John Rhys

Manx Folklore & Superstitions

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John Rhys

Manx Folklore and Superstitions

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Introduction

John Rhys, the noted Celticist, primarily visited Mann in order to further his study of Manx Gaelic. While walking the countryside in search of native speakers it would seem he was not always successful. 'When I failed to elicit any useful information of a linguistic nature, I tried another tack, and generally succeeded in learning something about the legends and superstitions of the Island. In passing it may be mentioned that the result of my gleanings in that field will be found in two papers published in *Folk-Lore*, ii, 284–313, iii, 74–91' (Rhys 1894: x). It is this material which is reprinted here. It originally appeared in two parts under the title "Manx Folk-Lore and Superstitions," in *Folk-Lore*, II (1891), pp. 284–313, & III (1892), pp. 74–88.

Rhys first visited the Island in July 1886, making a brief visit to Kirk Braddan. Two years later, in 1888, he returned for a second visit which lasted from the 7 September to the time of Michaelmas. He travelled widely, visiting Cregneash, Surby, Colby, Michael, and Andreas. His next visit was in 1890, for a month, from 11 July to 11 August, visiting Cregneash and Andreas. In 1891 he made a brief trip during April, where he went to Peel and Ronague between 9 and 23 April. A fifth visit was made in 1892 between 28 July and 16 August, where he spent time in Ramsey, Michael, and Cregneash. Another visit was made in 1893 when Rhys visited Ballaugh and Michael (Rhys 1894: viii–ix). If Rhys made any further visits after the publication of his *Outlines of the Phonology of Manx in* 1894 they have not been recorded.

Rhys later worked his material together, using it in his *Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx* (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1901) where it appeared as 'Manx Folklore,' pp. 284–322, which is Chapter IV in Vol I of the above title. The material reads substantially the same as that first published in *Folk-Lore,* although it is augmented in places with extra material. Although published in 1901 it was according to Rhys substantially written in 1891 (Rhys 1910: 287, fn 2). The following chapter, Chapter V, 'The Fenodyree and his Friends,' pp. 323–53, is a comparison of the Manx supernatural figure the *phynnoderee*, with its counterpart figure, the 'brownie,' and largely drawn from Peacock's collecting in Lincolnshire. Again this chapter was written well before the date of eventual publication, this time the start of 1892. A facsimile edition of *Celtic Folklore* (Hounslow, Middlesex: Wildwood House) appeared in 1971.

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STEPHEN MILLER
24th JUNE 1994

Manx Folklore and Superstitions

PART ONE

(284) The following paper exhausts no part of the subject: it simply embodies the substance of my notes of conversations which I have had with Manx men and Manx women, whose names, together with such other particulars as I could get, are in my possession. I have purposely avoided reading up the subject in printed books; but those who wish to see it exhaustively related may be directed to Mr Arthur W. Moore's book on *The Folk-lore of the Isle of Man*, which has just been published by Mr Nutt.

For the student of folk-lore the Isle of Man is very fairly stocked with inhabitants of the imaginary order. She has her fairies and her giants, her mermen and brownies, her kelpies and water-bulls.

The water-bull or *tarroo ushtey* as he is called in Manx, is a creature about which I have not been able to learn much, but he is described as a sort of bull who disports himself about the pools and swamps. For instance, I was told at the village of Andreas, in the flat country forming the northern end of the island and known as the Ayre, that there used to be a *tarroo ushtey* between Andreas and the sea to the west: that was before the ground had been drained as it is now. And an octogenarian captain at Peel related to me how he had once when a boy heard a *tarroo ushtey*: the bellowings of the brute made the ground tremble, but otherwise the captain was unable to give me any very intelligible description. This bull is by no means of the same breed as the bull that comes from Welsh lakes to mix with the farmer's cattle, for in Wales the result is great fertility among the stock and an overflow of (285) milk and dairy produce, but in the Isle of Man the *tarroo ushtey* only begets monsters and strangely formed beasts.

The kelpie, or, rather, what I take to be a kelpie, was called by my informants a *glashtyn*; and Kelly, in his *Manx Dictionary*, describes the object meant as 'a goblin, an imaginary animal which rises out of the water.' One or two of my informants confused the *glashtyn* with the Manx brownie. On the other hand, one of them was very definite in his belief that it had nothing human about it, but was a sort of grey colt, frequenting the banks of lakes at night, and never seen except at night.

Mermen and mermaids disport themselves on the coasts of Man, but I have to confess that I have made no careful inquiry into what is related about them and my information about the giants of the island is equally scanty. To tell you the truth, I do not recollect hearing of more than one giant, but that was a giant; for I have seen the marks of his huge hands impressed on the top of two massive monoliths. They stand in a field at Balla Keeill Pherick, on the way down from the Sloc to Colby. I was told there were originally five of these stones standing in a circle, all of them marked in the same way by the same giant as he hurled them down there from where he stood, miles away on the top of the mountain called Cronk yn Irree Laa. Here I may mention that the Manx word for a giant is *foawr*, in which a vowel-flanked *m* has been spirited away, as shown by the modern Irish spelling, *fomhor*. This, in the plural in old Irish, appears as the name of the *Fomori*, so well known in Irish legend, which, however, does not always represent them as giants, but rather as monsters. I have been in the habit of explaining the word as meaning *submarini*; but no more are they invariably connected with the sea. So another etymology recommends itself, namely, one which makes the mor in fomori to be of the same origin as the *mare* in the English night*mare*, French cauche*mar*, German *mahr*, 'an elf,' and cognate words. This suggestion comes from Dr Whitley Stokes.

(286) The Manx brownie is called the *Fenodyree*, and he is described as a hairy, clumsy fellow, who would, for instance, thrash a whole barnful of corn in a single night for the people to whom he felt well disposed; and once on a time he undertook to bring down for the farmer his wethers from Snaefell. When the *Fenodyree* had safely put them in an outhouse, he said that he had some trouble with the little ram, as it had run three times round Snaefell that morning. The farmer did not quite understand him, but on going to look at the sheep, he found, to his infinite surprise, that the little lamb was no other than a hare, which, poor creature, was dying of fright and fatigue. I need scarcely point out the similarity between this and the story of Peredur, who, as a boy, drove home a doe with his mother's goats from the forest: he owned, as you will remember, to having had some trouble with the goat that had so long run wild as to have lost her horns, a circumstance which had greatly impressed him.[1] To return to the *Fenodyree*, I am not sure that there were more than one in Man; but two localities at least are assigned to him, namely, a farm called Ballachrink, in Colby, in

the south, and a farm called Lanjaghan in the parish of Conchan, near Douglas. Much the same stories, however, appear to be current about him in the two places, and one of the most curious of them is that which relates how he left. The farmer so valued the services of the *Fenodyree*, that one day he took it into his head to provide clothing for him. The *Fenodyree* examined each article carefully, and expressed his idea of it, and specified the kind of disease it was calculated to produce. In a word, he found that the clothes would make head and foot sick, and he departed in disgust, saying to the farmer, 'Though this place is thine, the great Glen of Rushen is not.' Glen Rushen is one of the most retired glens in the island, and it drains down through Glen Meay to the coast, (287) some miles to the south of Peel. It is to Glen Rushen, then, that the Fenodyree is supposed to be gone; but on visiting that valley last year in quest of Manx-speaking peasants, I could find nobody there who knew anything of him. I suspect that the spread of the English language even there has forced him to leave the island altogether. Lastly, with regard to the term *Fenodyree*, I may mention that it is the word used in the Manx Bible of 1819 for *satyr* in Is. XXXIV, 14,[2] where we read in the English Bible as follows: 'The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow.' In the Vulgate the latter clause reads: 'et pilosus clamabit alter ad alterum.' The term *Fenodyree* has been explained by Cregeen in his *Manks Dictionary* to mean one who has hair for stockings or hose. That answers to the description of the hairy satyr, and seems fairly well to satisfy the phonetics of the case, the words from which he derives the compound being *fynney*[3] 'hair,' and *oashyr*, 'a stocking'; but as *oashyr* seems to come from the old Norse *hosur*, the plural of *hosa*, '*hose* or stocking,' the term *Fenodyree* cannot date before the coming of the Norsemen; and I am inclined to think the idea more Teutonic than Celtic; at any rate I need not point out to you the English counterparts of this hairy satyr in the hobgoblin, 'Lob lie by the Fire,' and Milton's Lubber Fiend, whom he describes as one that

> 'Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
> And crop-full out of doors he flings,
> Ere the first cock his matin rings.'

(288) The fairies claim our attention next, and as the only other fairies tolerably well known to me are those of Wales, I can only compare, or contrast, the Manx fairies with the Welsh ones. They are called in Manx, *Sleih Beggey*, or Little People, and *Ferrishyn*, from the English word *faires*, as it would seem. Like the Welsh fairies, they kidnap babies; and I have heard it related how a woman in Dalby had a struggle with the fairies over her baby, which they were trying to drag out of the bed from her. Like Welsh fairies, also, they take possession of the hearth after the farmer and his family are gone to bed. A farmer in Dalby used to hear them making a big fire in his kitchen: he used to hear the crackling and burning of the fire when nobody else *could* have been there except the fairies and their friends. I said 'friends,' for they sometimes take a man with them, and allow him to eat with them at the expense of others. Thus, some men from the northernmost parish, Kirk Bride, went once on a time to Port Erin, in the South, to buy a supply of fish for the winter, and with them went a Kirk Michael man who had the reputation of being a *persona grata* with the fairies. Now one of the Port Erin men asked a man from the North who the Michael man might be: he was curious to know his name, as he had seen him once before, and then the Michael man was with the fairies at his house—the Port Erin man's house—regaling himself with bread and cheese in company with the fairies.

Like Welsh fairies, the Manx ones take men away with them and detain them for years. Thus a Kirk Andreas man was absent from his people for four years, which he spent with the fairies. He could not tell how he returned, but it seemed as if, having been unconscious, he woke up at last in this world. The other world, however, in which he was for the four years was not far away, as he could see what his brothers and the rest of the family were doing every day, although they could not see him. To prove this, he mentioned to them how they were occupied on such and such (289) a day, and, among other things, how they took their corn on a particular day to Ramsey. He reminded them also of their having heard a sudden sharp crack as they were passing by a thorn-bush he named, and how they were so startled that one of them would have run back home. He asked them if they remembered that, and they said they did, only too well. He then explained to them the meaning of the noise, namely, that one of the fairies with whom he had seen galloping about the whole time was about to let fly an arrow at his brothers, but that as he was going to do this, he (the missing brother) raised a plate and intercepted the arrow; that was the sharp noise they had heard. Such was the account he had to of his sojourn in Faery. This representation of the world of the fairies, as contained within the ordinary world of mortals, is very remarkable; but it is not a new idea, as we seem to detect it in the Irish story of the abduction of Conla Rúad[4]: the fairy who comes to fetch him tells him that the Folk of Tethra, whom she represents, behold him every day as he takes part in the assemblies of his country and sits among his friends. The commoner way of putting it is simply to represent the fairies as invisible to mortals at will; and one kind of Welsh story relates how the mortal midwife accidentally touches her eyes, while dressing

a fairy baby, with an ointment which makes the fairy world visible to her.

Like Welsh fairies, the Manx ones had, as you have seen from this, horses to ride; they had also dogs, just as the Welsh ones had. This I learn from another story, to the effect that a fisherman, taking a fresh fish home, was pursued by a pack of fairy dogs, so that it was only with great trouble he reached his own door. Then he picked up a stone and threw it at the dogs, which at once disappeared; but he did not escape, as he was shot by the fairies, and so hurt that he lay ill for fully six months from that day. He would have been left alone by the (290) fairies, I was told, if he had only taken care to put a pinch of salt in the fish's mouth before setting out, for the Manx fairies cannot stand salt or baptism. So children that have been baptized are, as in Wales, less liable to be kidnapped by these elves than those that have not. I scarcely need add that a twig of cuirn[5] or rowan is also as effective against fairies in Man as it is against them in Wales. Manx fairies seem to have been musical, like their kinsmen elsewhere; for I have heard of an Orrisdale man crossing the neighbouring mountains at night and hearing fairy music, which took his fancy so much that he listened, and tried to remember it. He had, however, to return, it is said, three times to the place before he could carry it away complete in his mind, which he succeeded in doing at last just as the day was breaking and the musicians disappearing. This air, I am told, is now known by the name of the *Bollan Bane*, or White Wort. I believe that there are certain Welsh airs similarly supposed to have been derived from the fairies.

So far I have pointed out hardly anything but similarities between Manx fairies and Welsh ones, and I find very little indicative of a difference. First, with regard to salt, I am unable to say anything in this direction, as I do not happen to know how Welsh fairies regard salt; it is not improbable that they eschew salt as well as baptism, especially as the Church of Rome has long associated salt with baptism. There is, however, one point at least of difference between the fairies of Man and of Wales: the latter are, so far as I can call to mind, never known to (291) discharge arrows at men or women, or to handle a bow[6] at all, whereas Manx fairies are always ready to shoot. May we, therefore, provisionally regard this trait of the Manx fairies as derived from a Teutonic source? At any rate English and Scotch elves were supposed to shoot, and I am indebted to the kindness of my colleague, Prof. Napier, for calling my attention to the *Saxon Leechdoms*[7] for cases in point.

Now that most of the imaginary inhabitants of Man and its coasts have been rapidly passed in review before you, I may say something of others whom I regard as semi-imaginary, real human beings to whom impossible attributes are ascribed; I mean chiefly the witches, or, as they are sometimes called in Manx English, *butches*.[8] That term I take to be a variant of the English word *witch*, produced under the influence of the verb *bewitch*, which was reduced in Manx English to a form *butch*, especially if one bear in mind the Cumbrian and Scotch pronunciation of these words, as *wutch* and *bewutch*. Now witches shift their form, and I have heard of one old witch changing herself into a pigeon; but that I am bound to regard as exceptional, the regular form into which Manx witches pass at their pleasure being that of the hare, and such a swift and thick-skinned hare that no greyhound, except a black one without a single white hair, can catch it, and no shot, except a silver coin, penetrate its body. Both these peculiarities are also well known in Wales. I notice a difference, however, between Wales and Man with regard (292) to the hare witches: in Wales only the women can become hares, and this property runs, so far as I know, in certain families. I have known many such, and my own nurse belonged to one of them, so that my mother was reckoned to be rather reckless in entrusting me to *y gota*, or 'the Cutty One,' as she might run away at any moment, leaving her charge to take care of itself. But I have never heard of any man or boy of any such family turning himself into a hare, whereas in the Isle of Man the witches may belong, if I may say so, to either sex. I am not sure, however, that a man who turns himself into a hare would be called a wizard or witch and I recollect hearing in the neighbourhood of Ramsey of a man nicknamed the *gaaue mwaagh*, that is to say, 'the hare smith,' the reason being that this particular smith now and then assumes the form of a hare. I am not quite sure that *gaaue mwaagh* is the name of a class, though I rather infer that it is. If so, it must be regarded as a survival of the magic skill associated with smiths in ancient Ireland, as evidenced, for instance, in St Patrick's Hymn in the eleventh or twelfth century manuscript at Trinity College, Dublin, known as the *Liber Hymnorum*, in which we have a prayer against 'the spells of women, and of smiths and druids.'

The persons who had the power of turning themselves into hares were believed to be abroad and very active, together with the whole demon world, on the eve of May-day of the Old Style. And a middle-aged man from the parish of Andreas related to me how he came three or four times across a woman, reputed to be a witch, carrying on her evil practices at the junction of cross-roads, or the meeting of three boundaries. This happened once very early on old May morning, and afterwards he met her several times as he was returning home from visiting his sweetheart. He warned the witch that if he found her again that he would kick her: that is what he says. Well, after a while he did surprise her again at work

at four cross-roads, (293) somewhere near Lezayre. She had a circle, he said, as large as that made by hores in threshing, swept clean around her. He kicked her and took away her besom, which he hid till the middle of the day. The me made the farm boys fetch some dry gorse, and he put the witch's besom on the top of it. Thereupon fire was set to the gorse and, wonderful to relate, the besom, as it burned, crackled and made reports like guns going off. In fact the noise could be heard from Andreas Church—that is to say, miles away. The besom had on it 'seventeen sorts of knots,' he said, and the woman ought to have been burned; in fact, he added that she did not long survive her besom. The man who related this to me is hale and strong, living now in the parish of Michael, and not in that of Andreas, where he was born.

There is a tradition at St John's, which is overlooked by the mountain called Slieau Whuallian, that witches used at one time to be punished by being set to roll down the steep side of the mountain in spiked barrels; but short of putting them to death, there were various ways of rendering the machinations of witches innocuous, or of undoing the mischief done by them; for the charmers supply various means of meeting them triumphantly, and in case an animal is the victim, the burning of it always proves an effective means of bringing the offender to book. I shall have occasion to return to this under another heading. There is a belief that if you can draw blood, however little, from a witch or one who has the evil eye, he loses his power of harming you; and I have been told that formerly this belief was sometimes acted upon. Thus on leaving church, for instance, the man who fancied himself in danger from another would go up to him, or walk by his side, and inflict on him a slight scratch, or some other trivial wound, which elicited blood; but this must have been a course always attended with more or less danger.

The persons able to undo the witches' work, and remove (294) the malignant influence of the evil eye, are known in Manx English as charmers, and something must now be said of them. They have various ways of proceeding to their work. A lady of about thirty-five, living at Peel, related to me, how, when she was a child suffering from a swelling in the neck, she had it charmed by an old woman. This charmer brought with her no less than nine pieces of iron, consisting of bits of old pokers, old nails, and other odds and ends of the same metal, making in all nine pieces. After invoking the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, she began to rub the girl's neck with the old irons; nor was she satisfied with that, for she rubbed the doors, the walls, and the furniture likewise, with the metal. The result, I was assured, was highly satisfactory, as she has never been troubled with a swelling in the throat since that day. Sometimes a passage from the Bible is made use of in charming, as, for instance, in the case of bleeding. One of the verses then pronounced is Ezekiel XVI, 6, which runs thus: 'And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.' This was told one by a Laxey man, who is over seventy years of age. The methods of charming away warts are various. A woman from the neighbourhood of St John's explained to me how a charmer told her to get rid of the warts on her hands. She was to take a string and make a knot on it for every wart she had, and then tie the string round her hand, or fingers—I forget which; and I think my informant, on her part, forgot to tell me a vital part of the formula, namely, that the string was to be destroyed. However, she assured me that the warts disappeared, and never returned since. A lady at Andreas has a still simpler method of getting rid of warts. She rubs a snail on the warts, and then places the snail on one of the points of a blackthorn, and, in fact, leaves the snail to die, transfixed by the thorn ; and as the snail dies, the warts disappear. She has done this in the (295) case of her niece with complete success, so far as the wart was concerned; but she was sorry to say that she had forgotten to notice whether the snail had also succumbed.

The lady who in this case applied the remedy cannot be in any sense called a charmer, however much one may insist on calling what she did a charm. In fact, the term charmer tends to be associated with a particular class of charm involving the use of herbs. Thus there used at one time to be a famous charmer living near Kirk Michael to whom the fishermen were in the habit of resorting, and my informant told me that he had been deputed more than once by his fellow-fishermen to go to him in consequence of their lack of success in the fishing. This charmer gave him a packet of herbs, cut small, with directions that they should be boiled, and the water mixed with some spirits—rum, I think—and partly drunk in the boat by the captain and the crew, and partly sprinkled over the boat and everything in it. The charmer clearly defined his position in the matter to my informant. 'I cannot,' he said, 'put the fish in your nets for you; but if there is any mischief in the way of your luck, I can remove that for you.' The fishermen themselves had, however, more exaggerated notions of the charmer's functions; for once on a time my informant spent on drink for his boon companions the money which he was to give the charmer, and then he collected herbs himself—it did not much matter what herbs—and took them to his captain, who, with the crew, went through the proper ritual, and made a most successful haul that night. In fact, the only source of discontent was the charmer's not having distributed the fish over two nights, instead of

endangering their nets by an excessive haul all in one night They regarded him as able to do almost anything he liked in the matter.

A lady at Andreas gave me an account of a celebrated charmer who lived between there and the coast. He worked on her husband's farm, but used to be frequently called away to be consulted. He usually cut up wormwood for the people (296) who came to him, and if there was none to be had, he did not scruple to rob the garden of any small sprouts it contained of cabbage or the like. He would chop them small, and give directions about boiling them and drinking the water. He usually charged anyone leaving him to speak to nobody on the way, lest he break the charm, and this mysteriousness was evidently an important element in his profession. But he was, nevertheless, a thriftless fellow, and when he went to Peel, and sent the crier round to announce his arrival, and received a good deal of money from the fishermen, he seldom so conducted himself as to bring much of it home. He died miserably some seven or eight years ago at Ramsey, and left a widow in great poverty. As to the present day, the daughter of a charmer now dead is married to a man living in a village on the southern side of the island, and she appears to have inherited her father's reputation for charming, as the fishermen from all parts are said to flock to her for luck. Incidentally, I have heard in the South more than once of her being consulted in cases of sudden and dangerous illness, even after the best medical advice has been obtained in fact, she seems to have a considerable practice.

In answer to my question, how the charmer, who died at Ramsey, used to give the sailors luck in the fishing, my informant at Andreas could not say, except that he gave them herbs as already described, and she thought also that he sold them wisps to place under their pillows. I gather that the charms were chiefly directed to the removal of supposed impediments to success in the fishing, rather than to any act of a more positive nature. So far as I have been able to ascertain, charming is hereditary, and they say that it descends from father to daughter, and then from daughter to son, and so on—a remarkable kind of descent, on which I should be glad to have the opinion of Mr Elton. One of the best Manx scholars in the island related to me how some fishermen once insisted on his doing the charmer for them because of his being of (297) such and such a family, and how he made fools of them. It is my impression that the charming families are comparatively few in number, and this looks as if they descended from the family physicians or druids of one or two chieftains in ancient times. It is very likely a question which could be cleared up by a local man familiar with the island and all that which tradition has to say on the subject of Manx pedigrees.

In the case of animals ailing, the herbs were also resorted to; and, if the beasts happened to be milch cows, the herbs had to be boiled in some of their milk. This was supposed to produce wonderful results, described as follows by a man living on the way from Castletown up South Barrule. A farmer in his parish had a cow that milked blood, as he described it, and that in consequence of a witch's ill-will. He went to the charmer, who gave him some herbs, which he was to boil in the ailing cow's milk, and the charmer charged him, whatever he did, not to quit the concoction while it was on the fire, in spite of any noises he might hear. The farmer went home and proceeded that night to boil the herbs as directed, but he suddenly heard a violent tapping at the door, a terrible lowing of the cattle in the cow-house, and stones coming down the 'chumley': the end of it was that he suddenly fled and sprang into bed to take shelter behind his wife. He went to the charmer again, and related to him what had happened: he was told that he must have more courage the next time, unless he wished his cow to die. He promised to do his best, and this time he stood his ground in spite of the noises and the creaking of the windows—until, in fact, a back-window burst into pieces and bodily let a witch in, who craved his pardon, and promised never more to molest him or his. This all happened at the farm in question in the time of the present farmer's grandfather. The boiling of the charmer's herbs in milk always produces a great commotion and lowing among the cattle, and it invariably cures the ailing (298) ones: this is firmly believed by respectable farmers whom I could name, in the North of the island in particular, and I am alluding to men whom you might consider fairly educated members of their class.

Magic takes us back to a very primitive and loose way of thinking; so the marvellously easy way in which it identifies any tie of association, however flimsy, with the insoluble bond of relationship which educated men and women variously regard as connecting cause and effect, renders even simpler means than I have described quite equal to the undoing of the evils resulting from the activity of the evil eye. Thus, let us suppose that a person endowed with the evil eye has just passed by the farmer's herd of cattle, and a calf has suddenly been seized with a serious illness, the farmer hurries after the man of the evil eye to get the dust from under his feet. If he objects, he may, as has sometimes been very unceremoniously done, throw him down by force, take off his shoes, and scrape off the dust adhering to their soles, and carry it back to throw over the calf. Even that is not always necessary, as it appears to be quite enough if he takes up dust where he of the evil eye has just trod the ground. There are innumerable cases on folk record of both means proving entirely effective. A similar

question of psychology presents itself in a practice, intended as a preservative against the evil eye rather than as a cure. I allude to what I have heard about two maiden ladies living in a Manx village which I know very well: they are natives of a neighbouring parish, and I am assured that whenever a stranger enters their house they proceed, as soon as he goes away, to strew a little dust or sand over the spot where he stood. That is understood to prevent any malignant influence resulting from his visit. This tacit identifying of a man with his footprints may be detected in a more precarious and pleasing form in a quaint conceit familiar to me in the lyrics of rustic life in Wales, when, for example, a coy maiden leaves her lovesick swain hotly avowing his perfect (299) readiness to *cusanu ol ei thraed*, that is, to do on his knees all the stages of her path across the meadow, kissing the ground wherever it has been honoured with the tread of her dainty foot. Let me take another case, in which the cord of association is not so inconceivably slender, when two or more persons standing in a close relation to one another are mistakenly treated a little too much as if mutually independent, the objection may be made that it matters not whether it is A or B, that it is, in fact, all the same, as they belong to the same concern in Welsh this is sometimes expressed by saying, '*Yr un peth yw Huw'r Glyn a'i glocs*,' that is, 'Whether you talk of Huw'r Glyn, or of his wooden shoes, it is all the same.' Then, when you speak in English of a man 'standing in another's shoes,' I am by no means certain that you are not employing an expression which meant something more to those who first used it than it does to us. Our modern idioms, with all their striving after the abstract, are but primitive man's mental tools adapted to the requirements of civilised life: they betray the form and shape which the neolithic worker's chipping and polishing gave them.

It is difficult to arrange these scraps under any clearly classified headings, and now that I have led you into the midst of matters magical, perhaps I may just as well go on to the mention of a few more: I alluded to the boiling of the herbs according to the charmer's orders, with the result, among other things, of bringing the witch to the spot. This is, however, not the only instance of the importance and strange efficacy of fire. For when a beast dies on a farm, of course it dies, according to the old-fashioned view of things, as I understand it, from the influence of the evil eye, or the interposition of a witch; and if you want to know to whom you are indebted for the loss of the beast, you have simply to burn its carcase in the open air and watch who comes first on the spot or who first passes by; for that is the criminal to be charged with the death of the animal, and he cannot help coming there: (300) such is the effect of the fire. A Michael woman, who is now about thirty, related to me how she watched while the carcase of a bewitched colt was burning, and how she saw the witch coming, and how she remembers her shrivelled face, with nose and chin in close proximity. According to another native of Michael, a well-informed middle-aged man, the animal in question was oftenest a calf, and it was wont to be burnt whole, skin and all. The object, according to him, is invariably to bring the bewitcher on the spot, and he always comes; but I am not clear what happens to him, when he appears. My informant added, however, that it was believed that, unless the bewitcher got possession of the heart of the beast burning, he lost all his power of bewitching. He related, also, how his father and three other men were once out fishing on the west coast of the island, when one of the three suddenly expressed his wish to land. As they were fishing successfully some two or three miles from the shore, they would not hear of it. He, however, insisted that they must put him ashore at once, which made his comrades highly indignant; but they had soon to give way, as they found that he was determined to leap overboard unless they complied. When he got on shore they watched him hurrying away towards a smoke where a beast was burning in the corner of a field.

Manx stories merge this burning in a very perplexing fashion with what may be termed a sacrifice for luck. The following scraps of information will make it clear what I mean: A respectable farmer from Andreas told me that he was driving with his wife to the neighbouring parish of Jurby some years ago, and that on the way they beheld the carcase of a cow or an ox burning in a field, with a woman engaged in stirring the fire. On reaching the village to which they were going, they found that the burning beast belonged to a farmer whom they knew. They were further told it was no wonder that the said farmer had one of his cattle burnt, as several of them had recently died. Whether this was a case of sacrifice or not I cannot say. But let (301) me give you another instance: a man whom I have already mentioned, saw at a farm nearer the centre of the island a live calf being burnt The owner bears an English name, but his family has long been settled in Man. The farmer's explanation to my informant was that the calf was burnt to secure luck for the rest of the herd, some of which were threatening to die. My informant thought there was absolutely nothing the matter with them, except that they had too little to eat. Be that as it may, the one calf was sacrificed as a burnt-offering to secure luck for the rest of the cattle. Let me here also quote Mr Moore's note in his *Manx Surnames*, p. 184, on the place-name *Cabbal yn Oural Losht*, or the Chapel of the Burnt Sacrifice. 'This name,' he says, 'records a circumstance which took place in the nineteenth century, but which, it is to be hoped, was never customary in the Isle of Man. 'A farmer,' he

goes on to say, 'who had lost a number of his sheep and cattle by murrain, burned a calf as a propitiatory offering to the Deity on this spot, where a chapel was afterwards built. Hence the name.' Particulars, I may say, of time, place, and person could be easily added to Mr Moore's statement, excepting, perhaps, as to the deity in question; on that point I have never been informed, but Mr Moore is probably right in the use of the capital *d*, as the sacrificer is, according to all accounts, a highly devout Christian.

One more instance: an octogenarian woman, born in the parish of Bride, and now living at Kirk Andreas, saw, when she was a 'lump of a girl' of ten or fifteen years of age, a live sheep being burnt in a field in the parish of Andreas, on May-day, whereby she meant the first of May reckoned according to the Old Style. She asserts very decidedly that it was *son oural*, 'as a sacrifice,' as she put it, and 'for an object to the public': those were her words when she expressed herself in English. Further, she made the statement that it was a custom to burn a sheep on old May-day for a sacrifice. I was fully alive to the interest of this evidence, and cross-examined her so far as her age allows of it, and (302) I find that she adheres to her statement with all firmness. I distinguish two or three points in her evidence: 1. I have no doubt that she saw, as she was passing by a certain field on the borders of Andreas parish, a live sheep being burnt on old May-day. 2. But her statement that it was *son oural*, or as a sacrifice, was probably only an inference drawn by her, possibly years afterwards, on hearing things of the kind discussed. 3. Lastly I am convinced that she did hear the May-day sacrifice discussed, both in Manx and in English: her words, 'for an object to the public,' are her imperfect recollection of a phrase used in her hearing by somebody more ambitious of employing English abstract terms than she is; and the formal nature of her statement in Manx, that it was customary on May-day to burn as a sacrifice one head of sheep (*Laa Boaldyn va cliaghtey dy lostey son oural un baagh keyrragh*), produces the same impression on my mind, that she is only repeating somebody else's words. I mention this more especially as I have failed to find anybody else in Andreas or Bride, or indeed in the whole island, who will now confess to having ever heard of the sheep sacrifice on old May-day.

The time assigned to the sheep sacrifice, namely May-day, leads me to make some remarks on the importance of that day among the Celts. The day meant is, as I have already said, Old May-day, in Manx *Shenn Laa Boaldyn*. This was a day when systematic efforts were made to protect man and beast against elves and witches; for it was then that people carried crosses of rowan in their hats and put May flowers on the tops of their doors and elsewhere as preservatives against all malignant influences. With the same object also in view crosses of rowan were likewise fastened to the tails of cattle, small crosses which had to be made without the help of a knife. Early on May morning one went out to gather the dew as a thing of great virtue, as in other countries. One woman who had been out on this errand years ago told me that she washed her face with (303) the dew in order to secure luck, a good complexion, and immunity against witches. The break of this day is also the signal for firing the ling or the gorse, which used to be done in order to burn out the witches fond of taking the form of the hare; and even guns, I am told, were freely used to shoot any game met with on that morning. With the proper charge some of the witches were now and then hit and wounded, whereupon they resumed the human form and remained cripples for the rest of their lives. Fire, however, appears to have been the chief agency relied on to clear away the witches and other malignant beings; and I have heard of this use of fire having been carried so far that a practice was sometimes observed—as, for example in Lezayre—of burning gorse, however little, in the hedge of each field on a farm in order to drive away the witches and secure luck.

The man who told me this, on being asked whether he had ever heard of cattle being driven through fire or between two fires on May-day, replied that it was not known to him as a Manx custom, but that it was as an Irish one. A cattle-dealer whom he named used on May-day to drive his cattle through fire so as to singe them a little, as he believed that would preserve them from harm. He was an Irishman, who came to the island for many years, and whose children are settled in the island now. On my asking him if he knew whence the dealer came, he answered, 'From the mountains over there,' pointing to the Mountains of Mourne looming indefinite in the mists on the western horizon. The Irish custom known to my Manx informant is interesting both as throwing light on the Manx custom, and as being the continuation of a very ancient rite mentioned by Cormac. That writer, or somebody in his name, says that Beltane, May-day, was so called from the 'lucky fire,' or the 'two fires' which the druids of Erinn used to make on that day with great incantations; and cattle, he adds, used to be brought to those fires, or driven between them, as a safeguard against the diseases (304) of the year. Cormac[9] says nothing, it will be noticed, as to one of the cattle or the sheep being sacrificed for the sake of prosperity to the rest. However, Scotch[10] May-day customs point to a sacrifice having been once usual, and that possibly of human beings, and not of sheep, as in the Isle of Man. I have elsewhere[11] tried to equate these Celtic May-day practices with the Thargelia[12] of the Athenians of antiquity. The Thargelia were characterised by peculiar rites, and among other things then done,

two adult persons were lead about, as it were scapegoats, and at the end they were sacrificed and burnt, so that their ashes might be dispersed. Here we seem to be on the track of a very ancient Aryan practice, although the Celtic date does not quite coincide with the Greek one.

It is probably in some ancient May-day custom that we are to look for the key to a remarkable place-name occurring several times in the island: I allude to that of *Cronk yn Irree Laa*, which literally means the Hill of the Rise of the Day. This is the name of one of the mountains in the south of the island, but it is also borne by one of the knolls near the eastern end of the range of low hills ending abruptly on the coast between Ramsey and Bride Parish, and quite a small knoll bears the name near the church of Jurby.[13] I have heard of a fourth instance, which, however (305) has escaped both my memory and note-book. It has been attempted to explain the name as meaning the Hill of the Watch by Day, in reference to the old institution of Watch and Ward on conspicuous places in the island; but that explanation is inadmissable as doing violence to the phonetics of the words in question.[14] I am rather inclined to think that the name everywhere refers to an eminence to which the surrounding inhabitants resorted for a religious purpose on a particular day in the year. I should suggest that it was to do homage to the Sun on May morning but this conjecture is offered only to await a better explanation.

The next great day on the pagan calendar of the Celts is called in Manx *Laa Lhunys*, in Irish *Lugnassad*, which was associated with the name of the god Lug. This should correspond to Lammas, but, reckoned as it is, according to the Old Style, it falls on the twelfth of August which used to be a great day for business fairs in the Isle of Man as in Wales. But for holiday-making a twelfth only suited when it happened to be a Sunday; when that was not the case, the first Sunday after twelfth was fixed upon. It is known, accordingly, as the First Sunday of Harvest, and it used to be celebrated by crowds of people visiting the tops of the mountains. The kind of interference to which I have alluded with regard to an ancient holiday, is one of the regular results of the transition from Roman Catholicism to a Protestant system (306) with only one fixed holiday, namely, Sunday. The same shifting has partly happened in Wales, where Lammas is *Gwyl Awst*, or the festival of Augustus, since the birthday of Augustus, auspiciously for him and the celebrity of his day, fell in with the great day of the god Lug in the Celtic world. Now the day for going up the Van Vach mountain in Brecknock was Lammas, but under a Protestant church it became the first Sunday in August, and even modified in that way it could not long survive under a vigorous Protestant régime either in Wales or Man. As to the latter in particular, I have heard it related by persons who were present, how the crowds on the top of South Barrule on the first Sunday in Harvest were denounced as pagans, by a preacher called William Gick, some seventy years ago; and how another man called Paric Beg, or Little Patrick, preaching to the crowds on Snaefell, in milder terms, used to wind up the service with a collection, which appears to have proved a speedier method of reducing the dimensions of these meetings on the mountain-tops. Be that as it may, they seem to have dwindled since then to comparative insignificance.

If you ask the reason for this custom now, for it is not yet quite extinct, you are told, first, that it is merely to gather ling berries; but now and then a quasi-religious reason is given, namely, that it is the day on which Jephthah's Daughter and her companions went forth on the mountains to bewail her virginity: somehow, some Manx people make believe that they are doing likewise. That is not all, for people who have never themselves thought of going up the mountains on the first Sunday of Harvest or any other, will be found devoutly reading at home about Jephthah's Daughter on that day. I was told this first in the South by a clergyman's wife, who, finding a woman in the parish reading the chapter in question on that day, asked the reason for her fixing on that particular portion of the Bible. She then had the Manx view of the matter fully explained to her, and she has since found (307) more information about it, and so have I. This is a very curious instance of a pagan practice profoundly modified to procure a new lease of life; but it is needless for me to say that I do not quite understand how Jephthah's Daughter came to be introduced, and that I should be glad to have light shed on the question.

I notice, with regard to most of the mountains climbed on the first Sunday of Harvest, that they seem to have near their summits wells of some celebrity; and these wells appear to be the goal of the visitors' peregrinations. This is the case with South Barrule, the spring near the top of which cannot, it is said, be found when sought a second time; also with Snaefell and Maughold Head, which boasts one of the most famous springs in the island. When I visited it last summer, in company with Mr Kermode, we found it to contain a considerable number of pins, some of which were bent, and many buttons. Some of the pins were not of a kind usually carried by men, and most of the buttons decidedly belonged to the dress of the other sex. Several people who had resorted many years ago to St Maughold's Well told me that the water is good for sore eyes, and that after using it on the spot, or filling a bottle with it to take home, one was wont to drop a pin, or bead,

or button, into the well. But it had its full virtue only when visited on the first Sunday of Harvest, and that only during the hour the books were open at church, which, shifted back to Roman Catholic times, means doubtless the hour when the priest is engaged saying Mass. This restriction, however, is not peculiar to St Maughold's Well, as I have beard of it in connection with other wells, such as Chibbyr Lansh in Lezayre parish, and with a well on Slieau Maggyl, in which some Kirk Michael people have a great belief. But even sea-water was believed to have considerable virtues if you washed in it while the books were open at church, as I was told by a woman who had many years ago repeatedly taken her own sister to divers wells and to the sea during the service on (308) Sunday, in order to have her eyes cured of their chronic weakness.

The remaining great day in the Celtic year is called Sauin or Laa Houney ; in Irish, Samhain, genitive Samhna; the Manx call it in English *Hollantide*, a word derived from the English genitive plural, *Allhallown*,[15] for All Hallowen Tide or Day. This day is also reckoned in Man according to the Old Style, so that it is our 12th of November. That is the day when the tenure of land terminates, and when servantmen go to their places. In other words, it is the beginning of a new year; and Kelly, in his *Manx-English Dictionary*, has, under the word *blein*, 'year,' the following note: 'Valancey says the Celts began their year with January; yet in the Isle of Man the first of November is called New Year's Day by the Mummers, who, on the eve, begin their petition in these words: "To-night is New Year's night, Hog-unnaa,[16] etc." ' It is a pity that Kelly, whilst he was on this subject, did not give the rhyme in Manx, and all the more so as the mummers of the present day have changed their words into *Noght oie Houney*, that is to say, To-night is Sauin Night (or Halloween). So I had despaired of finding anybody who could corroborate Kelly in his statement, when I happened last summer to find a man at Kirk Michael who was quite familiar with this way of treating the year. I asked him if he could explain Kelly's absurd statement—I put my question designedly in that form. He said he could, but that there was nothing absurd in it. He then told me how he had heard some old people talk of it; he is himself now about sixty-seven. He had been a farmservant from the age of sixteen till he was twenty-six to the same man, near Regaby in the parish of Andreas, and he remembers (309) his master and a near neighbour of his discussing the term New Year's Day as applied to the first of November and explaining to the younger men that it had always been so in old times. In fact, it seemed to him natural enough, as all tenure of land ends at that time, and as all servant-men begin their service at that date. I cross-examined him, without succeeding in any way on shaking his evidence. I should have been glad a few years ago to have come across this piece of information, or even Kelly's note, when I was discussing the Celtic year and trying to prove[17] that it began at the beginning of winter, with May-day as the beginning of its second half.

One of the characteristics of the beginning of the Celtic year with the commencement of winter was the belief that indications can be obtained on the eve of that day regarding the events of the year; but with the calendar year gaining ground it would be natural to expect that the Calends of January would have some of the associations of the Calends of Winter transferred to them, and *vice versa*. In fact, this can, as it were, be watched now going on in the Isle of Man. First, I may mention that the Manx mummers used to go about singing, in Manx, a sort of Hogmanay song,[18] reminding one of that usual in Yorkshire and other parts of (310) Great Britain, and supposed to be of Scandinavian origin. The time for it in this country was New Year's Eve, according to the ordinary calendar, but in the Isle of Man it has always been Hollantide Eve, according to the Old Style, and this is the night when boys now go about continuing the custom of the old mummers. There is no hesitation in this case between Hollantide Eve and New Year's Eve. But with the prognostications for the year it is different, and the following practices have been usual. I may, however, premise that as a rule I have abstained from inquiring too closely whether they still go on, but here and there I have had the information volunteered that they do.

1. I may mention first a salt prognostication, which was described to me by a farmer in the North, whose wife practises it once a year regularly. She carefully fills a thimble with salt in the evening and upsets it in a neat little heap on a plate: she does that for every member of the family, and every guest, too, if there happen to be any. The plate is then left undisturbed till the morning, when she examines the heaps of salt to see if any of them have fallen; for whoever is found represented by a fallen heap will die during the year. She does not herself, I am assured, believe in it, but she likes to continue a custom which she has learned from her mother.

2. Next may be mentioned the ashes being carefully swept to the open hearth, and nicely flattened down by the women just before going to bed. In the morning they look for footmarks on the hearth, and if they find such footmarks directed towards the door, it means, in the course of the year, a death in the family, mid if the reverse, they expect an addition to it by marriage.[19] (311)

3. Then there is an elaborate process of eaves-dropping recommended to young women curious to know their husbands' names: a girl would go with her

mouth full of water and her hands full of salt to the door of the nearest neighbour's house, or rather to that of the nearest neighbour but one, for I have been carefully corrected more than once on that point. There she would listen, and the first name she caught would prove to be that of her future husband. Once a girl did so, as I was told by a blind fisherman in the South, and heard two brothers quarrelling inside the house at whose door she was listening. Presently the young men's mother exclaimed that the devil would not let Tom leave John alone. At the mention of that triad the girl burst into the house, laughing and spilling the mouthful of water most incontinently. The end of it was that before the year was out she married Tom, the second person mentioned: the first either did not count or proved an unassailable bachelor.

4. There is also a ritual for enabling a girl to obtain other information respecting her future husband: vessels placed about the room have various things put into them, such as clean water, earth, meal, a piece of a net, or any other article thought appropriate. The candidate for matrimony, with her eyes bandaged, feels her way about the house until she puts her hand in one of the aforesaid vessels. If what she lays her hand on is the clean water, her husband will be a handsome man[20]; if it is the earth, he will be a farmer; if the meal, a miller; if the net, a fisherman, and so on into as many of the walks in life as may be thought worthy of consideration. (312)

5. Lastly, recourse may be had to a ritual of the same nature as that observed by the druid of ancient Erinn, when, burdened with a heavy meal of the flesh of a red pig, he laid him down for the night in order to await a prophetic dream as to the manner of man the nobles of Erinn assembled at Tara were to elect to be their king. The incident is given in the story of Cúchulainn's sick-bed; and you all know the passage about Brian and the *taghairm* in the 4th Canto of Scott's *Lady of the Lake*. But the Manx girl has only to eat a salt herring, bones and all, without drinking or uttering a word, and to retire backwards to bed. When she sleeps and dreams, she will behold her future husband approaching to give her drink.

Probably none of the practices which I have enumerated, or similar ones mentioned to me, are in any sense peculiar to the Isle of Man; but what interests me in them is the divided opinion as to the proper night for them in the year. I am sorry to say that I have very little information as to the blindman's-buff ritual (No. 4); what information I have, to wit, the evidence of two persons in the South, fixes it on Hollantide Eve. But as to the others (Nos 1, 2, 3, 5), they are observed by some on that night, and by others on New Year's Eve, sometimes according to the Old Style[21] and sometimes the New. Further, those who are wont to practise the Salt Heap ritual, for instance, on Hollantide Eve, would be very indignant to hear that anybody should think New Year's Eve the proper night, and *vice versa*. So by bringing women bred and born in different parishes to compare notes on this point, I have witnessed arguing hardly less earnest than that which characterised the ancient controversy between British and Italian ecclesiastics as to the proper time for keeping Easter. I have not been able to map the island according to the practices prevalent (313) at Hollantide and the beginning of January, but local folk-lorists could probably do it without much difficulty.[22] My impression, however, is that January is gradually acquiring the upper hand. In Wales this must have been decidedly helped by the influence of Roman rule and Roman ideas; but even in Wales the adjuncts of the Winter Calends have never been wholly transferred to the Calends of January. Witness, for instance, the women who used to congregate in the parish church to discover who of the parishioners should die during the year.[23] That custom, in the neighbourhoods reported to have practised it, continued to attach itself to the last, so far as I know, to the beginning of November. In the Isle of Man the fact of the ancient Celtic year having so firmly held its own, seems to point to the probable fact that the year of the pagan Norsemen pretty nearly coincided with that of the Celts.[24] For there are reasons to think, as I have endeavoured elsewhere to show, that the Norse Yule was originally at the end of summer or the commencement of winter, in other words,the days afterwards known as the Feast of the Winter Nights. This was the favourite date in Iceland for listening to soothsayers prophesying with regard to the wintcr then beginning. The late Dr Vigfusson had much to say on this subject, and how the local Sybil, resuming her elevated seat at the opening of each successive winter, gave the author of the Volospá his plan of that remarkable poem, which has been described by the same authority as the highest spiritual effort of the heathen poetry of the North.

PART TWO

(74) In my previous paper I made allusion to several wells of greater or less celebrity in the Island; but I find that I have a few remarks to add. Mr Arthur Moore, in his book on *Manx Surnames and Place-Names*, p. 200, mentions a Chibber Unjin, which means the Well of the Ashtree, and he states that there grew near it 'formerly a sacred ash-tree, where votive offerings were hung.' The ash-tree calls to his mind Scandinavian legends respecting the ash, but in any case one may suppose the ash was not the usual tree to expect by a well in the Isle of Man, otherwise this one would scarcely have been distinguished as

the Ash-tree Well. The tree to expect by a sacred well is doubtless some kind of thorn, as in the case of Chibber Undin in the parish of Malew. The name means Foundation Well, so called in reference probably to the foundations of an ancient cell, or *keeill* as it is called in Manx, which lie close by, and are found to measure 21 feet long by 12 feet broad. The following is Mr Moore's account of the well in his book already cited, p. 181: 'The water of this well is supposed to have curative properties. The patients who came to it, took a mouthful of water, retaining it in their mouths till they had twice walked round the well. They then took a piece of cloth from a garment which they had worn, wetted it with the water from the well, and hung it on the hawthorn-tree which grew there. When the cloth had rotted away, the cure was supposed to be effected.' (75) I visited the spot a few years ago in the company of the Revd E.B. Savage of St Thomas's Parsonage, Douglas, and we found the well nearly dried up in consequence of the drainage of the field around it; but the remains of the old cell were there, and the thorn-bush had strips of cloth or calico tied to its branches. We cut off one, which is now in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford. The account Mr Savage had of the ritual observed at the well differed a little from that given by Mr Moore, especially in the fact that it made the patient who had been walking round the well with water from the well in his mouth, empty that water finally into a rag from his clothing: the rag was then tied to a branch of the thorn. It does not appear that the kind of tree mattered much; nay, a tree was not, it seems to me, essential. At any rate, St Maughold's Well has no tree growing near it now; but it is right to say, that when Mr Kermode and I visited it, we could find no rags left near the spot, nor indeed could we expect to find any, as there was nothing to which they might be tied on that windy headland. The absence of the tree does not, however, prove that the same sort of ritual was not formerly observed at St Maughold's Well as at Chibber Undin; and here I must mention another well which I have visited in the Island more than once. It is on the side of Bradda Hill, a little above the village of Bradda, and in the direction of Fleshwick: I was attracted to it by the fact that it had, as I had been told by Mr Savage, near it formerly an old cell or *keeill* and the name of the saint to which it belonged may probably be gathered from the name of the well, which, in the Manx of the south of the Island, is Chibbyrt Valtane, pronounced approximately Chuvurt Valtane or Aldáne. The personal name would be written in modern Manx in its radical form as Baltane, and if it occurred in the genitive in old inscriptions I should expect to find it written *Baltagni*. It is, however, unknown to me, but to be placed by the side of the name of the saint after whom the parish of Santon is called in the (76) south-east of the island. This is pronounced in Manx approximately[25] Santane or Sandane would have yielded an early inscriptional nominative *Sanctagus*, which, in fact, occurs on an old stone near Llandudno on the opposite coast: see Rhys's *Lectures on Welsh Philology*, p. 371.[26] To return to the well, it would seem to have been associated with an old cell, but it has no tree growing by it. Mr Savage and I were told, nevertheless, that a boy who had searched a short time previously had got some coins out of it, quite recent ones, consisting of halfpennies or pennies, so far as I remember. On my observing to one of the neighbours that I saw no rags there, I was assured that there had been some; and, on my further saying that I saw no tree there to which they could be tied, I was told that they used to be attached to the brambles, which grew there in great abundance. Thus it appears to me that, in the Isle of Man at any rate, a tree to bear the rags was not an essential adjunct of a holy well.

There is another point to which I should like to call attention, namely, the habit of writing about the rags as offerings, which they are not in all cases. The offerings are the coins, beads, buttons, or pins thrown into the well, or placed in a receptacle for the purpose close to the well. The rags may belong to quite a different order of things: they may be the vehicles of the diseases which the patients communicate to them when they spit out the well-water from their mouths. The rags are put up to rot, so that the disease supposed to cling to them may also die; and so far is this believed to be the case, that anyone who carries away one of the rags may expect to (77) attract the disease communicated to it by the one who left it near the holy well. So it is highly desirable that the distinction between the offerings and the accursed things should be observed, at any rate in writing of holy wells in the Isle of Man. How far the same distinction is to be found elsewhere I am unable to say; but the question is one which deserves attention.

From the less known saints Baltane and Santane I wish to pass to the mention of a more famous one, namely, St Catherine, and this because of a fair called after her, and held on the 6th day of December at the village of Colby in the south of the Island. When I heard of this fair in 1888, it was in temporary abeyance on account of a lawsuit respecting the plot of ground on which the fair is wont to be held; but I was told that it usually began with a procession, in which a live hen is carried about: this is called St Catherine's hen. The next day the hen is carried about dead and plucked, and a rhyme pronounced at a certain point in the proceeding contemplates the burial of the hen, but whether that ever took place I know not. It runs thus:

'*Kiark Catrina marroo:*
Gows yn kione as goyms ny cassyn,
As ver mayd ee fo'n thalloo.'

'Cathrine's hen is dead:
The head take thou and I the feet,
And we shall put her under ground.'

A man who is found to be not wholly sober after the fair is locally said to have plucked a feather from the hen (*T'eh er goaill fedjag ass y chiark*); so it would seem that there must be such a scramble to get at the hen, and to take part in the plucking, that it requires a certain amount of drink to allay the thirst of the over-zealous devotees of St Catherine. But why should this ceremony be associated with St Catherine? and what were the (78) origin and meaning of it? These are questions which I should be glad to have expounded by the Society, for I have not had time to consult Mr Fraser's *Golden Bough*, in order to see if it gives any close parallel to the proceedings of the good people of Colby.

Manx has a word *quaail* (Irish *comhdháil*), meaning a 'meeting,' and from it we have a derivative *quaaltagh* or *qualtagh*, meaning, according to Kelly's *Dictionary*, 'the first person or creature one meets going from home,' whereby the author probably meant the first person met by one who is going from home. Kelly goes on to add that 'this person is of great consequence to the superstitious, particularly to women the first time they go out after lying-in.' Cregeen, in his *Dictionary*, defines the *qualtagh* as 'the first person met on New Year's Day, or on going on some new work, etc.' Before proceeding to give you my notes on the *qualtagh* of the present day I may as well finish with Cregeen, for he adds the following information: 'A company of young lads or men, generally went in old times on what they termed the Qualtagh, at Christmas or New Year's Day, to the houses of their more wealthy neighbours; some one of the company repeating in an audible voice the following rhyme:

'*Ollick ghennal erriu as blein feer vie,*
Seihll as slaynt da'n slane lught thie;
Bea as gennallys eu bio ry-cheilley,
Shee as graih eddyr mrane as deiney;
Cooid as cowryn, stock as stoyr,
Palchey phuddase, as skaddan dy-liooar;
Arran as caashey, eeym as roayrt;
Baase, myr lugh, ayns uhllin ny soalt;
Cadley sauchey tra vees shiu ny lhie,
As feeackle y jargan, nagh bee dy mie.'

It may be loosely translated as follows:

'A merry Christmas, a happy new year,
Long life and health to the household here.
(79) Food and mirth to you dwelling together,
Peace and love to all, men and women;
Wealth and distinction, stock and store,
Potatoes enough, and herrings galore;
Bread and cheese, butter and plenty,
Death, like a mouse, in a barn or haggard;
Sleep in safety while down you lie,
And the flea's tooth—may it not badly bite.'

At present New Year's Day is the time when the *qualtagh* is of general interest, and in this case he is practically the first person one sees (besides the members of one's own household) on the morning of that day, whether that person meets one out of doors or comes to one's house. The following is what I have learnt by inquiry as to the *qualtagh*: all are agreed that he must not be a woman or girl, and that he must not be *spaagagh* or splay-footed, while a woman from the parish of Marown told me that he must not have red hair. The prevalent belief; however, is that he should be a dark-haired man or boy, and it is of no consequence how ugly his appearance may be, provided he be black-haired. However, I was told by one man in Rushen that the *qualtagh* need not be blackhaired: he must be a man or boy. But this less restricted view is not the one held in the central and northern parts of the Island, so far as I could ascertain. An English lady living in the neighbourhood of Castletown told me that her son, whom I know to be, like his mother, a pronounced blond, not being aware what consequences might be associated with his visit, called at a house in Castletown on the morning of New Year's Day, and he chanced to be the *qualtagh*. The mistress of the house was horrified, and expressed her anticipation of misfortunes to the English lady; and as it happened that one of the children of the house died in the course of the year, the English lady has heard of it since. Naturally the association of these events are not pleasant to her; but, so far as I can remember, they date only some eight or nine years ago. (80) The Society may have published information on this subject, but I am at present utterly ignorant what importance the *qualtagh* may have enjoyed in other parts of the British Isles. As to Wales, I can only recall, that, when I was a very small boy, I used to be sent very early on New Year's morning to call on an old uncle of mine, because, as I was told, I should be certain to receive a *calennig* or a calendary gift from him, but on no account would my sister be allowed to go, as he would only see a boy on such an occasion as that. I do not recollect anything being said as to the colour of one's hair or the shape of one's foot; but that sort of negative evidence is of very little value, as the *qualtagh* was fast passing out of consideration.

The preference here given to a boy over a girl looks like one of the widely-spread superstitions which rule

against the fair sex; but, as to the colour of the hair, I should be predisposed to think that it possibly rests on racial antipathy, long ago forgotten; for it may perhaps be regarded as going back to a time when the dark-haired race reckoned the Aryan of fair complexion as his natural enemy, the very sight of whom brought with it thoughts calculated to make him unhappy and despondent. If this idea prove to be approximately correct, one might suggest that the racial distinction in question referred to the struggles between the inhabitants of Man and their Scandinavian conquerors; but to my thinking it is just as likely that it goes far further back.

Lastly, what is one to say with regard to the *spaagagh* or splay-footed person, now more usually defined as flatfooted or having no instep? I have heard it said in the south of the Island that it is unlucky to meet a *spaagagh* in the morning at any time of the year, and not on New Year's Day alone; but this does not help us in the attempt to find the genesis of this belief. If it were said that it was unlucky to meet a deformed person, it would look somewhat more natural; but why fix on the flat-footed (81) especially? For my part I have not been trained to distinguish flat-footed people, so I do not recollect noticing any in the Isle of Man; but, granting there may be a small proportion of such people in the Island, does it not seem to you strange that they should have their importance so magnified as this superstition would seem to do? I must confess that I cannot understand it, unless we have here also some supposed racial characteristic, let us say greatly exaggerated. To explain myself I should put it that the non-Aryan aborigines were a small people of great agility and nimbleness, and that their Aryan conquerors moved more slowly and deliberately, whence the former, of springier movements, might come to nickname the latter the flat-feet. It is even conceivable that there was some amount of foundation for it in fact. If I might speak from my own experience, I might mention a difficulty I have often had with shoes of English make, namely, that I have always found them, unless made to my measure, apt to have their instep too low for me. It has never occurred to me to buy ready-made shoes in France or Germany, but I know a lady as Welsh as myself who has often bought shoes in France, and her experience is, that it is much easier for her to get shoes there to fit her than in England, and for the very reason which I have already suggested, namely, that the instep in English shoes is lower than in French ones. These two instances do not warrant an induction that the Celts are higher in the instep than Teutons, and that they have inherited that characteristic from the non-Aryan element in their ancestry; but they will do to suggest a question, and that is all I want: Are the descendants of the non-Aryan aborigines of these islands proportionately higher in the instep than those of more purely Aryan descent?

There is one other question which I should like to ask before leaving the *qualtagh* , namely, as to the relation of the custom of New Year's gifts to the belief (82) in the *qualtagh*. I have heard it related in the Isle of Man that women have been known to keep indoors on New Year's Day until the *qualtagh* comes, which sometimes means their being prisoners for the greater part of the day, in order to avoid the risk of first meeting one who is not of the right sex and complexion. On the other hand, when the *qualtagh* is of the right description, considerable fuss is made of him; to say the least, he has to accept food and drink, possibly more permanent gifts. Thus a tall, black-haired native of Kirk Michael described to me how he chanced on New Year's Day years ago to turn into a lonely cottage in order to light his pipe, and how he found he was the *qualtagh* : he had to sit down to have food, and when he went away it was with a present and the blessings of the family. Now New Year's Day is the time for gifts in Wales, as shown by the name for them, *calennig*, which is derived from *calan*, the Welsh form of the Latin *calendae*, New Year's Day being in Welsh *Y Calan*, 'the Calends.' The same is the day for gifts in Scotland and in Ireland, except in so far as Christmasboxes have been making inroads from England; I need not add that the Jour de l'An is the day for gifts also in France. My question then is this: Is there any connection of origin between the institution of New Year's Day gifts and the belief in a *qualtagh?*

Now that it has been indicated what sort of a *qualtagh* it is unlucky to have, I may as well proceed to mention the other things which I have heard treated as unlucky in the Island. Some of them scarcely require to be noticed, as there is nothing specially Manx about them, such as the belief that it is unlucky to have the first glimpse of the new moon through glass. That is a superstition which is, I believe, widely spread, and, among other countries, it is quite familiar in Wales. It is also believed in Man, as it used to be in Wales and Ireland, that it is unlucky to disturb antiquities, especially old burial-places and old churches. (83) This superstition is unfortunately fast passing away in all three countries, but you still hear of it, especially in the Isle of Man, after some mischief has been done. Thus a good Manx scholar told me how a relative of his in the Ronnag, a small valley near South Barrule, had carted the earth from an old burial-ground on his farm and used it as manure for his fields, and how his beasts died afterwards. The narrator said he did not know whether there was any truth in it, but everybody believed that it was the reason why the cattle died; and so did the farmer himself at last: so he desisted from completing his disturbance of the

old site. It is possibly for a similar reason that a house in ruins is seldom pulled down and the materials used for other buildings: where that has been done misfortunes have ensued: at any rate, I have heard it said more than once. I ought to have stated that the nondisturbance of antiquities in the Island is quite consistent with their being now and then shamefully neglected as elsewhere: this is now met by an excellent statute recently enacted by the House of Keys for the preservation of the public monuments in the Island.

Of the other and more purely Manx superstitions I may mention one which obtains among the Peel fishermen of the present day: no boat is willing to be third in the order of sailing out from Peel harbour to the fisheries. So it sometimes happens that after two boats have departed, the others remain watching each other for days, each hoping that somebody else may be reckless enough to break through the invisible barrier of 'bad luck.' I have often asked for an explanation of this superstition, but the only intelligible answer I have had was that it has been observed that the third boat has done badly several years in succession; but I am unable to ascertain how far that represents a fact. Another of the unlucky things is to have a white stone in the boat, even in the ballast, and for that I never could get any explanation at all; but there is no doubt as to the fact of this superstition, and I may illustrate (84) it from the case of a clergyman's son on the west side, who took it into his head to go out with some fishermen several days in succession. They chanced to be unsuccessful each time, and they gave their Jonah the nickname of *Clagh Vane* or 'White Stone.' Here I may mention a fact which I do not know where else to put, namely, that a fisherman on his way in the morning to the fishing, and chancing to pass by the cottage of another fisherman who is not on friendly terms with him, will pluck a straw from the thatch of the latter's dwelling. Thereby he is supposed to rob him of luck in the fishing for that day. One would expect to learn that the straw from the thatch served as the subject of an incantation directed against the owner of the thatch, but I have never heard anything suggested to that effect: so I conclude that the plucking of the straw is only a partial survival of what was once a complete ritual for bewitching one's neighbour.

Owing to my ignorance as to the superstitions of other fishermen than those of the Isle of Man, I will not attempt to classify the remaining instances to be mentioned, such as the unluckiness of mentioning a horse or a mouse on board a fishing-boat: I seem, however, to have heard of similar taboos among Scotch fishermen. Novices in the Manx fisheries have to learn not to point to anything with one finger: they have to point with the whole hand or not at all. Whether the Manx are alone in thinking it unlucky to lend salt from one boat to another when they are engaged in the fishing, I know not: such lending would probably be inconvenient, but why it should be unlucky, as they believe it to be, does not appear. The first of May is a day on which it is unlucky to lend anything, and especially to give anyone fire. This looks as if it pointed back to some Druidic custom of lighting all fires at that time from a sacred hearth, but, so far as is known, this only took place at the beginning of the other half-year (85) namely, Allhallows, called in Manx *Laa'll mooar ny Saintsh*, 'the Day of the great Feast of the Saints.'

Lastly, I may mention that it is unlucky to say that you are very well: at any rate, I infer that it is regarded so, as you will never get a Manxman to say that he is *feer vie*, 'very well.' He usually admits that he is 'middling'; and if by any chance he risks a stronger adjective, he hastens to qualify it by adding 'now' or 'just now,' with an emphasis indicative of his anxiety not to say too much. His habits of speech point back to a time when the Manx mind was dominated by the fear of awaking malignant influences in the spirit-world around him. This has had the effect of giving the Manx peasant's character a tinge of reserve and suspicion, which makes it difficult to gain his confidence: his acquaintance has, therefore, to be cultivated for some time before you can say that you know the workings of his heart. The pagan belief in a Nemesis has doubtless passed away but not without materially affecting the Manx idea of a personal devil. Ever since the first allusion made in my presence by Manxmen to the devil, I have been more and more deeply impressed that the Manx devil is a much more formidable being than Englishmen or Welshmen picture him. He is a graver and, if I may say so, a more respectable being, allowing no liberties to be taken with his name, so you had better not call him a Devil, the Evil One, or like names, for his proper designation is *Noid ny Hanmey*, 'the Enemy of the Soul,' and in ordinary Anglo-Manx conversation he is commonly called 'the Enemy of Souls.' The Manx are, as a rule, a sober people, and highly religious; as regards their theological views, they are mostly members of the Church of England or Wesleyan Methodists, or else both, which is by no means unusual. Religious phrases are not rare in their ordinary conversation; in fact, they struck me as being of more frequent occurrence than in Wales, even the Wales of my boyhood; and here and (86) there this fondness for religious phraseology has left its traces on the native vocabulary. Take, for example, the word for 'anybody, a person, or human being,' which Cregeen writes *py'agh* or *p'agh*: he rightly regards it as the colloquial pronunciation of *peccagh*, 'a sinner.' So, when one knocks at a Manx door and calls out, '*Vel p'agh sthie?*' he strictly speaking asks, 'Is there any sinner indoors?' The question has,

however, been explained to me, with unconscious irony, as properly meaning 'Is there any Christian indoors?' and care is now taken in reading to pronounce the consonants of the word *peccagh*, 'sinner,' so as to distinguish it from the word for 'anybody': but the identity of origin is unmistakable.

Lastly, the fact that a curse is a species of prayer, to wit, a prayer for evil to follow, is well exemplified in Manx by the same words *gwee*[27] and *gweeaghyn* meaning both kinds of prayer. Thus I found myself stumbling several times, in reading through the Psalms in Manx, from not bearing in mind the sinister meaning of these words; for example, in Ps. xiv, 6, where we have *Ta 'n beeal oc lane dy ghweeaghyn as dy herriuid*, which I mechanically construed to mean 'Their mouth is full of praying and bitterness,' instead of 'cursing and bitterness'; and so in other cases, such as Ps. x, 7, and CIX, 27.

It occurred to me on various occasions to make inquiries as to the attitude of religious Manxmen towards witchcraft and the charmer's vocation. Nobody, so far as I know, accuses them of favouring witchcraft in any way whatsoever; but I have heard it distinctly stated that the most religious men are they who have most confidence in charmers and their charms; and a lay preacher whom I know has been mentioned to me as now and then doing a little charming in cases of danger or pressing need. On the whole, I think the charge against religious people of (87) consulting charmers is exaggerated; but I believe that recourse to the charmer is more usual and more openly had than, for example, in Wales, where those who consult a *dyn hyspys* or 'wise man' have to do it secretly, and at the risk of being expelled by their co-religionists from the *Seiet* or 'Society.' There is somewhat in the atmosphere of Man to remind one rather of the Wales of a past generation, the Wales of the Revd Edmund Jones, author of a *Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the County of Monmouth and the Principality of Wales* (Newport, 1813), a book which its author tells us was 'designed to confute and to prevent the infidelity of denying the being and apparition of spirits, which tends to irreligion and atheism.' That little volume not only deserves to be known to the Psychical Society, but it might be consulted with a certain amount of advantage by folk-lorists.

The Manx peasantry are perhaps the most independent and prosperous in the British Isles; but their position geographically and politically has been favourable to the continuance of ideas not quite up to the level of the latest papers on Darwinism and Evolution read at our Church Congresses in this country. This you may say is here wide of the mark; but, after giving you in my first paper specimens of rather ancient superstitions as recently known in the Island, it is but right that you should have an idea of the surroundings in which they have lingered into modern times. Perhaps nothing will better serve to bring this home to your minds than the fact, for which there is abundant evidence, that old people still living remember men and women clad in white sheets doing penance publicly in the churches of Man. Some of the penitents have only been dead some six or seven years, nay, it is possible, for anything I know, that one or two may be still alive. This seems to us in this country to belong, so to say, to ancient history, and it transports us to a state of things which we find it hard to realise. The lapse of years has brought about profounder changes in our greater Isle of (88) Britain than in the smaller Isle of Man; and we, failing ourselves to escape the pervading influences of those profounder changes, become an instance of the comprehensive truth of the words,

Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis

J. RHYS

NOTES

[1] For the text see the Oxford edition of the *Mabinogion*, pp. 193–4, and for comparisons of the incident see Nutt's *Holy Grail*, p. 154 *et seq.*; and Rhys' *Arthurian Legend,* pp. 75–6.

[2] The spelling there used is *phynnodderee*, to the perversity of which Cregeen calls attention in his *Dictionary*.

[3] I am inclined to think that the first part of the word *fenodyree* is not *fynney*, the Manx word for 'hair,' but the Scandinavian word which survives in the Swedish *fjun*, 'down.' Thus *fjun-hosur* (for the *fjun-hosa* suggested by analogy) would explain the word *fenodyree* except its final *ee*, which is obscure. Compare also the magic breeks called *finn-brækr* (see Vigfusson's *Dictionary* s.v. *finnr*), to which Mr Plummer kindly calls my attention.

[4] See Windisch's *Irische Grammatik*, p. 120.

[5] The Manx word for the rowan-tree, incorrectly called a mountain ash, is *cuirn*, which is in Irish *caorththainn,* Scotch Gaelic *caorunn*; but in Welsh books it is *cerddin*, singular *cerddinen*, and in the spoken language mostly *cerdin*, *cerding*, singular *cerdingen*. This variation seems to indicate that these words have been borrowed by the Welsh from a Goidelic source; but the berry is known in Wales by the native name of *criafol*, from which the wood is frequently called, especially in North Wales, *coed criafol*, singular *coeden griafol*.

[6] I am sorry to say that it never occurred to me to ask whether the shooting was done with such modern things as guns. But Mr Moore, to whom I have submitted the proof-sheets of this paper, assures me that it is always understood to be bows and arrows, not guns.

[7] Edited by Oswald Cockayne for the Master of the Rolls (London, 1864–6); see more especially vol. ii, pp. 156, 157; 290, 291; 401; vol. iii, pp. 54 and 55.

[8] Mr Moore is not familiar with this term, but I heard it at Surby, in the South.

[9] See the Stokes-O'Donovan edition of Cormac (Calcutta, 1868), pp. 19, 23.

[10] Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, xi, 620; Pennant's *Tour in Scotland in 1769* (3rd edition, Warrington, 1774, i, 97, 186, 291); Thomas Stephens' *Gododin*, pp. 124–6; and Dr Murray in the *New English Dictionary*, s.v. *Beltane*.

[11] In my Hibbert Lectures on *Celtic Heathendom*, pp. 517–21.

[12] As to the Thargelia and Delia, see Preller's *Griechische Mythologie*, i, 209–10, and A. Mommsen's *Heortologie*, pp. 414–25.

[13] It is my impression that it is crowned with a small tumulus, and that it forms the highest ground in Jurby, which was once an island by itself. The one between Ramsey and Bride is also probably the highest point of the range. But these are questions which I should like to see further examined, say in the pages of the Manx Journal, edited by Mr P.M.C. Kermode, the *Lioar Manninagh*.

[14] *Cronk yn Irree Laa* is the name as it is used by all Manxmen whose pronunciation has not been tampered with by antiquarians. To convey the other meaning, referring to the day-watch, the name would have to be *Cronk ny Harrey Laa*; in fact, a part of the Howe in the south of the Island is called *Cronk ny Harrey*, 'the Hill of the Watch.' Mr Moore tells me that the Jurby *Cronk* was one of the eminences for 'Watch and Ward'; but he is now of opinion that the high mountain of Cronk yn Irree Laa in the South was not. As to the duty of the inhabitants to keep 'Watch and Ward' over the island, see the passage concerning it extracted from the Manx Statutes (vol. i, p. 65), by Mr Moore in his Manx *Surnames*, pp. 182–83; also my preface to the same work, pp. v–viii.

[15] See the *New English Dictionary*, s.v. *Alllhallows*.

[16] This comes near the pronunciation usual in Roxburghshire and the South of Scotland generally, which is, as Dr Murray informs me, *Hunganay* without the *m* occurring in the other forms to be men- tioned presently. But so far as I have been able to find, the Manx pronunciation is now *Hob dy naa*, which I have heard in theNorth, but *Hob ju naa* is the prevalent form in the South.

[17] See my *Hilbert Lectures*, pp. 514–5.

[18] I am indebted to Mr Elton, M.P., for references on this subject to Hazlitt's edition of *Brand's Popular Antiquities*(London, 1870), i, 247–8, and Robert Bell's *Songs of the Peasantry* (London, 1857), pp. 186, 187, where the following is given as sung at Richmond in Yorkshire:

'To-night it is the New-Year's night, to-morrow is the day,
And we are come for our right, and for our ray,
As we used to do in old King Henry's day.
Sing, fellows, sing, Hagman-heigh.

'If you go to the bacon-flick, cut me a good bit;
Cut, cut and low, beware of your maw;
Cut, cut and round, beware of your thumb,
That me and my merry men may have some.
Sing, etc.

'If you go to the black-ark bring me X mark;
Ten mark, ten pound, throw it down upon the ground,
That me and my merry men may have some.
Sing, etc.'

[19] On being asked, after reading this paper, who was supposed to make the footmarks in the ashes, I had to confess that I had been careless enough never to have asked the question. I have referred it to Mr Moore, who informs me that nobody, as I expected, will venture on an explanation, by whom the foot-marks are made.

[20] This seems to imply the application of the same adjective, some time or other, to *clean* water and a *handsome* man, just as we speak in North Cardiganshire of *dwr glân*, 'pure water,' and *bachgen glân*, 'a handsome boy.'

[21] This is called in Phillips' Prayer-book *Lá nolick y biggy*, 'Little Nativity Day,' and *Lá ghian blieny*, 'The Day of the Year's End,' meaning of course the former, not the latter, end of the year.

[22] Here, again, I must appeal to Mr Kermode and Mr Moore.

[23] See my *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 514–5, and the *Brython* for 1859, pp. 20, 120.

[24] This has been touched upon in my *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 676; but to the reasons there briefly mentioned should be added the position allotted to intercalary months in the Norse calendar, namely, at the end of the summer, that is, as I think, at the end of the ancient Norse year.

[25] I say 'approximately,' as, more strictly speaking, the ordinary pronunciation is Sndaen, almost as one syllable, and from this arises a variant, which is sometimes written *Stondane*, while the latest English development, regardless of the accentuation of the Anglo-Manx form Santon (pronounced Santn), makes the parish into a St Ann's! For the evidence that it was the parish of a *St Sanctan* (or *Sanctagnus*), see Moore's *Surnames*, p. 209.

[26] Old-fashioned grammarians and dictionary makers are always delighted to handle Mrs Partington's broom: so Kelly thinks he has done a fine thing by printing *guee*, 'prayer,' and *gwee*, 'cursing.'