

WILLIAM BOTTRELL

TRADITIONS AND
HEARTHSIDE STORIES
OF WEST CORNWALL,
SECOND SERIES

William Bottrell

**Traditions and Hearthsides Stories
of West Cornwall, Second Series**

«Public Domain»

Bottrell W.

Traditions and Hearthsides Stories of West Cornwall, Second Series /
W. Bottrell — «Public Domain»,

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William Bottrell
Traditions and Hearthside Stories
of West Cornwall, Second Series

*"Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
Legend and vision, prophecy and sign."*

Scott.

DUFFY AND THE DEVIL

AN OLD CHRISTMAS PLAY

Part First

Open your doors, and let me in,
I hope your favours I shall win;
Whether I rise, or whether I fall,
I'll do my best to please you all.

Christmas Play of St. George and the Dragon.

ASSOCIATED with Trove and the ancient family who lived, for many generations, in that pleasant place, there is a tradition that one old Squire Lovell wedded a poor girl solely because he believed her to be the best spinster and knitster in Buryan; but that all the fine stockings and other knitted garments with which she provided her husband were made by a devil. This droll formed the subject of an old Guise-dance (Christmas Play) which is all but forgotten: yet, in our youth, we have heard a few scenes rehearsed, which may be interesting as an example of a primitive drama of West Penwith, that may have succeeded, or been contemporary with, the miracle plays which, about three centuries ago, were acted in the Plan-an-gwarre, St. Just, and at the Church-town cross in most other western parishes. This uncouth piece shows something of the rude and simple humour of old times, when people were quite as innocent, though less fastidious, than in our days.

Great part of the dialogue appears to have been improvised, as the actor's fancy dictated. Yet there were some portions in rude verse, which would seem to have been handed down with little variation. Mimical gesticulation expressed much of the story; and when there was unwonted delay in change of scene, or any hitch in acting, in came the hobby-horse and its licenced rider, to keep the mirth from flagging. This saucy jester being privileged to say whatever he pleased, kept the audience in good humour by filling up such intervals with burlesque speeches on any matters which had taken place during the past year, that furnished fit subjects for ridicule.

A hall, farmhouse-kitchen, barn, or other out-house, served for a theatre, and a winnowing-sheet, suspended from key-beams or rafters, made a drop-curtain. Father Christmas, as chorus, described the scene, and told the company what characters the actors represented, unless they introduced themselves, as was frequently the case, like St. George, saying, "Here comes I, a champion bold," &c. He also narrated such parts as could not be acted conveniently.

Our simple actors got up their dresses in as old-fashioned and smart a style as they were able to contrive them, by begging or borrowing cast-off finery from the gentry round. Male players were often seen rigged in long-waisted, gay-coloured coats, having their skirts spread out with straw, instead of buckram or bombast, and resplendent with brass or tin buttons, large as crown pieces, and long ruffles at their breasts and wrists; their breeches were of blue, red, or buff, slashed, puffed, and tricked out with ribbons, tassels, and knee-buckles. Their hose was of any bright hue, to make a strong contrast to the small clothes. High-heeled shoes were adorned with shining buckles or bows of ribbons. Yet their greatest pride was displayed in steeple-crowned or cocked hats, surmounted with plumes and decked with streamers of gay ribbons.

Our rural actresses also wore steeple-crowns fixed high above their heads on pads; stiffen-bodied, long-waisted gowns, with bag skirts or long trains; ruffles hanging from their elbows, wide stiff ruffs round their necks; and any other remnants of old finery that they could contrive to get.

It is somewhat curious that in this old guise-dance, or story about Madame Lovell and the devil, several ladies belonging to noted families who lived in Buryan, two or three centuries ago, are represented as bringing their corn to Trove Mill to be ground and as serging (bolting) their flour themselves. The names of Mesdames Cardew, Pender, Noy, Trezilian, &c., are taken by these ladies, whose gossip forms a kind of by-play.

We now purpose to reproduce a few well-remembered scenes, as we have heard them related many years ago, by old folks of Buryan, and to simply tell the story as expressed by others. Yet, with a feeling somewhat akin to regret, we have curtailed some portions, in order to exclude whatever might, now, be regarded as indelicate: there is sufficient, however, preserved to carry on the story as far as it is likely to interest or amuse any but antiquarian students who might prefer, with all its blemishes, an unmutated picture of such "merrie disports" as were usual at Christmas-tide with our simple-honest forefathers.

Characters: —

Squire Lovell, *of Trove.*

Duffy, *a poor girl, who became Madame Lovell.*

Huey Lenine, *Duffy's lover.*

Jenny Chygwin, *Duffy's stepmother.*

A Bucka-boo, or Devil.

Betty, *the witch of Trove Mill.*

Jone, *Squire Lovell's housekeeper.*

Several ladies and gentlemen, and witches.

Scene i. – Father Christmas, with long hoary hair and beard enters before the curtain, and says: – "Ladies and gentlemen, – Please to take it that we are in Buryan Church-town, in the cider-making time. Squire Lovell is come up to get help to gather in his apples. When the curtain rises you will see him at Jenny Chygwin's door."

Curtain raised. Squire Lovell is seen on his horse (a hobby horse); an old woman and a young woman scolding within.

Squire: – "Hullo! in there! Jenny, what's all the caperrouse with you and the maid, I'd like to know?"

Duffy rushes out, and round the stage, followed by old Jenny, her stepmother, who beats the girl with the skirt or kirtle of her gown, saying, "I will break every bone in her body; the lazy hussy is all the time out courseying, and corantan, with the boys. She will neither boil the porridge, knit nor spin."

Duffy runs to the Squire, saying "Don't e believe her, your honour. I do all the work, whilst she is drunk from morning till night, and my spinning and knitting is the best in Church-town. Your stockings are nothing so fine as I can make."

Squire: – "Stop beating the maid, Jenny, and choaking one with dust from the skirt of thy old swing-tail gown. And, Duffy, as thou canst spin and knit so well, come down to Trove and help my old Jone, who is blind on one eye and can't see much with the other, as any one may know by looking at the bad darns in my stocking and patches on my breeches. Come away, on to the heaping-stock. Jump up: you can ride down behind me without pillion or pad."

Squire rides off: Duffy follows.

Jenny: – "Aye, go thee ways with the old bucca, and good riddance of bad rummage."

(Curtain drops.)

Scene ii. At Squire Lovell's door. – Squire on Horseback: Duffy standing beside him.

Squire calls: – "Jone, come here and take in Duffy Chygwin, who is come down to help thee knit and spin, give her some bread and cheese, and beer: dost thou hear?"

Squire rides off.

Jone comes out, and says: – "Oh, Duffy, my dear, I am glad to see thee here, for I want help sorely ever since that villain, Tom Chynance, put out the sight of my eye because I seed his thievish tricks in stealing from the standings one night in Penzance."

Jone tells us a long story which we omit, as it can be found in the first series of *Traditions and Hearth-side Stories of West Cornwall*.¹ She concludes by saying, "Now you needn't eat any bread and cheese, as dinner will be ready soon. You can go up to the loft whenever you please and card wool to spin in the afternoon."

Scene iii. – A room in which are seen fleeces of wool, a turn (spinning-wheel) and other appliances for spinning. Duffy seated, carding and making rolls of wool, which were placed in a cayer (winnowing sieve.) Over a while she rises and exclaims: —

"Cuss the carding and spinning! What the devil shall I do now the wool is carded, for I can neither spin nor knit, and the devil take such work for me."

From behind some wool comes a devil, in the shape of a black man, with half-cocked, squinting eyes, and the barbed or forked tip of his tail just seen below his coat skirts.

Devil: – "My dear, here I am, come at your call, ready to do all you wish for very little pay. Only agree to go with me at the end of three long years, and for all that time I'll do your spinning and knitting and everything else you wish for, and even then, if you can tell me my name at three times asking, you may go or stay, till another time."

Duffy: – "Well, I don't mind much: anything for a change. What ded'e say you were called?"

Devil, winking: – "You have only to prick your arm and draw blood to sign our agreement you know."

Duffy: – "My word is as good as my mark. Spin and knit for me if you will; and I'll have, that while, a courant in the orchard and a dance at the mill."

In leaving, Duffy says: – "Bolt the door, that no one may see who is doing the work."

"Stop and let me take the measure of your foot," says the devil, in stringing the wheel as handy as if he had been used to spinning all his life.

Father Christmas comes before the curtain and says: – "Good people, you see that Duffy wans't at all scared at the Bucca-boo's appearance, because in old times people were so much used to dealings with the devil – women especially – that they didn't mind him. Duffy is now gone off by the outer door and stair, to merrily pass the day; and old Jone, hearing a rumble all through the house, thinks her to be busy at work."

Duffy passes a great part of her time at Trove Mill, near at hand; where a crowd of women high and low, meet to take their turn at grinding, serging, &c. Whilst some work others tell stories, sing, or dance on the green, near which grew many old oaks, sycamores, and elms, in a place still called the rookery, a little above.

There was a great friendship between Duffy and Old Betty, who worked the mill, because this old dame, having long had strange dealings, saw at once, by a stocking Duffy pretended to be knitting, that a stitch was always down and that the work was none of hers.

In the evening, Duffy hearing, when she came in, the devil still spinning, thought she would see him at work and try to learn something. Looking through the latch-hole she saw what she took to be a woman, seated, and spinning with a small treddle-turn such as is used for spinning thread, and the wool-turn (with a wheel as large as that of a coach) put aside. When she looked around she knew that it was only the devil dressed in clothes like what she wore. He had on a loose bed-gown, petticoat, and towser (large coarse apron or wrapper,) with a nackan (large 'kerchief) thrown loosely over his head and shoulders. As Duffy entered, he turned around and said, "How are'e, my dear? Here I am, you see, busy at work for'e. See what I've already spun," he continued, pointing to a heap of balls in the corner, and skeins of yarn hanging on the walls.

¹ One-eyed Joan's Tale, p. 213.

She stood wondering, with eyes and mouth wide open, to see how handy the devil spun, and yet seemed to do nothing with his hands but pull off the yarn whilst his foot worked the treddle, and a ball dancing on the floor wound up itself!

"Arreah! faix," said Duffy, "I should have taken 'e for a woman if I hadn't chanced to spy your cloven foot, and your tail hanging down, and I don't much admire 'e in petticoats."

"There's good reason for wearing them, however," replied he; "besides, they are handy for such work, and if you will come here on Saturday night you will find, under that black fleece, ever so many pairs of stockings, both for you and the squire. I know his measure, and see if I don't well fit both of ye. So now good night."

Before she could wish him the same he disappeared, and all the yarn of his spinning along with him, leaving nothing to show that he had ever been there but a strong smell of brimstone.

Duffy didn't wait till dark night on Saturday, but went up to the wool-chamber about sunset. The Bucca-boo had just left work, and, having thrown off his petticoats, stood before her dressed like a sporting gentleman. He bowed as she entered and, handing her half-a-dozen pairs of stockings, all as strong as broadcloth and as fine as silk, said, "Excuse me, my dear, from staying a moment longer, as I must be away before Buryan bells are rung; else, some mishap may befall me."

"I wish 'e well till I see 'e again, and thank 'e, Mr. What-shall-I-call-'e," said Duffy, taking the stockings from his hand.

"You may call me captain," he replied, and vanished in a flash of lightning with a roar of thunder that shook the house.

On Sunday morning, when Squire Lovell was getting ready to don his velvet suit, that he might ride to church in grand state, as was his wont, Duffy brought him a pair of stockings suitable for the occasion.

"You see, master," said she, "that I havn't been idle, to spin and knit ye a pair of such long stockings in three days and the work so fine too." He put on the stockings, admired the beautiful knitting and good fit; then to show his delight at having such nice hose, the like of which were never on his legs before, he kissed Duffy again and again.

It was late when he reached Church-town. After churching, he stopped, as usual, to exchange greetings with other gentry of Buryan. Everyone admired his fine stockings. The ladies enquired how and where he procured them, saying there was no one in the parish who could do such good work; one and all declared they were fit for a king.

The fame of Squire Lovell's stockings drew crowds of people to Buryan church on the following Sunday. Old and young wanted to feel his legs. They couldn't be satisfied with looking, and so they continued to come from farther and farther, Sunday after Sunday. Church-town, for some weeks, was full of people like on a fair or feasten tide.

[It will be understood that great part of the foregoing, as well as the narrative parts of what follows, is related by Father Christmas, in his character of Chorus. He enters into details about the devil's wonderful spinning with a turn (spinning-wheel) of his own invention, that took wool from the fleece, without carding, and passed it into the spinster's hands all ready for knitting or weaving. He also related many other surprising exploits of these sable gentry, such as their church-building in out-of-the-way places, like that of St. Levan, of their amiable intercourse with witches, &c. Thus, as fancy dictated, he entertained his audience until the curtain rose.]

We next behold Squire Lovell's kitchen, with Jone, rather the worse for liquor, on a chimney-stool or bench in a broad and deep fire-place, such as used to be found in every West-country mansion, when wood and turf were the only fuel. She makes awful groans and screeches, till Duffy enters. Then Jone says "Oh Duffy, you can't think what cramps I have in my stomach and wind in my head, that's making it quite light. Help me over stairs to bed, and you wait up to give master his supper."

The old housekeeper is led off by Duffy, who soon returns and seats herself on the chimney-stool.

Then Huey Lenine enters and says: – "What cheer, Duffy, my dear? Now thee cus'nt (can'st not) say that the lanes are longer than the love, when I'm come to see thee with this rainy weather."

"Joy of my heart," said she, "come by the fire and dry thyself."

Huey sits on the outer end of the chimney-stool. After a long silence, the following dialogue takes place: —

Duffy: – "Why dos'nt thee speak to me than, Huey?"

Huey: – "What shall I say than?"

Duffy: – "Say thee dos't love me, to be sure."

Huey: – "So I do."

Duffy: – "That's a dear. – Brave pretty waistcoat on to you, than, Huey."

Huey: – "Cost pretty money too."

Duffy: – "What ded a cost than?"

Huey: – "Two and twenty pence, buttons and all."

Duffy: – "Take care of an than."

Huey: – "So I will."

Duffy: – "That's a dear."

Another prolonged silence.

Huey continues: – "I'm thinkan we will get married next turfey season if thee west (thou wilt.)"

Duffy: – "Why doesn't thee sit a little nearer than?"

Huey: – "Near enough I bla (believe.)"

Duffy: – "Nearer the fire, I mean. Well, I'll be married to thee any day, though thee art no beauty, to be sure."

Huey gets a little nearer.

Duffy, putting her hand on his face, "Thy face is as rough as Morvah Downs, that was ploughed and never harved (harrowed) they say; but I'll have thee for all that and fill up with putty all the pock-mark pits and seams; then paint them over and make thee as pretty as a new wheelbarrow."

The squire is heard outside calling his dogs. Duffy starts up in a fright, seizes a furze-prong, and says, "Master will be here in a minute, jump into the huccarner (wood-corner) and I'll cover thee up with the furze."

Huey hesitates.

Duffy: – "Then crawl into the oven: a little more baking will make thee no worse."

Huey gets into an oven, opening on to the fire-place and behind the chimney-stool, just as the Squire enters and calls out,

"Jone, take up the pie, if its ready or raw. I'm as hungry as a hound."

Duffy, rising to uncover a pie that was baking on the hearth, says, "Master, I have staid up to give ye your supper, because An Jone es gone to bed very bad with a cramp in her stomach and wind in her head, so she said."

"Why I heard thee talking when I came to the door, who was here then?" demanded the Squire.

"Only a great owl, master dear," she replied, "that fell down from the ivy-bush growing over the chimney and perched hissself there on the stool, with his great goggle eyes, and stood staring at me and blinkan like a fool. Then he cried Hoo! hoo! Tu-wit, tu-woo; and, when you opened the door, he flew up the chimney the same way he came down."

The Squire, satisfied with Duffy's explanation, advances, and puts his foot on the hearth-stone, looks at his legs, saying, "Duffy, my dear, these are the very best stockings I ever had in my life. I've been hunting all day, over moors and downs, through furze and thorns, among brambles and bogs, in the worst of weather, yet there isn't a scratch on my legs and they are as dry as if bound up in leather."

The Devil (supposed to be invisible) rises behind Duffy and grimaces at the Squire.

Duffy: – "I may as well tell 'e master that I shan't knit much more for 'e, because Huey Lenine and I have been courtan for a long time. We are thinkan to get married before winter, and then I shall have a man of my own to work for."

Squire: – "What! Huey Lenine! I'll break every bone in his carcass if he shows his face near the place. Why the devil is in it that a young skit like thee should have it in thy head to get married! Now I'll sit down a minute and talk reason with thee."

[The Squire sits close beside Duffy. The Devil tickles them with his tail. Huey is seen peeping from the oven.]

Squire: – "Give up thy courting with Huey Lenine,
And I'll dress thee in silks and satins fine."

Duffy: – "No I'll never have an old man, an old man like you,
Though you are Squire Lovell:
To my sweetheart I'll be constant and true,
Though he work all day with threshal and shovel."

The Devil tickles the Squire behind the ears. He sits nearer and places his arm round her waist.

Squire: – "Thou shalt have a silk gown all broider'd in gold,
Jewels and rings, with such other fine things
In the old oak chest, as thee did'st never behold."

Duffy: – "My sweetheart is young, lively, and strong,
With cheeks like a red rose;
But your time will not be long: —
You have very few teeth, and a blue-topped nose.
So keep your silks and keep your gold,
I'll never have a man so feeble and old."

Here the Devil tickles them both. The Squire hugs and kisses Duffy, who makes less and less resistance.

Squire: – "You shan't find me feeble, though I'm near sixty;
I'm stronger still than many a man of twenty."

Duffy: – "Your only son is now far away.
If he came home and found ye wed,
What think ye he would say?"

Squire: – "I hope he is already dead,
Or'll be kill'd in the wars some day,
If alive he shan't enter my door,
I'll give thee my land, with all my store,
Thou shalt ride to church behind me upon a new pavillion,
Smarter than Dame Pendar or Madam Trezillian."

Duffy: – "Dear master, hold your flattering tongue,
Nor think to deceive one so simple and young;

For I'm a poor maid, lowly born and bred;
With one so humble you could never wed.
Keep your distance, and none of your hugging;
You shall kiss me no more till you take me to church.
I'll never cry at Christmas for April fooling
Like a poor maid left in the lurch.
Look! the sand is all down and the pie burned black,
With the crust too hard for your colt's-teeth to crack:
So off to the hall and take your supper."

Duffy rises, takes up from the hearth a pie, which had been baking there, goes out with it, followed by the Squire and Devil dancing. Huey crawls from the oven, saying "Lack a day who can tell, now, what to make of a she-thing?" By the time he gets on his legs Duffy returns, and, assisted by the devil pushes him to doors, saying,

"Now betake thyself outside the door,
Nor show thy black face here any more;
Don't think I would wed a poor piljack like thee,
When I may have a Squire of high degree."

Duffy and the Devil dance till the Squire returns and joins in a three-handed reel, without seeing the Old One, who capers back into a dark corner at the pass of the dance, and comes close behind him at the pitch. *Curtain drops. – Thunder and lightning.*

The scene changes to Trove Mill, where a long gossip takes place over the new "nine days' wonder" of Squire Lovell having wedded Duffy for the sake of her knitting. Some say she will behave like most beggars put on horseback, and all the women agreed that they would rather be a young man's slave, and work their fingers to stumps, than be doomed to pass a weary time beside such an old withered stock; they should wish him dead and no help for it.

In the next, Duffy (now Madame Lovell) is beheld walking up and down her garden, or hall, decked out in a gown with a long train, hanging ruffles at her elbows, ruff of monstrous size round her neck, towering head-dress, high-heeled shoes, with bright buckles, earrings, necklace, fan, and all other accessories of old-fashioned finery. The bucca-boo is seen grinning, half-hidden, in the corner; whilst Madam walks she sings: —

"Now I have servants to come at my call,
As I walk in grand state through my hall,
Decked in silks and satins so fine:
But I grieve through the day,
And fret the long night away,
Thinking of my true-love, young Huey Lenine.

I weep through many a weary long hour,
As I sit all alone in my bower,
Where I do nothing but pine;
Whilst I grieve all the day,
And fret the long nights away,
In dreaming of my true-love, young Huey Lenine.

Would the devil but come at my call,

And take the old Squire – silks, satins, and all,
With jewels and rings so fine;
Then, merry and gay, I'd work through the day,
And cheerily pass the nights away,
Kissing my true-love, young Huey Lenine."

Part Second

"Refinement, too, that smoothen's all
O'er which it in the world hath pass'd,
Has been extended in its call,
And reach'd the devil, too, at last.
That Northern Phantom found no more can be,
Horns, tail, and claws, we now no longer see.

* * * * *

But with your like, when we the name can learn,
Your nature too we commonly discern."

Goethe's Faust.

Filimore's Translation.

IN a mill scene, after the Squire's marriage, there is a long dialogue, in rhyme, on "the cruel miseries to be endured" by both husband and wife, "when a young maid is wedded to an old man." This can not be given because much of it would now be regarded as indelicate.

In another scene, the Squire's man Jack, and Huey Lenine, discuss the same subject. This is also inadmissible for the same reason. We are reluctant to dismember this old piece, even by so much as may be deemed necessary by persons of fastidious taste, because students of ancient manners would doubtless prefer an unpruned version.

We shall give the remainder of the story as it may be gathered from the play, without dividing it into scenes. And indeed great part of it, for want of convenience in acting, was often recited by Father Christmas, in his character of Chorus. We also omit the mill scenes, as they afforded a kind of by-play, that had little or nothing to do with the main story. Whenever time was required for the principle personages to get ready, a bevy of women were brought on to gossip about old times and the past year's events, or they told stories, danced, or sung until their turn came to "serge their flour," (bolt their meal.)

Duffy complain'd to the kind old witch that she was very dissatisfied with her aged spouse. The old crone advised her to have patience and well feather her nest, that she might secure a youthful successor to Squire Lovell, who was'nt likely to trouble her long. Notwithstanding Madam's griefs, she kept the Bucca-boo to his work, so that all her chests and presses were filled with stockings, blankets, yarn and home-spun cloth; and her husband was clad, from top to toe, in devil-made garments. Squire Lovell, as was his wont, being away hunting every week-day, from dawn till dark, and the housekeeper and other servants hearing a constant rumbling throughout the house like the noise of a spinning-wheel, only varied by the clicking of cards, thought their mistress busy at work, when she spent great part of her time at the mill.

The stocking that Duffy made out to be knitting, but never finished, had always a stitch down. By that old Betty suspected her of having strange dealings as well as herself.

Though the time seemed long and wearisome to Madam, the term for which the devil engaged to serve her drew near its end: yet she was ignorant as ever of his true name, and gave herself but little concern on that account, thinking it might be just as well to go with a devil, who was so very

obliging, as to remain with old Squire Lovell; for all the time this Bucca-boo became, as it were, her slave, he was well-behaved and never gave her the least reason to complain of his conduct.

Yet when she walked through Trove orchards, and saw the apple-trees weighed down with ripe fruit, she had some misgivings, lest her next abode might be less pleasant than Trove, besides, she thought that the devil, like most men, might be very civil in courtship but behave himself quite otherwise when he had her in his power.

Madam being much perplexed made her troubles known to Betty, the witch, who, cunning woman as she was, had'nt found out the particulars of the bargain. She was'nt much surprised, however, when Duffy told her, because she knew that women and devils were capable of doing extraordinary things. Betty was somewhat troubled, but not much; for in old times, white-witches could perform almost incredible feats, by having devils and other spirits under their command. So, after twirling her thumbs a minute, and thinking what to do, she said, "Duffy, my dear, cheer up! I would'nt like for 'e to be taken away before me. Now do what I advise 'e, and it is much to me if we don't find 'e a way to fool this young devil yet, he is but a green one. So, to-morrow evening, soon after sunset, bring me down a black jack of your oldest and strongest beer. But before that, be sure you get the Squire to go hare-hunting. Fool him with the old story, or any thing else to make him go. Wait up till he comes back, and note well what he may say. Go 'e home now: ask me no questions; but mind and do what I have told 'e!"

Next morning, the Squire noticed that his wife ate no breakfast, and, at dinner, observing that she seemed very sour and sad, and appeared to loath everything on the board, he said,

"My dear wife, how is it that you have been so melancholy of late? What is the matter with 'e? Don't I do as much to comfort 'e as any man can? If there's anything to be had, for love or money, you shall have it. You don't appear to have much appetite, honey; what would 'e like to eat?"

"I could just pick the head of a hare, if I had it," she replied; "I am longing for hare-pie; but you have been so busy about the harvest that we havn't had one for weeks, and I'm feeling so queer that have one I must or the consequences will be awful to the babe unborn, and to you as well."

"You know dear," said the Squire, "that harvest is late. We have still much corn to get into the mowhay. Besides, it's full time that all should be ready for cider-making. I would do my best to catch a hare if that would please ye," he continued, over a bit; "but dont 'e think that the old story about the child, that according to your fancy has been coming to and again for the last three years, is ever going to fool me to the neglect of corn and apples."

"Hard-hearted, unbelieving wretch," replied she, "you don't deserve to be the father of my child. Know, to your shame, that innocent virgins, when first wedded are often deceived with false hopes. Now would 'e have our cheeld disfigured for the sake of such little good as you are among the harvest people? An old man's bantling," she continued, "is mostly a wisht and wizened-looking object! Would 'e like to see ours with a face like a hare besides an ugly nose, and a mouth from ear to ear? Go, do, like a dear, and stay my longing; but in the evening, after croust (afternoon refreshment), will be time enow for 'e to start, that we may have one for dinner to-morrow."

With coaxing, scolding, and hopes of paternal joys, she, at length prevailed.

Soon after the Squire and his dogs were out of sight, Duffy drew about a gallon of beer, that was many years old, into a strong leather jack, made small at the mouth like a jar, for convenience in carrying, and took it down to the mill. Betty, after trying the liquor, said it would do, and told Duffy to go home, make the devil work till dark, wait up for her husband, and keep her ears open to all he might say. When nearly dark and a few stars glimmered, Betty turned the water from the mill-wheel and closed the flushet. Then, having donned her steeple-crowned hat and red cloak, she fastened the jack of beer to one end of a "giss" (hempen girth), and her "crowd" to the other, slung them across her shoulder, under her cloak, took a black-thorn stick, closed her door, and away she went over the hill. She went up the "Bottom" (glen) between Trove and Boleigh, till she passed the Fuggo Hole, and there, amongst the thickets, she disappeared! All this Bottom was well-wooded,

and the upper part thickly covered with hazel, thorn, and elder; and a tangled undergrowth of briars, brambles, and furze, surrounded a wood called the Grambler Grove. Few persons liked to pass near this place, because strange noises were heard, and fires often seen within it by night, when no one would venture near the place.

Duffy waited up many hours after the servants had gone to bed, in great impatience for her husband's return. Her fears and doubts increasing, she remained seated in the kitchen chimney-corner, attending to a pie on the hearth; that it might be kept hot for the Squire's supper. It came into her head at times, as a kind of forlorn hope, that the crafty old witch might somehow get the Devil to take her husband instead of herself. About midnight, however, her uneasy musings were interrupted by the dogs rushing in, followed by Squire Lovell, who seemed like one distracted, by the way he capered about and talked in broken sentences, of which his wife could make neither head nor tail. Sometimes he would caper round the kitchen, singing snatches of a strange dancing-tune; then stop, try to recollect the rest, and dance till tired out. At last the Squire sat down and told his wife to bring him a flagon of cider. After draining it, he became more tranquil, and, when Duffy asked if he had caught a hare, he answered,

"I've seen queer sights to-night, and the damn'd hare – as fine a one as ever was chased – most in the dogs' mouths all the while. We coursed her for miles, yet they couldn't catch her at all." Then he burst out singing,

"To-morrow, my fair lady,
You shall ride along with me,
Over land and over sea,
Through the air and far away!"

O! the funny devil! How he tossed up his heels and tail when he danced and sang,

"'To strange countries you shall go,
For never here can you know.'

"I've forgotten the rest," said he, after a pause; "but give me supper, and fill the tankard again. Then I will begin at the beginning, and tell 'e all about the strange things I've seen to-night. I wish you had been there; it would have made ye laugh, though I havn't seen 'e so much as smile for a long time. But give me supper, I tell thee again, and don't stay gaping at me like a fool frightened! Then, and not before, I'll tell thee all about our uncommon chase, and we will ride 'Over land, and over sea, with the jolly devil, far away, far away!"

Duffy placed a pie on the board and helped the Squire.

After supper he came more to himself, and said,

"We hunted all the way down, both sides of the Bottom, from Trove to Lamorna without seeing a hare. It was then dark, but for the starlight: we turned to come home, and, up by Bosava, out popped a hare, from a brake of ferns close beside the water. She (the hare) took up the moors; we followed close after, through bogs, furze, and brambles, helter-skelter, amongst mire and water. For miles we chased her – the finest hare that ever was seen, most in the dogs' mouths all the way, yet they couldn't catch her at all. By the starlight we had her in sight all the way till far up the Bottom, between Trove and Boleigh; there we lost all sight and scent of her at last, but not till, tearing through brakes of brambles and thorns, we found ourselves in the Grambler Grove. And now," continued he, after a pull from the flagon, "I know for certain that what old folks say is true – how witches meet the Devil there of summer's nights. In winter they assemble in the Fuggo Hole, we all know; because one may then often hear the devil piping for their dance under our parlour floor – that's right over the inner end of the Fuggo. And now I believe what we took for a hare was a witch that we chased into this

haunted wood. Looking through the thickets I spied, on a bare spot, surrounded by old withered oaks, a glimmering flame rising through clouds of smoke. The dogs skulked back and stood around me like things scared. Getting nearer, and looking through an opening, I saw scores of women – some old and ugly, others young and passable enow as far as looks go. Most of them were busy gathering withered ferns or dry sticks, to the fire. I noted, too, that other witches, if one might judge by their dress, were constantly arriving – flying in over the trees, some mounted on ragworts, brooms, ladles, furze-pikes, or anything they could get astride of. Others came on through the smoke as comfortable as you please, sitting on three-legged stools; and alighted by the fire, with their black cats on their laps. Many came in through the thickets like hares, made a spring through the flame, and came out of it as decent lasses as one might see in Buryan Church of a holiday. A good large bonfire soon blazed up; then, by its light, I saw, a little way back sitting under a tree, who should 'e think? Why no less than old witch Bet, of the Mill. And by her side a strapping dark-faced fellow, that wasn't bad looking and that one wouldn't take to be a devil at all but for the company he was with, and the sight of his forked tail that just peeped out from under his coat-skirts. Every now and then Old Bet held to his mouth a black leather jack, much like ours, and the Devil seemed to like the liquor by the way he smacked his lips. Now said I to myself I don't much dislike nor fear thee, devil or no, as thee art so honest as to drink hearty. So here's to thee, wife!"

Duffy was very impatient, but took care not to interrupt the Squire. After draining the flagon, he continued to say,

"Faix, I should think the Devil got drunk at last by the way he capered when the witches, locked hand-in-hand, danced round the fire with him in their midst. They went round and round so fast one couldn't follow their movements as Betty beat up on her crowd the old tune of

'Here's to the Devil, with his wooden spade and shovel,
Digging tin by the bushel, with his tail cocked up.'"

"Over a while Old Bet stopped playing; the Devil went up to her, drained the jack, took from her the crowd, and sang a dancing-tune I never heard before. The words, if I remember right were,

I have knit and spun for her
Three years to the day,
To-morrow she shall ride with me,
Over land and over sea,
Far away! Far away!
For she can never know
That my name is Tarraway!"

"The witches then sung as a chorus,

'By night and by day
We will dance and play,
With our noble captain —
Tarraway! Tarraway!'"

"I thought the words odd for a dancing-tune, but devils and witches do queer things."

"The witches, locked hand-in-hand, danced madder and faster, pulled each other right through the fire, and they wern't so much as singed, the bitches. They spun round and round so fast that at last, especially when the Devil joined in, my head got light. I wanted to dance with them and called out as I advanced, 'Hurra! my merry Devil, and witches all!' In an instant, quick as lightning, the

music stopped, out went the fire, a blast of wind swept away umers (embers) and ashes, a cloud of dust and fire came in my eyes and nearly blinded me. When I again looked up they had all vanished. By good luck I found my way out of the wood and home. I'll have another hunt to-morrow and hope for better luck."

The Squire drank another flagon of ale; then, weighed down with fatigue and drink, he rolled from his seat on to the floor. Duffy covered him up. He often passed his nights thus, when too drunk to go over stairs. As she threw over him a rug, and kicked a pile of rushes from the floor, in under his head, he murmured, "To-morrow, we will ride over land and over sea, through the air and faraway!"

It was hours after sunrise when Squire Lovell awoke and found his wife sitting near him; but she didn't say a word about his going a-hunting; in fact she would rather not be left in the house alone, or with servants only. Late in the afternoon, however, he whistled to his dogs and away he went a hunting again. As he had a mind to see, by daylight, the ground he coursed over, and where the witches danced, he took his way towards the Grambler Wood. Now Duffy hadn't been upstairs for all that day, but, a little after sunset, she went up to the guest-chamber, as a large spare bedroom was called, to fetch something she much wanted. She took the garment from a hanging-press, and hastened to leave the chamber, but, when she passed round the bed she beheld the bucca-boo, standing before her, in the doorway. She never saw him looking so well, nor so sprucely dressed, before. From beneath a broad-brimmed hat and plume his coal-black hair fell in glossy curls on his shoulders. He wore a buff coat of fine leather, with skirts so long and full that they quite concealed his forked tail, or he might have coiled it round his waist for what we know, any how there wasn't so much as the tip of it to be seen.

Madam surveyed him, over and over again, from the golden spurs on his bright black riding-boots to the nodding plume on his high pointed hat, and thought she had never seen a more likely-looking fellow. Yet she was speechless from fear or surprise. The devil, advancing with stately step, doffed his hat, and bowing, said in courteous tones,

"Know, fair lady, the time is passed and some hours over that I engaged myself to work for ye, and I hope that you have no reluctance to fulfil your part of our agreement."

"Indeed no," said she, "I can't say I have much objection as you are a very well-behaved obliging devil, and, during the three years that I have had the pleasure of your acquaintance, you have given me no reason to complain of your conduct. Yet," continued she, after a moment's pause, "I'd like to know where you live when at home, and what sort of a country it is? I fear it may be rather hot, as you seem to be burnt very dark!"

"As to where my country is," replied he, "You wouldn't be much the wiser if I told 'e all about it, because you have hitherto seen so little of the world, and there would be great difficulty in making 'e understand. As a proof, however, that my country's climate isn't much to be complained of, you see me strong and healthy enow; besides, I'm not so dark-skinned under my clothes; and, if you were burned as black as myself, I would love ye all the same."

"I can't quite make up my mind," said she, "though no doubt you would please me as well, and make a better husband than Squire Lovell, who, if he isn't drunk, snores all night with his face to the wall. If I went how would 'e convey me to your far country?"

"I have brought to the Grambler Grove a noble steed," he replied, "that will go over land and sea, or fly through the air with lightning speed. Now do make haste, dear, and get ye ready for my horse is very impatient to be left alone; he may whistle for me and shake down the chimney-tops, or paw the ground and make all the country tremble; yet he is as gentle as a lamb when mounted. So come along as you are; there's no time for delay," said he, offering his hand.

"If you please," said madam, shrinking back, "I would like to stay in Trove a little longer."

"Now, no nonsense," said the devil, in an angry tone; "You know that I have been true to my word, as every gentleman ought, and trust you will abide by our bargain: and as for your knowing my name," added he, with a haughty air, "that's impossible, because it is long since that I, like other

persons of quality, have only been known by my title, and even that is not familiar to vulgar ears." Assuming his ordinary courteous manner, he said, "Yet, my love, for mere form's sake I'll ask 'e three times if ye like! Besides, I'm curious to know what sort of a guess you will make at it. So now, for the first time asking, tell me if you can, what is my name?"

"My dear Mr. Devil," said she, "don't 'e take offence if I happen to misname ye in my ignorance. Now arn't 'e my lord Beelzebub!"

"No! be d – ," replied he, choaking with anger, "how could ye even think me such a mean, upstart devil as Beelzebub, whose name isn't known in the place where I belong; and, even here, among those best acquainted with him, nobody ever heard of his grandfather! Now I hear my horse shaking his bridle and, for the second time, I ask ye my name?"

"Pray excuse my ignorance and don't 'e be vexed," said she, "for I don't doubt but you are a grand gentleman when at home and no other, I think, than Prince Lucifer!"

"What? Lucifer!" he exclaimed, more than ever enraged; "you make me mad but to think that I should ever be taken for one of such a mean tribe as Lucifer, who is no better than the other. As for me, I wouldn't be seen in their company. None of their family were ever known or heard of in this country till lately. Great indeed is your want of sense," continued he, with a scornful air, "to take me for one of these upstarts. Yet, forsooth, many fools – if one may judge by their fears – seem to reverence them; nay almost to worship them. But crafty folks, who profit by fools' fears, havn't a good word to say of these new buccas behind their backs, nor yet of their country; for that, they say, is full of burning brimstone, and one may well believe it, for when any of the tribe come here they stink of sulphur. But one like you – born and bred in Buryan Church-town – can't have any notion of the antiquity and dignity of my family! If you hadn't been the loveliest of Buryan ladies I would never have condescended to spin for 'e. And now, for the third and last time, I ask what is my name?" On the same breath he added, "come! Give me your hand love, and let's away, for you can never guess it."

Duffy didn't feel much reluctance to go with him, yet was proud to outwit the devil and answered,

"Don't 'e be in such a hurry, old gentleman, Buryan people mayn't be so ignorant as you think them; they live near enow to St. Levan witches to know something of devils and their dealings. You are Tarroway – you won't deny it!"

"No, by my tail," said he, almost speechless with surprise; "I am too proud of my ancient name to disown it. I'm fairly beaten; it's provoking though to be outwitted by a young thing like you, and I can't think however you found it out. But true as I'm a gentleman, if you don't go with me now, the time will come when you'll wish you had, and one day you shall spin for me yet."

Duffy shrunk back, and, in a moment, thick smoke gathered around Tarroway; the room became dark; and he disappeared amidst a blaze of lightning and a rattling peal of thunder, that shook the house from end to end.

Duffy, much frightened, ran down stairs, and, as she entered the hall, in tore old Jone, terrified out of her wits by the kitchen chimney-top rattling down on the hearth where pots, kettles, and pans were all smashed. Their dread was much increased by finding throughout the house a smother of burning wool. Other women servants ran shrieking into the hall. Old Jone said she felt a fit coming on; whilst she looked about for a place to fall down and have her fit comfortable; into their midst rushed the Squire, with nothing on but his hat, shirt, and shoes. At this sight all the women have fits; the Squire stands for some time, looking on, like one distraught, till the women come to; all rise and run out except his wife; she asked him how he came home in such a plight, and where he had left his clothes. The Squire told her that when he came to the Gambler he had a fancy to see by daylight the place where Old Nick and his witches had their dance the preceding night. He entered and searched all round – over bare places, between the trees, and elsewhere, but saw no signs of any fire having been made in the wood; there wasn't even a handful of ashes, or the grass so much as burnt on the spot where he was sure he saw a bonfire blazing the night before.

He turned to leave this haunted place, by taking his course down the Bottom, but, when he was just out of the wood, a blinding flash of lightning surrounded him like a sheet of flame, whilst he was stunned by louder thunder than he ever heard before. When he recovered his senses and opened his eyes he found that all his home-spun woollen garments were burned from his breech and his back, leaving him as he then stood. He believed it was all done by witchcraft, because he saw their devilish doings. He told his wife to fetch him a coat, stockings, and breeches.

Duffy, disliking to go upstairs alone, called Jone to accompany her, and great was her terror to find that every article of Tarroway's work had disappeared from chests and presses – nothing was left in them but Squire Lovell's old moth-eaten garments covered with dust and ashes. He was very dissatisfied with his old clothes, but there was no help for it.

As clever a conjuror, or pellar, as any in the west country was fetched. He declared that it was all exactly as Squire Lovell thought – the devil and witches had served him out because he wanted to pry into their doings, and had chased one of them in the form of a hare. The wise man nailed old horse-shoes over the doors, and promised, for little pay in proportion to his services, that he would take Trove and the Squire's household under his protection, so that they need fear no more mischief from witchcraft, nor bad luck.

Madam, by the witch's aid, had a happy riddance of Tarroway, yet greater troubles were in store for her. Squire Lovell, disliking to be seen again wearing his old stockings, would neither go to church nor to market, and instead of hunting, as was his wont, from dawn till dark, he stayed indoors all day, in a very surly mood, to keep his wife at her spinning; and she knew no more how to spin than when she summoned the bucca-boo to work for her.

The Squire having forbade Betty the witch to come near his house, Duffy had little chance to see her; but one Thursday evening when he was off guard – up to the blacksmith's shop in Boleigh, to hear the news from returning market-people, as was his custom – Duffy hastened off to Mill and made known her troubles, and the next market-day Betty went to Penzance and bought the best stockings she could get. On Sunday morning Duffy brought them to her husband and passed them off as her own work; but he wasn't at all satisfied, because they wern't so fine and soft as what he had been accustomed to for three years. He wouldn't go to church in them; he went a-hunting, however, and returned very cross, for his new stockings didn't protect his legs from brambles, furze and wet, like Tarroway's. He again staid indoors to keep his wife to spin, and Madam was obliged to twirl her wheel all day though she only spoiled the wool, for unless he heard the sound of turn or cards, he would be up to the wool-chamber door calling out, "art thee asleep Duffy, lazy slut that thee art, I havn't heard cards nor turn for an hour or more, and unless thou very soon makest me better stockings than the rags on my legs, and a good breeches too, I'll know the reason why, that I will, you lazy faggot you, what the devil else did I marry thee for I'd like to know." She would threaten to card his face if he entered, so they led a cat and dog life for months, that seemed years to Duffy, shut up as she was in a dusty wool-loft and not a soul to comfort her or to share her griefs. Her spirits sunk and her beauty faded fast, she thought it had been better by far to have gone with the devil, than lead such an irksome life with old Squire Lovell. Often she prayed Tarroway to come for her, but he turned a deaf ear to her cry, and was never more seen in Trove.

By good luck, when winter and muddy roads came, the Squire took it into his head one Sunday morning to don his jack-boots and jog off to church, that he might learn what was going on in the rest of the world.

It was the Sunday before Christmas. He wished his wife to mount behind him, but she, pretending illness, begged to be excused and said she would be glad to accompany him next time.

Madam watched her good man spurring his Dobbin till he was clear of Trove town-place, then down she ran to Mill and told old Betty that unless she got a speedy release from her irksome task she would drown herself in the mill-pool.

Betty sat a moment on the mill-bed, twirling her thumbs so quick that one could hardly see them spinning round each other, and said, "No, my dear cheeld, dont 'e think of such a thing yet, young and handsome as you are it would be a pity, let's try a scheme that I've thought of, a woman never should despair of finding a trick to fool an old man, and if need be the old witch will stir her stumps and trot again to help 'e, if one plan don't serve we'll try another, for as the old saying is 'nobody ever got out of a ditch by grunting,' what's just popped into my head may answer!" "Do tell me what it is," said Madam. "No, there's no time now," Betty replied. "You have wasted so much already in bemoaning your griefs instead of thinking how to get rid of them, like a sensible body ought, that old master will soon be back from church, and he musn't know that you have been here, so only mind now what I am going to tell 'e."

"Next Saturday, being Christmas-Day, the Squire will no doubt go to church and desire you to go with him; by all means go, and when, as usual after churching, you stop at the cross to exchange greetings with other gentry, I'll come near enow for 'e to hail me with 'A Merry Christmas to 'e An Betty, and a Happy New Year when a do come.' I shall wish 'e the same, and you invite me, before the Squire, to come up in the evening to taste your Christmas beer. And in the afternoon when, according to custom, there will be a hurling match from Church-town to Boleigh, the Squire and you, with scores of gentlefolks, on horseback and afoot, will be near the goal to see the ball brought fairly in, and to hinder fighting; then look 'e out for me, give your kindest greetings again, and don't 'e be surprised at anything you may hear and see, or if you be don't 'e show it, and invite me again to partake of your Christmas cheer. That's all I have to tell 'e now," said she, opening her door for Duffy to depart, but going a few steps on the Green she continued, "It don't cost 'e any pain, no not a bit, to speak kindly to a poor body now any more than before you became Madam Lovell, and as good a lady as the best in Buryan, for you are no ways vain; but if you had ever shown any scornful pride be assured I would never have gone a trotting for 'e, nor do what I intend, to get 'e relieved of your troubles: besides it isn't your fault that you can neither knit nor spin, you never had a kind mammy to teach 'e. And no one can blame ye for deceiving old Squire Lovell – lying and deceit come to us poor women by nature – so hasten home, leave the rest to me, and hope for better times."

Madam got home just in time to see that dinner was ready, when her husband returned in a good temper after his morning's ride.

"Duffy, my dear," said he, as she assisted him to pull off his boots, "I wish you had gone to church, everybody was enquiring for 'e, and asking what was become of us this long time that they hadn't seen sight nor sign of us. And some of the women – cuss their itching curiosity they can never be satisfied – wanted to roll down my boot-tops and undo my knee-buckles that they might have a peep at my stockings. But on Christmas-Day come ye along with me, they won't be so foarthing if you be there."

Duffy replied, "my darling man, I'll go with all my heart and see if they carry their impudence so far again, and now dear, make a hearty dinner, and tell me all the news you have heard."

Christmas-Day in the morning, Duffy, as richly attired as any lady in Buryan, mounted on a pillion behind her husband, and away they went to church. After service, a great number assembled at the Cross and sung old charols. Squire and Madam Lovell exchanged many kindly compliments with the Cardews, Harveys, Noys, Penders, Vivians, Gwennaps, and other ancient gentry of Buryan, who were waiting for their steeds.

Whilst wishing her neighbours a Merry Christmas Madam Lovell had kept a sharp look out for old Betty; but had nearly given up all hopes of seeing her, and was about to mount behind the Squire, when glancing around for the last time she spied her steeple-crown and red mantle among the crowd of singers, through whom she had great trouble to lead her fat and lazy Dobbin to the heaving-stock. Madam went to meet her, shook hands heartily and said, "good morrow to 'e Dame Chymellan, how are 'e an; I am glad to see ye looking so well and wish 'e a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

and many of them. I hope you liked the sermon and the singing, and so on;" – we can't tell all the fine compliments that passed so long ago.

"Thank your honour, and I wish 'e the same," the old dame replied, making a low curtsy to Duffy. Then turning round to other gentlefolks, she continued to wish all their honours – as she styled them – the compliments of the tide, calling each by name as she curtsied to every one.

Now there was nothing remarkable in An Betty's civil words; but as she stood close beside the Squire, who was on horseback, and bestowed her old-fashioned greetings at every curtsy, an unseemly noise was heard. Squire Lovell got vex't, the ladies looked confused, glanced at him and rode off.

Betty, however, without appearing to hear or to heed anything, mounted the heaving-stock, settled herself comfortably on her high-peaked bow-pad, and jogged away with Dame Pendar; Squire Lovell and others going the same road. At parting Duffy said to her, "now be sure An Betty you come up early to try our Christmas-cake and ale." "Thank your honours I will," replied she, in turning off to the Mill.

It was customary for the Squire's tenants, and all who choose, to assemble at his house every night from Christmas-Eve till twelfth-night, to freely partake of his abundant cheer and help in the merry disports of the tide; yet he wasn't at all pleased because his wife invited the old dame. "I should'nt have minded her coming at any other time," said he, "but to-day a good many from the hurling will come home with us and pass the evening; I hope however, she will be on her best behaviour before the quality: to be sure one don't like to offend the spiteful old witch for fear of her tricks."

In the afternoon Squire Lovell and his wife, with many others – mostly on horseback – were got together near Daunce-Mayn when old Betty stalked in to their midst, and just such another scene was acted there as took place in Church-town.

Many who came from a distance went down to Trove to pass a merry Christmas night.

A score or more of ladies and gentlemen, seated in the hall, pledged each other in hot-spiced-ale, brandy, punch, and wine, when Betty, Jone and others entered, holding aloft their horns of foaming liquor. The Squire fearing another display of Betty's unbecoming behaviour, rose in haste to prevent her drinking their healths with all the honours. "Stay a moment An Betty," said he, "come into the kitchen, I must tell 'e that twice already to-day you have made me ashamed of 'e, how could 'e do so and show so little respect for the company both in Church-town and Boleigh?"

"O dear master, you musn't mind such a trifle as that," replied she, without budging an inch, "for it will soon be all the same with madam there, your honour's wife, if you keep her to spin so much, she won't be able to help it for her life. You may look scared and misbelieving, but indeed she won't; no! no more than I can whenever I move quick, or curtsy to your honours as I am, in duty, bound to do; and if your honours would like to hear how it happened to me I'll tell 'e."

Many of the company having intimated that they would like to hear how she became in such a condition, Squire Lovell placed her in a settle near the hearth, she emptied her horn and gave the following relation: —

"Know then, your honours, that in my first husband's time, – more than thirty years ago, – we lived at Trevider. I did out-door work and helped old mistress besides, when there was extra house work, such as great brewings, cheese-making, the baking and roasting at feasten-tides, spinning for the weavers, besides the regular spinning of winter's nights, and such like. Though I say it, there wasn't a brisker lass in Buryan than I was then; just like mistress there, your honour's wife. There was no woman and but few men that could beat me in shaking liners (threshed wheaten sheaves), leading trusses, branding turves, raking tabs (roots, grass, &c.), reaping, rulling, aye, or binding either on a push; and I could make an arish mow as well as any man. Old master used to say that at the windan-sheet (winnowing-sheet), there wasn't my equal in the parish for handling the sieve and kayer (coarse sieve), and that I made a better sample of corn, and not half so much after-winding and waste, as

any other windster he ever met with; but I needn't blow my trumpet any more on that score. My old mistress, Madam Pendar, was a noted spinster, as you may have heard, and of winter's-nights she, with her servant maidens and I, took our places at the turns (spinning wheels); master and the servant men carded and sung three-men's songs or told old drolls the while. My spinning-work was soon equal to Madam Pendar's though she would never allow it; but my yarn was strong, even, and fine, just like your honour's wife's," said Bet, addressing Squire Lovell to fasten his attention. "And often I was kept spinning all day for days running, just like mistress there. But one Christmas night every body belonging to Trevider, young and old, went off in a Guise-dance, except old mistress and I. 'Now they are all gone, Betty,' said she, 'and left us all alone, see if we don't enjoy ourselves.' Mistress drew a good joram (jug) of strong old ale, boiled, sweetened, and spiced it whilst I roasted the apples; we brewed a drink fit for a king; for hours we pledged each other's good health and drank to our heart's content. Over a while mistress began to brag of her spinning, she was proud of her work and so was I of mine, just like your honour's wife. I shall ever remember that Christmas-night and how cherry the old hall looked with the Christmas-log burning bright, and faggots of oak and ash blazing up the chimney, showed every window, dresser and wall decked in holly, box, and ively; with branches of bays and rosemary around the pewter flaggons, plates, and platters, that shone like silver among the Christmas greenery.

Old mistress boasted much of her spinning, and wager'd a bottle of brandy – which she placed on the board – that she would spin a pound of wool in a shorter time, and make a finer yarn than I could. I took her to her word, rolled up the rushes from the floor, to make a clear run all the length of the hall, and placed our turns, while mistress weighed and carded the wool, divided the rulls, and gave me my choice of them. When all was ready, to cheer our hearts and put life in our heels, we each drank a noggin of brandy. Then I tripped backward and forward as light as a feather, and for more than three hours we twirled our wheels by the bright fire-light, keeping good time together. My yarn was suant (even) and fine as a flaxen thread; just like that spun by my lady there, your honour's wife, and I was then about her age. I had nearly spun my pound of wool, and never felt in better heart for dancing to the turn, when, as bad luck would have it, my twadling-string – weakened with so much stepping backwards – burst. I fell to the ground, and ever since I've been in the sad predicament that so surprised your honours. Though it's comforting to have companions in affliction," said she, after a pull at the flaggon, "yet from the regard I have for your honour and mistress there, I have spoke of my ailment to warn 'e that as sure as I sit here with a broken twadling-string it will soon be the same with my lady there, if it's true, what I do hear, that you keep her to spin from morn till night most every day of the year. When that do happen you will be frighten'd into fits; old mistress was so scared that she nearly lost her senses, she thought the house falling about her ears, to save herself she snatched the bottle and tore up stairs; next day she was found asleep under a bed with the empty bottle close by her head."

Old Betty's story rather surprised the company, and Squire Lovell, much concerned, said "I'm glad you told me An Betty, now drink another horn full like a dear; I wouldn't for the world that my darling Duffy should be in such a plight, nevermore shall she spin from this very night. I would go bare leg'd all my life, rather than such a mishap should befall my wife."

The entertainment concludes with a dance, to music made by Father Christmas on a crowd.

Celtic Monuments of Boleigh and Rosemodrass

Dear land of old romance,
Legend and mystic dance;
Lost towns and temples, and that buried shore
Where thy great hero fought his last sad fight,
Cromlechs and quoits and cairns and hills of war,
Circles of mystery and mounds of might.

W. K. D.

ABOUT a furlong south-west of Trove, but on a tenement of Boleigh, is the Fuggo. It consists of a cave about six feet high, five feet wide, and near forty long, faced on each side with rough stones, across which long stone posts are laid. On its north-west side a narrow passage leads into another cave of similar construction and unknown extent; as it has long been blocked up by a portion of the roof having fallen in. One may be pretty sure, however, that much of the stories about its great length are fabulous. They say that it extends from its entrance, at the foot of Boleigh hill, to the old mansion at Trove; in proof of this the old one has often been heard piping under a parlour of the house. It is supposed he meets the witches down there, who have entered by the Fuggo to dance to his music. Hares are often seen to enter the Fuggo which are never known to come out the same way; they are said to be witches going to meet their master, who provides them with some other shape to return in.

There are also traditions of this cavern having served as a place of refuge to some of the Levelis in troublesome times; and of its having frequently been used by our fair-traders, as it afforded them a secure hold for storing their goods, and to have a carouse therein.

Old traditions about the far-reaching and unknown extent of the Fuggo, may not, however, be altogether void of foundation. At the annual excursion of the Royal Institution of Cornwall, in 1871, Mr. H. M. Whitley, of Truro, remarked that the bank, just opposite the branch cavern, sounded hollow, from which he is persuaded that there is a chamber underneath to be yet explored.

There are the remains of a triple entrenchment near, and this subterranean passage might have been connected with it.

Old folks of the neighbourhood say that there was another Fuggo in Trove Hill, on the opposite side of the Glen, but the entrance has long since been closed, and no one knows exactly where it opened.

The track of moor and croft between Trove and Boleigh has indeed never been thoroughly examined by our antiquaries; yet as the vestiges of ancient British habitations are generally found in the vicinity of prehistoric monuments, the Daunce-mayn, Menheres, and holed-stones on the hill, would seem to indicate that this sheltered glen might be a likely place in which to find the remains of old crellas or circular huts, similar to those of Bodennar, Busulow, and Chysauster. And farther up, near the brook, amidst brambles and furze may yet be discovered traces of ancient Celtic dwellings, with ashes still on the hearth and quern and miller beside it.

A short time ago an old inhabitant of Boleigh informed us that many persons in that neighbourhood are afraid to enter the Fuggo, even by day, as they believe that bad spirits still frequent this place. Women of villages near often threaten their crying babies that they will carry them down to the Fuggo, and leave them there for the Bucca-boo if they don't stop their squalling. There are traditions that almost all these caves were haunted by beings of a fearful nature, whose path it was dangerous to cross.

The fuggo at Bodinnar, called the Giant's Holt, was a few years ago much dreaded, as it was thought to be the abode of ugly spriggans that kept watch and guard over treasures which still remain buried in that ancient hiding-place.

There is a somewhat graceful creation of fancy associated with the Vow, or fuggo, at Pendeen, which is said to extend from the mansion to Pendeen Cove, and some say it has branches in other directions, which spread far away from the principal cavern.

At dawn on Christmas Day the "Spirit of the Vow" has frequently been seen just within the entrance, near the Cove, in the form of a beautiful lady, dressed in white, with a red rose in her mouth. There were persons living, a few years since, who had seen this fair but not the less fearful vision; for disaster was sure to visit those who intruded on the spirit's morning airings.

Many of the "sawns" in the western cleaves have also similar legends connected with them, only the dwellers in sea-side caverns, are either of the mermaid race, or what we call Hoopers. The latter are beneficent spirits who warn fishermen from going to sea when there is an approaching tempest.

The Hoopers shroud themselves in a thick fog which stretches across coves frequented by them. There are well remembered stories of Sennen Cove Hooper that used to rest in a cloud of mist, on Cowloe, and thence emit its doleful notes as a danger signal.

Boleigh or Boleit

Although we never heard of any Household Stories connected with this interesting spot, yet we cannot pass it without some notice of its prehistoric remains.

Our antiquaries follow the fashion of spelling the name of the hamlet on the hill as above, yet everyone here who ought best to know the name of the place in which they live, call it Bolé. Most likely it has been thus pronounced from long before it was ever written. All sorts of contradictory meanings have been given for the name of this noted place; as the dairy-house, place of slaughter, &c. It was once the residence of an old Norman family, whose name, spelt Bolleit, may be seen on a long coffin-shaped slab, which lay on the floor within the tower of Buryan Church a short time ago. The inscription in old Norman-French which borders the edge of this curious tomb says that

† Clarice: la: femme: cheffrie: de: bolleit: git: ici: dev: de: lalme: eit: merce: ke: pvr: lealme: pvnt (priunt:) di: ior: de: pardvn: avervnd.

This means, in plain English, to say † "Clarice, the wife of Geoffry de Bolleit, lies here: God on her soul have mercy: Who prays for her soul shall have ten days' pardon."² Now the "Bo" we know to be another form of Beau, in ancient French names. Leit may be a variation of lieu. The provincial pronunciation of Beaulieu is, in many parts of Northern France, simply Bolè. And this is the nearest approach to the proper sound of the name that a Cornish man would be likely to turn his tongue to form. This old Norman family, as in many other instances, might have done their best to give to their new inheritance a name which was a common one in their former home. This conjecture respecting the derivation is at least as probable as the others. We know of no Cornish name which terminated in leit, yet, if the name be Cornish, it is safer to take the traditional pronunciation of those who live in Buryan than to go by any mode of spelling.

² It is somewhat curious to notice that no one who has written on the parish of Buryan, in speaking of the Boleit tombstone in the church, has pointed out that the inscription is, in accordance with a very common custom, in verse, namely in a triplet followed by a distich. It reads thus: —Clarice, la femme Cheffreide Bolleit, git ici, Dieu de lalme eit mercie. Ke pur lalme punt Di ior de pardun aveunt. The word punt in the fourth line is short for prierunt. Probably there is now, or at all events, has been at some time, in the original, a small letter r above the word between the p and the u. An r has been similarly omitted in aveunt. This somewhat primitive epitaph may be thus literally translated into equally primitive English: —Clarice, the wife of Jefferei Of Bolleit, here doth lie. God of her soul have mercie. For her soul whoever prays Shall have pardon for ten days. From One and All.

Menheres

The most striking objects seen after passing through the hamlet are two large long stones or pillars of granite, sometimes called the pipers, but formerly known as the hurlers, which stand in the fields on the north side of the road. Antiquaries are far from being unanimous in their conjectures as to the purpose intended to be served in the erection of these remarkable stones. Whether they were astronomical, sacerdotal, or sepulchral monuments – whether erected for all or neither of these objects – the learned think it premature to decide. There is no mark on these mysterious stones to throw any light on the subject. Yet it is pretty certain that all the large menhere stood in pairs; that their bearing is generally east and west; that they are mostly found on an open plain near other Celtic monuments, and the vestiges of ancient British habitations; and we may be sure they were formerly more numerous and regarded as objects of great importance, from the number of dwelling-places, enclosures, and names of old Cornish families terminating in Menhere, as Tremenhere, or Tremener, (Longstone place) Polmener, (Longstone pool) Goonmenhere, (Longstone downs) and many others. Probably many of the companion stones of the erect single pillars may be still found lying along in some hedge, at no great distance, (about the twelfth of the circle north of east or south of west), from those which remain where placed thousands of years ago.

If the menhere (as has been conjectured from being found in pairs, bearing nearly east and west) were intended to mark the times of the equinox or solstice, these seasons being sacred festivals of Baal or the Sun, the desire of the early Christians to obliterate all remembrances of Pagan rites may account for the prostration or destruction of such objects as must have been regarded with religious veneration, from their importance to show the times to sow the grain, and do various kinds of work pertaining to pastoral life; and, above all, to denote the sacred festivals of our forefathers, which we still commemorate in our Midsummer bonfires. These long stones at Boleigh are the more interesting because there are not many of the original pairs to be found standing in the west. There is another pair near Newbridge, and one may be seen lying prostrate in Escols lane, Sennen, at a short distance from the stile on the pathway to Escols village.

There is a tradition that this menhere was taken down from where it stood, in the middle of the field, by a giant, who lived in Escols, by him rolled into the hedge, and his son, ten years of age, placed the trigg (propping stone) as we may still see it. An old lady of Escols informed me that the other stone of the pair was in a hedge at no great distance, prostrate also. The erection of these huge monoliths proves that the animal powers and mechanical skill of our ancestors were of no mean order.

Holed Stones, &c

Continuing on the road towards Boskenna, a minute's walk from the Menheres brings us to a holed stone standing in the hedge on the right hand side. This stone has been removed a considerable distance from its original site to form the side of a gateway. The upper portion of the stone is very much broken, and is irregular in shape, yet its head appears to have been triangular and worked to an angle similar to the Men-an-tol at Lanyon.

In the lane near the holed stone is an ancient cross, seemingly placed in the midst of the Druidic monuments to sanctify what the old Celts would not permit the Christian teachers to remove.

There is another holed stone near by, in Rosemodrass lane, placed head downwards, and it serves for the hanging-post of a gate. The form of the head of this stone cannot be easily ascertained, as it is buried so deeply in the ground that only a small portion of the hole is to be seen.

The aperture in both these stones (about six inches in diameter) is too small to pop the smallest, or all but the smallest, baby through; yet the people call them crick stones, and maintain that they were so-called before they were born. Crick stones were used for dragging people through, to cure them of various diseases. As these holed stones at Boleigh have been removed from their original site no satisfactory conclusion can be arrived at as to their primitive use. Some have thought that these stones, in common with the men-an-tol at Lanyon, the tolmen in Constantine, and many others, might have served the same important purpose as the menheres – to fix the proper time for the celebration of the autumnal equinox, by the stones being so placed that the sacred index of the seasons on rising above the horizon would be seen through the perforation, at a right angle to the face of the stone, and that the triangular head of the stone formed such an angle that when the sun was on the meridian, (at certain periods of the year, which were required to be known,) its altitude would denote the time, by its place in the heavens being in a line with the slope of the primitive time-piece, which would then cast no shadow on the ground at mid-day. If these monuments were intended for stone calendars, and any can be found in their original position, it might be possible, at least approximately, to fix the time of their erection, by their present variation from true east and west. If the deviation is in the direction demanded by the precession of the equinoctial points, the difference might be calculated at the allowed rate of fifty seconds a year. There is but little doubt but the men-an-tol still remains where it was first erected.

As urns, or crocks of ashes and charred bones, have frequently been found near these, and other mystic stones, which were generally regarded as Celtic relics, it has been conjectured that long stones, holed-stones, and quoits (cromlechs) were all raised to mark the last resting-places of some noted personages. Is it not as probable that they were erected for the use of the living, and, by being associated with the religious observances of the time and people, came to be regarded as garrac-zans or holy stones; and that the priest, or chief, would desire to be buried near them, prompted by a feeling identical with that of the present time and common to all ages, which makes many desire that their poor dust and ashes may rest near the shrine at which they worshipped, within the bounds of what they regard as holy ground? Sacerdotal communities have always been ready to grant this distinction to the rich, and encouraged this enshrining of the relics of mortality, because the presence of the King of Terrors in the temple augments that mysterious awe with which all ancient theocratical hierarches endeavoured to invest themselves, and all their ghostly appurtenances; as by this means they acquire more power over those who live in dread of the spirit world, easily conjured up by morbid fancies, when surrounded by whatever engenders melancholy.

Besides the tolmen noticed above there are several others in the western part of Cornwall. Some thirty years ago, two holed stones, about the size of those at Boleigh, might be seen in Treen Cliff, at no great distance from the end of Pedny vounder lane, on the sea side of the wheel-road to Castle Treen and the Logan Rock. These stones were amidst other rocks. One was standing upright and the

other lying flat on the ground a few feet from it. The old people of Treen did not know what these stones were placed there for.

In a field on the southern side of the lane is the circle of upright stones called by the people of Buryan, Daunce-Mayn. The name is most probably a corruption of Zans Mëyn (sacred stones,) and has nothing whatever to do with dancing maids. The legend that the (originally) nineteen posts were damsels, thus fixed for dancing on Sunday, was evidently suggested by the name to some manufacturer of such wares, who as readily converted the two long stones, in the field across the road, which we have already noticed, into the Pipers, who took to their heels and left the damsels to their fate as soon as their metamorphosis began; but their ungallant action did not avail, as the petrifying power of the cursing saint, who stopped their sweet pipings, overtook them when they ran thus far, and laid them up in stone as we now see them.

No such legend, however, is native to the place, as the old folk only know it from having it repeated to them by visitors, who have seen it in books. They never regard the name as having any connection with dancing maids any more than dairy maids, and the Menhere, changed into Pipers, were known to them by the name of the Hurlers, from their having been a goal for the hurling-run, when the starting-post (where the ball was thrown up) was the cross in the Church-town.

This story affords another example of the way in which the meaning is lost of many an ancient Cornish name, (which tells a history,) from the foolish desire to assimilate the expressive old Cornish name to some unmeaning English nickname. Thus, goon-here-an (the long downs) near Tregonebras, is become goldherring. And the town-arms of Penzance is just as bad a punning kind of Blazon. It is easy to understand how Zans-Mëyn became Daunce-Meyn. A common form of mën is mêdn, as pen changes into pedn, in Tol-Pedn-Penwith. And this is near enough to maiden, for the legend to spring up to account for the name.

Another common name for the Celtic circles is the Nine Maidens. Now, as the usual number of stones in the circle is nineteen, that number may have something to do with the first part of this name, and the latter would come from the Cornish, as before, mêdn.

The Daunce-Mëyn is the best known of all the Druidic circles in the west, as it is within sight from the road frequently taken by those visitors to the Logan Rock who care for seeing the many interesting objects, and fine sea views, visible from the lower road, as we call this route near the sea shore. Yet the circle at Boscawen-un, in the higher side of the parish, is invested with a peculiar interest, from the fact of the opinion held by Dr. Borlase that these circles were places of council of judgment, has been confirmed by an old Welsh triad, which makes this place still more remarkable by naming it as one of the three Gorsedds, or places of judgment for poetry and bardic minstrelsy. This valuable relict of Welsh poetry, as translated by the eminent Welsh scholar, the late Rev. Thomas Price, is in English: – "The three Gorsedds of Peetry of the Island of Britain; the Gorsedd of Boscawen Damnonium; (Damnonium included Cornwall and great part of Devon;) the Gorsedd of Salisbury, in England; and the Gorsedd of Bryn Gwyddon in Wales."

We hope that when the laureate revisits Cornwall he may be induced to go there, and, sitting on a granite throne, by the side of the tall central stone, sing the "Idyls of the King," if only in honour of the Welsh bard who has preserved the remembrance of this remarkable temple where ancient minstrels sung of how Merlin, the enchanter, deceived the beautiful Igera, so that she received King Uter Pendragon as her husband – how King Uter died, and Arthur, his son, by Igera, kept his court at "Wild Dundagel, by the Cornish sea" – and how our own Prince Arthur, and his knights of the table rounde, slew all the enemies of Britain. Here they sang of the beauty and guile of the fair and frail Guenever – of the honour and truth of Arthur's knights, and the treachery of Mordred. Here the Bard sounded a lament for the lost lands of Lethowsow, and the submerged City of Langona: —

"Between Land's End and Scilly rocks
Sunk lies a town that ocean mocks.

* * * * *

Where breathes the man that would not weep
O'er such fine climes beneath the deep?"

We owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Borlase for preserving to us a graphic description of these, and many other, Druidic circles which have disappeared since his time.

Fortunately, the work of destruction has been arrested at Boscawen-un circle, as the lady to whom the property belongs has caused it to be surrounded with a good hedge to prevent further spoilation. Some years ago a wholesome fear prevailed of bad luck following anyone who removed these landmarks of a long past age, but now our country folk think themselves more enlightened, and, unless those who have some respect for the monuments of ancient times, take measures to prevent the recipients of this questionable sort of enlightenment from exercising their vandalism, our Celtic remains will soon disappear. Pages might be filled with an account of the destruction which has taken place within the past half century.

That these circles were used for religious, judicial, or political purposes, (and in ancient times all three were combined), there can be no doubt, from the veneration with which they were formerly regarded. This solemn respect was expressed in the belief that the avenging deity, in the shape of Bad Luck (which was felt to be as real a personage as any other undefined invisible demon) would sooner or later overtake the sacrilegious destroyer of the ancient holy stones. In many of the oldest villages there were formerly altar-like stones, known by the name of garrac zans, (the holy stones) which were protected by the fear of the goddess of Bad Luck; and until within these last few years, no rude hand would dare to remove or spoil them. We remember one of these venerated rocks in the village of Rosekestal and another in Sowah town-place. The noted stone in Mayon was also called indifferently the garrac zans or table men. We have heard of many others which were formerly to be seen in the town-places of ancient hamlets, but their places know them no more.

Dr. Borlase describes many circles and other Celtic remains as being in his time almost as perfect as when left by our forefathers thousands of years ago. Of these public monuments, there is now scarcely a trace to be found. Recent investigation proves the trustworthiness of the information preserved by the antiquary, born and bred in Pendeen, in the very heart of a district which contains, even now, more Celtic remains of all kinds than any other portion, of equal space, in the British Isles.

By similar monuments to those we have noticed at Boleigh, the migrations of the ancient Celtic race may be traced from farthest Ind to the Scilly Isles.

The last Cardew, of Boskenna, and the Story of Nelly Wearne

No ditch is so deep, no wall is so high,
If two love each other, they'll meet by and bye;
No storm is so wild, and no night is so black,
If two wish to meet they will soon find a track.

*From Klaus Groth's Song "Keen Graff is so brut."
Max Müller's Translation.*

THERE are few places which afford such a variety of picturesque views as may be seen in and from the grounds of Boskenna ("dwelling-on-the-ridge.") The sylvan and rural are beheld, forming endless combinations with the grand, the wild, and the romantic. Glimpses of the boundless ocean are caught through overarching boughs in deep winding glens, where the brilliant plants of semi-tropical climes are seen growing in loving companionship with our more modest and sweet native shrubs, ferns, and flowers.

From the height called the Rockery, (surely there must be an old Cornish name,) the view embraces towering carns, distant hills, and headlands, including Castle Teryn and the Lizard Point; scenes of many wild legends and poetic traditions, of Danish invaders, of witches, saints and hermits.

"Far as the eye can peer,
The waters roll, divinely blue and clear;
With white sails flashing in the sunlight's ray,
Of countless vessels, near and far away;

Here the wild sea-gull plumes her snowy breast,
Then skims the wave or perches on the crest
Of some majestic cairn, or cromlech where
Long ages past the Druids knelt in prayer,
Till, with stretched wing, she cleaves the fields of blue,
Dips 'neath th' Atlantic, and is lost to view."

One of the most delightful spots on the grounds of Boskenna is a little wooded glen, through which flows a clear stream, embowered by luxuriant foliage and fringed with ferns, flags, and sedges, amongst which many rare wild flowers show their elegant bells of pale blue, and star-like blossoms of every tint. The brooklet and shady walk wind down this little vale to St. Loy Cove, where, within a few years, there stood on the verge of the cliff, the walls and altar of a chapel dedicated to St. Eloi; but, a few years ago, this interesting relict of the piety of ages past, with its wrought-stone altar, was thrown over cliff by the, then, occupier of an adjacent cottage, without the knowledge or permission of the owner of the property. The vestiges of this sacred building were thus toppled into the sea, merely that a few feet of land might be gained for growing early potatoes; and now nothing remains but the name of St. Loy to connect this romantic spot with the saint by whom Chaucer's "Wife of Bath" was accustomed to swear. We fear that the mention of this realistic, marriage-loving dame may put to flight all poetic notions; yet hear what our Cornish poetess, Mrs. S. E. Tonkin, (from whom we have quoted above) says of this hallowed shrine.

"A pleasant ramble through a bosky vale;
A pause to hear a babbling brooklet's tale;

A moment's lingering by its mossy well,
And I, once more, am in St. Loy's green dell.

Ages ago, as old traditions say,
The monks devout stole here to fast and pray;
Within these wilds they communed by the sea,
And reared for worship a fair chapelry,
Where pious souls, and needy, found them rest,
And by their prayers and sanctity were blest.

Naught now remains to whisper of the past;
Still, o'er the spot a holy light is cast,
In gothic arches yon fair trees entwine,
Low-drooping o'er the consecrated shrine,
And waves come singing, as they inland flow,
Thrilling the heart with strains of long ago."

The place thus favoured by nature and Mrs. Tonkin's verse, was an ancient seat of the Cardew family, who, between two and three centuries ago, also owned Boskenhal and several other farms in the neighbourhood. The last of this decayed family, who lived in the old home of his ancestors, mortgaged this place, and other lands, to the predecessors of the present possessor. The Paynters resided here for some generations, and the late Mr. John Paynter will long be remembered in the West Country as a liberal landlord and kind neighbour; and for being more learned in the law than country justices usually are. It was a common saying in the West, that "the Squire of Boskenna knew more law than all the lawyers of Penzance put together!" This place is now the residence of Charles Dacres Bevan, Esq., Judge of the district County Court. Mr. Bevan has much improved and beautified both the mansion and grounds. Many years ago, the late Mr. Cardew, of St. Ives, (who was descended from a collateral branch of the Boskenna family) informed us that there were several old family portraits of the Cardews in the mansion of Boskenna during his remembrance. He also related the following traditional

Story of Nelly Wearne

This damsel was an illegitimate daughter of the last Cardew of Boskenna, and, (according to a very general custom which prevailed in the West) this love-child was bound a parish 'prentice to her father that he might be legally entitled to some degree of guardianship over his irregularly-begotten offspring. Children thus bound to their fathers were mostly regarded as a sort of poor cousins to the legitimate members of the family, and they were often taught a trade or handicraft, or portioned off with some small tenement. Nelly's spendthrift father, however, was a most unsuitable guardian for a young girl. He paid much more regard to his dogs and hunters than to his daughter, who, by all accounts, was very remarkable for her good looks and devil-may-care disposition. The Squire's mother did all an old dame could do to restrain her wild tendencies, and give her a little more gentle breeding than was thought requisite for an ordinary servant. Dancing was one of the accomplishments in which Nelly took most delight, and Madam was rejoiced to find that her damsel was soon the best dancer in Burian. However hard Nell might have worked during the day, she thought nothing of going three or four miles of an evening, in any kind of weather, to enjoy her favourite diversion at some village merry-making. She never missed Burian Fair, which was then regarded by our western lads and maidens as the most joyful holiday of the spring.

When Nelly had become a young woman it happened that one Burian Fair-day the weather was even more tempestuous than usual, though the storms of Burian Fair are proverbial. Madam Cardew had made up her mind that Nelly should remain at home that stormy night, but she protested that neither rain nor wind, thunder nor lightning, nor all the old women in Burian, should hinder her going to Church-town and dancing at the Fair, which only came once a year; and she swore that a reel she would have, before that night was passed, even if she danced with Old Nick. "She would never be married," she often said, "unless she could meet with a man who was able to dance her down; and she would find one that night or the Devil might take her." Off she went in a storm of wind, rain, and thunder, blaspheming and reviling the old lady, who tried to keep her home. Arrived in Church-town, Nelly found dancing going on in every room of the public-house; and violin, fife, or tambourine making music for the revellers in many other dwellings. Nell entered the principal room of the inn; and before she cast off her cloak and wrung the rain from her long black hair, many youngsters asked her to drink and dance with them, but she refused them all, saying they couldn't keep the floor half so long as herself – she would either get some better partner or not have a jig for that night.

Whilst she was declining the offers of her rustic suitors, two dark-complexioned, strapping sailors entered, and one of them, dressed in dashing style, with gold lace on his coat, broad leather belt round his waist, cutlass by his side, and glossy boots reaching to his knees, advanced to Nelly, doffed his hat, bowed, and said, "Pray dance with me, my fair pretty maid?" "With all my heart, sir," she replied, rising and giving him her hand. Nelly's partner called to his comrade, "Now pipe away, Bosun, and give us the good old tune." The seaman addressed as Bosun took a pipe from his pocket, marched round the couple prepared to dance, saying "A floor, a floor, for the lovely Nell and our gallant Capt. Black." The piper blew at first a rather slow measure, to which the captain's heel and toe, true as an echo, showed a new step at every change of pass and pitch. By slow degrees the tune became quicker till it was such as Nelly never moved her feet to before. The lively music soon drew such a crowd into the room to see the dancers, that the floor beams warped and showed signs of breaking. Then, as the storm lulled and a full moon shone bright, the dancers, followed by all the rest, left the house for an open space below the cross. Now every one wanted to treat the seamen, and they drank as much as they could, to show their good fellowship with every one, and Captain Black, giving a purse of gold to the landlady, desired her to send out her best cordials for the women kind, and to keep her beer-cocks running, that all might drink health to him and the lovely Nell.

When one and all had drunk as much as they liked, the Bosun's pipe again rung out so loud and clear that his music was heard for miles away. The Captain, Nelly, and scores of others again danced in joyous style. People from all parts flocked round them; every house in Church-town was soon empty. Old men and women hobbled and danced on their crutches; the piper's lively strains set every one in motion, till the road was covered with dancers, capering like mad folks, all the way from Park-an-cady to the cross and around the churchyard. Soon after midnight, however, whilst their mirth was at its height, there suddenly came on a more violent storm than ever of wind, hail, and thunder. The sky, black as pitch one moment, was all ablaze the next. Streams of lightning fell and ran hissing along the ground. All were terror-struck with the sudden rise of this awful weather. Yet, in the general consternation, some one had the happy thought to ring the bells, that their sound might allay the weather, and drive away the evil spirits who rode on the tempest. With the first stroke of the big bell the thunder-clouds rolled away to the eastward, and at the same instant Captain Black vanished with Nelly and the piper.

This terrific storm, joined with the sudden disappearance of Nelly and the dark looking strangers, so frightened many that they fell down in fits, and others, from the same cause, were never right in their heads again.

On a tract of uncultivated land north of Boskenna lane, there was then a barn, which usually contained a quantity of dry food for the cattle wintered on the downs. This barn, then full of straw and hay, was burned to the ground that Fair-night, and near its ruins were found a handkerchief, full of fairings, with some other things which belonged to Nell, but all search for the wilful damsel was in vain. Most people believed that Captain Black was the Old One, disguised as a seaman, and the Bosun some inferior devil in attendance – that Nell, by her blasphemous language, had brought them from below, whither they had now taken her to dance as best she might. Squire Cardew, being less superstitious than many of his neighbours, conjectured that the strange dancer and piper were nothing worse than two jovial sailors, who had carried her off to their ship – an occurrence far from unusual in these times; and in hopes of gaining some tidings of his stolen or strayed daughter, he rode into Penzance and over to Market-jew, to make enquiries; but he could learn nothing of her. Some said, however, that a strange craft had anchored in Guavas Lake, the Fair-day, and that part of her crew had landed in Newlyn, but nothing farther was known of them, as the ship made sail the next morning.

Nelly's gay songs were missed in Boskenna hall, where she often sung for hours, to cheer the old lady when they were together plying their spinning-wheels, or seated in the window, lighted with the evening sun, at their embroidery. Then, at night, she used to be foremost in the dance with her father and his roystering companions of the chase.

Grief for the strange fate of Nelly shortened the days of old Madam Cardew, who was soon at rest in Burian churchyard, and the Squire took to hunting, drinking, and rioting worse than ever.

Twenty years and more passed; Nelly and the Cardews were all but forgotten; new people possessed their ancient domain; none of their kin remained in the West, but an old well-to-do yeoman and his family, who resided at Sennen.

One dreary afternoon there was a very humble funeral at Burian Church, and the last Cardew of Boskenna was laid beside the dust of his forefathers. Soon after candlelighting on that day, whilst some few who came to see the last of the spendthrift, who had lavished his property upon them, were still drinking in the public house, there entered, dripping wet, and weary, an elderly foreign-looking woman, whose dress of rich stuff and of outlandish make, was travel-stained and much the worse for wear. The large hooped-shaped rings in her ears, joined with her dark complexion and long braids of black hair wound around her head, only covered with the hood of her scarlet mantle, made her appearance still more remarkable.

The stranger enquired if Betty Trenoweth, who many years ago lived in Boskenna, was still alive. She was answered that Betty was alive and well, and lived no farther off than a minute's walk would take her, in a comfortable dwelling of her own, over Trevorgans side of Church-town. Without

giving any one the chance to question her as to who she was, or whence she came, the outlandish-looking dame proceeded to Betty Trenoweth's cottage. The elderly woman, who opened her door, asked the stranger in and placed her to sit by her fireside, wondering who she could be and what she could want of her, at that time of night. The stranger in a broken voice and speaking in an unfamiliar tongue, made many enquiries about the Cardews, and appeared to think they were all still living in Boskenna.

Betty informed her that none of the name were then in the place – that her old mistress had long been dead, and the young master was that day buried, having lost all his lands, she couldn't tell how, and the new people had, for years, only kept him there in a condition little better than that of a servant to hunt the same dogs which were his own a short time ago. "But who can you be," she continued, "not to know anything about them now; yet, from what you say, you must have known them all long ago? Oh! if I could but believe that dear Nelly were still alive, from the sound of your voice, so like the tones of the one laid in his grave to-day, I would say that you were she; and if you are, I have kept everything that belonged to ye, and what was found on the morning after the Downs barn was burnt is now in my chest."

"My dear old friend," the stranger replied, "I'm your Nelly. The night I lost that handkerchief I found my husband, but we must have some rest before I can tell ye our history."

Dame Trenoweth showed her delight at again beholding Nelly, by preparing her a good supper and a comfortable bed. In the morning Nelly rose refreshed, and knowing the old woman wished to hear how she had fared since they danced together at Burian Fair, commenced by asking, "Did it never come into your head to think who the dark seaman could be? You had often seen the one, whom many took for Old Nick, dance with me in Boskenna hall, when he, and scores of others, came to Feast. He had to leave the country, because a person he beat in fair fight died from the effects of his lusty blows, three years, or so, before that Burian Fair; and the Bosun, too, was a lad you very well knew."

"Oh," exclaimed Betty, "now I see it all: the one that took you off was young Billy Brea, and his comrade was his cousin Bosvargus, of Kelynack."

"You have rightly guessed," Nelly replied.

"Hundreds of times," Betty continued to say, "old mistress and I have wondered what was become of the wild youngster who was so fond of you, even when a young girl working your sampler; and he, foremost in the hunt or fight, always said he'd have no other wife than the lovely little Nell. And old Madam would often say that, though he might be as poor as poor might be, yet was he come of the gentle blood of the Breas of Brea, who at one time were as rich and high as any in the West Country; and their old mansion, with the chapel turned into a barn by those who now occupy their estate, and their chapel on the hill of Brea, still show how grand they once were! I remember, too, the many good offers you had from rich farmers' sons around, and wondered how you refused them all."

When the old dame had somewhat recovered from her surprise, Nelly told her, that, young and thoughtless as she was, until Brea, to avoid trouble to his family, escaped with great haste and secrecy, she had no notion how deep was her love for the unfortunate youngster, and that he, unknown to every one but herself, had been for many days and nights in Boskenna or Treviddern cliff, before Bosvargus found a merchant-ship, in which they both left on a long voyage. Nelly knew if all went right, when they might be expected to return; and Brea promised her that, whenever he came on shore, he'd take no rest till he met her again in the old chapel of St. Loy, where many a long and dreary night she had watched and prayed for his safe return, and often of an evening, or a winter's night, when the inmates of Boskenna thought her in bed, or miles away at some merry-making, she was wandering the cliffs, or waiting in the cairns near by, in hope of meeting with her absent lover. Yet she had only the chance to see him at long intervals, and then only for a short time.

Four or five years after Brea went to sea, he became captain of a ship. Then he proposed to take Nelly with him as his bride, and she, being nothing loath, they met at St. Loy, one night, a little before the Fair, and agreed that, at the Fair, a dance together they would have, and that should be

their bridal night. He was so altered, as well as his comrade, the Bosun, that no person but Nelly knew them, and, if they did, no one would betray him, or turn informer.

When Nelly had come thus far in the history of her courtship, Betty said, "Now, my darling, one can understand how, in spite of wind and rain, you were so eager to go to Fair that night; and, faith, I'd go through fire and water for the man I loved when at the mad age you were then. One can see how drink, given without stint, by the open-hearted sailor, together with the music of the Bosun's pipe, set every one dancing in spite of themselves. Then, when the storm so suddenly came, and as suddenly broke, and you vanished in the midst of thunder and lightning, with Brea and his Bosun, everyone believed you were carried off by the Devil, and it's thought so still. But tell me what next became of ye?"

Nelly then related, how when the storm was at its height, Brea took her on towards Boskenna. They intended to see old Madam, say farewell, and take a horse from the stable to help them on their road; but, long before they came to Boskenna gate, with hard weather, drinking, and dancing, Nelly was unable to stand. Then Billy Brea took her up in his arms, and bore her along till they came to the Downs barn, where she fell on the straw half dead. Brea remembered every hole and corner about the place, and knew that a tinder-box, with candle and lanthorn, used to be kept in the barn that one might have light in winters' mornings to bundle up straw or hay for the cattle, and, being anxious to reach his ship early in the morning, wanting to know the time, and not being over steady in the head, when he struck a light and saw by his watch that there was still some hours to daybreak, he, neglecting to put out the candle, fell asleep and only woke to find the place on fire. He drew Nelly from the burning barn, and they hurried on to Mousehole, where they found the Bosun and boat's crew waiting for them.

"And have ye been lawfully married, my darling?" asked the old dame. "Indeed we have," answered Nelly, "not that I cared much about the ceremony; for to me his love was all in all, and from that moment I felt sure of his truth and affection I regarded him as my husband and freely gave him all that love requires. Yet as we were near a port when I was about to become a mother, my husband proposed we should go through the legal form which would entitle our children to bear their father's family name, if they chose; so one may say they are, at least, all truly born. But that was of little consequence, because he was no more known by the name of Brea."

Captain Black, as we shall henceforth call Nelly's husband, offered her a home either on land or on board. She decided to make her abode in his gallant ship; the Captain was pleased with her choice, and she not to be encumbered with an inconvenient dress for such a life, rigged herself in man's attire, and soon learned to do the duty of an able seaman. To act as cook and steward on board ship soon became as natural to her as the care of Boskenna mansion. Besides this, Nelly learned to keep the ship's reckoning and navigation so well, that often, when the Captain was laid low with wounds or fever, she took his place, and by that means saved the ship and ship's company.

During many years they traded from London to distant ports in various parts of the globe, without any serious mishap; but, on a return voyage from the Levant, a Barbary corsair gave chase and overtook them. At that time these sea-robbers seldom levied what they were pleased to call dues for coming into, or crossing, their waters, from any English ships, but often from a motive of revenge as much as for gain, confined their attention to Spanish and French vessels. This Levantine gang, however, attempted to board and take the *Buck*, and many of them were cut down by her crew, as they came up the side, before they gave over and made off. In this encounter Captain Black, Nelly, and several of the crew were badly wounded. This maddened the Captain, and he swore to serve out these cursed pirates if his crew would join him. Nell and all the ship's company, being as eager for revenge as their Captain, and hoping by this neck-or-nothing game to acquire riches quickly, as soon as their cargo was disposed of, the Captain having saved a large sum, procured a suitable craft for privateering which he called the *Lovely Nell*, and when she was well armed and victualled, they made sail for

the Levantine seas, where, in a short time, they captured several rich prizes, and, among others, the galleon which was the cause of their becoming privateers. On this crew they took ample revenge.

Nelly, and all the ship's company, liking the excitement of this wild life, and not being over-scrupulous as to the means of getting rich, no sooner neared the Cornish coast that the Captain, Nelly, Bosvargus, and some few others, put ashore, in a boat, at Goonwalla Cove, and buried a quantity of gold in some secret nooks of the cliff. The *Lovely Nell* then took her course for the sea-rovers' rendezvous in the West Indies.

There, many years were passed in buccaneering expeditions to plunder the French and Spanish Settlements, until they had amassed a great quantity of treasure in money and jewels, taken in pillage and for the ransom of prisoners. Nelly said that, for many years, she much enjoyed this roving life. During that time several children were born. And all who lived were boys, who soon became expert sailors, and, after serving their apprenticeship with their dad, all but the oldest and youngest had then left for other vessels.

About a year before the time Nelly returned to Burian, she, with her husband and most of the crew, thinking they were rich enough, wished to give up this roving life, and decided to settle down in their native land. They disinterred the riches they had buried in various uninhabited islands and keys, which were only frequented by such as themselves. The chests of dollars, bars of silver, ingots of gold, ornaments, jewels, and rare gems, which belonged to the Captain's share alone, were worth more than would purchase half-a-dozen such estates as Boskenna, and the dearest wish of her heart was that they might return in time to free that place for her father.

They were many months collecting all their riches. They then set sail from the western main, and arrived with fair weather in sight of the Cornish coast. The wind being light and sea smooth they kept close in shore for the pleasure of gazing on the well-remembered cays and coves.

More than a week before they sighted land, Nelly was seized with a most intense desire to be put ashore at some cove near the Land's End, and, when they beheld the well-known landmark of Burian Tower, saw Castle Trereen, passed Penberth, St. Loy, and Lamorna Coves, her longing to land and see her father was such that she could neither eat nor sleep; and this was about the time he breathed his last.

She begged to be landed in Mount's Bay, but her husband, wishing her to remain on board till their vessel should be disposed of and their riches turned into English money, they passed the Lizard, when, to save her from going mad, she was put ashore at Falmouth. Thence she was brought on horseback to Market-jew, and walked from that place to Burian. Her husband agreed, should the weather permit, to return to Mount's Bay, and there cruise about until she might be ready to proceed along with him, when, as was arranged, she would be taken on board from Mousehole or the Mount. This is the substance of what Nelly related to her old friend, of her adventures up to that night; and when Dame Trenoweth told her how all the Cardews were dead and gone from Boskenna, she no longer desired to see the old mansion, but heartily wished herself again on the ocean with the one for whom she had left her native land and weathered the storms of more than twenty years; she endeavoured to cheer herself with the hope that, ere many days, she would again behold the *Lovely Nell*, sailing, in all her pride of flowing sails, and, walking the quarter-deck, her husband, near enough to be hailed from Reginnis Cliff.

The second day after Nelly's return to Burian, she became anxious to rejoin her husband, as she knew the wind had been favourable for him to beat back to Mount's Bay. It had been arranged that he should cruise about near the coast for a day or two, or until she might give him a signal, from Paul Cliff, to send a boat ashore for her at Mousehole. The following morning Nelly rose by break of day, dressed herself in a suit of seaman's clothes which she had brought with her, left her discarded woman's dress, and a good sum of money, with Dame Trenoweth, and wished her good-bye, saying that she hoped to see her again ere long, when she and her husband would settle down in the West, to end their days in peace.

Before sunrise, Nelly stood on the high headland west of Mousehole, straining her vision in a vain endeavour to pierce the clouds of mist which rolled over the water and hid both sea and shore. She could hear the fishermen's voices and the sound of oars rattling in the row-locks; but, only at the distance of a stone's cast, land, sea, and sky, were all shrouded in fog. A few hours later the mist cleared away. She saw boats returning from the fishing-ground, and a good many vessels passing across the Bay, but no craft that could be taken for her husband's ship.

Tired with watching, from the cliff, the ships as they sailed past, she descended to Mousehole to make enquiries there, if any vessel like the *Lovely Nell* had been seen on the coast. She met with no person until near Squire Keigwin's mansion, and there, near the balcony, were collected a number of people around a pile of such things as are usually found loose on a ship's deck. Nelly joined the crowd, who told her that the water-casks, hatches, buckets, spars, and other articles she saw before her had, that morning, been found floating near Lamorna Cove; and everybody thought that a ship, which was seen cruising near the shore, the night before, must have struck on some dangerous rocks west of Lamorna, sprung a leak, and foundered in deep water, with all hands on board. Nelly, hearing this, rushed through the crowd, examined the wreck, and there saw many well-remembered articles belonging to her husband's ship. Whether Nelly cried, fainted, or gave any other natural expression to her grief, we don't know. Without discovering herself, however, to the people of Mousehole, she remained there all day, hoping to hear something farther from others who had gone out in search of anything which might be floating near the place where it was supposed the vessel must have sunk; but nothing more was learnt of the disaster. Some fishermen, however, said that when the mist cleared away they saw a boat far out to sea, but that they concluded it to be a smuggling craft bound for France.

Late at night Nelly returned crushed with grief, to her old friend who did all she could to console her, and time, which alleviates all sorrows, at last brought relief to the bereaved woman. Then she assisted the old dame in her household work and in carding and spinning – more because constant exercise made her think less of her loss than from any necessity for exertion to gain a livelihood. She had brought with her a good sum of money, intended to pay off the incumbrances of her father's estate (in these times a small amount of gold would buy a large extent of land). She had many valuable jewels besides. An Betty was also well off. Having seen the last of Madam Cardew, the old servant had from her son many valuable dresses and old heirlooms of the family, saved, between them, from the clutches of those who got the besotted Squire into their power, and, long before he died, this old servant of the family was the only one in the wide world to care for him, or who showed him any kindness. Nelly, on her mother's side, being a near relation to Dame Trenoweth, she regarded the poor wanderer as her own daughter. When several months had passed a circumstance occurred which gave Nelly just that uncertain glimmer of Hope against Reason, which is more grievous to bear than the certainty of evil.

A sealed bottle was found in Mount's Bay, containing a paper on which Captain Black's name, and those of several others, were written. It was directed to "Nelly Wearne, Boskenna;" and the news came to her through the gossip of the village. The paper was lost or destroyed without reaching her, because everyone thought that she was an inhabitant of a warmer region.

An Betty one day said to Nelly, "'Tis as good as a play, my dear, to see how all the old women of Church-town try to discover who and what you are, and they can't find out, because, for the fun of the thing, I take good care to fool them." Seeing that Nelly roused herself and took some interest in her talk, she continued,

"They are mad to know how you are never to be seen anywhere out-of-doors, except down in the cliffs, early in a morning or late of moonlight nights."

"Well, and what did you answer to that?" Nelly asked.

"To puzzle them the more," said Betty, "I told the curious, prying fools, that you were a Wise Woman come from the East – that you ramble over cliffs and moors to gather herbs, whilst the morning dew is on them, or when the moon is near the full – that no one can beat you in making

from them, ointments, salves, and still-waters – that you understand all sorts of complaints and can cure anything, from the gripes to the palsy. And now all the young wenches in the parish want to know if you can read fortunes; they think you can because you look like a gipsey, so they say. 'Why yes to be sure; nobody better,' I told them. Now listen to me," Betty went on to say, when she had recovered her breath, "I've made them believe that you can read the stars – that you know all that will happen to any body by the lines of their palms – that you can tell, by means of rushes, spring water, and ivy leaves, and scores of ways besides, who are to be married, as well as who are to die unblessed with a husband. And to everything they asked about your knowledge of white witchcraft, I assured them that you knew more about magic, conjuration, and so forth, than the Witch of Endor that we have all heard of."

"My dear old friend," says Nelly, "how could 'e go on so. I know no more about fortune-telling than you do – perhaps not so much, as you're a noted hand for charming."

"No matter for that," answered An Betty, "You know everything remarkable that ever happened in the families round up to the last twenty years or so, and what you don't know I can tell 'e. When they find that you're acquainted with what's past they are sure to believe that you can read them the future. Besides, this game will serve to divert your thoughts from ever dwelling on Billy Brea, or Captain Black, if you have a mind to call him so."

"I don't much mind trying, but how shall I manage to know who they are?"

"You keep in the hale," (best room) Betty replied, "and, before they see you, I'll come in and tell 'e who they are; then, when they enter to consult 'e, be sure, first of all, to give a hint at some scandal that made a noise about their families, no matter how long ago; everything bad is remembered for ages after the good is forgotten. Then promise the young lasses any number of sweethearts and a speedy marriage. You know what you used to wish for in your teens."

In spite of her grief, Nelly, to please the old dame, soon became widely known as the wise woman, or white witch, of Burian Church-town. She read the fortunes of young and old, much to their satisfaction and her own gain. Those who could'nt pay in cash paid in kind. The greatest trouble she had was with the sedate, plain, and sour elderly females, who were all but past hope. They would come, and come again, mad to know if they were ever to be blessed with a husband. By the old woman's advice, Nelly gave them dubious answers and advice for wheedling old hoary-heads and hobble-de-hoys, as they were easiest snared. 'Tis said some were supplied with love-powders, made from the bulbs of plants commonly called Adam and Eve, and that others were furnished with compounds for more questionable purposes. In a little while Nelly became famous for match-making. Her outlandish dress and the strange speech which she affected, made the simple folks, who had never been out of the smoke of their chimnies, think she must have been born and bred in Egypt, or in some other foreign land of which they had heard.

Sometimes, when at a loss to find a suitable response to the wishes or fears of her visitors, she would burst out with long, unintelligible words, as if forgetting herself, and end by saying, "Oh! my dears, know that, far away as I am from my native land, I often think that I am speaking to my cousins, the maidens of Jericho; all the tongues of eastern countries are easier for me than your Cornish speech." At other times she would entertain them with stories of what she had learned from an uncle in Babylon. Besides carrying on these profitable trades of soothsaying, charming, and deviltry, Nelly and Dame Trenoweth made and sold ointments that were in great demand for the cure of various skin diseases, which were more common in those times (when much salt meat was used all the year round) than the same class of distempers are at the present day. The way in which these ointments, salves, or unguents were prepared, was by seething in lard elder-flowers, betony, and other healing or drying herbs, cut fine, until their medical virtues were extracted; then the ointment was carefully strained from the herbs and ready for use. As a remedy for a troublesome distemper, now seldom heard of, they made an ointment from Skaw-dower, the English of the name is water-elder, (the *Scrophularia*;) sulphur was mixed with this unguent for the disease alluded to. Another noted preparation of this time

was a golden-coloured salve, made from purified lard and celandine juice; this was much esteemed as a remedy for obscured sight. Our wise-women also distilled elder-flowers, eye-bright, and other cooling herbs for eye-waters.

Nelly and her aged friend had acquired much useful knowledge about the virtues of plants from Madam Cardew, who, like many other ladies of the West Country, at that time, prepared from simples, many useful medicines with which they supplied their poorer neighbours, and such was Nelly's fame as a skilful doctress, that, before a year was gone, gentle and simple came from a great distance to consult her for her medicines. Her preparations might have possessed medical virtues which need not be despised even in these enlightened times. Though the faculty make a jest of old women's nostrums, yet in our great-grandmother's time, the uses and natures of various plants were much better understood by country ladies than they are at the present day; because those who are esteemed accomplished botanists pay more attention to the classification and nomenclature of plants than to their usefulness. In this kind of life, Nelly passed her time – seemingly tranquil. Knowing that any expression of gloomy feeling only makes it take the deeper root, she showed no outward signs of sorrow. Yet she was for ever grieving over the untimely fate of the lost ones; and, when alone with her old friend, she would often say that, in spite of all she could do to forget, her heart was ever with her husband and children at the bottom of the deep. However skilful the poor woman might have been in reading others' fortunes, she little knew what fate had in store for her.

One Autumn evening, about three years after Nelly returned, she was alone with her old friend relating some adventures of her seafaring life. As usual, her husband's reckless courage and bravery was the theme of her discourse. A knock was heard at the open door. Dame Trenoweth rose and saw, standing on the door-sill, a stout, dark man, who asked if any one lived there who could read his fortune? Nelly knew the voice, sprung to the door, and was clasped in her husband's arms.

"Whatever has happened," said Nelly, "thank the Powers, you are safe. But tell me where are my sons?" "Here's one of them," said a lusty young fellow, stepping into the doorway, from having stood on one side fearing the fortune-teller wouldn't turn out to be his mother, "and my eldest brother is on board our good ship anchored in Guavas Lake, which we left a few hours since."

The Captain then related how he had come to Boskenna, expecting still to find some of the Cardews there, and Nelly with them. He found none but strangers, who told him that the Cardews were all dead and their clothes washed – that Nelly Wearne had never been heard of since she was carried away by the Old One, as every body believed.

They came on to Church-town and enquired at the inn if a strange woman had come to the parish about three years since, and were told that a gipsy fortune-teller, who lived with Betty Trenoweth, came there about that time.

Before going to rest Captain Black related how, on the foggy morning, when he hoped to take Nelly on board, by a mistake in reckoning, he kept too near the shore, and their ship struck on a rock west of Lamorna. As the ship leaked but little at first, they hoped she had only sustained slight damage. They tacked off the coast, still shrouded in dense fog, and intended to bring her into Mousehole or Penzance; but, in an hour or so, the water poured in so fast that they had barely time to launch a boat and place in it a small part of their riches, when the *Lovely Nell* went to the bottom, with several of the crew in her hold. The Captain told all hands to let the jewels, gold, and silver go to Davy Jones's locker, but some of them, disregarding his orders, went below and were endeavouring to save a part of their riches when the ship sunk, and he being the only one then on deck swam off and reached the boat. They remained an hour or more, beating about where the ship went down, in hopes that some of the submerged crew might escape from the hold and rise to the surface. The fog still hid the shore, so that they knew not on which side of the coast they lay, and, before they had time to think much of their loss, or to form any plans for the future, a ship, with sails and rigging all out of order, loomed in the mist, within speaking distance.

There was not a soul to be seen on the dirty-looking craft. Black hailed her with the usual questions. No response. They were about to board her and hailed again, when a man rambled to the gangway and, in a drunken voice, answered "Here I am: this ship is the *Red Rover*." To the questions where bound, &c., he replied "We are from the Seas; we want to get to Madagascar; can't 'e tell us the way, mate, and where we are now? we ought to be near there by this time I should think, and seeming to me I have heard your voice before now, but can't call 'e by name, who are 'e an? and where do 'e hail from when you are home?"

On getting nearer, Captain Black perceived that the one who spoke to him was a St. Just man, who had sailed with him many years – a good fellow, and a first-rate seaman when sober, but he was so seldom capable of performing his duty, that the Captain, to be rid of him, and others of the crew equally fond of rum, had, a year or so ago, left them the good ship in which they sailed; but now from neglect, those who built the strong and swift-sailing craft wouldn't know her.

"Oh; I know 'e now," said the St. Just man, after he had stared at Captain Black awhile. "You are our old commander, and I am brave (very) and glad to find 'e; and where have 'e left your ship, the *Lovely Nell*?"

Black inquired for their captain and quarter-master.

"I'm cappen to-day," he of the *Red Rover* replied, "we are all commanders in turn when we arn't too drunk, like all the rest of us are now. As for quarter-master, we haven't wanted any yet to share the prizes; but we want a captain who can keep the reckoning, and you shall take charge of the ship with all my heart, if you will."

With the St. Just man's full consent, Black and the remnant of his ship's company, among whom were his two sons, took possession of the *Red Rover* which, for strength and swiftness, was almost equal to his former craft. Before the drunken crew came to their senses all the arms and ammunition were secured in the cabin. Then, over a bowl of punch, Black was elected Captain; a quarter-master was chosen, as was usual with these hardy seamen; and they had a carpenter among them who always performed the surgical operation: in case of need he would take the wounded limb under his arm, and, with his big saw, separate it from the body of his patient, with as much ease and as quickly as he could have cut a spar in two, and with his red-hot axe cauterize the wound.

Rules were drawn up, agreeably to the sea-rover's code, and sworn to on an axe – the *Rover's* old crew consenting to all Captain Black required on the condition that there should be no stint of rum.

Now a few days after this, whilst the old and new hands were working in company, clearing the deck of all lumber, that they might have a fair stage for fighting and otherwise getting things into ship-shape, it leaked out and was known to the Captain that, only a few months since, the *Rover's* former crew had chosen a commander and officers who knew something of navigation, but when the crew was augmented by half a score desperadoes from the lawless multitude swarming about the islands, these officers, for trying to check the riotous proceedings of their ship's company, got themselves marooned; that is, they were put ashore on an uninhabited island, that they might take their chance to die or live. As these deserted men were the only ones on board who had any notion of keeping a ship's reckoning, the drunken crew, who took possession, when found in Mount's Bay, had a very vague idea as to what part of the world they were sailing in, and they had, by fits and starts, a week or so past, given chase to the *Lovely Nell*, thinking her to be some richly laden merchant-man. She and her crew had been altered in her rig, and otherwise, so as to pass for a ship pursuing an honest vocation. Some of the marooned men were well known to Captain Black and esteemed by him to be worthy fellows, as pirates go, and as brave men and true – for gentlemen of their profession. Without enlightening his crew as to their destination, he made sail for the desolate island, and by the time they had their guns, pistols, and cutlasses clean and fit for service they arrived at the place of exile only just in time to save the deserted men from starving in the midst of plenty; all for want of a tinder-box, or any other means of kindling a fire. The rescued men told Captain Black and the sober portion of his ship's company, that they would repay them for their deliverance with something more substantial

than words. The fact was that in wandering over and round the island in search of water, yams, roots and fruits, or whatever would contribute to sustain life, they had discovered an immense quantity of buried treasures, probably the concealed spoil of former pirates, which were taken on board to be shared among all but those who marooned them. The drunken mutineers, when their former officers were brought on board, were sent on shore with a tipsey fiddler to take their places.

Among the rescued Captain Black found one of his own sons. This did not surprise him, as he had left his father's ship many years ago, that he might enjoy more liberty elsewhere; but it accounted for the silence of the crew. It was only in their drunken bouts that an intimation of the occurrence escaped, on which the Captain acted.

Some provisions, a tinder-box, and materials for striking fire, were left with the sailors on the island. The rescued officers soon recovered their strength, and, falling in with a strong and swift-sailing Spanish ship, the *Rover* gave chase, and captured the prize, which, as one captain was enough in a ship, was handed over to those delivered from the island, who retained part of the crew and made the rest walk the plank.

Captain Black, with his share of the treasures found on the island, was as well off as ever he was for returning; but, as the greatest part of his ship's company preferred to enjoy their free-and-easy life a few years longer, they bore away to the Spanish Main, where they sometimes acted in concert with other buccaneers.

Nothing worthy of note is related of their adventures. One of their practical jokes was whenever the buccaneers took a priest in any of the Spanish settlements, they conveyed the sable gentleman on board, placed him on all-fours, and rode him round the deck, or made him dance by sweating him with pricks of knives or forks, &c., as long as the fiddler or piper could play.

In about three years they had treasures to their hearts' content, and those who chose to give up their adventurous career returned with Captain Black. Best part of the night was passed by the returned Captain in relating his adventures to his wife and the old dame.

Early next morning three horses were procured, and Nelly, with her husband and son, were on Newlyn beach by break of day.

Captain Black hailed the *Red Rover*. A boat, well manned, left the ship and soon grounded on Newlyn beach. Then such a man as the Captain was when he danced at Burian Fair, on his stormy bridal night, sprang from the boat and beat through the sea to meet his mother. With little delay great store of money, jewels, rich stuffs, and other valuables were landed and conveyed to Betty Trenoweth's dwelling. The *Red Rover* with Nelly's eldest son appointed commander, proceeded on her voyage to London, that her valuable merchandise might there be disposed of. Now the Captain and younger Black, by Nelly's earnest desire, consented at least to try the landsman's peaceful life. They had more riches than would suffice to purchase a good farm and enable them to live at their ease. The son, too, seems to have had no great love for a sea-rover's profession. Black leased, or purchased, a large old house at Trevorgans, with about thirty acres of tillable land, and a great run of downs and moors which, though they could not boast of much in the shape of game, were well stocked with rabbits, and the moors, in winter, were resorted to by wild-fowl – a substitute for beasts of chase not to be despised when but little fresh meat could be had. Then hunting was pursued as much for necessity as for pastime. The younger Black took to farming kindly, for one who had only been used to plough the deep, and soon acquired a sufficient knowledge of the simple husbandry practised at that time.

When the only crops grown in fields were corn and pulse, green crops for winter's consumption were unknown, and potatoes, just introduced, were regarded as something more curious than useful, and to be cultivated in the gardens of rich folks only; just as Jerusalem artichokes, asparagus, sea-kale, salsify, beans, and many other useful plants, which ought to be grown in every farmer's field or garden, are still neglected here. The bold Buccaneer, Black, was well received and made much of by the neighbouring gentry, who, for the most part, were very poor; yet they contrived to keep up a show of gentility on very inadequate means. Then in Burian parish alone, one might count

seven or eight gentlemen's seats, or, more correctly, what by courtesy were called such, which were inhabited by different branches of the Pendars, Tresillians, Davieses, Jenkins, Harveys, Hutchenses, and others. The Levealises had become extinct, and the Noys, Boscawens, Vivians, &c., had shortly before then removed from their ancient homes to other parts of the country. Portions of their old mansions still remain in the condition of dilapidated farm-houses in Trove, Trevider, Treveddern, Pendrea, Baranhuel, Alsia, Tresidder, Rissic, &c. A country church was then, (perhaps even more than it is now,) the principle stage on which the rural gentry displayed their state and grandeur to admiring rustics. Captain Black, not to be eclipsed, would appear in Burian Church on Sundays and holidays dressed in crimson damask waistcoat and breeches, silk hose, diamond knee and shoe-buckles, a red feather in his cocked hat, a gold chain round his neck with a diamond cross hung to it, jewel-hilted sword, hanging by a silk sash at his side; his naval-blue coat resplendent with gold buttons, lace, and other trappings proper to the Buccaneer's costume. Nelly, decked out in rich velvets, lace, silks, satins, and jewels which once belonged to dark-eyed senoras of Mexico or Peru, eclipsed all the ladies of the West Country.

Such a man as Captain Black, notwithstanding his former profession was not a person to be treated with contempt at any time, and much less "In the days when we went a pirating, a long time ago." These gentlemen were looked upon as heroic adventurers, who served the dons, by way of reprisal, no worse than they deserved. Because then, if an English, French, or Dutch ship put into a Spanish-American port she was likely to be confiscated, and her crew kept prisoners, or treated no better than slaves, if they escaped with their lives, till dearly ransomed. We have little to do, however, with the morality of sea-highwaymen. Yet, if old stories may be credited, our brave Buccaneer Black soon became a greater favourite with certain ladies of the parish than he was with their lovers and husbands.

One tale is often told of his adventures with a gay lady of the Tresillian family, who then lived at Tresidder, and how a noted smuggler called Ackey Carn, one both landless and lawless, who cared for no man, being a rival for the gay dame's favour, by way of a jest spoke of certain amatory passages which he had witnessed between the Captain and lady, whose powerful and proud relatives constrained Carn, under pain of their displeasure, to do penance in Burian Church for thus thoughtlessly exposing the scandal. But the culprit, who, according to custom, came into church barefooted and clad in a sheet, instead of kneeling before the priest or parson, to beg pardon, and otherwise express contrition, and receive the priestly reprimand with becoming humility, stood up in front of the roud-lofts (rood-loft,) turned his back to the priest and, facing the congregation (crowded to behold the show) made the well-remembered speech which begins: —

"Here am I, compelled by the law
For to deny what my own eyes saw, &c."

Here follows a minute relation, told in language more quaint than choice, which was calculated to spread the scandal far and near. Then, throwing off his sheet, he showed himself well armed and bade defiance to all priests, pirates, and Tresillians, this side of a disagreeably warm place, as he would have said, if paraphrases of gentle words and equivocations had been the fashion then; however, he said he didn't care a rap for any one before him, and he would fight them all one after the other.

Black took up the challenge as soon as given, and offered to fight him there and then, any way he chose, either with arms or naked fists. Their partisans decided that they should fight unarmed. Black threw down his sword and would have fought in the church had there been a clear field for their encounter. They passed through the hundreds who were assembled at a clear space or bowling-alley, below the cross. Ackey Carn, finding that Black was too dexterious for him in the use of his fists, and that he was getting the worst of it in boxing, turned the Captain over his hip and brought him down a fair back fall; and, as often as Black rose, the smuggler laid him down at full length, yet

always with the greatest care not to harm the man who had often treated him like a prince. Carn only wanted to convince the Captain that he was his match one way or another in the art of self-defence. The two men having fought and wrestled till they were bruised black and blue, acquired the greatest respect and admiration for each other's courage, fair play, and prowess; and they were taken at last into the public-house and, over a bowl of punch, the Buccaneer and smuggler Carn became sworn friends, which they ever remained until their day of doom, when they left this world together.

Notwithstanding the favours of country ladies and gentlemen, Black soon became tired of what he was pleased to call a landlubber's lazy life. Caring little for hunting, and less for farming and other sports or occupations which make rural life glide pleasantly away, he passed much of his time in the public-house, surrounded by a gang of loafers who drank at his expense and applauded his stories of savage warfare, told in such infernal language as is seldom heard except from the lips of sea-robbers. His greatest delight was to beat everyone in hard drinking – no easy matter in those times. An old song of that jovial age thus describes what was deemed fair enebriation: —

"Not drunk is he who from the floor,
Can rise alone, and still drink more!
But drunk is he who prostrate lies,
Without the power to drink or rise!"

After days and nights of drunken revelry, Black, in gloomy fits, would often wander down to the cleves and pass many days alone, in the carns and sawns of the sea-shore, or was only seen in company with the smuggler Carn, who, from the Sunday when they fought for the honour, or disgrace, of the fair lady, became the Captain's favourite companion. Yet time hung heavy on the Captain's hands, and by way of a change, he had built from his own designs, a strong, swift-sailing, half-decked craft, which might serve for fishing and fetching liquors and other goods from France. There was a high duty on salt then.

When she was all rigged and ready for sea Captain Black took Carn for his mate, and they, with a crew of such dare-devils as suited them, set sail one Friday morn in the Fall and shaped their course for Gunwallo, where they landed, dug up and shipped the treasures taken from the Moorish galley some five-and-twenty years before. Thence our free-traders bore away for their usual trading port in Brittany. They soon procured the goods they required, then passed several days drunk and rioting, and often fighting, with anyone they encountered, for mere pastime. As smugglers spent abundance of money in the place, they were allowed to do much as they pleased. At last they made sail for home with a fair breeze, which, however, soon died away; and, for several days, there was scarcely a breath of wind. The sky continued overcast and the air sultry. During this heavy weather Black lay among the goods like one worn out, and scarcely spoke or moved. After a tiresome spell of beating about and making but little progress, the wind freshened, and one evening, about night-fall, they sighted the Lizard. Then, suddenly, black clouds gathered over-head, and a thunder-storm came on. With the first flash of lightning Black sprung up and said, "Hoist all sail, boys, for by all the devils we'll get home this night." The crew wished to shorten sail or lay to till day-dawn, but the Captain's spirits rose with the storm. He took the helm, and shaped his course in almost total darkness, for Penberth Cove. The boat going before the wind, bounded over the waves like a thing of life; the crew expected every moment to become a wreck; they could only see the cliffs by the flashing lightning; when Black, as if sporting with their fears, cried out, "Bravo, devils of the whirlwind, fire away, we will give ye a salute with our thunder;" then, giving the helm to Carn, he loaded and fired their swivel-gun, in answer to a cannonade from the clouds. The crew were confounded by the blasphemous talk of their commander, who, amidst the crash and roar of wind, waves, and thunder, seemed rejoicing in his native element. Their terror was at the utmost when, amidst the awful tumult, he stood up and, tearing out a handful

of hair, threw it away in the blast, bellowing out, "There, fellow devils, take that; stand by me now, and I'll be with ye soon."

That instant the lightning burst out in such bright flashes over the cliffs, that rocks and cars were seen as plainly as at noon-day, and a sheet of flame hung over across the cove, from Pednsawnack to Cribba Head, till they ran safely in and the storm died away.

With the help of farmers' men and others, who had been several days and nights watching for the smugglers' return, the goods were soon landed, taken up to a level spot above the capstan, and covered with a tarpauling. Then two or three kegs were broached, a fire made, and the smugglers, with those who assisted them, sat round to enjoy the good liquor and other things.

At the height of their carousal the Captain drew the keg he sat on close beside the pile of blazing wood. He had not long settled himself there to drink and smoke, when his breath appeared to be all ablaze and his body in flames. His mate, Carn, threw himself on him, and swore he would save his Captain or perish with him. And perish with him he did; for, before the rest of the company had power to hinder him, both the commander and his mate were blazing like a bonfire. They neither spoke nor struggled. The others, in great terror at beholding their fearful end, went off, in all haste, to Treen, there remained till morning; then they and many others went down to the Cove, and on the spot where the two men were burned, not a sign of them was to be seen: all their ashes, even, were blown away.

Now, when folks came to think of Captain Black's strange career and stranger departure, many believed that he was either an evil spirit in human form or else a man possessed with a devil, and it remained undecided by the people of the West, whether he was man or demon, or a compound of both. Yet, in all probability, this strange being was only mad at times, and his sudden exit, might have been a case of spontaneous combustion, (if indeed, there be such a thing.) Many of those who in former times were believed to be demoniacs, witches, or wizards, would, if they lived and played their pranks at the present day, be simply regarded as lunatics and most interesting cases for the medical student rather than for the rude treatment of inquisitor, exorcist, or other priestly operator. We hear but little more of Nelly. Her son purchased a farm in St. Just, she removed thither with him, and ended her days in peace. Some descendants of the rover, (whose name we have abridged) were living in the western parishes a few years since.

About a century ago an aged dame of the family kept school in Burian Church-town and used frequently to relate strange traditions of her buccaneering ancestor.

The Witch of Burian Church-town

These midnight hags,
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
And conjurations, horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
And set the ministers of hell at work.

Rowe. – "Jane Shore."

Who rides my horse a' nights,
Who lamed the miller's boy,
Who raised the wind that blew my old barn roof down;
But I've a silver bullet ready for her that will lame her,

Hobble how she will. —Old Song.

ABOUT the time of Captain Black's exit old Betty Trenoweth from her superstitious usages and pretensions to mysterious science, became notorious as a witch, and her practice of the black art was discovered and put past doubt by some one in Church-town, against whom she had a grudge. A man, finding when all attempts to please old Betty failed, that his cattle still pined off their legs, and everything went wrong, and that there was nothing but bad luck about house and land. Then he or his wife determined to punish the witch and bring her to reason. He made her image in clay or dough, we have forgotten which, and, when the figure was fashioned to their mind, ran up a good long skewer through the lower part of its body. Now, that they might know the effect of their counter-spell, some persons in the plot, entered the witch's dwelling, at the moment the skewer pierced her effigy, and saw her fall suddenly on the ground, where she continued rolling, kicking, and groaning in great agony for some minutes, when she exclaimed, "Good Lord, what's in my body? I can hold out no longer; do run over to Dick Angwin's and tell am I'll make et up weth am ef he will!" Fearing the witch might die in her agony and leave her curse on them or the spell unbroken, they hastened to make friends with Betty and destroyed the image.

Yet this punishment didn't make the old dame desist from carrying on her naughty tricks; for, one Thursday about the end of harvest, Betty jogged away to Penzance, intending to buy a pig that she might fatten it for winter's use. She was in price, and had nearly come to terms for one which suited her fancy. There were only a few pence between her and the seller; yet, pretending she didn't care about it, and saying she wouldn't give a farthing more, she turned her back and went to look at some others. That while, one Tom Trenoweth, a cousin of hers, offered a trifle more and purchased the sow.

Tom had paid the "earnest money," when the old dame came back and said she would have the sow. "You're too late, cousin," said Tom, "I've bought her." "And what made thee interfere, I'd like to know, when I was in price for the sow?" said Betty; "ef I don't have her thee shust wish thy cake dough, and find the sow the dearest bargain thee hast ever had." Tom refused to give up his purchase. Betty went off mumbling threats and curses, and shaking her bony finger at Tom.

With much ado, the man got home the sow, put her in a crow (sty), filled the pig's-trough with wash, and firmly fastened the door. Tom rose early next morning, and found the crow-door open, the pig's-trough full of wash and his sow rooting in a neighbour's garden; and it took all the men and boys in Church-town many hours to get the troublesome beast of a sow back into her crow again; and in spite of all he could do, scarce a night passed but she would get out, be off to lanes miles away, and do some mischief that Tom would have to pay for.

Months passed, during which the sow had given to her corn, meal, milk, and everything else that could be thought of to satisfy her, but all without avail – the more she ate the leaner and more lanky she became. One day Old Betty met the owner of the pig and said, quite friendly-like, "well, cousin Tom, how es thy sow getting on? Will she be fat against Christmas? I hear she is very troublesome; perhaps you had better sell her to me. What do 'e look for her now?"

"No," Tom replied, "ef she esn't fat for seven years, in Sundays, you shall never be the better off for begrudging her to me; old black-witch that you are; I'll drive her to Penzance and sell her for less than I gave, rather than you shall have her."

More months passed, during which the old woman, in spite of Tom's rebuffs, made him various offers for the sow, but every time less than the preceeding, as she said the pig was getting poorer and would soon be reduced to skin and bone. Tom, finding that his sow had eaten and destroyed more than she was worth, and all the time getting leaner, fastened a rope to her leg and started early one Thursday morning for Penzance, determined to sell her for anything he might be offered rather than bring her back again. The sow went on, quiet as a lamb, till she came to a stream running across the road in Bojew-bottom; there was no bridge over Bojew water in Tom's time. The sow wouldn't take to the water, nor could the man make her; he tried to put her across, wheelbarrow fashion, holding her up by the hind legs; then he endeavoured to drag her through the water, but she turned right around, bolted in between his legs, upset him in the muddy stream, and the rope slipping from his hand, she took her way up the moors, over hedges and ditches. Tom followed her, through bogs, brambles, and furze for many miles, till they came out in Leah lanes on the Land's End road to Penzance and Sancreed; the sow seemingly never the worse. But Tom felt very tired, and his clothes were torn to rags with the thickets.

The sow, now on the road to Penzance, and near Tregonebris Downs, went along so quietly that Tom caught hold of the rope again, made a running noose in the end of it, and (that she mightn't jerk it away again,) passed it over his hand and reeved it round his wrist. That being done to his mind, "Now, ah es much to me," says Tom to himself, or to the sow, "late as et es, ef I don't get 'e to market yet." He hadn't spoken the words a minute when a hare leaped out of a bush beside the road, made a squeak that sounded like "chee-ah!" ran down over the moor, the sow followed after, dragging Tom along, and never stopped, going almost as fast as the hare, till she came to Tregonebris bridge, when in under the road she bolted, so far as the rope would let her. The opening under the road being little other than a drain, or "bolt," as we say, Tom couldn't even crawl in on all-fours, his arm was almost dragged out of joint, and the loop, reeved on his wrist, cutting through the skin; Tom by good luck having his knife in his pocket, managed to get at it, cut the rope, and let the sow go; but she only went as far as the middle of the bridge, where it was narrowest, and fell to lie in the water.

Tom could neither drive nor coax his pig from under the road. He threw all the stones he could find at her till he had nearly closed up the bridge on one side, but she hardly noticed him with a grunt.

About noon Tom got very hungry; yet he was afraid to leave his sow and go to the nearest house, that he might have something to eat, because whilst he was out of sight the devil-directed pig might bolt away, no one could tell whither. Tom sat down beside the bridge, wishing some one might go by or heave in sight within call. He had to wait there till near sunset, when who should come by, from Tregonebris way, but Old Betty, with her basket on her arm and knitting-stocking in her hand. She came on clicking her needles, knitting all the way, and looking as demure as if "butter wouldn't melt in her mouth and cheese choke her." When she saw Tom sitting beside the road she seemed all surprised like, and said "Arrea! cousin, es that you? Have 'e sold the sow and got drunk on the profit, that you have missed your way back, an soas?"

"Well, Old Betty, es that thee? I must say that thee hast beaten me hollow," Tom replied. "The sow is under the 'brudge,' and thee dust know it well enow; for who but thee crossed the road and went over the moor in the shape of a hare? Thy friend, the devil, lent thee his hounds, I suppose, to drive her in where she can neither turn, go forth, nor come back, et seems to me."

"Well, thank the powers," said she, according to her custom, when anyone came to grief, "I am'at the only one in trouble this day; but as you are a cousin of my own, I'll give 'e the value of the sow still, and that es about half of what she cost 'e, because she's now gone to skin and bone, et will take months to get her up again."

"If you will give me something from your basket to eat, and what you last offered, you may take her, get her out ef you can, and be d – d to 'e."

But no, the old witch stood out, and wouldn't give a farthing more than half of what Tom paid for the sow; and he was glad at last, to get that and a two-penny loaf which she took from her basket. Then the dame went down to the mouth of the bridge, or bolt, only just said "Chee-ah! Chee-ah!" and the sow came out and followed her home like a dog.

Tom took the road to Sancras Church-town, and stayed at "The Bird in hand" as long as his money lasted. "It was no good to lay by; he might as well spend it first as last," he said, "because every shilling of the devil's coin will go and take nine more with it." All who heard Tom's story agreed that what seemed a hare, to cross his path, was no other than Old Betty in that shape, and wished they could send a silver bullet through her. It is said here as elsewhere that lead has no effect on a witch-hare. The old woman kept her pig many years for a store-sow and she became the parent of a numerous progeny.

The Story of Madam Noy

After Betty had gained her ends with Tom Trenoweth, nobody ventured to deny her anything she coveted except Madam Noy, of Pendre. From the little known of this lady, she seems to have been a strong-minded close-fisted termagant. She was fond of going to law, and had always suits on hand concerning the bounds and common rights of her lands. She is said also to have kept the best hunter and hounds in the West Country, and that she coursed with them daily as she rode over her farms, across hedges and ditches, to inspect her work-people and stock. We suppose she was a widow then, or if she had a husband he made too little noise in his time to be remembered. She took great pride in her poultry; above all, in her rare breed of hens with large tufts or cops on their heads. Now Betty knew that Madam had often refused to give or sell any eggs from her coppies to her best friends, yet one morning early she put on her steeple-crown hat and mantle, took her basket and stick, hobbled down to Pendre, and seated herself on a stile entering the town-place. In a few minutes she saw Madam Noy come from the barn with a bowl of corn in her hands to feed her poultry of all sorts and sizes. "Good morrow to your honour," said Betty, as she went up curtsying and nodding to Madam, "Dear me, how well you are lookan, you're gettan to look younger and younger I do declare, and what beautiful hens, ducks, and geese, you've got! The finest in the parish I do believe. Do 'e know, Madam dear, that I've got an old cluckan hen that I should like to put to set, ef you would spare me a dozen eggs, the sort of your coppies I'd like best." "Arrea! Betty, I suppose you would," said Madam, "but I've no eggs to spare from my hens with cops nor the ones without, while I've so many of my own clucking hens about. And dust thee think, than, that when I've refused to sell any of my new sort to my own sister Dame Pendar, or to my cousin Madam Trezillian, that I would spare them to the likes of you?" "I don't care a cuss whether you do or no," Betty replied, "but if you won't sell me some eggs you shall wish your cake dough." "Now go thee way'st home thou deceitful old bitch," said the lady in a rage, "and what business hast thee here pryan about the place and covetan all thee cust spy with thy evil eye, I'd like to know. Begone, or I'll set the dogs at thee, and throw fire over thee, doesn't think that I'm afraid of thy witchcraft."

"I am on the church-road through the town-place," said Betty, "and here I will stop as long as I like in spite of you and your lawyers too." Madam Noy and Betty continued their threats and abuse until the lady became so enraged, at the old woman's persistence to stay in her town-place, that she snatched up a stone, threw it at Betty, and hit her right on her noddle, with a blow that made her jaws rattle. Betty limped to the stile mumbling to herself, "now may the devil help me and by all that's evil here I will rest till I've curst thee to my heart's content." Standing on the stile she pointed her finger at Madam Noy and made the lady 'shake in her shoes;' whilst she nodded her head, waved her out-stretched hand, and ill-wished her by saying, —

"Mary Noy, thou ugly, old, and spiteful plague,
I give thee the collick, the palsy, and ague.
All the eggs thy fowls lay, from this shall be addle,
All thy hens have the pip and die with the straddle.
And before nine moons have come and gone,
Of all thy coppies there shan't live one:
Thy arm and thy hand, that cast the stone,
Shall wither and waste to skin and bone."

Madam Noy was never well from that day, her fowls' eggs were always bad, and all Betty's spells took effect. Before six months were past she lost her coppies every one; for, in place of gay tufts of feathers, the chickens' brains came out on all those hatched from her coppies' eggs.

A noted old droll-teller and clock-cleaner of Sancreed, called Billy Foss, used to recite this, and many other stories, in a sort of doggrel, in which he mostly half said and half sung his drolls. We remember but little more of Billy's verse, in this story, than the few lines given above; these are enough, however, for a sample of the kind of composition that was much in vogue with our old droll-tellers.

'Tis said that Betty owed her proficiency in the black art to her frequent conferences with Old Nick, (or her familiar, whatever his name might have been,) who almost nightly took the form of An' Mally Perase's black bull, and, under that shape, met the witch on the northern side of Burian churchyard. Much more is related of Betty's transactions, but nothing new in the annals of witchcraft; and enough has been stated to serve as an example of the faith and practices in such matters long ago; indeed, we may say that such beliefs and doings are anything but extinct; something turns up, every now and then, to show that, notwithstanding all the teaching and preaching, faith in witchcraft, and other dreary superstitions, are nearly as rife as ever.

We give the following instance as just related.

A Modern Sancreed Witch

Only t'other day a farmer of Sancreed had three or four dairy-cows to let, and a woman who lived near by offered to take them, but as he didn't altogether like this woman he wouldn't close the bargain with her, and another neighbour soon agreed for the dairy. When the woman heard who had been preferred, she told everybody she met with that Jemmy – the man who took the cows – should rue the day that he ventured to cross her path. "For if I didn't know the right hour and minute," said she, "I would ill wish him every minute of the day till the spell was cast." A week or so after the first cow was in milking, Jemmy and his wife came to the farmer's house one night and said, "we believe that our cow must be ill-wished, for her milk is all bucked and gone to cruds (curds), with only a mere skin of cream on the pans; if you don't believe it come and see for yourself." The farmer and some of his family went home with the dairy-man, and found the milk like it often is in summer when the buck (spittle-fly) is on the grass, that, so it is believed, makes milk curdle then without becoming sour. The farmer and his wife couldn't tell what to think of milk being in that state early in spring; he took home the cow, however, and let the dairy-man have another, and when she was milked by Jemmy her milk 'runned' too, like that of the former one, which was then all right in the master's dairy. And so it continued with all the other cows Jemmy had; it was only for a day now and then, that any cream rose; other things went wrong with him and his family, and the farmer was at last obliged to take back his cows because there was no chance of his dairy-man making the rent. Meanwhile the woman who coveted them bragged how she had served Jemmy out for interfering.

"The very night I heard that he had took the cows," said she, "I went on my knees under a white-thorn tree by the crossroads, and there, for best part of that night, I called on the powers till they helped me to cast the spells that gave old Jemmy and his family plenty of junket and sour milk for a time." In fact she was proud to make her neighbours believe her to be a witch.

We suppose the reason why this would-be witch chose the cross-road thorn as a suitable place for her hellish work, was because many such trees are said to have sprung from stakes driven into suicides' graves; also on account of those sites being often visited by Old Nick and his headless dogs when they take their nightly rounds to see if any spirits have wandered from their assigned resting-places.

We may remark that, although the Black-huntsman's hounds are said to have neither heads nor tails, yet according to our popular mythology, they are believed to have the former appendages, with the same lineaments they bore when they dwelt on earth in human forms, but they make their heads invisible, to ordinary mortals, that they may not be known.

The same applies to apparently headless coach-drivers, horses, &c., that were frequently seen in old times.

A Queen's Visit to Baranhual

At all feasts where ale was strongest,
Sat this gracious Queen the longest,
First to come and last to go.

Longfellow, slightly altered.

THERE is a tradition, – that has taken the form of a droll, as it is related by old people of Buryan, – which sayeth that when the Pendars lived in grand style, in Baranhual, a Queen and her retinue landed from a Man-of-war, at Moushal, for the sake of seeing the Logan Rock and Land's End. News of the intended trip soon spread, and reached Buryan ere sufficient horses could be procured to furnish out the cavalcade. On the morning of the royal progress, work was at a stand still, and nearly all who could "lift a leg" started off from house and field towards Buryan Church-town, as it was rumoured that Her Majesty intended to inspect Buryan Church on her way. So, in the morning early, Buryan bells were set a ringing; and Church-town folks arrayed themselves in their best to receive the Queen with due honours.

Every soul left Baranhual except old Dame Pendar, who was rather infirm. "My lady, the Queen," said she, "is but a woman, and make the most of her, even if she do wear a crown on her head every day of her life, with velvet robes all broider'd in gold, silk stockings, and diamond-buckles on her satin shoes, with rings on her fingers and bells on her toes, yet she's much like myself under all her fine clothes; and it esn't worth while to leave the house alone, and all that's in it, and go so far to see her at my time of life; besides there's the milk to scald and many jobs to be done at all hours. No, verily," said she to her son and his wife, "you may be off to Church-town with the scabble-angow (rag, tag, and bob-tail), but, indeed, I'll stay home and guard the house, and all that's in it. That shall never be left alone whilst I draw breath."

At that time the Pendars kept a capstan in repair, and gave other aids to the fishery at Penberth, – which is partly in Baranhual ground, – and received for it a certain portion of fish from the owners of each boat kept in the cove.

An hour or so after all the household, but old mistress, had started off to behold a queen, An' Joan Taskes came up from Penberth with a cowl full of fish, as the Squire's dues from all the boats which landed that morning. Madam told An' Joan to take the fish to the river, and that she would be down in a minute to help clean them. Before Joan had taken all out of her cowl, and laid them on the stepping-stones, that stood in the water where Baranhual bridge now crosses it, old mistress arrived, knife in hand, ready to help clean and split her fish. They had nearly finished their job, – the old lady standing on a stepping-stone, with her skirts tucked up to her knees, taking the fish from An' Joan, who waded in the stream to give them a last rinsing, – when the old fishwife, on hearing a clatter of horses' hoofs coming down hill, looked up, turned round, and bawled out, "Can I believe my eyes; look 'e mistress, dear; ef I live, there's hundreds of kings and queens ridan down the hill. I can see more than a score, and there's more a coman round the turnan; pull down your petticoats, do! Oh, I wish to gracious I had a clean towser on, and my best hat."

Before old Joan had ceased exclaiming, and fixing herself as tidy as she could – though Madam Pendar, intent on the fish, didn't notice her commotion – a score or so of ladies and gentlemen on horseback, were within a stone's-cast. They drew reins, and a horseman started forward, rode down into the water, accosted the old lady, enquired if Squire Pendar lived in the house on the hill, and informed the wondering women that Her Majesty, on her route to the Logan Rock, well remembering that the Pendars had always been staunch friends to the royal cause, had preferred coming that way to give him a visit, instead of seeing Buryan Church, which Her Majesty and her attendants might

have a glance at on their return from the Land's End. Madam replied that she was very glad to see "my lady, the Queen;" and was sorry that her son and his wife, with all their servants, were gone to pay their respects to Her Majesty in Church-town, as everybody said that was the intended route, and nobody home but herself to receive them.

"My royal mistress approaches to speak for herself," said he.

Madam was still standing on a stone, knife in hand, her coats tucked up, and kirtle drawn through her apron-string, when the Queen, understanding that her gentleman was speaking to no less a person than Madam Pendar, rode into the water, shook hands with her, and said, "If all are gone to see the Queen and left 'e alone, the Queen is come to see you; and I, and my attendants, would be glad to rest a while to have something to eat, and to mend the rents in our clothes that are torn to 'skethans' with thorns and brambles that overhang the narrow lanes." "The Lord love 'e, my dear lady, the Queen," exclaimed she, making a low curtsy, and quite overcome with honour. "Do 'e put your hand, now – as mine, on that side, is fishy and wet – into my left pocket, take out the key of the fore-door, and my huzzey (housewife) you will find in it needles and thread of all colours, ride up to the house, let yourselves in, and I'll follow with the fish, and do the best we can to entertain 'e." "We should like nothing so much as some of that nice fish, draining on the stones," said the Queen, in trying to get a key, large enow for a church-door, out of Madam's pocket. "Bless your life, and you shall have them," replied the old lady. "I am so flambustered (confounded) with the honour you have done me, that I hardly know which end I stand upon. But you will want my scissors, pieces of stuff, and other things in my pockets, for mending," continued she, in untying the string from around her waist, that kept up her pockets; "take them all as they are; you will find most everything in them."

The precious pockets, like knapsacks, were handed to a gentleman who slung them across his saddle-bow, and the Queen rode on well pleased with Dame Pendar.

Joan stood gaping and staring, nodding and smiling, without speaking a word, though many spoke to her; but their backs were no sooner turned than she said, "Why, mistress, dear, can you make out their lingo? Can that lady, who spoke to 'e, be a Queen? Why, where's her crown? It wasn't upon her head, I'm sure." "Cease thy clack, be quick and gather up the fish," Madam replied; "she put her crown in her pocket, I suppose, that the thorns might'nt sweep it off her head and under the horses' feet; thee west see her wearing of it when she's seated in the great parlour, by and bye, eating bread and honey: I'm glad, though, thee hast brought up a lot of nice mullett, bass, whiting-pullocks, and other fish for pies and frying, besides good large cod and ling for boiling."

When Dame Pendar and Joan got up to the house, they found the Queen and her ladies in the parlour busy sewing up rents in their garments; and the gentlemen – having stabled their horses – had made a blazing fire on the hearth. A large brass brewing-pan was placed on a brandes (trivet); pounds of butter and lard cast into it, and the nicest frying-fish cooked therein.

Mullet-and-parsley pies were put to bake on the hearth; large fishes boiled, and conger stewed, with fennel, in as many crocks and kettles as it would contain, with other things. Ladies and gentlemen – Queen and all – helped: some got the best pewter platters, plates, and flagons – only used on grand occasions – out of a chest, those on dressers and shelves, for ordinary use, wern't half enough; others peeled garlic and hollick, chopped fennel, tarragon, and other herbs to flavour sauces. Several tried to grind mustard, but none could give the right motion to their knees to make the bullet spin round in the bowl, and old mistress was obliged to grind it all, or have it spoiled. They dished up fried and boiled fish, swimming in butter; bowls of cream were poured into the pies; lucky, too, Madam had a batch of barley bread just baked, hot and hot.

Two gentlemen placed a high-backed carved oak chair, with several pillows thereon, at the head of the hall table, and Her Majesty was seated in as much state as she desired. They ate, one and all, with such an appetite, as if they hadn't tasted "meat" for a week, so old Joan Taskes said. The Queen imbibed old ale from a silver goblet; her ladies from pewter tankards and flagons; her gentlemen

drank beer and cider from black-jacks and brown-georges (leather drinking vessels), which were often replenished.

Wasn't Dame Pendar delighted to see it all, as she bustled about to help Her Majesty to all sorts of sauces, of her own compounding. Indeed it was, as she said, "the proudest day of her life." She was, above all, elated when her royal guest smacked her lips after a sip of brandy, and swore, "by cock and pie," that "true as she was a sinner, never before, in all her born days, had she so much enjoyed a repast."

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