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Folk-Lore of

The North Carolina Mountains
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

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ENTITLED Folk Lore of the North Carolina Mountains

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Plate I.

Map of portion of Unaka Mountains on boundary between North Carolina and Tennessee, illustrating topography of the Smoky Mountains.
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FOLK-LORE OF THE NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS

I. Introduction

The library of every child contains copies of the beautiful legends of Greek mythology, the strange adventures of Roman gods, and the marvelous tales related of the Northern Odin, the valiant Valkyries, the tender Frey. We are all more or less familiar with the stories of Cupid and Psyche, Brunhilde and Siegfried, Launcelot and Elaine. We acknowledge the wealth of wit and imagination which has so long delighted us in the stories of Herakles, Perseus, Hermes, Sigurd—and we appreciate the precious legacy which antiquity has bequeathed us. But is this our whole duty? Should we be content to close our volume at the end of a quiet evening's reading and, with eyes which yet see in the blue flames of a dying fire the glorious Charlemagne or the Court of Arthur, simply bless the bards who have made our pastime so pleasant? Let us stop our dreaming once and look seriously at the subject matter in the volumes which we have just been reading. Of course we know it is folk-lore—traditions of a people long past! Here the average person's conception ceases. To tell him that there are regions today where folk-lore not only flourishes but is the only type of literature familiar to the people, is enough to jar his complacent contentment; to tell him, further, that in the hidden fastness of Welsh forests, in the mysterious China, in the domain of India, in far off Albania there exist complete cycles of folk-lore, relics of the past infused with little of the spirit of modernism, is to seriously shatter his tenderly cherished opinion that he is a Scholar; and when you, per-
haps a bit maliciously,—for the Scholar has always been so very much of a Scholar that he has either flouted your opinions or else been calmly unaware that you possessed any,—when you tell him that right here in the heart of his own America there are districts where there are countless tales, songs, superstitions, and local proverbs that contribute to the folk-lore of this nation, he is completely dumbfounded and humbly begs you to tell him something about this unheard of district, and its people, its customs, and best of all its literature.

You tell him first that there are many districts in America that can boast of legends as wondrous as those tales of chivalry in which Europe so delights. You sketch for him roughly the various types of Indian mythology, the songs of the sailors which have built up a reputation for the seaside, the tales of the western plains, where the cowboy was monarch until very recent years, and the stories of lonely mountain districts, where bold men still boast of their skill with the rifle and their independence of outside influences.

There are many of us in America who do not realize the wealth of this folk-lore, who underestimate its importance, and who neglect the opportunity given us to collect, organize, and permanently record the traditions of our own land. Once we are interested, the fascinating work of comparing and contrasting our material with that of Europe soon opens new doors to us through which we hasten to bend our endeavors.

The early interest in North American folk-lore naturally
turned to that of Indian tribes. Here a very striking similarity was found between the Red Man's ideal hero and those of his Pale Face brothers. The tales, themselves, scanty and prosaic, bore a fundamental resemblance to parallel tales of European lore. The artistic method of treatment was quite different, but as elsewhere the world over, so in America, many tribes had to tell of..."an august character, who taught them what they knew,—the tillage of the soil, the properties of plants, the art of picture writing, the secret of magic; who founded their institutions and established their religions; who governed them long with glory abroad and peace at home, and finally did not die, but, like Frederic Barbarossa, Charlemagne, King Arthur, and all great heroes, vanished mysteriously, and still lives somewhere, ready at the right moment to return to his beloved people and lead them to victory and happiness."*1

On the plains this "august character" was created, lived, and passed away; but in the mountain districts, the scantily settled regions where the isolated individual must originate and execute for himself, no such mythical personage ever made his home. The daily routine, the uncertainty of the winter seasons, the late spring, the meager crops, lent to the mountaineer a dignity of toil, but robbed him of ecstatic flights of imagination to some enchanted Avalon. He has his own literature, his songs, and dances, but they belong distinctly to him. They are American literature. Influenced by French and Scotch and English tradition, it is true, nevertheless, they are the characteristic products of isolation in an American environment.

America is not the only country whose literature has been so effected as well as affected. There are many European nations whose folk-lore today shows as primitive a cast as that of our North Carolina mountaineers, and some of the superstitions existing among our southern highlands may be paralleled with those of other climes. In Cornwall, England, for example, children are passed through holes in ash-trees in order to cure them of herine.\(^1\) In North Carolina the same remedy is prescribed. Ash-rods are used in England to cure diseased sheep, cows, and horses; particularly are they supposed to neutralize the venom of serpents.\(^2\) In Greek myths the hazel and fern share these magic powers, and whenever a Greek is compelled, through an unlucky combination of circumstances, to make his bed in the forest, he chooses ferns in the belief that the smell of them will drive away poisonous animals.\(^3\) So in North Carolina, the mountain lad gathers sweet smelling ferns for his mattress, unconsciously imitating his Hellenic brother. We are apt to laugh at these simple precautions of a simple people—and to scorn their primitive remedies, but we should remember with what great ease the uncultivated mind reaches all manner of apparently fanciful conclusions through the reckless reasoning of analogy. All human thinking is done through the association of ideas, and only accumulated experience teaches us that many associations of ideas are not proper. Therefore, if one baby who had been passed through an ash-tree lived and was cured, why shouldn't other babies profit by the find? And if one Greek boy—or North Carolinian, as the case may

2. Ibid.
be,—rests on a bed of fern in the forests of his native mountain and sleeps free from bites of poisonous reptiles, why should another youth imperil his life by not observing the same precaution?

In any isolated region superstition clings with a persistence sometimes annoying, sometimes amusing, and sometimes entirely delighting us. What could be more pleasing than the stolen glimpse of mountain maid slyly plucking the leaves from a mountain ash and hiding them in her breast? The significance of this ceremony is enormous. Every girl in the springtime watches eagerly for the green leaves to unfold, so that she may test the charm, to her own satisfaction;—for leaves of the ash worn in the bosom will bring to the wearer at night prophetic dreams of various lovers! Nor is North Carolina alone in the possession of this charming secret. We read in Harland and Wilkinson's Lancashire Folk-Lore, *1 "Our country maids are well aware that triple leaves plucked at hazard from the commonplace ash are worn in the breast for the purpose of causing prophetic dreams respecting dilatory lovers."

Let us pass now from the superstitions which youth and abundant life have prolonged, and consider those practices which inevitably follow in the wake of Death.

In all Aryan myths the souls of the dead are supposed to ride at night on the wind, with a pack of howling dogs, gathering into their throng the souls of the just dying as they pass their houses. In France and Spain, England and the Netherlands, Portugal and Italy, Germany and the Balkans, everywhere, in truth, where the Aryan traditions are known, we find the window of the death

chamber open.*1 Maybe the good wife gives another explanation to
account for the raised sash, perhaps she performs the act uncon-
sciously, urged by a "hankrin'" that all is not well until fresh air
shall have cleansed the close room, but whatever the acknowledged
motive may be, the origin of the custom is probably in all instances
identical,—namely, to permit the spirit of the dead to escape through
the window and join the Invisible Host without.

This superstition is closely akin to the prevalent belief
among all primitive people of the existence of another self. The
manifestation of this "other self" in life is not so rare as one who
has not made a study of the circumstances might suppose. Frequent-
ly does the "other self" make its force felt through dreams in the
course of which it utters prophecies, warnings, and generally plays
the role of monitor to the sleeper. Dreams in which the body seems
to undergo miraculous adventures are commonly considered as the ac-
tual experiences of the "other self" that has been away and returned.
Many evenings, during the twilight which falls so early in the moun-
tains, the older folk gather about the chilly fireplace to retell
the wanderings of their unknown companion, and to "reckon" on the
symbolic interpretation of its message. However, this mysterious
"other self" does not confine its activities to the shadow-world of
dreams. Many a mountain boy will cry "Howdy!", apparently into
space, until the echo sounds and resounds, startlingly near to the
small lad. When you ask him to whom he is speaking, big eyes shyly
look you over, incredulity spreads itself over the face which a

moment previously was joyously animated, and you are rewarded with a disconcertingly ambiguous "Him!" If you are a stranger in the vicinity, uninitiated in the practices of its natives, you are naturally unenlightened; but if, on the other hand, you have passed some time among these people quietly observing, then you will realize that it is to no other than his "other self" to whom this child has been calling, with the customary mountain salutation. The illusive mysterious echo is regarded by both children and grown folks in these districts as the utterances of the "other self". ¹

Superstition is the mother of not only delightful conceits but also of one of the most obnoxious practices—that of witchcraft. Witchcraft has influenced the thinking, customs, and literature of both Europe and America. That it was brought into the Christian religion by converted heathen who, after baptism, considered their former divinities as devils, is an interesting and authoritative fact that I will not be able to develop further, here, but the influence of this practice, fed by the credulity of the people of the Middle Ages, grew to such an extent that all Europe throbbed in its grasp. It gave birth to crimes unparallelled in the history of civilization, and to fanciful legends that the intervening years have softened and embellished. Witches, from time immemorial, have enjoyed the power of changing their forms at will. The modern American witch, whose visitations astonish the good folk of mountain district, can transform herself into any variety of bird or beast, but perhaps the most favored disguise is that of the cat. During the great flourishing period of European witchcraft, and also during

¹. Spencer: Recent Discussions in Science. The Origin of Ancient Worship.
its popularity in the New England colonies, the cat often served as a disguise for the witch's agents or even for the hag herself. Only upon obtaining the hide of that animal, which the witch sheds upon resuming her natural form, and by rubbing salt into it, can power over the shape-shifting demon be procured.

However, it is not only the witch who enjoyed the special privilege of transformation. The Middle Ages, as a whole, accepted the belief that attributed to other supernatural beings also the power of changing their forms. In the island of Celebes it is told that "seven heavenly nymphs came down from the sky to bathe and were seen by Kaismbaha, who thought at first that they were white doves, but in the bath he saw that they were women. Then he stole one of their robes that gave the nymphs their power of flying, and so he caught Utahazi, the one whose robe he had stolen, and took her for his wife, and she bore him a son."*1

Besides the element of metamorphosis which we find in this tale, there is also represented the ancient faith that the possession of any particle of one's personal apparel gave to the possessor power over the owner. Is it carrying an analogy too far to parallel this with the present day belief in North Carolina that a witch may gain control over one by having in her possession a bit of one's clothes, hair, or finger-nail parings? Surely, the germ of the two superstitions is the same, and one can be safe in stating that the American witch inherited much from her European fore-runner!

Connected very closely to the above mentioned convictions, we find, in France especially, the prevalent miner's superstitions, which, undoubtedly, arose from the same source—witchcraft.*2

Southern and central France is similar to North Carolina in its geographical characteristics, and such being the case, it is easier to understand the presence of common opinions in two such far distant provinces as those of Loire et Saon and the Smoky Mountains. We learn of charming legends, which France exported together with her French Huguenots, existing among the North Carolina miners, and we recognize a certain atmosphere of French enchantment which has surrounded prosaic American mines from the earliest times. Without doubt from a very early time when one saw gods everywhere, earth was one of the most sacred deities, and before a spade was permitted to cut into her, the people demanded pardon by means of sacrifices for the great liberty which they took against her. In the ground lived the dei minores and each had its attributes; gardens of treasures! They saw, with a jealous eye, man entering into their domains and taking a part of their bounty for himself, and they punished the bold one who dared to violate the sacred soil. They did not always manifest themselves, these subterranean spirits; sometimes they contented themselves with playing tricks upon the miners. At other times by terrible phenomena did the outraged deities vent their rage. Sometimes the deity who guarded his treasure might be appeased by regarding certain prescribed conditions to gain his favor or by offerings. According to popular belief those who first troubled a hidden treasure must die. This danger was equally great for the discoverers of mines, and great precaution should be taken by sacrifices or other appropriate ceremonies.\footnote{1. Ibid.}
The essence of medievalism, you say, what can this have to do with North Carolina miners? To be sure, these men and boys who work on six hour shifts seem too modern and too much like the rest of commercial America to cherish such out-of-date beliefs; nevertheless, the North Carolina miner is much like his French co-worker. To each the frequent explosions heard in deep mines at moments when none of the miners themselves are working, are believed to be the product of the work of the Pixie, a sort of fairy who makes his residence in the interior of the pit. The echoes and resonances of a mine, which the ignorant are incapable of explaining in any save a supernatural way, are the result of some spirit's work; and whenever a miner sees one of these spirits underground, the apparition is regarded as favorable.

Other spirits known as Knockers are believed by the miners to be the souls of the Jews who crucified Christ and who were taken as slaves to Rome and set to work in the mines.¹

Not only do these genii concern themselves with the worker, but the spirit of the mountain as well interests herself in their affairs. In Barinage, for example, the miners are warned of an explosion by the appearance of a White Lady. There are some days on which the miners believe accidents are particularly apt to occur. They believe in the fatality of Friday, day of sorcery; in England, Sunday is a dangerous day.² North Carolina recognizes Sunday by closing her mines, partly in deference to the accepted Christian doctrine of the day of rest, and partly in deference to the Old World tradition which the miners brought over with them and which they have handed down from generation to generation.

¹: Ibid.
²: Ibid.
In modern times the piety, often a little superstitious, of the miners has caused them to erect barriers between themselves and the underground spirits. Religious manifestations are frequently shown by the men who carry small pious objects to which they attribute in all religions a sort of protective virtue. Coins with or without holes in them strung on twine on a piece of faded calico and hung about the neck, relics of the saints, and the familiar rabbit's foot figure conspicuously.

In the interiors of mines certain behavior is conducive to invoking misfortune not only upon oneself, but also upon one's companions, while the reverse action will assure one protection. To whistle, to make the sign of the cross underground, to fail to respond to the greeting of a brother miner entering on the night shift, are all considered ill omens.1 The natural dangers to which the miners are exposed every day, such as sliding of the earth, rolling of rocks whose position was not suspected, asphyxiation, burning, are the prophesied catastrophies which but fulfill the predictions of the "bad signs". Accidents always occur in triads, or such is the favored belief of the miners of North Carolina. Should one man be killed within the mine the majority of the others would "lay off" to await the fatal third, secure in their faith that after that all will be well, and that they are assured of perfect safety. To hear a cock crow underground is regarded as unfavorable, for that gay gentleman has been cursed ever since the cock crowed thrice as a signal for the denial of the Savior. This

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1. Ibid.
last superstition is of Cornish origin,¹ but Cornish and French both flavor American tradition in many ways besides contributing to the body of superstition found in and about a mountain mining community. Emotion is intense in the miners' world, but men continue to descend into the mines, as do sailors after a tempest set out again to sea, and it is rare indeed that a miner leaves his occupation for a safer one above ground.

Literature of the miners is rare. They conceive vividly the friendly and unfriendly spirits of the underworld, but their characteristic shyness and fear of being ridiculed by the "fer'eners" tend to further their taciturnity and to make more difficult the collection and classification of their tales.

We have seen how America borrows the traditions of England, France, and far-off Greece to increase the complexity of her folklore, and now we must consider one more community, not so far distant from the land of the Greek, yet much closer to the mountainous regions of North Carolina in its social and natural environment than is the rest of the Eastern world.

Both Albania and North Carolina are cut off from intercourse with the outside world by their mountains, which rise chain after chain, completely encircling the little country villages which perch precariously on dubious rocky ridges, or hide themselves quietly in the luxuriant forest fastness (see fig. 1). More often, however, isolated cabins remind one of the days when the head of the house must be cobbler, blacksmith, doctor, farmer, lumberman, hard-

er, and butcher,—his home his community, where necessity compelled him to be jack of all trades and quite frequently master of several.

Neither the Albanians nor the North Carolinians are purebred; both are compounded of various stocks, but the stocks are different in the two cases. The Albanian is a complex of the races of southern climes, and the North Carolinian of those of northern regions. Although the product of various nations, the mountaineers of both regions are a curious mixture of careless indolence and warlike activity. Adverse to habits of active industry, content to wander quietly on the mountains and in the forests, they are, nevertheless, restless and ready to fight.*

The martial spirit once aroused, the North Carolinian places himself on the list of "public workers", and the Alban engages very readily in the service of foreign states. Neither enlists for long, however, because his attachment to his native mountains will not permit him to be away from the hills for any considerable time. This love of the highlands is common to all native highlanders, who feel the lure of the mountain fastnesses continuously, and are unhappy unless within sight of the well-known and dearly beloved homeland. Perhaps the love of the mountaineer for his home is due to some extent to a feeling of gratitude for the rugged refuge which it typifies. To all oppressed people the mountains offer a quiet security from the despotism of a tyrant, or from the wars of conflicting parties battling for the right to be dictator in a newly discovered land. The Albanians recognized this fact and fled from the tyranny of Turkish sultans to the peaceful shades of the place which now bears their name; the

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Fig. 1. Minneapolis, N. C. An Illustration of an Isolated Settlement.

Fig. 2. Typical Mountain Cabin, Great Smoky Mountains.
North Carolinian fleeing from European dictation, settled in the Alleghanies far from the turmoil of colonial wars. They had left Europe to secure peace, and that the highlands offered them.

The appearance of the Albanian anticipates somewhat that of the American mountaineer. Both magnificent specimens of primitive manhood, their lives are similarly ruled by their natural environment, which forces them to similar precautions. Their cabins, for instance, are much alike, consisting of two rooms, with a surrounding garden in which the most luxurious flowers satisfy the beauty-hunger of the women. In both regions loop-holes are preferred to windows, and for much the same reason. The irritable temper of the Albanian rarely allows him to forgive a blow or an insult. The mistaken sense of clan loyalty causes the North Carolinian to magnify an imaginary slight until war has been declared between him and his enemy. From this tenderly cherished wrath develops in the former the theory and practice of personal vengeance, and in the latter the blood-feud. As the injured person may gather all his kindred about him to aid in establishing his honor the loop-holes become not only a precaution but a necessity to the raided man and his family. (Fig. 2.)

Although the life of the Albanians is mostly toil for the women and war for the men, nevertheless they frequently meet in social intercourse. Their eager abandon, hot, quick-tempered pursuit of pleasure is, however, quite different from the sedate dignity of the North Carolinians who strive to conceal their feelings in whatever company they may find themselves. The lively playful mood of the Eastern mountaineers is well exhibited in their dances,
which are their chief delight. Persevering energy and outrageous glee characterize them. The lute, their chief musical instrument, played by men too old to enter into the vigor of the dance, is accompanied by vocal songs and the formations of the company for the various figures. One of the most famous of the native dances is the Handkerchief Dance, so called because the handkerchief is the connecting link from man to man—one person holding one end, another the other end, thus forming a chain, at the head of which stands the leader.*1 He commences the performance by footing quietly from side to side, accompanying the motion with a rhythmic swaying of the body; he then hops, twirls, drops frequently on one knee, rebounds suddenly with a great shout. Faster and faster grows the music, quicker and quicker moves the line, leader after leader vies in the rapidity of his hops, twirls, and jumps, until some new way of expressing their superabundant spirit catches the favor of their enthusiasm and the dance ends. All festivities have, in the course of their events, a presentation of the Albanitico, the national dance of Albanian palikars.*2 The evolutions and figures of this display the astonishing activity and muscular strength of these mountaineers who, grasping each other by the hands, move slowly at first, then faster and faster, until they hurry around in a quick circular movement according to the excitement of the music and their own voices. The leader, tall and supple, leaps backward until his head almost touches the ground, then springs up in the air, while his long hair flows over his shoulders in truly picturesque fashion.

There is no end to the dance. Each takes his turn in leading the others as often as he likes, utter fatigue being the only motive for abandoning their mad revelry.

Quite dissimilar from these powerful dances are those "square dances", that are always round, of the North Carolina mountaineers; and yet both possess many similarities and both are expressions of spirits which have been weighed down by the loneliness of isolated men, and of the instincts which arise in him during the few free days which he spends away from the cabin and in the company of his fellowmen!

Nationality is a characteristic of the mountaineers which appears to be unknown to the plainmen.*1 The waving fields of grain seem not to call the dwellers of the lowland, as the green arms of mountain forests plead with their sons, or if they do call the lowlander is deaf to their appeal. That the heart of the former is constantly with his hills is evident in the great delight which an accidental meeting in foreign fields affords two natives of the mountains. They will go out of their way to visit one another if they learn of each other's presence through the common gossip of small towns. Nothing is so dear to their hearts as the mountains and they perpetually recur to them. Are we to attribute to this devotion to the hills the presence of such archaic language, such primitive literature, and such simple pastimes as exist today in a great region of northern South Carolina, western North Carolina, and eastern Tennessee? Is it the result of the man's passionate attachment to his home in the wilderness of mountains and

forest, the lack of social intercourse with the outside world, the
Omnipotent force of his environment? Surely it must be this,
coupled with his own characteristic likes and dislikes, moods, faults
and superstitions!

The object of the foregoing pages has been to point out
some of the features of folk-lore which are commonly characteristic
of all Aryan tradition, and which survive in modern North America
of the 20th century; and to compare two mountain regions of today--
Albania and the Smoky Mountain district of North Carolina--in which
two different nationalities live in utter seclusion from foreign
intervention, but which have a similar environment that has produced
both in the East and the West a parallel mode of life. The purpose
of the following pages is to show how isolation and environment can,
and do, affect the customs, language, and literature of the North
Carolina mountaineers.
Fig. 4. The Forest Clad Mountains of North Carolina.

Fig. 3. The Great Smoky Mountains.
II. The People and Their Environment.

The southern highlands are a realm of mystery. The Great Smoky Mountains (fig. 3), which form the principal chain of the Appalachian system of North Carolina, cover 6,000 square miles with an average elevation of 2,700 feet, although there are 21 peaks that rise to the height of 6,000 feet or more. The southeast front of the Blue Ridge is a steep escarpment which rises from the Piedmont Plateau of the Carolinas. Here is the collecting basin of nearly the whole system of southern drainage, for many rivers cut through the rocky ridges in a veritable network of small streamlets, and carry the rainfall of the Atlantic slope to the waters of the Gulf. The Blue Ridge possesses 7 peaks over 5,000 feet high.

On the border of North Carolina and Tennessee there is a single range which outtops all its neighbors. The United States Geological Survey calls this the Unakas, but the natives know it as the Alleghanies.*¹ Rivers have cut the range into segments and each has a distinct name of its own. The Unakas has 125 peaks over 5,000 feet high and 10 over 6,000 feet. Several transverse ranges, connecting the Unaka chain with the Blue Ridge, are known as Stone, Beech, Roan, Yellow, Black, Pisgah, Newfound, Balsam, Cowee, Nantahala, Tusquitee,—all rising between 5,000 and 6,000 feet. Nine-tenths of western North Carolina, which yet awaits careful exploration, consists of mountains that rise from the rich soil in the river-bottoms to the "back country", with slopes of 20 to 40 degrees or more.

The Carolina mountains have a distinct personality all their own. They rise abruptly from a low base and round gradually upwards for 2,000 to 5,000 feet above their valleys. Dense forests and thick undergrowth reach clear to the tops of most of them, although here and there a grassy "bald" forms a natural and welcome meadow. From almost any summit, one can command a magnificent view of "sea of flowing curves and dome-shaped eminences undulating to the horizon."*1 Deep, narrow ravines separate each ridge from its fellows, while the characteristic V-shaped valley, often as deep as 3,700 feet, is the link between two mountain chains. If one should visit these mountains in August or September, he would notice a dreamy blue haze which envelops all objects, softening their outlines and lending an illusive enchantment to the nearest of them, thus giving an appearance of great distance to what is in reality only a few miles away.

The richness of the Great Smoky forests are the wonder and admiration of all who are familiar with their abundant growth. (Fig. 4.) The luxuriance of the Himalayas and mountains of the Far East is represented in North Carolina by the silver-bell tree, fringe-bush, wisteria, and ginseng.*2 Here all the floral zones from Georgia to Southern Canada blossom in an undergrowth of tropical thickness and variety during the summer months. The upper mountains are a gigantic flower-garden from the first scarlet challenge of the flame-colored azalea, hedged about with a "slick" of white and pink rhododendrons, to the last lingering caress of the goldenrod, as it slowly lowers a proud little head and quietly yields its

*1. Ibid., Cap. III., p. 51.
mellowed pollen to a merry, thoughtless wind.

The black bear is about the only game animal which remains in the mountains. He has succeeded so far in holding his own in the roughest districts, like those southwest of the Sugarload Mountains where laurels and cliffs keep all but the hardiest of men at bay. Deer are all but exterminated, squirrels are rather scarce, and good trout fishing is rare. Rattlers are quite common, but the timid adventurer is seldom annoyed by copperheads. A little lizard called "scorpion", believed by the mountaineers to be "rank pizen", is a familiar and harmless hill-hermit. The mountains are exempt from black-flies and mosquitoes, but the common house-fly is a nuisance, and every cabin is alive with fleas.

The climate is delightful. Pleasantly cool, dry air makes the nights refreshing; but the mornings are apt to be damp, as the fogs hang low, and heavy dews remain until 9 A.M. The winters are short, generally lasting from Christmas until February. In the higher mountains, however, from October until April the intense winter cold, and the chilling winds from about the peaks, cause the first faint sign of the spring thaw to be eagerly anticipated. Frost often forms as early as July and August in Avery County, N. C., and September mornings greet one with the brisk, invigorating air common to lower altitudes in October and early November.

The North Carolina mountains comprise one of the best fruit regions in eastern America. Apples, grapes, and berries especially thrive. The mountain farmers let the trees take care of themselves and everywhere, except on the select and model farms,
one sees old trees, gnarled, and twisted, bristling with shoots, and probably half uprooted. The gardens share the fate of the orchards, yet in spite of neglect the flower crop is luxuriant and highly colored. There is a plant whose growth is most prolific in the higher mountains—the galyx (lencothae), which, together with the mistletoe opens an industry to the thrifty mountain women. Before Christmas every year the children gather its leaves, the women pack them, and sell them to railroad dealers, who ship them North to the florists. Everywhere in the woods the ruddy bronze of the galyx is abundant, and so luxuriant is it that a score of children, reinforced by mothers and older sisters picking all day, can scarcely make an impression on the crop. So prolific is this plant and so great is the demand of northern florists for its leaves that a little town has sprung up in the mountain wilderness whose sole claim to existence rests upon the annual galyx harvest. Quite appropriately the mountaineers have christened their village Galyx. It lies in the higher portion of Avery County, N. C.

Valley, road, and mountain stream are all one in the "back woods" districts. The streams do not meander quietly and effectively through the mountains as they do along the lowlands. In the latter, on either side of the channels lie rich and fertile farmlands whose harvest well repays even the careless farmer; whereas in the hills, the steep slopes and rocky gorges make impractical any agricultural venture. The only highways follow the beds of the tortuous water courses, whose paths lead through the heart of dense forests (fig. 5) back into the sheltered coves, which the first settlers chose for their homesteads in recognition of the protec-
Fig. 5. Typical Road up Mountain Valley, Along Stream Bed.

Fig. 6. Common Means of Transportation in Walker's Valley, Great Smokies.
tion which their isolated position afforded from the wild winter storms. Foot-trails are the only means of communication during the winter months, but in summer the dry or nearly dry stream beds serve as roads.

One may start on the always eventful trip to town with a brilliant mountain sun to light a pathway through the trees, and perhaps within an hour a raging torrential rain may make the way almost impossible. Since there are no bridges on his road but the single logs thrown athwart the streams to help the foot-passenger at the deepest crossings, one may be forced to ford the same stream a dozen times within a mile. Consequently spring-"tide" forces all communication between "settlement" and cabin to cease. When once more the swollen streams have resumed their ordinary courses, the mules and oxen are frequently seen; the mules, with stuffed saddle-bags made of old burlap sacks, picking their way between the boulders of the waterways, and the oxen, which are used for all heavy teamwork, plodding before a clumsy springless cart beneath an awkward but picturesque yoke fashioned like the yokes of olden Spain, or dragging behind them a homemade sled (fig. 6).

"An important characteristic of the mountains is their power to retard, arrest, or deflect at every phase of historical development."*1 The mountains repel people by their inaccessibility and hard conditions of life, yet there are no safer refuges for the hunted once their interior has been gained. The high massive mountain systems present a most effective barrier to one who would be a settler, and their stern resistance to the spread of a popula-

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tion long discourages the bravest heart. In some of the valleys easier intercourse is possible and a denser population results; but in most cases the mountains are the homes of isolated cabins and lonesome trails.

There is one peculiar type of settlement, however, which is characteristic of mountain topography in thickly settled communities, but which has not yet been developed in our southern mountains. It is the village in the mountain pass which is inhabited by the road-keeper or "garrison" and is used principally by visitors. A carriage road may lead to the foot of the final ascent to the pass, but a mule-path or a foot-trail is the only way to the settlement itself, which lives largely upon transmontane tourists. It is a busy place of inns and blacksmith shops, where the sound of hammer and anvil pleasantly typifies to the summer travelers the simple life which they have set out to "enjoy to the utmost" in as comfortable a manner as possible. This pass is a place of "seasons"—where stables and corrals are crowded with pack horses,—and of convenience, where the traveler can provide himself with food from full storehouses.

Such settlements are unknown to our southern highlanders. There the quiet seclusion of mountain top is unmarred by the hurry and confusion attendant upon departing pleasure-seeking crowds. There the deep tranquillity of fragrant pine is the home of quail and "boomer" (a small red squirrel), untrampled fern and sweet chinquapins. With a blanket of grey mist by night, and a laughing blue sky by day, the mountains grow into the souls of their people with quiet persistence. What wonder that the imagination of the
mountaineer is stirred to life, evincing itself in such place-names as Balsam, Lone Bald, Cone Mountain, Sunset Hill, Little Snowbird, Brier Top, Laurel Top, and Thunderhead!

The American mountaineer's world is encompassed within a small radius around his own home. He is not only cut off from the outside world by miserable roadways, but he is separated by natural barriers from his neighbors. Many of the men never see the small town or village of their county seat; while if a "fur'ener" should follow one of the alluring little bridle paths into the forest wilds he would find at its end some woman, who since her marriage twenty years previous, had not been away from the vicinity of her cabin.

In his isolation the mountaineer is forced to seek enjoyment in the simplest pleasures. His greatest excitement is an occasional revival at the nearest church. Let us imagine ourselves at one of the delightful "poke-suppers", which figure so conspicuously among his church activities. The "poke-supper" is a substitute for the church fair, with an additional element of mystery which is lacking in the more ordinary function. Each unmarried girl prepares a supper and carefully carries it to the "meetin'-house" in a "poke". The "pokes", or bags, are there auctioned off to the highest bidder, and whoever bids in a "poke" is entitled to eat its contents with the girl who prepared it, and to escort her home afterwards. Rivalry is keen; especially when some of the boys suspect a certain "poke" to belong to the "gal that Hank's a-settin' up to, else fer why should he bid so?" Good-natured teasing then is in order. Hank is forced to bid higher and higher for the coveted "poke" with its bit of white feather tucked cleverly under the
string which holds it together at the neck, and enables Hank to recognize the handiwork of his lady-love.

Ice-cream suppers are another method by which the hillisman raises money to pay "fer the preachin'" or to paint the school house. The supper itself is not a novelty, but the festival that concludes the supper is as interesting as it is unique.

Last summer I had the pleasure of attending one of these entertainments in a new one-room church that had recently been erected. There were pews on either side, similar to those in our churches, but unpainted and weirdly white in the flickering light from a single oil lamp. By the pulpit, which was a raised platform with a stand like those used in college lecture rooms, was a small old-fashioned wood stove with a shining stove-pipe—the sole heating apparatus in a room with a seating capacity of 100 people. There the final "jollification" was staged. The preacher announced with thundrous self-importance that all unmarried ladies were to step forward, please, to the first seats. Accordingly they stepped forward. He then explained to the frankly impatient crowd that the cake—a lovely-looking chocolate frosted cake—would be auctioned off to the "pret'iest gal thar", and would the boys please to bid on their "fav'rites". A typical auctioneer called off the bids, writing down in an improvised note-book a record of money placed on the different girls. Cries of "Com'on Jem", "don't lay down on Polly, Mac", "Jim's done busted", and "here's a dime fer Mabel Love", filled the air. The blushing girls, as soon as the first bid had been entered opposite their names in the auctioneer's book, were required to stand on the pew seats so the "fel'ers" could "look 'em
over". Frequent urgings to individuals to "keep 'on a-comin'" resulted in the cake's being knocked down to Miss Mabel Love for $50—the money so acquired to be used in painting the schoolhouse.*1

The most important of all "meetin'-house" social gatherings is held in the late summer when the entire population of the mountains within a radius of 50 miles flocks to hear the "preachin'". This is the well-known revival, whose enthusiastic welcome by the mountaineers is only equalled by their eager participation. This will be referred to more particularly in the following chapter.

The second great gathering spot of the hill-folk is the schoolhouse. North Carolina has little reason to be proud of her early history in the cause of education. For years there was greater illiteracy in North Carolina than in any other State, and the improvement of late years has not been any greater than it should have been.*2 The Old Field Schools took the place of kindergarten, grade school and college, and until very recently they were the only institutions devoted to educational purposes throughout the State. There were generally one or two schools in each county, and they were in session only when it was not crop time. Attended by big, little, old and young, often as many as 100 in a room, where there were no windows except those openings made in the wall by cutting out a section of one of the logs here and there, with slab benches from which little legs dangled hopelessly and onto which tall forms crowded themselves in awkward determination,—what wonder that illiteracy gained such a foot-hold in the southern mountains? The

*1. This "festival" took place August 1919 at Pineola, Avery Co., N.C.
schoolhouse was invariably a log cabin, with a fireplace at either end, and a puncheon floor, hardened by constant trampling into a drab brown unevenness. The master was skilled in the use of the rod and in the art of manufacturing quill pens from the wing-feathers of goose or turkey. The ink used was made from poke-berries, and kept in slim vials partly filled with cotton to prevent evaporation. The school was paid for from the public funds, the teacher boarded around among the pupils, and was hailed by the work-weary women as a godsend, for "master" always knew the latest gossip, and he had such a "pleasin' way of mechin' the children".

The mountain school reminds us that we do not have to travel to Japan to hear children "con" their lessons aloud, for the mountaineer little folk all studied in this fashion a few years ago. Some of the smallest pupils often learned to spell quite perfectly before they could repeat the alphabet, and older girls and boys showed no hesitation, whatever, in competing with them in a "spell-in'-bee", the most exciting part of the indoor program. This "bee" was the concluding exercise of the school.*1 The two eldest pupils, the leaders, would toss up a coin to see who would have first choice. That decided, the sides chosen, the contest would commence. A word was given out, if the first person missed it, it passed to his opponent, and the unfortunate child must take his seat, put out of the contest for that day. If his opponent missed, likewise, he, too, was out of the game, the word crossing back to the other side. When correctly spelled, a second word was given out and the contest closed only when the last child had been spelled down or when the time for dismissal arrived. From their method of studying aloud and in uni-

*1. Ibid., pp. 421-2.
son the school acquired the name of "Blab School",¹ and as such was known throughout the mountains.

Since the time of the Old Field School great progress has been made by individuals, such as Bishop Ives, who established a school for mountain children at Valle Crucis, so named because the positions of two valleys suggested the shape of a true cross; by churches, as the Willow Farm school for boys at Hot Springs; by missions, as the Crossnore Mission School; and by the State itself. Much, however, yet remains to be done before the mountain people will have caught up to their lowland brothers and can appear as their intellectual equals.

There is a third type of mountain social which is perhaps the most enjoyable of all,—the private gatherings. Here the "quiltin'-bees" hold a prominent place and deserve special mention, for they are the only social activity of the mountain woman, apart from the men, and out of these has grown our modern conception of an afternoon thimble party, or the woman's sewing circle.

Upon a sultry July afternoon, for in the wintertime a woman seldom leaves her cabin, when the early crops have been harvested and the late crops are yet in the field, a gathering of the women in the miniature yard of some neighbor lends an unusually festive air to surrounding hills and forest. Each guest brings with her a needle and a pair of scissors. The hostess has set up her quiltin' frame before their arrival, and she presents each with a ball of thread as they greet her. No time is lost, immediately the newcomer sets to work, drawing the stiff thread through her neigh-

¹. Ibid., p. 423.
bor's quilt, and snipping stuboy ends, in a pleasantly mechanical manner. They are very quiet, these mountain women, and talk little, busying themselves with the task of finishing their work before the time comes for them to hasten home to milk the cow and prepare the evening meal for the "men folksees". When the final tuft has been completed the guests help their hostess take the quilt from its frame, and their hands, coarsened by rough work, caress its freshness. Their hostess appears with a pail of foaming buttermilk and a dipper which she offers to each woman in turn. When the last has drunk she bids them "come in an' set awhile", with cordial mountain hospitality. But they refuse and start silently home—to dream, perhaps, along the way, of a restful afternoon away from the tiny hot cabin overflowing with noisy babies.

The quilting patterns are very interesting in themselves. Some of them have been handed down from generation to generation since the time of the first arrivals. Others are the invention of expertly skilled individuals of today. A few of the best known designs are the album quilt, nine-patch, log cabin, star, tea-leaf, tumbler, Statehouse steps, brickwork, pineapple, goose chase, rising sun and Irish chain.*

The young folk's pastimes are not so different from our own parties. "Taffy-pullin's" are frequent, and "corn-huskin's", while not limited to the mountains, are well-known there. The most interesting festivities, however, are the various functions which follow in the wake of a wedding, such as the "shivaree", the "in-fare", and the "house-raisin".

Weddings are never celebrated at church, but always at the home of the bride. They are jolly occasions where young men, stimulated more or less with "moonshine", swing their partners to the "twistifications" of the country dance, in which favorite figures of the well-known "Square dance", the "Grape Vine Twirl", and the old-fashioned "shas-i-ta" steps predominate.

Following the wedding comes the "infare", a dinner given at the home of the groom's parents the day after a mountain wedding. Sometimes, among the more modern of the highlanders, a "reception" takes its place. The "shivaree" is held at the groom's home immediately following the wedding. Last summer I had the opportunity of being a guest at a reception.

The bride was an attractive girl about 17 years old—whose wedding dress was a thin, china silk blouse such as could be bought at any of our cheaper department stores, a heavy duck skirt, and thick-soled, high, black shoes whose clumsiness hid effectively a naturally slender foot. Her husband was resplendent in "store clothes" of conservative blue serge. His hair was tightly slicked down on either side of a broad part, but in this case, not with the mountains' bandoline, which is a fairly thick mixture of molasses and water.

The entire lower floor was thrown open to the guests, the hall and parlor (this was an exceptionally well-to-do family who lived in a settlement) were given over to dancing, while the table in the hospitable dining room almost bent beneath its weight of fried chicken, home-made jellies, bread, cake and cookies of all descriptions. The country dances were the leading feature of the
evening, although more modern two-steps and waltzes were introduced for our special enjoyment, the kindly mountaineers remembering our unfamiliarity with their own figures. "Moonshine" was conspicuously absent, but "spiked grape juice" was to be had in abundance.

In every place where primitive customs exist the "house-raisin'" is a necessary and friendly acknowledgment of a wedding. Let us suppose "Squar" McGinnis's eldest daughter was married today to Jeems McRea, and that this evening the neighbors have been invited to a "house-raisin' back up yonder". As "evenin'" in the mountains is any time after the noon hour, the party starts about one o'clock and follows the trail "about so far back up yonder". The men are well equipped with saws, hammers, nails, and fixin's, such as heavy paper which is used instead of glass for the windows; the women "tote" food and the necessary cooking utensils, for their part of the program is to furnish plenty of hot "huch-puppy" for the entire company "after a bit". Arrived on the spot, the real work commences; men saw and split, fit and nail rough logs and badly shaped shingles; women bend in anxious concentration over an immense gypsy kettle from which a tantalizing odor soon rises. When the last shingle has been placed, and the last nail driven in the corner of the cabin, a hungry crowd gathers about the kettle, supplies itself with a bowl and a spoon, and "sets and fills" in true mountain fashion.

The mountain home of today is a log cabin which four "corner men" can erect in one day, and which can be finished by the owner at his leisure. It usually consists of a single large room with a narrow porch in the front, onto which a plank door opens.
The chimney is a mass of piled stone and mud, which runs up the side of the cabin opposite the only window. At the back a 7 to 8 foot lean-to is built for the kitchen. The inner and outer faces of the logs are hewn flat, the corners are notched together, and the owner can fill up the spaces with splits, rocks and mud, later. As the cabin is built of green timber, in one or two seasons, at the most, it becomes a dilapidated hovel with sagging roof, warped sides, and curling shingles. The floors shrink apart and an air of desolation spreads over its entirety. The site of the cabin is governed by the location of a spring, for the mountaineer recognizes the value of water.

Besides this single cabin, double cabins are popular in North Carolina, but principally in the lumber camp, the mining camp, or the "settlemint". A double cabin differs from its simpler neighbor in only one respect. It is double; it houses two families—is, in reality, two single cabins with a porch and one partition in common.

Although the interior of a cabin is undecorated and painfully bare, material for external decoration is abundant. Morning glories, sweet potato vines, and wild mountain ivy form thick screens about the porch. Ferns and creepers hang from home-made baskets (fashioned out of tin cans) suspended from the roof. A flower garden of gorgeous sweet-peas, nasturtiums, dahlias, marigolds, and countless other varieties brighten the drab appearance of an unpainted mountain home. A necessary appendage to every cabin is its vegetable garden. This is either at one side of the home or more generally at the rear. It is ploughed by the men in
the spring, but all else is left to the women. Tobacco is grown near-by for home use, since men and women both chew and smoke. The women also "dip" snuff. The brush, with which this last practice is performed, is made from a twig of althea, and it is no unusual sight to see a young girl of 15 as she walks sedately to "meetin'" stop and in the most matter-of-fact manner, slip the twig loaded with snuff under her tongue.

Their isolation is so complete, the single cabins often being miles apart, that the mountaineers have no race consciousness at all. Undying devotion to kin and family takes the place of this and gives rise to the slogan "my family right or wrong". Clan loyalty is considered outside of and superior to law, for in these backlands mutual protection is known only through the aid of blood-kin. A score of feuds, a few famous through newspaper publicity, but the greater part unheard of by "outlanders", testify to the chivalrous, self-sacrificing fidelity of the mountaineer for his family. To be sure, this loyalty often gets the better of legal justice, for backwoodsmen are versed in petty subtleties of legal practice to such a degree as would amaze "fur'ener" judges. Their knowledge comes from experience gained during "court-week", when the town is more crowded than if a circus were within its bounds. The southern highlander places a low valuation on human life. In the westernmost seven counties of North Carolina the yearly toll of homicides sometimes reaches as high as 1 in 1,000.¹ The right of private war is not questioned, the judge's charge from the bench is regarded as a mere formality. It is the signal to round up the

kindred and make them willing false witnesses to the innocence of their kin. In the secluded districts of North Carolina a person who has been insulted cuts in his arm a "vengeance mark"—a cross—and demands that it be avenged. This often heralds the outbreak of a feud.

The feud is an "armed conflict between families, each trying to exterminate or failing that, to drive out from the region, the other." It spreads from blood-kin to relations by marriage, from these to friends and retainers. It may lie dormant for a time and then break forth with renewed strength. Although in most feud districts the active feudists include but a small part of the community, the rest of the population take good care to see nothing, hear less, and keep their mouths shut. Nobody outside of the warring clans is in the least danger. The mountaineer has a long memory, he never forgives an insult or an injury, and the feud offers a splendid chance to settle old scores. Even the women take part in vindicating the family honor. They are as combative in spirit and often as active as the men. One old woman, with a hole shot through her cheek by a feudist bullet, complained bitterly of her fate, but only because she could no longer "chaw terbaccy"—she did not shrink from the actual fighting. During the feud, each clan has a leader. He is marked by no dashing romance; suave treachery, "double-teamin'," waylaying, and "blind shootin'" characterize him. His word is law, he has but to plan, there are plenty to execute. After the warring parties have fought themselves out, they disband and return to their several cabins—the leader has no further author

*1. Ibid., Chap. 15, p. 337.
ity over them, each is again his own master.

The most striking characteristic of the southern mountaineers today is conservatism with regard to customs, manners, and habits of thought, for the southern folk brought many Middle Age traditions from Europe which their isolation has preserved.

The mountaineers of the southern highlands are a composite stock with a Scotch-Irish strain predominant. This is largely due to the immigration of colonists from the "Plantation of Ulster", which dates from the days of Queen Elizabeth when an Irish rebellion was suppressed with relentless energy and the confiscated estates of Ulster were colonized by the so-called "Plantation of Ulster". Later King James commanded that Protestant emigrants, largely from Scottish lowlands, should take the place of the Irish colonists. Hence the name Scotch-Irish. From 1730 to 1770 these people immigrated to America as a result of ill treatment by England. They landed at Philadelphia and Charleston, pressed forward to the Shenandoah Valley and the Blue Ridge, and settled among the mountains of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee.*1

In the valleys of North Carolina one finds many Huguenot names. These are borne directly from descendants of nobles driven from France by Louis XIV.'s revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They came by way of Charleston and Savannah, seeking refuge among the mountains.

English, Welsh, and German blood is also mingled with the French and Scotch-Irish in the ancestry of these sturdy people. There is no trace of recent immigration; the German heritage is

traced back to the Pennsylvania Dutch, who settled in the mountains before the Revolution; while proof of the early colonization by the English and Welsh is evident in the eighteenth century customs and speech which lingers yet in the region, as, for instance, the "rule of the road" which advocates the traditional English custom of turning to the left, instead of the right, when one meets a passer-by.

In one custom, only, did the new colonists depart from the traditional manners of the Mother Country, and because this practice still exists in the mountains it deserves special mention. "So hateful and unjust to our ancestors seemed the practice of giving to the eldest son the real estate, that a custom sprang up of giving the youngest son the family homestead—which persists now."*1 The girls of the family received as a dowry a cow, a mare, and sufficient "house-plunder" with which to set up housekeeping, but rarely any land. This, the husband was expected to provide,—the custom has remained unchanged since the days of Daniel Boone.

In the beginning isolation was forced upon the mountaineers. They accepted it as inevitable and bore it stoically, until they came to love solitude for its own sake. Emma Miles, a native writer, says: "We, who live so far apart that we rarely see more of one another than the blue smoke of each other's chimneys, are never at ease without the feel of the forest on every side and room to breathe, to expand, to develop, as well as to hunt and to wander at will. The nature of the mountaineer demands that he have solitude for the unhampered growth of his personality, wing-room for his

The mountaineer pinched by necessity will take a turn on "public works" (any job where men work together, as on a railroad, in the mines, lumbering, etc.), but he hates to be bossed. He will stay just long enough to satisfy his immediate needs, then will hark back to the highlands.

The characteristics of the mountaineer are apt to be misunderstood by the "outlander" unless he possesses a sympathetic understanding of the environment which has formed such a character. The highlander is sly, suspicious of all things strange, secretive, but honest, loyal, and with a keen intelligence which appreciates the gulf between himself and the outside world. In the wilderness the feral arts of concealment, false "leads" and doubling on trails are arts of self-preservation. "The native practices them instinctively and with as little compunction upon his own species as upon the deer and wolf from whom he learned them."*2

The language of the mountains is distinctly Elizabethan or Chaucerian, or ever pre-Chaucerian in character. Terms contemporary with the "Canterbury Tales" are incorporated into everyday speech. Primitive legitimate forms such as "ax" for ask, and "kag" for keg have been traced back to the time of Layamon. "Afore", "atwixt", "awar", "heap o' folks", "peart", "up an' done it", "usen" (used) are common expressions, while "hit", the Saxon pronunciation of it; "gorm", to miss; "buss", to kiss; and "pack", to carry, are all survivals of early English dialect. "Feathered into them" is a phrase

2. Ibid., p. 205.
surviving from the time of the arrow, when to shoot was to "feather"; "doney gal" is the mountaineer's name for sweetheart. (It probably comes from doña or donna, anglicized by the British sailors who imported it to America from Spanish or Italian parts.) When dinner is served on the bare board table the "missus" may mystify her visitor or by inviting him to "set and fill with leather-breeches, poor-do, and sass." Interpreted, the lady of the house has invited him to a dinner of beans dried in the pod and boiled, hull and all ("leather-breeches"), scrapple ("poor-do"), and apple sauce ("sass"). Seated at the table he is urged in mountain vernacular to help himself ("make a long arm").

One marked peculiarity of Elizabethan English—the use of one part of speech for another, as a noun, adjective, or adverb in the place of a verb—is noticeable in the following illustrations:

"My boy Jesse book-kept for the camp." "When my youngest was a little set-along child." "Won't you light and come in?" "I belong to go, but I don' want to" (ought to go). "He is bad to fight" (pugnacious). "Mind out the dog!" (be careful of). "I ain't goin' to bed it no longer" (to lie abed). "The train don't belong to come" (isn't due). "Where you a-goin'?" "Jes brogin' about" (to go afoot). "I chiscled him down right smart" (to beat down). "I creeled my knee" (wrenched). "Who daddied that kid?" (who is the father of), or "That kid daddies itself" (resembles his father).

Further demonstration of the prevalence of archaic

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1. Ibid., Chap. 13, p. 289.
2. Ibid., p. 285.
5. Ibid., Vol. 4, Pt. IV., 1817, p. 283.
and "short sweetnin'", for sugar.

The mountaineer is very sensitive and becomes quite insulted when the foreigner is amused at his speech. Clearness is preferred to grammatical correctness, and brevity to both clearness and correctness. This often causes the speech to be unintelligible to a stranger, whereas to one familiar with the vocabulary of the hills its pithy vividness enhances its value. A few examples of mountain idioms will give a fair idea of their character. "I knowed in reason she'd have the mullygrubs over them doin's." "He carries his gal to meetin'" (takes). "He lit a rag fer home" (hurried).*¹ "That ain't got no bad taste; it has a leetle fare-well to it as though it had campfire in it" (after taste). "A little the rise o' six miles" (more than), also "he ain't out risin' six." "That thar shack was put up fer a stay-place fer them herd-ers to pass the night in." "Toler'ble survigrous baby" (active), or "A most survigrous cusser." "I won't take a full turn o' meal but jist a toddeck."*² "I've laid off and laid off to fix that fence." "She's aimin' tu go tu meetin'."*¹

One striking parallelism to "the unsettled Elizabethan period when the foreign influence was contending with varying success against the native rules of English pronunciation"*³ remains in the mountain dialect of today--the accentuation of the final syllable as in "settlemint," judgment, etc. Here the Norman-French influence prevails.

*³ Ibid., Vol. 4, Pt. IV., 1917, p. 286.
speech in the Smoky Mountains may be found among the farmers, who call their pigs "pee-ko-o", and their ducks "widdies", corruptions of the ancient names of the animals themselves.*1

Intensified expressions are in common usage. One often hears "rifle-gun", "widder-man", "tooth doctor" and "p'int-blank"—"We jist p'int-blank got it to do!" While double and even triple negatives are more popular in the mountains of North Carolina than they were in England. "Rance, he ain't got nary none." "I did it the unthoughtless of anything I ever done in my life!"*2

Quaint, idiomatic uses of words peculiar to the mountain-er are today an integral part of his conversation and place him in a distinctly different linguistic niche than that of "outlander" to even the most casual of observers. Almost nowhere out in the "back-lands" do we hear such words as "low", for think; "agin", for before ("Do it agin I come back"); "bay", for a small thicket; "biggety", for proud, vain; "blackberry winter", the severe cold weather in the spring when the blackberries are in bloom;*3 "ferninst", for opposite;*3 "huchpuppy", a sort of bread prepared very quickly and without salt;*3 "minâ", for remember; "plum", for entirely; "yon", for yonder; "gonna", for going to; "hollerin' distance", for calling distance; "how come?", for why; "like there", for that place, ("I like there very much"); "pieded", for spotted; "perade", for find, ("I can't perade my shirt nowheres"); "long sweetnin'", for molasses;

*1. Bolton, H. C. The language used in talking to domestic ani-
    mals.
In general the mountaineer speaks as little as possible. He is often stolidly reticent, which sometimes causes him to be misunderstood by the outside world, conveying to his intimates by some slight movement of the face that which outlanders can only communicate by explanation, description, and narration.

Close intermarriage and the lack of social life is also characteristic of the Smoky Mountains. One of the results of these factors is the purest type of American stock in all the United States, for "by the law of biology an isolating environment operates for the preservation of a type by excluding all intermixture which would obliterate distinguishing characteristics."*1 The intense spirit of independence, which there finds expression in ignoring of revenue laws and adherence to the blood-feud,—the distinguishing feature of all Anglo-Saxon peoples—is preserved in their purest descendants, the mountaineers of North Carolina.

The lowest peasantry of Europe alone can show anything like the life of the mountain woman. She marries early, at from 13 to 15 years old, a husband somewhere between 17 and 20 years of age. There is little romance; "my man" and "my woman" being the conventional terms of speech where the husband or wife mention each other to a third party. The average family is from 7 to 10 children; 15 are not uncommon. (Fig. 7.) Infant mortality is high, as there are few doctors within reach, and competent mid-wives are scarcely known. A girl of 20 is put on the "cull" list, that is, she is no longer marriageable; and a man of 28 faces the same fate. The woman raises the family, works at the cabin in spinning or weaving,

Fig. 7. Small Mountain Family.

Fig. 8. Carindy Stinnett, Spruce Flats, Great Smokies.
knitting socks, making moccasins, feeds and milks the cows, hoes the corn, helps in ploughing, saws the wood, and lays "stake and ridere fences. Her kingdom is within the house, although she is a field hand as well. No hat is raised to her, she stands and waits on the men at the table, yet she does not complain. She knows no other life. It is "manners" for the women to drudge and obey. At 25 she looks 40, at 40--80. Her life is short but fruitful. A mountain proverb describes her state in the terse "Mountains is alright for men and dogs but it's hard on women and hosses." (Fig. 8.)

All the mountain women weave. It is an inevitable preparation for a home of one's own, and every mountain girl must be efficient in this art as well as in the arts of spinning and quilting. Their "kiver" patterns are as delicately intricate as those of the finest tapestry work of medieval nuns, and because each of them possesses a fascinating story, I wish to describe here in some detail this art peculiar to the southern mountains. "The handwoven coverlet tells you that the humblest artisan who kneels at the altars of Beauty, receives from the hand of the god his share of that priceless draught."*1 The coverlet, surely, holds the "spice of the past" as nothing else, for, like family tradition, it comes from great-great-great grandmother's time to the present day, mellowed with age. But our patrician great-great-great grandmother has a rival today in the mountain woman who proudly shows her "kivers" to an enthusiastic visitor. Time and change pass these people by in their isolation, and hand-weaving is the only recognized means for obtaining warm "kivers" for cold winter nights. Their tools of

trade are simple, a loom and some home-grown cotton and wool, the
former for the woof, the latter for the warp. With these the busy
housewife finds time to create such patterns as the "Flower of the
Mountain", "Rose in the Garden", "Catalpa Flower", "Piney Rose";*1
etc., or to follow the more prosaic lines of the "Window Sash",
"Spectacles", "Heil Storm", or "Panel Doors";*2 perhaps she weaves
one of the various Beauties or Fancies, "Parson's Beauty", "North
Carolina Beauty", "Rich Man's Fancy";*3 maybe the "Sea Star" or
"The Star of the East" pleases her;*4 or the "Iron Wheel",*5 or the
"Broken Diamond",*6 or "Democrat Valley"*7 may busy her fingers.
Sometimes a humorous quirk of her mind will give the complicated
"Tennessee Trouble in North Carolina", and "Guess Me"*8 designs.

One of the most interesting patterns peculiar to the North
Carolina mountains is the "Downfall of Paris", whose history Miss
Hall traces back to its origin. It was woven in North Carolina
three generations ago, fell into the hands of some unappreciative
vandal who cut it into 32 pieces; but it was "restored" by sewing
the pieces together. "I first saw it on a load of tobacco, and
the owner of the tobacco, Kirk Bailey, of Richelieu, Kentucky, kind-
ly loaned it to me for illustrating purposes. The name of the de-
sign commemorates the 31st of March 1814, when the allied armies

*1. Illustrative of the poetical nature of the mountain woman.
2. Illustrative of her practical turn of mind.
3. Illustrative of her esthetic fancy.
4. Illustrative of her imaginative faculty.
5. Suggestive of native trades.
7. One of a group suggestive of political or historic origin.
8. Illustrative of a sense of humor.
entered Paris accompanied by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, or perhaps the 7th of July 1815, when, for the second time, the allies took possession of the French capital and Napoleon's power was finally broken."

The mountain woman has various methods of coloring her hand-work. Yellow is obtained from hickory bark, from peach leaves, or from the Black-eyed Susan. A North Carolina receipt for yellow dye is to "get the flowers of the Black-eyed Susan, boil them and set the color with alum." We must acknowledge from the overwhelming evidence of this and other similar directions, that the mountain artist inherits as well as her patterns, her knowledge of extracting dyes from natural sources. She always takes an unknown quantity of bark or roots, in an uncertain quantity of water, throws in a grain of copperas or a little piece of alum, and boils it "just about so long!"

"Many coverlets", declares Miss Hall, "express the personality of their weaver. A long, broad, heavy, closely woven one of dark indigo and white" indicates the spirit of the pioneer woman. Whereas, "Tennessee Trouble" could be woven only by a "happy-faced woman, who wore gay colored muslins, put a flower in her hair occasionally, and sang at her task." Let us pass, finally, to a consideration of the mountain children. They are preeminently well-bred. They wait quiet, alert, unconscious, with silent expectation while the stranger admires Mother's flowers or talks "biznes" with the man of the family. They have few toys save the "play-purties" which they make for them.

2. Ibid., p. 151
3. Ibid., pp. 166-167.
selves from broken bits of crockery and corn cobs, the former serving as beads and chine, the latter for dolls or rifles, according to the nature of the game. A dog or a pet pig is their constant companion. If total indifference to the child's doings is kindness, the mountaineers are super-indulgent parents. The men are away from home the greater part of the day, and the women have too many demands upon their time to stop their work to pick up the next-littlest baby and kiss away the bumps,—consequently the children soon learn to take care of themselves and to develop into sturdy, matter-of-fact men and women.

As a race the mountaineers are proud, sensitive, hospitable, kindly, obliging in an unreckoning way that is almost pathetic, honest, loyal, poor, ignorant, isolated, naturally capable and eager to learn. They have little sense of the value of time. The repose of eternal hills is in their nature. They are painfully sensitive to criticism, have a passion for politics, love their homes and the established order of things, are strongly religious—although this has no influence on morals,—and will perform mental gymnastics in questions of dogma. Their standard of morality is low, due to the heavy burdens of life, isolation, and environment, which force a one room cabin to house old and young, married and unmarried, of both sexes.

In conclusion, the reader is reminded that there are active in the development of any people two main factors, severally stated as heredity and environment, whose force is inseparable, as neither can be disregarded in the study of the other. Mountain regions are areas of isolation and confinement, remote from the
great currents of men and ideas that move along the river valleys. "They are regions of much labor and little leisure, of poverty to-day and anxiety for the morrow, of toil-cramped hands and toil-dulled brains."*1 The mountaineers are essentially conservative. They inherit the habits and customs of their fore-fathers. There is little in their environment to stimulate them to change. Wall-like barriers hold them apart and prevent concerted action. This makes them restive under any authority but their own. Clan and tribal societies, feudal rule, always on a small scale, characterize their societies. These are modified by exaggerated individualism and its inevitable concomitant, the blood feud.

The literature of any community reflects the spirit of its people; and the spirit of any people is the reflection of its surroundings. This is especially true of the mountain districts, as their isolated environment makes a people homogeneous in cultural taste as well as in habits of living by limiting or preventing the infusion of foreign elements.

III. Folk-Literature

In the consideration of the various songs, stories, and superstitions brought together in this paper, it must be remembered that the people who originated this literature are of Scotch-Irish, English, and French ancestry, with a slight infusion of German blood; and that, because of their isolation, they have preserved the earliest conceptions of their mother-countries with respect to myths, ballads, and general folk-knowledge, while they have at the same time incorporated into this literature sufficient new material to make it distinctly their own. They brought their traditions with them to our mountains, and time has slightly modified some of these, while it has left others entirely untouched. This is especially true of their ballad literature, their games, and their superstitions. On the other hand, the folk-stories of the mountain region have grown out of the people's experience, and therefore, are little touched by the influence of European lands.

This field of folk-lore is so interesting and so extensive that only a very slight draught has as yet been made upon its vast richness, and all that I have attempted to do is to consider a few of its various types and to show to what an extent this literature of the North Carolina mountaineers is distinctly characteristic of them and their environment.
A. Folk-Superstition

"Folk-lore is the study of intellectual survivals."*1 The student of folk-lore finds in districts removed from the great current of ideas that circulates along the plains and coastal regions of any continent, many survivals of primitive belief in the form of superstitions, home-made remedies, and local signs and omens.

Superstition, "a belief respecting causal sequence, depending on reasoning proper to an outgrown culture",*2 is an important element in the life of the mountaineers of North Carolina. The heterogeneous composition of these people is accountable for the many usages and beliefs, which they brought to America from their European mother-countries, and which, to a great extent, they have retained up to the present time.

Besides this lore preserved by inheritance and tradition, superstition in the southern highlands may be traced to another source. Folk secluded in remote regions are inclined to ascribe to supernatural agency anything that is mysterious, bewildering or strange. Superstition may spring from ignorance.

But whether tradition or ignorance is responsible for the conservation of this great body of folk-superstition, an analysis of even the most absurdly fantastic superstitions, shows that their basis rests in ideas. "Man's destiny is influenced in part, at least determined, by hidden powers; he is not the absolute master of

*1. The Open Court, Sept. 12, 1889, p. 182.
2. W. W. Newell.
himself and circumstances; the controlling forces can foreshadow the future and reveal objects and events to come; they thus far transcend the limits of human intelligence which cannot prove itself an infallible prophet."

As illustration of this point of view, one has only to visit any North Carolina church or graveyard. These are invariably located on hill-tops, because it was believed that in high places one gained the benediction of the sun,—direct reverence to it belongs to all primitive life. Another instance is recognized in the use of rhyme and doggerels for counting-out, found among children in all countries. This custom perpetuates the ancient superstitious practice of divination by lots.

Divination, in the time of ancient Greek and Roman, was practiced by the priests, the oracles, and other personages whose position assured them, at least in the eyes of their fellow citizens, of an intimate communication with the gods. Today, however, the power of divination is enjoyed solely by the witch or the witch-doctor.

"Faith in the reality of witchcraft is one of the oldest and most persistent tenets of the human race. It was once universal; it was rooted and grounded in the minds of the people before they became Christians; and it is still the creed of most savages" and of millions of civilized men."

fore, is not as unique, as one might suppose, in his credence of the relics of witchcraft superstition that are to be found in his environment. His knowledge is but one more link in the intellectual heritage of the human race; and he, in his turn, will pass his faith on to his son and his son's son, forging an infinite chain of primitive culture for future generations.

Authorities on early frontier history declare that in the latter part of the eighteenth century the people of Davie County, N. C., "firmly believed in the existence of witches", while those of the Bush Creek district in Randolph County "believed in witchcraft, ghost-seeing, haunted houses, and fortune telling".*1-2

The term witch is applied to either sex, but more women than men seem to be in league with the supernatural in North Carolina. The following story, furnished by Mr. G. T. Stephenson, about a woman supposed to be a witch will serve as an authentic account of the habits, likes, and powers of that species of human creature. (Incidentally it may be noted that the witch is not always infallible.)

"The early years of Phoebe Ward, witch, are shrouded in mystery. It is known that she was a woman of bad morals. No one seemed to know anything of her past. She was an old, old woman when this account begins.

"Phoebe Ward had no fixed home. She lived here and there first at one place and then at another in Northampton County, North Carolina. She stayed in a hut or any shelter whatsoever that was

granted her.

"She made her living by begging from place to place. Most people were afraid to refuse her, lest she should apply her witchcraft to them. When she found a house at which people were particularly kind to her, there she stopped and abused their kindness. Hence the people resorted to a number of methods to keep her away. For instance, when they saw her coming they would stick pins point-up into the chair-bottoms, and then offer her one of these chairs. It is said that she could always tell when the chair was thus fixed, and would never sit in it. Also, they would throw red pepper into the fire, and Phoebe would leave as soon as she smelled it burning."

"Among her arts it is said that she could ride persons at night (the same as nightmares), that she could ride horses at night and that when the mane was tangled in the morning it was because the witch had made stirrups of the plaits. She was said to be able to go through key-holes, and to be able to make a horse jump across a river as if it were a ditch. She was credited with possessing a sort of grease which she could apply, and then slip out of her skin and go out on her night rambles, and on her return get back again. It is said that once she was making a little bull jump across the river, and as she said, 'Through thick, through thin; 'way over in the hagerleen,' the animal rose and started. When he was about half way over, she said, 'That was a damn'd good jump,' and down the bull came into the river. (The witch is not to speak while she is crossing.)"*1

The witch does not necessarily have to be old; young girls are sometimes initiated into the mysteries of the black art. In North Carolina the daughter of a celebrated witch got into serious trouble by accompanying her mother on one of her midnight rambles, and quite often supernatural practices are a means of livelihood for the unprotected young virgin. These witch-maids, however, may be identified by one skilled in the study of anatomy, for they frequently possess physical characteristics that differentiate them from the ordinary girl. An idea occurring in folk-lore and mythology all over the globe, attributes some sign of ugliness such as inverted knees or feet to malignant spirits. Sometimes the feet alone appear distorted, for some spirits are conceived of as wearing clothes, as is the witch, and therefore, since the feet only are exposed to public view, it is but fitting that they should be marked.

"In North Carolina where, as in other Christian communities, the Devil is ever ready to deceive the unwary, license to practice witchcraft is often received from his Satanic Majesty, who in exchange takes a mortgage on the soul of the pupil." A man or woman may acquire the desired knowledge by "scouring a tin or pewter plate in some secret place, and giving himself (or herself) to the Devil by saying, 'I will be as clean of Jesus Christ as this dish is of dirt.'" Once ordained a witch, the powers of this privileged character are numerous. Witches may transform themselves into any bird or beast that suits their immediate purpose. For instance, the following story was told by an inhabitant of Guil-

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ford County.

Two neighboring negro farmers were on unfriendly terms. One of them discovered that a large white horse was destroying his tobacco. So he decided to stop it that night. "He went to de fence an' gathered him up a rail, an' sat down. An' when de horse come, an' at full speed, he knocked it backuds with the rail. It was that other man's wife he foun' layin' over the other side of the fence a-shiverin!'"*1

The favorite form of the famous Bell Witch, of whom an account may be found in Mr. Cross's article "Witchcraft in North Carolina",*2 was that of a rabbit. To this day, the natives declare, there may be found descendants of this witch-rabbit in and about the Bell community. Only experts can distinguish this species from the ordinary cottontail, but in that section no one will eat a rabbit that has a "black spot on the bottom of its left hind foot". When the spot is found, the foot is carefully cut off and placed in the hip pocket, and the body buried on the north side of an old log.*3

The toad is a frequent figure in folk-lore. His bad reputation is established, and his association with witches is of extremely long standing. Today there are few American witches who take the form of a toad, although it is a well-known fact in western North Carolina that "if you kill a toad, your cows will give bloody milk,—a misfortune which often results from the machinations of witches".*4 To keep witches from entering a house, a picture of a

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*1. Ibid., Vol. 30, p. 186.
frog's foot drawn on the entrance has proven an effective barrier.*1

Among the mountain whites of the South witches have the power to injure the minds and bodies of men and women, to stunt the growth of children, to prevent the formation of butter and soap, and to render fire-arms useless.*2 We learn that in Lincoln County during the first part of the nineteenth century:

"Witches were frequently supposed not only to exert their evil influences upon human beings but also upon hogs, cattle, fowls, cats, dogs, and the like. If a cow went 'dry', the witches were often charged with it. If the hogs or the cattle became diseased, the witches were supposed to have been exercising their spells and a witch doctor was called in to try to restore them to health again... Sometimes a 'witch-man' would come to a shooting match and spoil the 'luck'. On such occasions the participants would immediately disperse, saying that no prizes could be won while a 'witch-man' was in their midst."*3

The well-known superstition regarding the power of the "evil eye" is firmly established among the Alleghany Mountains. It is based upon the primitive doctrine of sympathetic magic, which states that "any effect may be produced by imitating it",*4 and upon the assumption that nails, hair, clothing and other articles of dress, and the name are parts of the personality, and, because to primitive folk things once joined remain joined forever,*5 any personal possession, in case it falls into the hands of an enemy, may

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*1. Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 113.
4. Ibid., p. 253.
be used by him to the misfortune of the owner. These facts explain
the North Carolinian's fear of giving anything to a witch. They
also explain his fear of "picking up tracks". Many people go bare-
footed in the mountain districts and, therefore, their foot-prints
are especially liable to be used by witches in working a spell upon
their makers. In Northampton County, conjure-bags contain besides
locks of hair, dirt from the tracks of the person to be conjured.

Just as parts of the body may be used to produce conjure,
so the spell may be broken by taking the parings of the toe and fin-
ger nails of the bewitched person and burying them at midnight at
the foot of a white oak-tree.\footnote{1} Nor is this the only remedy for
one afflicted. Maidenhair fern, mixed with the fodder, will make
bewitched cattle give milk.\footnote{2} The use of saliva is notorious. In
North Carolina one must make a cross and spit in it to secure him-
self from the evil influences of black cats and graveyard rabbits.\footnote{3}

Everyone realizes the luck of a left hind foot of a rab-
bit, killed in a graveyard at midnight by the light of a new moon,
but according to accepted tradition in North Carolina the "foot
should be cut from the living animal, the rabbit should be released,
and the foot should then be dipped in 'stump water'."\footnote{4} A mole's
paw, cut from a living animal, is also supposed to be a luck-charm,
and the child who "wears a mole's paw around its neck will not be
sick while teething."

Witches, in their nocturnal rambles, often "ride" human

\footnote{1}{Bergen, F. D. Animal and Plant Lore. Pp. 16, 102.}
\footnote{2}{J.A.F.-L., Vol. 20, p. 248.}
\footnote{3}{Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 100.}
\footnote{4}{Studies in Philology, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 272.}
beings. It is told that a girl was "pressed to death" by a witch who came night after night and sat upon her chest. The witch was in the form of a black cat.*¹ Sometimes the witch's mount is a transformed human being, transformed by means of a magic bridle, and sometimes it is an ordinary horse. If the first is the case, the next morning the "ridden" one will find his toes and fingers covered with dirt, his limbs scratched, and his strength exhausted; if the latter is the case, the following day the animal will be restive and fatigued, and will be found to have tangles in its mane, commonly known as "witch-stirrups".*²

There are various devices for keeping a witch from entering a cabin. One of the best known to the North Carolina mountaineer is to hang a sifter over the keyhole, for the witch must count all the meshes in the sifter before she can enter—and he knows she will be unable to complete her task before dawn. Another precaution is to sprinkle mustard seed in the four corners of the house. The hag must pick up each seed one by one before she can be free to work her evil spells upon the inmates.*³

Besides the various tricks, spells, and wicked transformations of which a witch is capable, the North Carolinian believes that she, or he, is vested with medical skill. The following is an account given of a young boy of western North Carolina who received no medical attention during a severe case of typhoid fever, other than that supplied by a witch-doctor.

*² Ibid.
*³ Southern Workman, Vol. 41, p. 246.
"This boy's parents were ignorant and superstitious, and believed in witches and in the powers witches were supposed to possess. When their young son fell sick, they imagined he had been bewitched; so the doctor was sent for. He came and told the parents that their surmising were correct, that witches had certainly caused the sickness of their child. Confidingly the parents permitted the witch doctor to have his way, and the treatment for 'witches' was immediately begun. First, the 'doctor' ordered the return of all borrowed property to the owners and also ordered that the parents of the sick boy call in everything which happened to have been borrowed from them. These orders embraced everything, and one neighbor was very much inconvenienced by having to return a log-chain which he was using and could not at the time replace without purchasing a new one. But finally all borrowed property was in place, and then the doctor proceeded to treat the bewitched boy. For several weeks he visited the patient and put him through many physical calisthenics, all the while uttering in a low voice what appeared to be magic words or incantations in Pennsylvania Dutch to drive away the spell wrought by the witches. But no one understood or could interpret the magic words which were used. Days passed and the child finally died. The witch doctor then reluctantly admitted that the spell of the witches was beyond his power. The death of this young child under such circumstances seems not to have caused any great public indignation at the time. Only upon a few persons in the neighborhood did this death make any lasting impression, so general was the belief in witches."

Strange drugs, many of animal origin, play an important part in primitive medicine. Toads, because of their supposed poisonous nature, are much used to draw out less virulent poisons. "A live toad-frog cut in two and applied to the bite of a mad dog will draw out the venom."*1 Spiders and toads were hung about the patient's neck as a remedy for ashmole and ague.*2 The toad, also, is regarded as a protection against the plague: its ashes burnt are a cure for cancer.*3

The familiar superstition that to handle a toad will reward the venturesome with warts is a doctrine based on the theory that like begets like. The warty skin of the toad gives sufficient evidence for the current belief. Sometimes in the mountains, one hears the expression "it rained toads last night." The origin of this belief is to be found in a study of the toad's habits. When larvae leave the water in great numbers and migrate, always by night they may be forced, by some hard rain, to leave their hiding places. If this occurs at night, and if on the following morning people see a great number of toads where formerly there had been none, they naturally conclude that the shower brought them.*4

The cures of witch-doctors do not depend entirely upon the virtue of the drug employed. Such injuries as a sprain may best be relieved by rubbing downwards on the part afflicted while pronouncing these words, "Ronde geronde", nine times. After an interval, "Prostale" should be solemnly uttered once. This acts only as an

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4. Ibid., Vol. 13, p. 41.
anodyne, however. If a rapid cure is desired it may be achieved by the interrupted pressure of a hand in which a mole has been squeezed to death.\(^1\) This is also a remedy for pain in a felon. Haemorrhage may be cured by repeating three times the passage in Ezekiel beginning, "As I passed by thee", or by saying three times, "Glick seliche wounde, Glick seliche wounde, Glick seliche ist der Engle, Das Jesus Christus geboren war."

Three crosses should then be made on the afflicted part. This is explained to mean an invocation to the persons of the Trinity.\(^2\)

To cure a sty rub three pieces of gravel together and repeat:

"Hi sty go off my eye, Go on the next one who comes by", then put the stones, wrapped up, at a crossroads. A burn may be healed by saying:

"Bread hunger not, water thirst not In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost."\(^3\)

Or, if one prefers, the following cure may be applied: First moisten the burned part with saliva and repeat:

"As far as the east is from the west, Come out fire and go in frost, In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

\(^1\) Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 111.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid., ff.
Then blow on it three times, and rub toward sunrise three times. This is not to be taught to more than three persons of the opposite sex.

Certain charms have potential power over evil. The carnelian is good for the blood and should be worn as a protection against evils in general.*¹ A child may be cured of phthisis if measured with a sourwood stick, held in such a manner that it remains unseen by the patient. As soon as the child grows taller than the stick it will be cured of the disease, provided that the charm has not been broken by a chance sight of the mysterious measuring-stick. In a similar fashion croup may be cured. Measure the height of the child against a good sized live tree, then bore a hole in the tree at the proper place, put in a lock of the child's hair and wedge tightly with a plug of wood. As the child grows above the hole it will cease to be troubled with the croup.*²

"Ordinarily wounds are stanched with dusty cobwebs and wound up in any old rag."*³ Women who have the care of the truck patch tie their cuts up in "sut an' a rag" and go "to hoein' corn" as nonchalantly as though nothing unusual had occurred.

The mountaineers' fortitude under severe pain is nothing short of heroic, although often needless. They obstinately refuse to take an anaesthetic, and their own surgery and obstetric practice is barbarous. Take, for instance, the minor operation known among the natives as "tooth-jumpin": "You take a cut nail (not one

*¹ Folk-Memory, p. 131.
*³ Kephart, H. Our Southern Highlanders. P. 226.
Fig. 9. Cove in Smoky Mountains.

Fig. 10. Bee Farm in Great Smokies, Showing Characteristic "Gums".
o' those round wire nails) and place it squar' p'int agin the ridge of the tooth, jest under the edge of the gum. Then jump the tooth out with a hammer. A man who knows how can jump a tooth without it hurtin' half as bad as pullin."

Some of the mountain ailments are unknown outside of their environment. "Dew-pizen is the poison of some weed, which, dissolved in dew, enters the blood through a scratch or abrasion." If this happens, as is most often the case, to affect a foot the entire leg will swell up and turn black. Many a mountaineer is "jest a lot o' sores all over, as big as my hand, from dew-pizen". A peculiar disease known as "milk-sick" prevails in districts where the cattle graze in rich and deeply shaded coves. (Fig. 9.) Unless promptly and properly treated it proves fatal to both the cattle and to any human being who drinks milk or eats butter from the afflicted "bossy-cows". The origin of this ailment is unknown, but it has been noticed, however, that it disappears from "milk-sick" coves when they have been cleared of timber and opened to the sunlight.

Just as unique as the diseases themselves are the majority of their cures. Here plants, as well as animals, play a conspicuous role, for folk-medicine is one of the most important subjects in American plant and animal lore. The mystery which shrouds plant origin and plant growth, has been interpreted by the primitive mind into a reason for plant worship. Plants pierce the earth and know all the secrets of hidden veins. Their roots may cause a tree to fall, or they may change the course of a mountain stream, and

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2. Ibid., p. 229.
3. Ibid., p. 230.
delicate flowers may bloom, far removed from human's reach, on the face of some barren cliff,—surely these are sufficient manifestations of supernatural power! From the recognition of the miraculous nature of plants, it is only one step to conceive of their significance. They were created to be of use to man.

The southern mountaineer is an adept in the administration of herbal medicine. For him each community cares for the injuries that might afflict those within its bounds. Herbs, roots, and barks unfold to him the magic of their nature: Rat's-vein has the power to render a woman pregnant;*1 butterfly-root tea, given hot, cures pneumonia; sourwood tea, thickened with flour and made into pills, is the recognized remedy for dropsy; wild cucumber bark soaked in whiskey will relieve a congested liver; lady-slipper tea has the power to render the most nervous person calm and steady; balm of Gilead buds steeped in whiskey will cure coughs; dog-wood bark and old field cinders are a well-known beauty secret, for they have the power to clear the complexion; flax-seed tea is good for acid in the blood; while seneca snake-root tea is an acknowledged cure for hives or measles, and any disease which must be "brought out".*2 If a "tooth-doctor" is not near, smoke-dried leaves from life-everlasting will relieve a toothache; and in case the mountain physician is out of reach, dried and powdered butterfly-root applied to an open cut will prevent proud flesh from forming. A poultice of Jimson leaves is good for a sore throat; and another remedy for severe cases of pneumonia is hot boneset tea.

*1. I have encountered this superstition in no place but Hot Springs, N.C.
*2. These, and the following cures are taken from J.A.F.-L., Vol. 20, p. 348 ff.
Should a child be a victim of whooping cough he may be cured by eating the bread baked by a woman whose maiden name was the same as that of her husband. The woman, however, must not give it to the child, someone else must fetch it, or, better still, the sufferer should steal it.

"That a knowledge of plants, emanating in part doubtless from monastic sources, was once widely spread is evinced by the existence of popular plant names, now to be learned only in textbooks"¹ or from the lips of an isolated folk, and by the diffusion of popular plant knowledge among the "backwoods" districts of all countries.

North Carolina is no exception to this general rule. There subterranean water or mineral veins are discovered by the aid of a divining-rod made from relatively small, feeble plants such as the Saxifraga, the common hazel. Faith in divining-rods has dated from the very beginnings of primitive magic. A rod in the shape of a Y of hazel or peach branches is "grasped at the ends by hands, palms up, so that the ends of the branch are between the thumb and forefinger, the stem is horizontal, the operator walks, elbows bent, forearm at right angles." The twig is said to move or turn according to the presence or absence of a spring or hidden mineral vein.² The hazel is likewise used as a lightning protector. The witch-hazel, "a North American shrub so-called because of its strange habit of post-foliar, autumnal-blooming, an omen of added mysterious virtue,"³ the ash, oak, and mistletoe, or "mist-rod" as the natives call it, are charms whose presence will protect man from lightning,

¹. Johnson, W. Folk-Memory, p. 16.
². The Open Court, Sept. 12, 1889, p. 162*.
³. MacBride: Folk-Lore of Plants.
witchcraft, or disease. The mistletoe will also save seeds and grains from fire.

Many of the popular names of plants are associated with local legends which are passed, by word of mouth, from generation to generation. For instance: to eat the fruit of the lotus will make the soul more blessed than the care-free gods (Buddhaistic origin); roses are regarded as a "rosary of faith"; heart's ease, our pharmacopeia, takes its name from the traditions of empiricism, the credulity of the ignorant; and to dream of cypress, "shadows of melancholy", or white thorn betokens death.¹

Various charms for certain seasons are famous in the Smoky Mountains. Those of springtime naturally turn to love, and many plants, as the cuscuta compacta, or common dodder, christened by the natives "love-vine", owe their names to the use which one finds for them in love divinations. If a young girl plucks a white dogwood blossom and wears it in her bosom, the first man she meets wearing a white hat will have the Christian name of her future husband, and a handkerchief left on the grass overnight will have his name on it in the morning. When she has discovered his name, if she will take some leaves of liverwort, "heart-leaf", dry them before a fire and sprinkle their dust over his clothes, she will win him immediately. If she carries the leaves in her bosom she will have a score of lovers. (This charm works for persons of both sexes.)² The orchid, locally known as "Adam and Eve", is also used in love divination. Take two little root balls, name one for yourself and one

¹. Ibid.
for the person you love best, and put them in a pan of water. If
the one named for yourself sinks, your case is hopeless, but if it
swims you will be successful. Several other tests for discover-
ing whether or not one's sweetheart is true are practiced as follows:
"Break off a piece of 'love-vine', twirl it around the head three
times and drop it on the bush behind you. If it grows your lover
is true, if not he is false." When the first mullein-stalk appears
break it nearly off after naming it. If it lives, he or she loves
you, if not, your love has been misplaced.

Birds, as well as flowers, have a part in the mountain-
eer's love projects. When one sees a turkey buzzard flying alone,
repeat--

"Hail! Hail! Lonely, lonesome turkey-buzzard,
Hail to the East, hail to the West,
Hail to the one that I love best,
Let me know by the flap of your wing
Whether he (or she) loves me or not."

Then notice the manner of the bird's flight; if it flaps its wings
that is a token that the lover is true, if not, he is false. When
the call of the first turtle-dove is heard, the mountaineer sits
down, removes shoe and stocking from the left foot, and turns the
stocking inside out. If, in the heel of this, a hair is found, it
will be of the same color as the hair of the future husband or wife.

Another omen connected with the first dove of the year is

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1. Known and used at Banner's Elk, N. C.
3. Ibid.
closely noticed and confidently believed by the North Carolinian: if he hears the cry of the bird above him, it is a token of prosperity for the coming year; if below him, downhill, he will be unlucky. To have quails fly up in front of one when he is on the way to drive a bargain is a sign that he should abandon the trade; and to have a flock of birds fly by the cabin denotes good luck to its inmates. For one who suffers with backache the call of the first whippoorwill is extremely significant, as it affords the means whereby the sufferer may relieve himself of all pain by the simple method of turning three summersaults. To find some origin for the belief of these omens is not our task here, but it is interesting to notice that they may all be traced back to ancient forms of worship, of natural science, or of culture.

Take the well-known tradition that the swallow is the harbinger of spring. This bird has been regarded as a favorable omen from Aryan times. In winter it disappears, engulfed by darkness, but with the advent of the long days it reappears and brings with it light and warmth. Is not the modern survival of this old time belief merely a new expression of the ancient theory that the powers of light ever contend against the powers of darkness? The powers of day versus the powers of night have long been a favorite theme of folk-lore, and under this belief many erroneous interpretations of natural phenomena have been recorded. Why might not this modern belief, current in all parts of America, be merely an "atavistic reappearance of the ancient Aryan conception of this swallowing of light by darkness?"*1 Surely, the prevalence of this superstition

*1. Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 39.
points to some such general folk-lore motif!

Animal lore is full of the belief in charms and amulets. The left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit has already been spoken of in connection with the subject of witchcraft, but there remains to be added the fact that its virtue is assured only if it is carried in the right-hand pocket. Burying a hair-ball (from a cow's stomach) under an enemy's doorstep will work a spell on him; carrying such a ball will protect one from spells;¹ "cattle must not sleep in the spring with a full belly until the Pleiades set;"² and to assure oneself that a young cow will give good milk, pour the first milk into a running stream; if any is spilled on the ground it is a sign that she will "dry up";³ to prevent witches from riding his horses or injuring his cows the mountain farmer hangs a hollow flint on his cow-byre;⁴--these and many other barn-yard omens are held by the southern folk to be infallible.

There are numerous superstitions held in regard to cats, some of which are familiar to people outside the highlands; others are only locally celebrated. Among the first group are found the beliefs that cats suck the breath of sleeping children, and that to have a strange cat follow one home denotes luck;⁵ among the second group are recorded the precaution against taking a cat when one moves from cabin to cabin, the prophecy of a cold snap⁶ when the cat sits with her back to the fire, and also the theory that a cat,

¹ Bergen, F. D. Plant and Animal Lore.
³ Ibid., Vol. 20, p. 244.
⁴ Johnson, W. Folk-Memory. P. 175.
⁵ Ibid., Vol. 20, p. 244.
⁶ Ibid., p. 243.
when sitting in a crowd of girls, will look first at the girl who is first to be married. It is also considered bad luck for a child to have a cat attached to it.

Snakes are almost as popular as cats in the mountain local sayings. The first thunder heard in the spring is supposed to awaken them;¹ they may be detected by the odor of watermelons when there are none around; and, if a dead black snake is hung up head downward it will bring rain within 48 hours; if it is hung tail downward thunder, but no rain, will result.² Good luck is the fortune of the person who kills the first snake he sees in the spring;³ and to all black snakes is attributed the power of standing erect on their tails. In that position they may run after one, and, upon catching their victim, they may wind themselves about him, effectively tying him to a tree. After whipping him to death with their tails they run the tail up their victim's nostril to make sure he is dead. From this belief rose the common name of "coach whip", well-known in Carolina.⁴

Whereas it is considered "good luck" to have the right eye itch; to have it snow on one's wedding day; and to find a spider on one's clothes; it is equally recognized as "bad luck" to spill salt; carry a hoe on one's shoulder;⁵ or to hear a woodpecker tapping on the house. This last sign betokens a death in the family, and opens an entirely new field for superstitious lore.⁶ If a clock,
long motionless, suddenly begins to tick or strike it is a sign of approaching death or misfortune; and if two people look into a mirror at the same time it is unlucky, for the younger will surely die within a year.

The dead always have their feet to the east and a piece of muslin over the faces until the time when friends come to see the body. The muslin is then placed over the hands and never put back on the face. This custom is fiercely observed, and should any stranger attempt to remove the cloth from the hands, the entire clan of the dead man or woman would curse him with all the evils their vivid imaginations could invent.

Rain falling on a new made grave is considered a lucky omen. In various lands the custom of telling the bees of a death in the family constitutes a very pretty and very touching ceremony. It dates back to the time when "honey or beeswax was sprinkled over the tomb as a symbol of death and immortality."*1 The bee hives are draped with black for a period of mourning, and the bees, themselves, are charged with messages to the dead. (Fig. 10.)

Some curious intellectual notions have clustered about the moon from very early times. The moon's changes are more marked than are the sun's, and are therefore more closely noticed by the people and are held responsible by them for changes in the lot of mortals. In North Carolina it is a bad omen to see the new moon through bushes or the branches of a tree, and to have a pocket-knife in one's hands at this moment foretells a quarrel with somebody, whereas a purse is a sign of good luck.*2 The moon exerts a power-

ful influence on agricultural and domestic affairs. Every seed has a certain sign in which it must be planted. All vegetables that are grown under ground should be planted in the dark of the moon; conversely all vines and plants whose fruit matures above ground should be planted in the light of the moon. Good Friday is an especially good day to plant beans and all things that grow down and hang, for Friday is "hangman's day". Crops of corn must be planted with the growing moon, but shingles are nailed on the roof when the moon is on the wane, as otherwise they would warp upwards at the edges. Hogs should be killed in the dark of the moon in order to prevent shrinkage, and fences are put up at this time, else they will sink into the ground. Moving should always be done on the increase of the moon, and the first thing carried to the new cabin should be something that will not blow away. If salt is moved first, it is considered a lucky omen.

Although it is bad luck to see the new moon over the right shoulder, if this should happen it may be put to good account by taking three steps backwards and repeating:

"New moon, true moon, true and bright,
If I have a lover let me dream of him tonight,
If I'm to marry far, let me hear a bird cry;
If I'm to marry near, let me hear a cow low;
If I'm never to marry, let me hear a hammer knock."

One of these sounds is always heard.

Other marriage signs are: two spoons in the same cup of

*1. The Open Court, Sept. 12, 1889, p. 1825.
tea or coffee, and the shortest piece of the breastbone of a chicken, pulled by two girls. These betoken an early marriage. It is never safe to be married in May.

The moon also figures in weather-lore. There will be as many snows during the winter as the moon is days old when the first snow falls. The first twelve days of January will furnish a forecast of the weather for the year; the first three days of December, in a like manner, control the weather for December, January, and February respectively. If it rains on Easter Sunday it must rain seven weeks thereafter; if it rains on Monday it will rain on two other days of the same week; if it does not rain on June first it will not rain for a period of fifteen days; and if the rain clears away at night the clearing may not be reliable, for to be positive of good weather it should clear during the day.

The housewife has her set tasks to perform and she is careful to obey all the laws of nature to secure success. She always sees dark colors in the dark of the moon, and light colors when it is full; she protects her chickens from the hawk's talons by keeping a pebble, taken from the bottom of the spring, in her fireplace; she never steps over a broom, or turns her spinning wheel backwards; she never sews on Sunday unless it is without a thimble, for she knows it is wrong; she finishes before Saturday a dress begun on Wednesday, otherwise she would not live to wear it; she is extreme
ly careful to take the baby upstairs instead of downstairs, when she first takes it from the room, otherwise it would not go to heaven, and if the door of the room steps down, she places a chair or a book in the sill, steps on that with the baby in her arms, and thence to the ground; she never cuts the baby's nails with scissors before it is a year old, for she knows that it would make her child steal;¹ and she never permits it to look into a glass before it is six months old, for, if the baby should live after that experience, it would be sure to grow up two-faced.²

A visitor is looked for in a mountain home if a chunk of fire falls on the hearth, if a cock crows before an open door, or if a dish-towel is dropped.³

The strength of superstition is equalled only by its lasting power. The North Carolina mountaineer, hemmed in on all sides by natural barriers, does not regard witchcraft, nor local signs and omens as ridiculous beliefs of an outgrown culture. His life very frequently depends upon the immediate administration of some homemade remedy, and the natural awe which he feels in the presence of vast mountains and lonely forests accentuates, perhaps not unduly, his conception of the spirit of the universe, which to him is an animated friend, ready to afford him amusement in the hunt, restfulness in the seclusion of her coves, and relief from pain in the abundance of her herbal remedies. Is it any wonder he attributes to Nature's agents the power of performing miracles, the power which outwardly manifests itself to him in charms and signs? While we

²2. Ibid., Vol. 20, p. 244.
³3. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 300.
recognize the unusual and the supernatural, at the same time we also realize the absurdity of attempting to perform miracles. Nevertheless, let us try to understand the credulity of our mountain brother and let us not try to explain away all that appeals to the imagination. Surely we should remember the words of Emerson and should be ready to say with him:

"Meantime, far be from me the impatience which cannot brook the supernatural; far be from me the task of explaining away all which appears to the imagination. Willingly I too say Hail! to the unknown, the awful powers which transcend the ken of the understanding."
B. Folk-Music and Folk-Games

The beauty and wild grace of the popular poetry and songs of the common people was first pointed out by Mrs. Theresa Robinson, better known under the acrostic pseudonym of Talvi,*1 and we accord to her the honor of arousing America to an early interest in native folk-song and folk-lore. Following her initiative, other folk-loreists turned their attention to the various districts in the New World where literature characteristic of the people and their environment might be found, and collected the songs of sea-faring mariners, the Indian legends, the cowboy ballads, and the plantation songs of southern negroes; but until very recently no attempt had been made to preserve the folk-lore of the mountains of the South. New efforts are now being directed towards the isolated highlands of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee with an amazingly fruitful reward.

Here were found those family likenesses which exist among the traditional songs of all European peoples and give rise to the repeated use of certain stereotyped expressions and forms of speech, as the riddle, refrain, question and answer, just as love, hero-worship, and belief in Divine Providence and its retributive justice are pointed out as common to the thoughts of various nations. Here were found, too, local improvisations, whose themes were entirely original and whose spirit arose from the isolated environment and the character of the mountain people.

2. Ibid., p. 41.
A theory advanced by several philosophers regards poetry as an expression of feeling, originally identical with song. "Even Herder insisted that song and speaking were long one and the same among the old race"; consequently the first poetry was in lyrical form, as that indicative of an expression of feeling. "Popular poetry, whether song, ballads, or drama, means those products existing now or formerly, which proceed from the common people and are blossoms of popular life, born and nurtured under the care of the people, cherished by their joys, watered by their tears; and, as such, eminently characteristic of the great mass of the nation and its condition." 

What is true of nations is also true of districts, and nowhere is a more excellent illustration of this doctrine to be found than among the Smoky Mountains where the ingress of "outland" influence is limited to a few lumber camps and mining communities.

"Followin' music", as it is called in the mountains, is the only outlet for those powerful emotions which the mountaineer studiously excludes from everyday life. "Part singin'" is unknown in the back districts, but a thin, high treble is a pleasing accompaniment to their various hymns and ballads.

A rough classification of these songs, divides them into five main groups: first, the traditional English and Scottish ballads; second, the songs of later origin bordering on folk-ballads; third, local improvisations, notably feud songs; fourth, religious songs; and fifth, play songs.*2

The collector of mountain ballads meets with many difficulties. The mountaineer is naturally shy and suspicious of all "fur'eners" with a notebook and a pencil. His pride will not permit him to speak of his people or their customs to any outsider, and even when he may admit knowledge of some weird melody, his mood may not be one conducive to singing. It is then impossible to move his languor, his failure to "re-collection" effectively stops all inquiry and baffles the sincere interrogator. Sometimes a temperance or religious revival sweeps the mountains with an intense fervor of spiritual zeal. Then nowhere within its compass can be found a man or woman who can be induced to recall even the names of former musical favorites.

Those who have only read the mountain songs and have not heard them sung to their appropriate airs have but a limited idea of their true artistic effect. The air is the life of the ballad, and is as traditional as the words. A great similarity prevails among the different airs, and much effort is required to keep them distinct from one another. For the most part, they are mournful and melancholy, and lend themselves to the weird wailing of mountain minstrel, to whom a ballad is "pretty" in proportion to the poignancy of the emotional effect it produces.

They are sung slowly, accompanied by the banjo, fiddle, or dulcimer, traditional instruments of mountain music. The dulcimer, a descendant from Elizabethan England, looks like a very slender and short-necked violin. It has three strings, sometimes of gut but generally of wire, two of which are tuned in unison, and the third an octave lower. The "dulcimore" is bowed or plucked. The per-
former holding it lengthwise on his lap, presses the string nearest to him with a bit of reed held in the left hand, while with the right he sweeps all three strings with a quill or a piece of not too flexible leather. The two unpressed strings form a drone-bass accompaniment like that of a bagpipe. The tonal quality is very light, and especially appropriate for the old Scotch and English ballads, such as *Fair Margaret* and *Sweet William*.

To hear some sweet voiced mountain woman sing these old melodies with their simple, monotonous minor cadences, carries one back to the rich romance of Mediaeval England, when the court minstrel entertained my lord and lady at supper. Although there are no court minstrels in North Carolina, there are found many old court ballads with slight changes in either title or theme. *The Demon Lover* becomes in the American version *The Ship Carpenter* or *The House Carpenter*, but tells the same story of a wife's desertion of home and husband when, in the disguise of a former suitor, the demon lover beguiles her.

"Well met, well met, my own true love;
Well met, well met," says he;
"I've just returned from the old salt sea,
And it's all for the love of thee.
I could have married a king's daughter dear,
And she fain would have married me;
But a crown of gold I did refuse,
It was all fir the love of thee."

The lady tells him of her marriage with *The House Carpenter*, but
the Lover persuades her to leave him.

The American version tends to minimize or to eliminate the supernatural elements: this is true of the thing as a whole, yet it is emphasized in the last two stanzas:

"What hills, what hills are those, my love,
That look so white like snow?"

"They are the hills of heaven, my love,
Where we will never go."

"What hills, what hills are yon, my love,
That look so black and low?"

"They are the hills of hell, my love,
Where you and I must go."

The following ballad offers a good example of what happens to the ballads in general in a region so far from the scene of their original composition. It borrows lines from The Lass of Loch Royal or Fair Annie of Loch Royal, and in the version entitled Old True Love is today to be heard in the mountain fastness of the Great Smokies.

Fragment from North Carolina

"Oh, who will shoe your feet, my dear,
my bonny foot,
Or who will glove your hand,
my
Or who will kiss your red rosy cheeks,
When I'm in the foreign land?"

Her cheeks were like some blooming red rose
All in the month of June.
Her voice is like some sweet instrument
That's just been put in tune.

"So fare you well, my own true love,
So fare you well awhile;
I'm going away but to come back again
Though it were a thousand mile."

The music is quaint, plaintive, charming, with abrupt harmonic changes which are fascinating but difficult to notate.

One of the characteristic practices of mountain singers is to ornament the tunes of their ballads according to their own fancy—words and syllables, as well as notes, are liberally added. A most excellent illustration of this is found in the two versions of Lord Randal; the first notation is that of the Scottish ballad, the second is a copy of the Kentucky air which is likewise known and used in North Carolina.¹

¹. Musical Quarterly, Apr. 1818.
Predominant among the English and Scottish ballad-survivals known in North Carolina are those classified by Professor Gummers*1 as belonging to the oldest ballad groups; namely, ballads whose themes deal with the stolen bride, of which The House Carpenter is an example; and ballads that celebrate an elopement, which is illustrated by the celebrated Gypsie Laddie of the Scotchmen, sung in North Carolina without modification of its original form:

The Gypsie Laddie

There came three gypsies from the north,
They were all wet and weary 0;
They sang so neat and so complete,
It charmed the heart of the Lady 0.

The squire he came home one night,
Inquiring for his Lady 0;
The news so quickly lit on him:
"She's gone with the dark-eyed gypsie 0."

He saddles his "milk-white steed" and rode both night and day to overtake his faithless Lady but the pursuit did not succeed.

"What care I for house and land,
What care I for money 0?
I'd rather have a kiss from the gypsie's lips
Than all your land and money 0."

The collector was fortunate enough to hear an elderly woman drone this ballad while knitting on her tufted counterpane. Her sweet, old-fashioned, high-quavered vocalization illustrated a mood frequent among mountain women—a mood of such utter languor or preoccupation that the listener feared that song and singer might fade away. This is partly because of her monotonous isolated life, and partly because in this land of mountain torrents and bitter winds, she must work so hard in and about her cabin that the temptation to relax is too great to be disregarded when chance offers a few relatively free moments.\(^1\)

Closely connected with this first group of ballads are those of the second group, that originated in a later day than the Scottish ballads proper, but the composition of which was greatly influenced by their predecessors. These songs feature at the "shivarees" where banjo and fiddle enter, where knees are limbered and where merry voices rise to sing the praises of 'Liza Jane', 'Polly', or some equally favored "doney gal".

'Liza Jane (Roan Mountain, N. C.)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{1. When I go a-ridin', I take the rail-road train; but when I go a-} \\
\text{court-in' I take Sweet 'Liza Jane.}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^1\) McGill, J. Musical Quarterly, July 1917, p. 368.
2. When I go a-fishin',
   I take my hook and line;
   But when I go a-courtin',
   I take that gal o' mine.

3. You climb up the oak tree,
   I'll climb up the gum—
   I never see a pretty gal
   But what I love her some.

4. I wish I had a needle and thread
   As fine as I could sew,
   I'd sew my true love to my side
   And down the road we'd go.

5. You go ride the old grey horse,
   I'll go ride the roan;
   You hug and kiss your gal,
   I'll hug and kiss my own.

6. The jay-bird and the sparrer,
   They both come down together,
   They flew through the briar patch,
   And never lost a feather.

7. I wish I was in Heaven,
   Sittin' in the big arm-chair
   With one arm around a whiskey barrel,
   And t'other around my dear.
8. She went down the new cut road,
    I went down the lane,
    A heavy load and a sorry team,
    To drive out 'Liza Jane.

In the coves, the spirit of mirth still dwells. "Squar" McRea, at the head of Wilk Cat Gap, holds a "workin'", or a "peahullin'", or a "water-melon cuttin'", or, perhaps, a "candy pullin'". When the work has been finished the chairs are pushed back, the fiddle and banjo are brought forth, and, if the church has not put its ban on "twistifications", the country dance is the feature for the rest of the evening's entertainment. As the dance is a natural exponent of the songs which immediately follow, it might be well to gain some idea of their "calls".

"Eight hands up and go to the left; half and back; corners turn; partners sash-i-ate. First four, forwards and back; forward again and cross over; forward and back and home you go. Gents stand and ladies swing in the center; own partners and half sash-i-ate."

"Eight hands and gone again; half and back; partners by the right and opposite by the left--sash-i-ate. Right hands across and howdy do? Left and back and how are you? Opposite partners, half sash-i-ate and go to the next (and so on for each couple)."

"All hands up and go to the left. Hit the floor. Corners turn and sash-i-ate. First couple cage the bird with three arms around. Bird hop out and hoot-owl in; three arms around and hootin' agin. Swing and circle four, ladies change and gents the
same; right and left; the shoo-fly swing (and so on for each couple).” 1-2

The mountain fiddle, a time-worn and much battered heirloom, is the necessary accompaniment to either song or dance. No social function is complete without its presence, and the fiddler is constantly in demand. He generally shares his popularity with those who are "followers of banjo pickin'". The instrument, home-made, very cleverly fashioned with a drumhead of cat-hide, the wooden part of hickory (there are no frets), is picked in a manner peculiar to the mountains which must be heard to be appreciated.

When the party has danced itself out, the young folks gather around the fireplace and sing. At the present day many of the ballads sung chiefly in isolated mountain districts of North Carolina and Tennessee have "Pretty Polly" for their heroine. The following is a version of Polly's Love as sung in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Henderson County, North Carolina.

Polly's Love.

1. Poor Jack he's gone a-sailing,
   With trouble on his mind,
   He has left his native country
   And his darling girl behind.
   And sing oh! and sing oh!
   So fare you well, my darling.

*1. Hanley: Mountain People of Kentucky.  (Southern Highlander. P. 263.)
2. This dance is known and performed in Avery County, N. C.
3. There was a rich old farmer,  
   In London he did dwell,  
   And he had an only daughter,  
   The truth too I will tell.

3. She went into a tailor's shop,  
   And dressed in man's array,  
   She enlisted with the captain,  
   To carry her away.

4. "Your waist it is too slender,  
   Your fingers they are too small,  
   Your cheeks too red and rosy,  
   To face the cannon ball."

5. "My waist is none too slender,  
   My fingers they are none too small,  
   It will never change my countenance,  
   To face the cannon ball."

6. And when the battle was ended,  
   Pretty Polly marched around,  
   Among the dead and wounded,  
   Her darling boy she found.

7. And she took him in her arms  
   And she carried him to the town,  
   And she called for some physician  
   To heal his bleeding wound.
8. This couple now are married, 
    How well they do agree. 
This couple they are married. 
And why not you and me? 
    And sing oh! and sing oh! 
So fare you well, my darling.

Roan Mountain, one of the bleakest, blankest "balds" of all western North Carolina is the seat of much mountain culture, and, because of the inaccessibility of the Roaring Creek district, its literature is less known than is that of any other region. Although the feud-songs and others of local interest predominate here, the "good fightin' stock" appreciate a love song as much as any of their more peacefully inclined brothers. 'Liza Jane, perhaps their best known ballad, has already been given, but Daisy is a heroine celebrated only a shade less emphatically:

Daisy (Roan Mountain, N. C.)

\[\text{Music notation}\]

1. Coffee grows on the white oak tree, The riv-er runs with bran-dy, 
   My little gal is a blue-eyed gal as sweet as any can-dy.
2. Fly around, my blue-eyed gal,
Fly around, my daisy,—
Every time I see that gal
She almost runs me crazy.

Most ballads are preserved by oral tradition, yet some, particularly those of the third group, are circulated in printed form. They are written in a dry, unemotional, matter-of-fact manner, very much like an ordinary newspaper account of a "killin'". The boy who "follows" writing ballads enshrines in crude verse the memory of such events as quicken the pulse and appeal to the imagination of the mountaineers, such as the Hargis-Marcum feud, which culminated in the assassination of Lawyer J. B. Marcum in the Court House at Jackson, Breathwitt County, Kentucky.*1 To understand this third type of mountain literature which celebrates local events and local characters, we must recall the frequency of blood-feuds, the hero-outlaw, and the great respect which such a man, real or mythical, arouses in the hearts of his sturdy brother-fighters.

The heroic ballads cluster for the most part around Jesse James, who seems to have stood with the North Carolinians as Robin Hood stood with the Anglo-Saxons of a by-gone age.*2 These ballads are always shouted with great gusto, and are by no means beautiful.

Jesse James.

1. Yes, I went to the depot
Not many days ago: they followed on behind,

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And I fell upon my knees, and I offered up the keys
To Frank and his brother, Jesse James.

2. Poor Jesse James, poor Jesse James,
He robbed that Danville train;
Yes, the dirty little coward, he shot Mr. Howard,
An' they laid poor Jesse in his grave.

3. Frank says to Jesse not many days ago,
"Let's rob that Danville train."
An' Jesse says to Frank, "We'll take it as we go,
For we may not be hyar any more."

Repeat 2.

4. Jesse was a man, an' he travelled over land,
With his sword and his pistol to his side.
Robert Ford watched his eye, an' shot him on the sly,
An' they laid poor Jesse in his grave.

5. Yes, Jesse had a wife, the darlin' of his life,
An' the children all was bane,
Robert Ford watched his eye, an' shot him on the sly,
An' they laid poor Jesse in his grave.

6. It was on Friday night; the moon was shinin' bright,
An' Jesse was standin' 'fore his glass.
Robert Ford's pistol ball brought him tremblin' from
the wall,
An' they laid poor Jesse in his grave.
7. Well, the people of the West, when they heard of Jesse's death,

They wondered how he come to die:
Robert Ford watched his eye, an' shot him on the sly,
An' they laid poor Jesse in his grave.

In contrast to Jesse James, who was noted throughout the highlands, and whose reputation has penetrated to the lowland districts as far west as Illinois and Iowa, we have John Hardy, whose notoriety is limited to his native mountains. The ballad which celebrates his life and imprisonment is more nearly similar to the old English and Scottish ballads than is the Jesse James cycle, for in the former the questions and answers hold a prominent place and remind one somewhat of Lord Randal.

John Hardy.

1. John Hardy was a mean an' disperated man,
He carried two guns ever' day,
He shot a man in New Orlean Town,
John Hardy never lied to his gun, poor boy.

2. He's been to the east and he's been to the west,
An' he's been this wide world round,
He's been to the river an' been baptized,
An' he's been on his hangin' grounds, poor boy.

3. John Hardy's father was standin' by,
Sayin', "Johnnie, what have you done?"
He murdered a man in the same ole town,
You ought to see John Hardy gettin' away, poor boy.

4. John Hardy's mother come weepin' around
Cryin', "Johnnie, what have you done?"
"It's all for the sake of her I love!"
An' they run John Hardy back in jail, poor boy.

A fragment of a third ballad, with the air, popularizes Joe Clark, who like John Hardy is a typically local character. To hear this played by an expert performer on the "hick'ry limb" and sung in a rhythmic, weirdly monotonous voice, transports the listener at once to a novel land where "killin'" is a recognized right of every man. Before making the acquaintance of the ballad one must know the character of the hickory limb—a primitive instrument strung with a single wire about four feet long. One end rests on the floor, while the lips press the other end, supposedly improving its tone.

\[\text{Ole Joe Clark 'e killed a man, En buried 'im in the san', Said ef 'e had another chance, He'd kill a-other man. Chorus: Good-by, Ole Joe Clark! Good-by, I'm gone! Good-by, Ole Joe Clark, Good-by, Betty Brown!}\]
The ballad is now beginning to disappear throughout North Carolina. It is uprooted and cast aside as a thing of small value. "To a certain extent the responsibility for this rests with the Old Regular Baptist Church, which, ruling the religious life of the mountains with a rod of iron, has of recent years, developed a type of aggressive puritanism."¹ They forbid the "song-ballets" which they call "love-songs" or "devil's-ditties", and substitute morbidly sentimental songs whose moral teaches the wrath of God, the doom of sinners, and the transitory pleasures of this world in contrast to the blessedness of the next. These constitute the songs of the fourth group. The "Meetin'-house" songs are to be found in The Thomas Hymnal and The Sweet Songster, both of which are owned by the majority of mountain families.

"Goin' to meetin'" is recognized primarily as a social function. Everybody attends. The "meetin'-house" is the acknowledged musical center of the community, and from mid-August to October, the season for camp-meetings, it is the scene of the mountain folks' jubilees. Sometimes the festival may last a week at one place, drawing work-weary women and inveterate feudists to an enthusiastic spiritual revival. "Big-meetin' time" is indeed a gala holiday. Here the preachers shout with unrestrained fervor, accompanied by ecstatic contortions, which have made famous to outlanders the zeal of these backwoods worshipers.

The mountain clergy are, for the most part, hostile to "book larnin'" for "there ain't no Holy Ghost in it."² They rely

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² Kephart, H. Our Southern Highlanders. P. 271.
upon a highly emotional religion that presents an opportunity to work an audience into the frenzy all primitive people love, and their chief qualification for office rests entirely upon their ability to intone sonorously.

"The mountains are intensely and universally Protestant. The first settlers were mainly Presbyterians, but the democracy of the wilderness could not support the supreme authority of the clergy. The circuit-rider, whether Methodist or Baptist, found here a field ripe for his harvest. Being himself self-supporting and unassuming he won easily the confidence of the people."

As a result of his activity Appalachia is mainly Methodist and Baptist, with all the varying branches of the latter creed.

The natural tendency of the mountaineers to sing whenever together, found in their evangelical meetings an immense incentive. Plaintive, minor melodies in high-pitched treble may be heard almost any "meetin' time" shrieking:

\[\text{Religion makes me happy, 'en then I want to go, To leave this world of sor-reer, 'en troubl-ee hayer be-low; Lord, I want more re-lig-ion, Lord, I want more re-lig-ion, Lord, I want more re-lig-ion, Lord, I want more re-lig-ion, To help me on to God.}\]

*1. Ibid., p. 369.*
or perhaps the more lengthy:

1. While beauty and youth are in their full prime and folly and fashion
   affect our whole time or let not the phantom our wishes engage, let us
   live so in youth that we blush not in age.

2. The vain and the young may attend us awhile,
   But let not their flattery or prudence beguile,
   Let us covet those charms that never decay,
   Nor listen to all that deceivers can say.

3. I sigh not for beauty nor languish for wealth,
   But grant me, kind Providence, virtue and health,
   Then richer than kings and far happier than they,
   My days shall pass swiftly and sweetly away.

4. For when age steals on me and youth is no more,
   And the moralist time shakes his glass at my door,
   What pleasures in beauty or wealth can I find,
   My beauty, my wealth, is a sweet peace of mind.

5. That peace I'll preserve it as pure as 'twas given,
   Shall last in my bosom an earnest of heaven,
   For virtue and wisdom can warm the cold scene,
   And sixty can flourish as gay as sixteen.
6. And when I the burden of life shall have borne,  
   And death with his sickle shall cut the ripe corn,  
   Reascend to my God sans murmur or sigh,  
   I'll bless the kind summons and lie down and die.

Funerals are "occasions" or "meetin's" celebrated years after the deceased has been interred. All depends upon the possibility of getting together several preachers, and many of the kin-folks and friends. "The time chosen will be after the crops are gathered, so that everybody can attend," and in some places the custom is to hold joint services for all in the neighborhood who died within the year. The saddest spectacle of the mountains is the funeral procession. A train of mourners winds to the typical mountain-top burial ground, where a "leader" begins to "line-off" the hymn, reading a line, holding syllables and words as his emotion dictates. When he completes one line the whole crowd sings it sonorously, stops while he "reads" another, and then repeats, and so on until the entire hymn is finished.

In vivid contrast to the pathetic graveyards, without headstones, overgrown with weeds, are the scenes which often take place within their bounds. The mountain children have few games because the families live so far apart, but at "big-meetin' time" a lively group of youngsters invariably seeks out the burial ground and revives old favorites, such as Chick-ur-mur Cravy Crow, a game universally popular in North Carolina. The songs accompanying these games are included in the fifth group.

Chick-ur-mur Cravy Crow.

One of the children squats on the ground and makes movements as if he is searching for something. The others stand each clasping with his arms the waist of the one in front. The stooping child is the "Old Witch" and the game starts as the others march around her singing:

"Chick-ur-mur, chick-ur-mur, cravy crow,
Went to the well to wash my toe,
When I came back my chicken was gone:
What time is it, Old Witch?"

The Witch answers, "One." The song is continued until the Witch calls "Twelve," whereupon the "old hen", at the head of the line, demands:

"What are you looking for, Old Witch?"
The Witch answers: "Grandmother's darning needle."

Question and answer follow alternately by the "old hen" and the Witch.

"When did she lose it?"
"Last deep snow."
"Is this it?" pointing to first one foot and then the other down the length of the line. The Witch answers "No" until the last person is reached. This one she starts to chase, when the "old hen" faces her and the two fence, the "old hen" defending her chicks behind her. Finally the "Old Witch" breaks through the "old hen's" defense and chases the scattered chicks until she catches one who must be the "Old Witch" in turn.
Poison.

Another characteristic game, played mainly by the boys, is known by the terrifying name of "Poison". This is especially favored by the younger boys, although I have seen older ones equally as enthusiastic in attempting to "poison" the one nearest.

A stick is driven into the ground and the boys form a circle about it, scrambling, tugging, pulling, trying to make one of the circle touch the stick which is "poison". The one who does touch it becomes poisoned, and he then chases the others, the circle breaking up, to poison them, too. All caught assist in helping poison others. Vaccination may be acquired by stooping down and placing the hands on the ground.\(^1\)

Ant'ny Over.

The rougher boys prefer a more energetic pastime, and are tremendously enthusiastic in playing any game which necessitates a choosing of sides. Last summer I was initiated into the mysteries of "Ant'ny Over", a historical survival of pioneer days.\(^2\) Sides are chosen and are stationed with a bush between them. A ball is tossed over the bush by one side. If a member of the other side secures it, he, with all his company, must run around the bush and try to hit one of his opponents with the ball. If he succeeds the boy hit must leave his group and join the side with the ball. This side then throws the ball back and the game continues in the same way until one side loses all its players. The side tossing the

\(^1\) Well-known in Avery County, N. C.
\(^2\) Popular in Avery County, N. C.
ball must call "Ant'ny", when ready to throw, and the other side must answer "Over!" if the throw was successful. ¹

Pretty Little Pink.

Small children enjoy singing games. In Murphy, on the eastern flank of the Smoky Mountains, Pretty Little Pink is popular. "Pretty little pink" stands in the center while the others march around singing to the tune of "The Girl I Left Behind Me":

"My pretty little pink, I once did think
That you and I would marry,
But now I've lost all hopes of that,
I can no longer tarry.

I've got my knapsack on my back,
My musket on my shoulder,
To march away to Mexico,
To be a gallant soldier.

Where coffee grows on a white oak tree,
And the river flows with brandy,
Where the boys are like a lump of gold
And the girls as sweet as candy."

The child in the center then chooses someone who is to take her place in the center of the ring and the song recommences about a new "pink".

It is interesting to notice, while on the subject of games, the survival of old English and European pastimes in America, and especially in the Carolinas. Comparison with collections of old European games shows that very few mentioned as formerly existing in Europe can not be found in parallel forms in North America. In nearly all cases it is plain that the New World has preserved what the Old World has forgotten. Take, for instance, the game of "Green", as played in South Carolina. A group of girls run out of the house for a morning's play. One suddenly points her finger at a companion and cries "green". She then must produce some bit of green, a leaf, a blade of grass, etc., from the apparel or else pay forfeit to the other after the manner of the philopoena. Rarely, therefore, does a child go forth without some green about her person. The practice amounts to almost a superstition. The object of each child is to make the others believe it forgotten, yet to keep it at hand, and surprise the rest. This game probably derives its origin from the French Huguenots who established themselves in these states two centuries ago, and long preserved the language and customs of their country. A French proverb states that to be caught "sans vert" is to be caught unawares.

The use of "green" borders closely upon the use of flowers in games. The practice is very old. They are always gathered and loved by children and used in all sorts of imaginative creations of their own fancy. The making of long garlands of dandelions in the spring-time, dates back to an old German custom. The early bloom and the golden hue of these flowers make them essentially the flowers of spring, and they seem to have a religious and symbolic meaning to
the country people. They are said to be of healing virtue, and to
give happiness to the lover, or, if plucked on a particular day they
will heal troubles of the eye. They possess these qualities on ac-
count of their brightness which associates them with the victorious
powers of light. Certain popular superstitions regarding them are
yet remembered. Children blow the seed pods to see if "mother needs
me"; and young girls ask the dandelion fluff in the same manner if
they "will be married within the year". Larkspur is another extreme-
ly popular flower, and the well-known verse

"Lark-spur, lark-spur, tell me true--"

is heard almost continually in the sheltered glens of the blue flow-
er's home.

The children, however, are not the only ones who enjoy the
games. All ages are welcomed into these pastimes with a cordial
"cum' on in", and in many of the homes "play-parties" are frequent.
Weavily Wheat, Shoot-the-Buffalo, and Skip t'm'Loo (pronounced "Skip-
tum-a-loo") and others of a rollicking, half-dancing nature are
practiced where the country dance proper is not admitted. One of
this type, a universal favorite, is the old time game of Courteship.
It is especially popular in the Hickory Gap region twenty miles from
Asheville. The verses of this game belong to an ancient English
song of manifold variations. The idea is that of the dramatization
of an offer of marriage as presented by ambassadors who demand a
wife on the part of their master, and who, at first, make small of-
fers, or assume mean disguises, but gradually augment their promises
till their true ranks become known.

Method of playing: A man, generally an older man, repre-
senting the father, and a girl who represents the daughter, sit side by side on two chairs in the middle of the room facing opposite directions. Another man and girl personating swine-herders walk around hand in hand and sing the first verse. Father replies with the second verse; the swine-herders sing the third, etc. The girl chooses her swain from among the men in the company. They join hands and withdraw, while another girl sits by the father. The song is repeated until all players are paired. Then the last girl and the father stand up and make a bridge, singing the fifth verse, "Come under--"; the others pass through. On the second passage a couple is caught by the father and girl who sing the sixth verse, "We've caught you--". The imprisoned men kisses his girl, the two are released, and another couple is caught. The game continues until each couple pays the forfeit of a kiss.

**Courtship or Swineherders.**

Version A.

1. Hog-driv-ers, hog driv-ers, hog driv-ers we air; A court-in' yer dar-ter

so sweet and fair and kin we get lodgin' here, o here, and kin we get

lodg-in here:
null
2. Now this is my darter that sets by my side,
   And no hog-driver can get 'er fer a bride;
   And you kain't get lodgin' here, o here--
   And you kain't get lodgin' here!

3. Yer darter is pretty, yer ugly yerself,
   So we'll travel on further and seek better wealth,
   And we don't want lodgin' here, o here,
   And we don't want lodgin' here!

4. Now this is my darter that sets by my side,
   And Mr. . . . . . . kin get 'er fer bride,
   And he kin get lodgin' here, o here--
   And he kin get lodgin' here!

5. Come under, come under, my honey, my love, my heart's above, come
   under, come under below Gal-i-lee.

6. We've caught you as a prisoner,
   My honey, my love, my heart's above--
   We've caught you as a prisoner,
   Below Galilee.

7. Then hug 'er neat, and kiss 'er sweet,
   My honey, my love, my heart's above--
Then hug 'er neat and kiss 'er twice,
Below Galilee.

Version B.

1. Swine-herders, swine-herders, swine-herders we air,
    Accountin' yer darter so neat and so fair,
    An kin we get lodgin' here, o here--
    An kin we get lodgin' here?

2. Swine-herders, swine-herders, swine-herders yer air,
    Acourtin' my daughter so neat and so fair,
    And ye can't get lodgings here, o here--
    And ye can't get lodgings here!

3. You have a fair daughter, you're ugly yourself,
    We'll travel on farther and seek better wealth,
    And we don't want lodgings here, o here,--
    And we don't want lodgings here!

4. I have a fair daughter, she sits by my knee,
    And some young man can get her from me,
    And he can get lodgings here, o here--
    And he can get lodgings here!

5, 6, 7. Same as Version A.

Another game in which old and young join is Quebec Town.
It is shorter than the preceding and is, therefore, better adapted
to large crowds than is Courtship. It is played in the following
manner:
The entire party with hands joined circle around one person who is blindfolded and seated in a chair placed in the center of the room, and sing:

1. We are marching down to Quebec Town,
   Where the drums and fifes are beating;
   The Americans have gained the day,
   The British are retreating.

2. The war's all over, we'll turn back
   To friends no more to be parted.
   We'll open our ring, and receive another in,
   To relieve this broken hearted.

The person in the center of the ring selects a partner by touching one of the ring with a long stick. The game concludes with the refrain:

Put a hat on her head to keep her warm,
And a loving, sweet kiss will do her no harm.

In the five general groups of folk-music that have been here briefly described and illustrated, we note two chief characteristics; first, the primitive nature of the airs and the themes, which are due primarily to the isolation of the mountains from the modifying influences of the lowlands; and second, an exhibition of the intense spirit of localization, that creates ballads to celebrate events of current interest to the mountaineer. Both of these reflect the conservative tendency of the southern highlander and his individualism; both serve as forces to retard the expansion of in-
tellectual thought, and to hold in check any new, unproven skill in either the art of singing or that of ballad making.
We remember the charm of Old World myths long after the spell of their immediate fascination has weakened, and we reread the well-known legends with as much appreciation for their beauty as we felt upon our initial introduction to them.

The New World, too, has her myths and legends, as refreshingly quaint as their predecessors, and especially in the South do we find immortalized Lover’s Leaps and haunted springs. North Carolina is rich in traditional lore which differs from other types of folk-tales inasmuch as it has no definite origin, but partakes of the character of the Märchen. Märchen are vague and impersonal. They may change their details according to the locality in which they are told, but the essence of their meaning is always the same, and they possess the same appeal in the new country as they did in the old, namely, the appeal of the unwritten literature of far-back ages.

Among the Balsam Mountains of western North Carolina, a large spring, overshadowed by branches heavy with countless green needle-like leaves, invites the thirsty wanderer to refresh himself with its clear water. He approaches, bends over the pool, and quickly starts back with a cry as a grinning face appears at the bottom and rises to meet him as he stoops. What is this demon? Surely a face so hideous must have a history.

Years ago a Cherokee maiden of uncommon beauty lived hard by, and took delight in luring lovers from her less lovely sisters. The braves were jealous of each other, the women were jealous of her while she—naughty flirt!—delighted in the mischief which she
roused. But once she carried her tricks too far. It was the wedding day of a hunter and an Indian maid of his tribe. The sun, in all his glory, marked the hour set for the ceremony, but the bridegroom was not present. It grew late, fearfully the little bride waited. He did not come. Hurt and mortified she stole away from the village and taking bow and arrow she began to search the woods. Presently she found her lover lying at the feet of the coquette. Immediately stringing her arrow the deserted bride shot the hunter through the heart, then, beside his lifeless body she prayed to Manitou, and begged him to send the curse of a hideous face to her rival. Manitou heard her with pity, and at the same moment the lovely face of the girl was convulsed and shrivelled into such a frightful mask that all who saw her thereafter were terrified. The afflicted creature ran to the mirror of the spring, she looked in, and started back in loathing. When she realized that the spring had but reflected her own image, she uttered a cry of despair and flung herself into the water. It is her face that gives the name of the "Haunted Spring" to the clear, cool water which today tempts the wayfarer.

The mountaineer's interpretation of the story makes the face which peers up at one from the depths of the spring a symbol of the evil in the maid, which was once hidden behind her beauty. Few of the mountaineers are brave enough to drink from the enchanted spring. "They refuse to believe that the apparition is caused by the shape of the basin, or aberrated reflection of their own faces,"—to them it is a "haunt", and as such must be carefully

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avoided.

Not far from Balsam is Hot Springs, N. C., a small mountain village whose chief attraction to the stranger is the medical power of its baths. The surrounding hills are the homes of numerous mountaineers who claim to have in this vicinity the original Lover's Leap and who point out as proof two cliffs on the north shore of the French Broad River—Paint Rock, where Indian warriors found a supply of ochre wherewith to smear their faces, and Lover's Leap itself. There are two traditions concerning the latter. Some tell the tale of an Indian girl who, discovered at its top by a band of braves from a hostile tribe, was driven into the gulf beneath. Others declare that an Indian wished to marry a daughter of a tribe with which his own had been immemorially at war. Both nations opposed the match, but the lovers refused to be separated. One night they scaled the rock and leaped together into the river below. Manitou was gracious, and they awoke in the happy hunting-ground, man and wife.

In these myths from our southern highlands, we detect elements which enter into folk-tales everywhere: namely, the motifs of love and of the supernatural. Let us recall, for a moment, the natural grace of the Lais of Marie de France, the first poetess to dedicate her genius to the glorification of love. Can we not liken the tragic death of our American lovers in North Carolina to that of Marie's "Two Lovers"? The theme of the two legends, separated by several centuries and thousands of miles, is almost identical. What difference if one celebrates the love of an Indian couple and the other that of a maid and a damoiseau "who hath in him no measure"?*^1

The treatment of the supernatural in North Carolina folklore carries us back to the old fairy-tale simplicity of style in its matter-of-fact narration of the marvelous. We have but touched upon this in the foregoing myths; it is in the following one that we recognize it in its purest form.

"Among the rocks east of Asheville, N. C., lives the Lorelei of the French Broad River. This stream—the Tselica of the Indians—contains in its upper reaches many pools where the rapid water whirls and deepens, and where the traveller likes to pause in the heat of the afternoon and drink and bathe. Here, from the time when the Cherokees occupied the country, had lived the siren, and if one who is weary and downcast sits beside the stream or utters a wish to rest in it, he becomes conscious of a soft and exquisite music blending with the splash of the wave.

"Looking down in surprise he sees—at first faintly, then with distinctness—the form of a beautiful woman, with hair streaming like moss and dark eyes looking into his, luring him with a power he cannot resist. His breath grows short, his gaze is fixed, mechanically he rises, steps to the bank, and lurches forward into the river. The arms that catch him are slimy and cold as serpents; the face that stares into his is a grinning skull. A loud, chattering laugh rings through the wilderness, and all is still again."

But the spirits in these tales are not always those from fairyland: sometimes ghosts of men bother the people. Once upon a time there was a man who wished to build a new cabin near the Upper Hiawasses. He hunted and hunted for a place suitable for his new

home, and at last decided to erect it at the mouth of an old cave. After he had started his task he found that within the cave was a pile of old skulls, but being a dauntless man and in "good church standin'" he did not abandon his work, but completed it, and moved the skulls into his shed.

"Night fell, dark and still, with a waning moon rising over the mountains--as calm a night as ever one slept through." As the midnight hour drew near, the man heard a sound which he interpreted to be the approach of a cyclone. He jumped from his bed, ran to the window, but saw nothing. Not a tree in the nearby forest was stirring, not a grass blade moved,—but a strange, oppressive stillness enveloped the world. The stars were brilliantly awake, and as he looked at them a vague fear seized his soul. He tried to rouse his wife, but she was like one in a state of catalepsy.

Again that ominous sound was heard, now he saw a shadowy band circling about his cabin stepping as lightly as leaves are whirled by the wind. A band of human shapes, they seemed to be, with restless arms and faint, hollow moans. He watched them fascinated. Were they the wraiths of the dead whose skulls he had in his shed? Were they protesting against his sacrilegious raid on their sepulture? He fell on his knees and prayed until faint streaks of day told him that dawn was come. He rose, replaced the skulls, and vowed never to remove any bones from the cave-tombs of the unknown dead. The "harnts" never reappeared.

Folk-loreists will recognize at once that the foregoing story deals with a series of phenomena long associated with haunted

*1. Ibid., p. 68.
houses. Buildings rendered uninhabitable by ghosts have existed from time immemorial, and the horrors connected with them have formed the nuclei of skeptical and sympathetic tales ever since the ancient classic dramatists popularized them in the varied forms of written and spoken drama. The following tale from Northampton County is furnished by Mr. O. P. Stephenson:

"An old house was haunted and nobody would stay in it. At last a foolhardy negro, under a wager, undertook to spend the night in the house. Soon after he had put the light out and gone to bed he saw sitting on the foot of the bed a big black cat with eyes that looked like moons, licking his whiskers. The cat mewed, 'There ain't nobody here but you and me, is there?' The negro rose up and said, 'Naw, and there ain't gwine to be nobody here but you long.' And with that he went out the window, taking the window-sash with him, and down the road like a streak of lightning. Having run out of breath the negro sat down on a log beside the road to rest. Looking up and towards the other end of the log he saw the same black cat sitting there. And the cat mewed, 'That was a right good race we had.' With that, the negro said, 'Dat ain't nothin' to what we's gwine to have,' and lit out again. The next morning those who had made the wager went to the haunted house to see what had happened and found the window-sash gone and no signs of the negro. Two or three days afterwards the negro came straggling in all bedraggled and with his clothes half torn off him. One of them asked him where he had been the last two or three days and he answered, 'I've been comin' back.'"*1

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The "Big Laurel" district, a dense jungle of laurel, ivy, and rhododendron, in the western part of Watauga County, sustains the reputation of being one of the most haunted regions in North Carolina. Andrew Wilson, a reliable farmer, who lives near Zionville, tells the following:

"I was coming from Elk Park one night about twenty years ago. I'd been there with a load of lumber. When I come to the spring where the ghosts are seen, I stopped to let my horses drink. The horses wouldn't drink, and they seemed like they was skeered. Just then I looked ahead of me in the road and see a man a-standing there. I could see he had shiny brass buttons on his coat like a soldier. Thinking it was somebody, I says, 'Howdy?' It didn't make no reply; so I spoke agin, but it didn't notice me. I watched it several minutes, and while I was a-gazin' at it, the thing jist seemed to fade away, and I could never see where it went to. I tell ye, I drove off from there in a hurry. But I didn't see the worst things that are seen there," continued Mr. Wilson. "Why, lots and lots of people have passed there of nights and seed the strangest things you ever heard tell of. They first see seven 'possums cross the road and go into a laurel thicket near the spring; then seven dogs follow right after the 'possums; then seven men cross the road right after the dogs into the laurel; and right after the men they see seven coffins sail across the road into the laurel thicket. I know of men who say they have seed all them skeery hants. Yes, there was men murdered there before the War; that's what causes them strange things to be seed."*1

The hills about the head of the Hiawassee, on the eastern side of the Smoky Mountains, are also filled with "harnts", among them many animal ghosts, that pillage the country from sheer viciousness. The people of this region are as illiterate and superstitious as the majority of the highlanders and have unquestioning faith in the spirits of the headless bull, the black dog of the valley of the Chatata, the white deer of the Sequahatchie, and the bleeding horse of the Great Smokies themselves. The last three "harnts" portend illness, death, or misfortune to anyone who may see them, but the majority of the haunts are notable only for their power of creating terror in the minds of the simple mountaineers.

Going home one night by Crackwhip Furnace, Mr. B......... beheld the likeness of a black bear in front of him. It screamed horribly at him with a human voice. His horse was terrified, and when the thing came nearer and screamed again, he rode for his life. Half a mile away from the spot the same dreadful cry sounded in his ears more shrill and appalling than ever!*1

The above is a plain matter-of-fact statement of a not unusual occurrence. It is related in a most meagre fashion, with no conscious literary art, and no detailed description, nothing but a commonplace reference to a familiar haunt.

Many of the ghost stories are of this type, yet some more artistically told are without doubt equally as characteristic of the people. As an illustration of the more elaborate tale one finds:

The Mysterious Deer.

"El Moore is a good hunter, and a splendid shot, too. But he got into a streak o' mighty ornery luck one time jes' on er count er one er them thar white deer. He tole me all erbout hit with 'is own lips, an' El is a mighty truthful man.

"He said he war out a'huntin' one mornin', an' he come on-ter a white deer, an' hit war not more'n 15 er 20 feet frum 'im.

"He fired at hit, but never toch a hair. That deer jes' stood still untwel he'd a-wasted 7 or 8 shots on hit. Then hit run off, an' he tried his gun on a spot in a tree, an' the bullet went straight to ther mark.

"He got his dander up then, an' laid fer that white deer, an' he wasted a powerful lot more ammunition on hit, untwel fin'ly 'e plugged hit in ther shoulder.

"But he was mighty sorry fer that, right then an' for a long time afterwards. He said hit made the sorrowfullest noise 'at he ever hear in all his life. An' from that day 12 month hit was impossible fer El ter kill any kind of er deer whatsomever. He could kill other kinds of varmints all right ernough, but kill a deer he couldn't."*1

Closely akin to the stories of haunts are those which take witchcraft proper for their theme. The relatively small number of fairy folk-tales may be accounted for by the mountaineer's life—which is either one of steady toil against heavy odds, or else one of purposeless idleness, both alike unstimulating to the higher

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*1. Ibid., p. 211.
types of creative imagination; but this deficit is counter-balanced by the numerous witch-stories, in which His Satanic Majesty condescends to appear with startling frequency. A characteristic story of this type is:

The Witch Spouse.

There was a woman who wouldn't eat like people. She would cook her husband's dinner, but when invited to eat with him she'd crumble her bread all up just like a little "sparrer". She would crumble it up with a quill, and she'd eat it just like a sparrer. At night when he was asleep, she'd steal out, dress herself, and go to the graveyard. One day when they had a buryin' he watched her. That night he followed her when she went out. He hid behind a bush and saw "her dig up that body an' cut off slashes of 'em jus' like meat, an' eat 'em." He tip-toed back to the house and got in bed before she returned. "He made no noise like he never been up." The next day he went to the king, her father, and told him about it, and when she got there, he started to scold her, but she "ketched her husband, an' beat him half to death about it. An' she was gone, an' never was found anymore."*1

In this story the Devil does not appear in visible form, although he works through the unfortunate agency of the witch-spouse. On the other hand, however, he often appears in person, and usually as a mountebank, for rarely does he exert any active evil upon his victims, preferring to hoodwink them and to make them ridiculous in

*1. Ibid., Vol. 30, p. 187.
the eyes of their neighbors, as related in the story of the Fiddler.

Fiddling for the Devil.

Once upon a time a man's wife told him not to fiddle so much. Man had been gone six months. He saw somebody coming out of the woods on a nice black horse. Asked him for two tunes. Man played them—the last one was The Devil's Black Joke. He got down and danced. When he danced he give the fiddler 50¢ in money. When he went home he put his hand in his pocket but found no money. Man's wife said, "Now you been playin' the fiddle for the Devil!" And he never went no more.*1

Just as the church of the mountains looked askance upon the ballads and the "twistifications", so, too, did it censure the tales of "heathen myth" and attempt to supplant them by narrative literature of a more religious tone.

According to the Southern Allegheny churchmen it was not a whale that swallowed Jonah, because the throat of that animal is so small that it will barely admit a herring, but a sea-monster. This sea-monster crossed the Atlantic and reached the Carolinas with Jonah as a passenger. But Jonah was supplied with tobacco and smoked much to while away the tedium of his voyage. The monster, unused to smoke, "suffered as all beginners in nicotine poisoning do, and expelled the unhappy man with emphasis." Jonah, once safely landed, was adopted by one of the tribes that inhabited the barrens, married, and left a white progeny which antedated Columbus's arrival by several centuries. God, looking down, pitied these ig-

*1. Ibid., Vol. 30, p. 180.
norant and feeble whites, and led them to Looking-Glass Mountain, North Carolina, where he caused corn and game to be plentiful for their benefit.

The sea-monster is not the only animal elevated to story-land. North Carolina has a cycle of animal tales akin to the Uncle Remus stories with which we are all familiar. These tales are invariably told in negro dialect and, in spite of the fairly large number in which they occur, are not extensively known.

The Three Little Pigs.

Ol' Fox got little Whitey an' car'ed him off one day. Nex' day he come an' got Brownie. Nex' day he come to get little Blacky. He went into his house an' shut his door. An' he could not get in. Blacky had to go to market nex' day to buy a big dinner-pot an' some cabbage. As he was comin' home, he heard de fox in de wood comin' behind him. He jumped in de pot an' commence rollin' down de hill so fas' he lef de fox behind. He run in de house an' shut de do', an' put his pot o' water on de fire. An' de fox jumped up on top of de house an' jumped down de chimney. Little Pig commence singin' an' dancin',—

"Oh, my! by de hair of my chin, chin, chin,
Dat is de way to take foxes in."*1

In contrast to the foregoing, one finds animal fables in the ordinary speech of the mountains. These tales contain a most

*1. Ibid., p. 186.
apparent moral, and are made a part of each Sunday School teacher's equipment.

The Frog Who Would Fly.

"Once there was a frog that wished to fly. So some ducks decided to carry the frog. The ducks got a stick, and told the frog to take hold of it in the middle with his mouth. The ducks took hold of the stick at each end. They went flyin' up in the air with the frog. They got up in the air, and met a gang of birds; and they said: 'What a beautiful frog!' and the frog began to swell. 'What a beautiful frog!' And the frog swelled. And went to open his mouth to speak a word to the birds, and opened his mouth and turned the stick aloose, and fell to the ground and busted himself open."*1

The disintegration of the art of the folk-tale is apparent in these examples of the "old-timey" story. The intrusion of anecdote and the direct or indirect imitation of popular printed stories, like that of the Three Little Pigs, is to be lamented, for to retain its original character a folk-tale must be passed from generation to generation with only unconscious changes in tone and theme.

Since we have likened the North Carolinian's love-stories and his stories of enchantment to the lais of old French literature, let us similarly compare the fabliaux of the Middle Ages to the adventure-stories of our southland. Both of these take reality for their theme, and omit magic and miracle from the happenings of everyday life. Unlike the fabliau, however, the North Carolina story is

*1. Ibid., p. 187.
always true. If the narrator himself did not experience the exact adventure which he recounts to an eager audience, some member of his family, or some intimate friend was the hero of the episode. Maybe the story is one of hidden treasure: "On the banks of the Cumber-land in Tennessee, is a height where a searcher for gold was seized by invisible defenders and hurled to the bottom of the cliff, receiving a mortal hurt,"*1 or maybe it is one of a "b'ar-hunt"--but however "cute" (curious or strange) it may seem to the stranger, it is always told with vivid picturesqueness and the becoming modesty of actual accomplishment.

"Black Bill" Walker sat in his favorite split bottom chair inside the doorway of his cabin on the Middle Prong of Little River, Tenn. (See figs. 11 and 12.) He is talking to some "furriners", "I never had a b'ar to run me but oncet, but I reckon that was unbeknownst to him. But hit wasn't unbeknownst to me!" He laughed heartily. Seventy-six years of age, Black Bill Walker is "still alert of mind and powerful of body... His greatest pleas-ure indoors is perusing a 'Life of Grant', the Bible and the alman-ac."*2 He loves to entertain his guests, and is never more happy than when recounting some of his interesting experiences. As the story proceeds, Black Bill warms up and dramatizes the situation by his impersonations of a dying she-bear "bellerin' 'Oh Lord!' like that", or the "cryin' of a b'ar cub" over its dead mother "somethin' heart rendin'!"

"Hit was jest sech a day as this," he recounted, "when I

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Fig. 11. Black Bill Walker, Walker's Valley, Gt. Smokies.

Fig. 12. Mrs. Black Bill.
had the adventure with the crazy b'ar. I was up in the spicewoods yonder where ye see that leetle gap in the mountains. I was standin' behind a chestnut watchin' the trail fer a big buck that was usin' 'round thar, when I seed this big b'ar come shamblin' along down the trail lookin' this way an' t'other. He sorter stopped with his hinder parts up on a log, but I was afraid to reak shootin' him in them. So I pulled up Old Death an' hit him in the eye.

"Well, he took straight toward me with some power before I could load my gun, which was a flint-lock then. I racked suddent and terrible 'round that tree with that b'ar arter me. I run so swift that I c'd 'a' cotched him by the tail ef hit hadn't been so short! I wasn't thinkin' o' doin' that however. I was watchin' the t'other end!

"'How'd I git outer hit?' Well, I jest kep' runnin' on-tell somethin' else happened! Soon I seed the b'ar was crazy from the shot in the eye. He blew blood all over me, 'S-w-oof!' and shammacked off into the bushes suddent and begun buttin' into ev'-thing. I mighty soon got off out o' the way o' trouble and loaded agin. Hit didn't take but one good shot to finish him."*1

The old hunter grinned, heartily amused, and then said more thoughtfully: "I shore was resky them days. I was jest a plain fool in many reespecks. I remember Jeff Wier one time of-fered me the hide of a b'ar ef I would go in a cave an' git hit, so to speak. He'd made a spear to stick her to death with. I stuck at her but she splintered that spear-handle the fust pass she made. And then I crawled in close to shoot her, but she smacked the gun

out o' my hand oncet. See thar where the marks of her claws is too! She splintered the stock thar some! Thar wasn't room enough fer both on us hardly in thet cave but I'd pull up close an' shoot an' then duck fer her to run by ef she wanted to. I killed her and captured the leetle cubs, but Jeff, he plumb forgot about the hide in the flustration. Fool? I was jest plain resky!"

Aside from the pleasure furnished us in reading these stories for the story's sake, the folk-tales of North Carolina give us an intimate glimpse into the life of the people, their interests, and their pleasures. More than that, they also stand for us as the true representatives of American folk-lore, a literature whose ideals are midway between those of the old country and those of the new. In them one may look for bits of myths, peculiar to the southern highlands, relics of an age that told its tales instead of writing them; and, at the same time, one may recognize in them the effort to dramatize present day life, its problems, and its emergencies. In their simplicity they show a shrewd observation of animal life, a vivid descriptive power, and a briefly compact narrative form, whose unadorned and realistic details carry the strength of conviction to the reader.
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