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[6]

ODD CUSTOMS AN SUPERSTIUIONS

ZUR,—In old times the Sunn, Mune, an Stars was supposed to rule the destinys ov the inhabitants ov this world, an among zom there is still a notion that thay du in the present day. How minny times hev es yerd it zed, "He was bawrn hunder a honlucy planet," and the mune especially at the present time is beleaved tu affect minny things. Now I shant try tu pruve that it issent zo; treu tis a towld by thay that be older, an that be thort tu naw better. The anshents yused tu hold a festival the fust day ov ivery lunimar month tu celebrate the benefits bestowed durin the past wan, an I spose tu ax for further favours, zomthin in the manner ov "For what we are about to recayve make us thankful." In zom plases durin our time, the custom hath prevayld tu bless the new mune, an tu bow in adoration.

But tu com tu the present, can it be denyd that thare is a wide spread beleif in the influence ov the mune.

It is considered honlucky tu zee the new mune vor the fust time with empty hands, or awver the left shoulder, but a gude sine if yu hev zilver in yer hand, or fust climpse en awver the right shoulder. Again hew hath not yerd awver and awver ov the affects ov

this luminary pon the weather an in stormy times we often yer it a zed, "It want be no better avaur the change ov the mune." In fact the wise wans zay no important hingagement shude be undertook wen the mune is "batin" but only wen he is grawin. This is supposed to affect the flesh ov a pig zo much that lots wont have wan killed pon the wanin, as thay zay the mayt will shrink instead ov plummin up.

It is awlso thort tu influence the destiny's ov luvvers tu a gurt extent, an if a yong man is in love wey a young lady an hur is rather "offish" if he can only induce hur tu take a stroll ov a munelight night, the probability is that he will succeed in winning hur affection. It is awlso considered an omen ov ill luck tu be marryd but in the fust quarters ov the mune.

Last but not layst who hathen a yerd ov the effects ov this orb upon the mind ov a man, and thay that be a bit "titched" be supposed tu be wuss at sartin stages or ages of the mune.

I suppose this was the origin ov "lunacy" as it was thort tu be a lunar malady, that is, caused by the mune.

How many superstitions be thare still lingerin abowt in the minds ov the vokes, an espeshally zo in connection way churches an services therein.

A bride shude not be married in a wite satin dress. Ivery wan meetin a weddin party gwain to Church shude go back a vue steps in company way mun, wich is aykil tu wishin un gue luck. A dayl ov importance is attached to the following lines.

"Blessed is the bride that the sun shines on. Blessed is the corpse that the rain falls on." All fast days an Fridays be honlucky days vor be marry'd upon.

In olden times the ringin ov bells was supposed (wither ritely or rongly I cant zay) tu drive the Devil away.

An it was considered he wud niver com ware thare was a cross zet up, so in moast churches thare is pon wan end a cross, wile at the tether is the tower way the bells, an wan wud think he wud niver com thare.

The late Passon Hawker was a strong beeleever in the power ov crosses, zo much zo that he had wan put pon the end ov his barn, as he zed, tu keep the devil away, but the building was in a terreble ruff place neer the cliff, an wan day the wind take off the slates, cross an awl, an zom wan joked en abowt it, wen he replied that Satan was in zich a rage tu zee the cross thare that he got up a storm tu carry it away. Ware 'twas zo

or no I cant zay, but he had awlways got a hanser vor ivery body. Wen he was bildin the Vicarage House at Morwenstow tu have a deycent house tu live in, zom wan zed tu en, "Fules bild houses an wise men live in mun." Iss, retorted the passon, an thare is anether proverb, "Wise men make proverbs, and fules yuse min." Anether time, wen he was bildin the day skule, wich he did moastly owt ov his own pocket, he axed a man, that he considered hoft tu du zomthing towards it, vor a subscription, wen the man zed, "Hot benefit willit be tu me?" Mr. Hawker told en it wud benefit posterity. He vurder replyd, "Posterity never dude nort vor me," an, instantly ansered the Passon, "Ancestry has done extremely little."

To return tu the Church, be it observed, the font is put in the end opposet the chancel, or "holy place," becaws the devil is supposed to come in in the cheeld that is brawt tu be crissened, an the cusom yused tu prevayl in Welcombe tu awpen the back or norther dore, wen the baptism was on, and Mr. Hawker yused tu march up zo var as the dore, striding along way his long say butes, an jist as he got strite vrom the dore he wud zay, "We take this child," and zo on. Then the devil wud go owt to this dore, rite away tu the north, as that is the land ov evil spirits. In Welcombe Churchyard, as in minny others, thare is no wan a berryd the back zide ov the Church. I have yerd that they yused to berry little babys there that hadden bin Chrissened. Zom places they berry vokes that have a killed therzels the north zide ov the church, but wan time they berryd min neer your crossways, and wud drive a stake dru the boddy vor keep min down, but vor awl that, ghosts yused tu be often zeed by crossways, at layst I've yerd zo.

I was spaykin ov puttin crosses pon the churches vor keep the devil owt, an 'twas thorth they wud niver git in the chancel, but I spose they uss be afeered they will, as theyve tuke, in zom places, tu havin crosses pon the communion tabel, but I doant naw ware thare is inny verty in it or no, moar than thare is in zingers an thay warin wite surplices as a toke ov purity, but I take it that 'tis often jist like a wited sepulchre, that luketh very well owtzide, but 'tis dirty in under. Wy I naw zom ov they hot ware em that will sware in a minnit, and aiven wuss than that. I doant zee the gude ov coverin auver a lot ov heeselness. 'Tis better swayp owt the caunders, aiven if it dithen luke zo well owtzide, vor then inny boddy dith naw ware he is. Then, warin ov crosses is jist the same tu my mind. I doant beleeve it keepeth the evil spirrits owt. If I thort it wud, I'd git wan an ware. I beg vor tellee, zur, that I've had a Imperial Dictionary, wich cost a lot ov

munny, an I daresay if I towld my wive how much it stude hur wud think I was extravagant, but tis, arter awl, but jist the figger ov a nu bunnet, an quite as yuseful.

Yours truly,

R. GILES.

Welcombe, Nov. 20th, 1886.

"ROGER GILES" REPLIES TO "AMICUS."

P.S.—I raut the above letter avaur the *Journal* came owt, wherein was a query about the same subject that I had referred to, viz, the haupenin the norther dore in Welcombe Church wen the renouncin of the devil tuke place durin a crissenin.

In anser, let me zay that I doant think it probable that thare was iver a rubrick, directin zitch a thing tu be dude, but would rather think it tu be a relique ov haythin mythology, for the anshents beleeved that the "north", wareiver that may be, was inhabited an ruled by evil genii or demons, an zo probably the evil spirit wich is supposed tu be in the cheeld, was banished tu his own land. Zitch is the theory that I've yerd, but no relyabel authority vor it. The natives ov North America yused tu think thares a evil spirit away up zomware beyond thare country, an zom ov em formerly payd homage tu en tu try tu keep his gude will.

I spose the owld practis ov aupenin the dore durin crissening is abolished now, as I obsarve that the library bookcase is plased agin it.

When I was a yungster the chaps wud play raselin owt the back zide of the church durin prare time, thus pruvn the truth ov the lines.

"Idle men an boys are found
Standing on the devil's ground;
He will find them work to do,
He will pay their wages too."

In different places different customs prevail. In Okehampton, vor hinstans, funerals awlways go intu wan dore an crissenin partys intu the tether, as thay zay the baby will die if it was carryd in dru the same dore as a corpse is.

I beleeve there is jist the same verty in it awl as thare is in the followin charm, that I
wud recommend tu inny maydens that be timid wen owt arter nite—

If ye peer tu be affrited,
Wen ye are (by chance) benited,
In yer pocket vor a trist,
Carry nothin but a crist,
Vor that holy peece ov bred,
Charms the danger an the dred.