A HISTORY
OF
DOMESTIC MANNERS
AND
SENTIMENTS
IN ENGLAND
During the Middle Ages.

By THOMAS WRIGHT

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Title: A History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments in England During the Middle Ages

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Illustrator: F. W. Fairholt

Release date: April 25, 2019 [eBook #59351]

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/59351

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A HISTORY OF DOMESTIC MANNERS AND SENTIMENTS IN ENGLAND During the Middle Ages.

A HISTORY OF DOMESTIC MANNERS AND SENTIMENTS IN ENGLAND During the Middle Ages.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, ESQ., M.A., F.S.A.,
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WITH

Illustrations from the Illuminations in Contemporary Manuscripts and other Sources, DRAWN & ENGRAVED BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, ESQ., F.S.A.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1862.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY JAMES S. VIRTUE,
CITY ROAD.



TO
THE LADY LONDESBOROUGH,
THIS
Volume is Dedicated
AS
A TESTIMONY OF
VERY SINCERE RESPECT,
BY
THE AUTHOR.





To the LADY LONDESBOROUGH.



Dear Lady Londesborough,

The object of the following pages is to supply what appeared to be a want in our popular literature. We have histories of England, and histories of the Middle Ages, but none of them give us a sufficient picture of the domestic manners and sentiments of our forefathers at different periods, a knowledge of which, I need hardly insist, is necessary to enable us to appreciate rightly the motives with which people acted, and the spirit which guided them. The subject, too, must have an interest for many classes of readers, who will be glad to learn something of the manners of former days, if it were only to see the contrast with those of our own time, and to discover in them the origin of many of the characteristics of modern society. Copious and valuable books have been published in our language on the history of costume, on that of domestic architecture, on military antiquities, on the history of religious rites and ceremonies, and on other kindred subjects, which enable the artist to clothe his personages correctly; but these would form, after all, but the disjointed skeleton of a picture, without that further, and perhaps more important, sort of information which is furnished in the following pages, and which will enable him to give life to his composition. I have not attempted to compose a very learned or very elaborate book. The subject is an immensely wide one as regards the materials, during a large portion of the period which I include; and to treat it completely would require the close study of the whole mass of the mediæval literature of Western Europe, edited or inedited, and of the whole mass of the monuments of mediæval art. But my aim has been to bring together a sufficient number of plain facts, in a popular form, to enable the general reader to form a correct view of English manners and

sentiments in the middle ages, and I can venture to claim for my book at least the merit of being the result of original research. It is not a compilation from writers who have written on the subject before.

There are at least two ways of arranging a work like this. I might have taken each particular division of the subject, one after the other, and traced it separately through the period of history which this volume embraces; or the whole subject might be divided into historical periods, in each of which all the different phases of social history for that period are included. Each of these plans has its advantages and defects. In the first, the reader would perhaps obtain a clearer notion of the history of any particular division of the subject, as of the history of the table and of diet, or of games and amusements, or the like, but at the same time it would have required a certain effort of comparison and study to arrive at a clear view of the general question at a particular period. The second furnishes this general view, but entails a certain amount of what might almost be called repetition. I have chosen the latter plan, because I think this repetition will be found to be only apparent, and it seems to me the best arrangement for a popular book.

The division of periods, too, is, on the whole, natural, and not arbitrary. During the Anglo-Saxon period, the social system, however developed or modified from time to time, was strictly that of our own Anglo-Saxon forefathers, and was the undoubted groundwork of our own. The Norman conquest brought in foreign social manners and sentiments totally different from those of the Anglo-Saxons, which for a time predominated, but became gradually incorporated with the Anglo-Saxon

manners and spirit, until, towards the end of the twelfth century, they formed the English of the middle ages. The Anglo-Norman period, therefore, may be considered as an age of transition—it may perhaps be described as that of the struggle between the spirit of Anglo-Saxon society and feudalism. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries may be considered in regard to society as the English middle ages—the age of feudalism in its English form—and therefore hold properly the largest space in this volume. The fifteenth century forms again a distinct period in the history of society—it was that of the decline and breaking up of feudalism, the close of the middle ages. At the Reformation, we come to a new transition period—the transition from mediæval to modern society. This, for several reasons, I regard rather as a conclusion, than as an integral part, of the history contained in the following pages, and I therefore give only a light sketch of it, noticing some of its prominent characteristics. The materials, at this late period, become so extensive, and so full of interest, that its history admits of several divisions, each of which is sufficient for an important book, and I leave them to future researches. One period, that of the English Commonwealth, is perhaps of greater interest to us at the present time than any other, because it was that which totally overthrew the traditions of the middle ages, and inaugurated English society as it now exists. I know that the history of society at that period has been studied most profoundly by a friend who is, in all respects, far more capable of treating it than myself, Mr. Hepworth Dixon, and from whom I trust we may look forward to a work on the subject, which will be a most valuable addition to the historical literature of our time. Knowing that he has been working on

this interesting subject, I have treated this period very slightly. I should be sorry to let my weeds grow upon his flowers.

A portion of the matter contained in this volume has already appeared in a series of papers in the *Art-Journal*, but this portion has not only been carefully revised and partly re-written, but so much addition has been made, that I believe that more than half the present volume is entirely new, and the whole may fairly be considered as a new book. I ought to add that one chapter, that on mediæval cookery (chapter xvi.) and the brief notices of the history of the horse in the middle ages, first appeared in papers, contributed by the author to the *London Review*. It must be stated, too, that the illustrations to my chapter on mediæval minstrelsies were originally engraved for a series of papers on the minstrels, by the Rev. E. L. Cutts, published in the *Art-Journal*, and that I have to thank that gentleman for the ready willingness with which he has allowed me to use them.

In conclusion, dear Lady Londesborough, I need hardly say that the study of the histories of the people (instead of that of their rulers) has always been a favourite study with me; and that in these researches on mediæval social manners and history, I have always received the warm sympathy and encouragement of the late Lord Londesborough and of your Ladyship. In his Lordship I have lost a respected and valued friend, to whose learned appreciation of the subject of mediæval manners and mediæval art I could always have recourse with trust and satisfaction, with whom I have often conversed on the subjects treated of in the present volume, and whose extensive and invaluable collection of objects

of art of the mediæval period, and of that of the renaissance, furnished a never-ending source of information and pleasure. It is therefore with feelings of great personal gratification that I profit by your kind permission to dedicate this volume to your Ladyship.

I have the honour to be, dear Lady Londesborough,
Your Ladyship's very obedient servant,
THOMAS WRIGHT.

14, SYDNEY STREET, BROMPTON, LONDON,
November 10, 1861.

CONTENTS.

Anglo-Saxon Period.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

INTRODUCTORY—THE ANGLO-SAXONS BEFORE THEIR CONVERSION—GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OF A SAXON HOUSE 1

CHAPTER II.

In-door life among the Anglo-Saxons—the hall and its hospitality—the Saxon meal—provisions and cookery—after-dinner occupations—drunken brawls 18

CHAPTER III.

The chamber and its furniture—beds and bed-rooms—infancy and childhood among the Anglo-Saxons—character and manners of the Anglo-Saxon ladies—their cruelty to their servants—their amusements—the garden; love of the Anglo-Saxons for flowers—Anglo-Saxon punishments—almsgiving 40

CHAPTER IV.

Out-of-door amusements of the Anglo-Saxons—hunting and hawking—horses and carriages—travelling—money-dealings 63

Anglo-Norman Period.

CHAPTER V.

The early Norman period—luxuriousness of the Normans—advance in domestic architecture—the kitchen and the hall—provisions and cookery—bees—the dairy—meal-times and divisions of the day—furniture—the faldestol—chairs and other seats 80

CHAPTER VI.

THE NORMAN HALL—SOCIAL SENTIMENTS UNDER THE ANGLO-NORMANS—DOMESTIC AMUSEMENTS—CANDLES AND LANTERNS—FURNITURE—BEDS—OUT-OF-DOOR RECREATIONS—HUNTING—ARCHERY—CONVIVIAL INTERCOURSE AND HOSPITALITY—TRAVELLING—PUNISHMENTS—THE STOCKS—A NORMAN SCHOOL—EDUCATION 98

The English Middle Ages.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY ENGLISH HOUSES—THEIR GENERAL FORM AND DISTRIBUTION 120

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OLD ENGLISH HALL—THE KITCHEN, AND ITS CIRCUMSTANCES—THE DINNER-TABLE—MINSTRELSY 141

CHAPTER IX.

THE MINSTREL—HIS POSITION UNDER THE ANGLO-SAXONS—THE NORMAN TROUVERE, MENESTREL, AND JOUGLEUR—THEIR CONDITION—RUTEBEUF—DIFFERENT MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN USE AMONG THE MINSTRELS—THE BEVERLEY MINSTRELS 175

CHAPTER X.

AMUSEMENTS AFTER DINNER—GAMBLING—THE GAME OF CHESS—ITS HISTORY—DICE—TABLES—DRAUGHTS 194

CHAPTER XI.

DOMESTIC AMUSEMENTS AFTER DINNER—THE CHAMBER AND ITS FURNITURE—PET ANIMALS—OCCUPATIONS AND MANNERS OF THE LADIES—SUPPER—CANDLES, LAMPS, AND LANTERNS 226

CHAPTER XII.

THE BED AND ITS FURNITURE—THE TOILETTE; BATHING—CHESTS AND COFFERS IN THE CHAMBER—THE HUTCH—USES OF RINGS—COMPOSITION OF THE FAMILY—FREEDOM OF MANNERS—SOCIAL SENTIMENTS, AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS 256

CHAPTER XIII.

OCCUPATIONS OUT OF DOORS—THE PLEASURE-GARDEN—THE LOVE OF FLOWERS, AND THE FASHION OF MAKING GARLANDS—FORMALITIES OF THE PROMENADE—GARDENING IN THE MIDDLE AGES 283

CHAPTER XIV.

AMUSEMENTS—PERFORMING BEARS—HAWKING AND HUNTING—RIDING—CARRIAGES—TRAVELLING—INNS AND TAVERNS—HOSPITALITY 304

CHAPTER XV.

EDUCATION—LITERARY MEN AND SCRIBES—PUNISHMENTS; THE STOCKS; THE GALLOWS 338

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD ENGLISH COOKERY—HISTORY OF "GOURMANDISE"—ENGLISH COOKERY OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES—BILLS OF FARE—GREAT FEASTS 347

The Fifteenth Century.

CHAPTER XVII.

SLOW PROGRESS OF SOCIETY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY—ENLARGEMENT OF THE HOUSES—THE HALL AND ITS FURNITURE—ARRANGEMENT OF THE TABLE FOR MEALS—ABSENCE OF CLEANLINESS—MANNERS AT TABLE—THE PARLOUR 359

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN-DOOR LIFE AND CONVERSATION—PET ANIMALS—THE DANCE—RERE-SUPPERS—ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE "NANCY" TAPESTRY 379

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHAMBER AND ITS FURNITURE AND USES—BEDS—HUTCHES AND COFFERS—THE TOILETTE; MIRRORS 399

CHAPTER XX.

STATE OF SOCIETY—THE FEMALE CHARACTER —GREEDINESS IN EATING—CHARACTER OF THE MEDIÆVAL SERVANTS—DAILY OCCUPATIONS IN THE HOUSEHOLD: SPINNING AND WEAVING; PAINTING—THE GARDEN AND ITS USES—GAMES OUT OF DOORS; HAWKING, ETC.—TRAVELLING, AND MORE FREQUENT USE OF CARRIAGES —TAVERNS; FREQUENTED BY WOMEN— EDUCATION AND LITERARY OCCUPATIONS; SPECTACLES 415

England after the Reformation.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHANGES IN ENGLISH DOMESTIC MANNERS DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE REFORMATION AND THE COMMONWEALTH—THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN'S HOUSE—ITS HALL—THE FIREPLACE AND FIRE—UTENSILS—COOKERY—USUAL HOURS FOR MEALS—BREAKFAST—DINNER, AND ITS FORMS AND CUSTOMS—THE BANQUET—CUSTOM OF DRINKING HEALTHS 441

CHAPTER XXII.

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE—THE PARLOUR—THE CHAMBER 471

CHAPTER XXIII.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE LADIES—GAMES AND ENJOYMENTS—ROUGHNESS OF ENGLISH SPORTS AT THIS PERIOD—THE HOT-HOUSES, OR BATHS—THE ORDINARIES—DOMESTIC PETS—TREATMENT OF CHILDREN—METHODS OF LOCOMOTION—CONCLUSION 482

HISTORY
OF
DOMESTIC MANNERS AND SENTIMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.—THE ANGLO-SAXONS BEFORE THEIR CONVERSION.—GENERAL

ARRANGEMENT OF A SAXON HOUSE.

Much has been written at different times on the costume and some other circumstances connected with the condition of our forefathers in past times, but no one has undertaken with much success to treat generally of the domestic manners of the middle ages. The history of domestic manners, indeed, is a subject, the materials of which are exceedingly varied, widely scattered, and not easily brought together; they, of course, vary in character with the periods to which they relate, and at certain periods are much rarer than at others. But the interest of the subject must be felt by every one who appreciates art; for what avails our knowledge of costume unless we know the manners, the mode of living, the houses, the furniture, the utensils, of those whom we have learnt how to clothe? and, without this latter knowledge, history itself can be but imperfectly understood.

In England, as in most other countries of western Europe, at the period of the middle ages when we first become intimately acquainted with them, the manners and customs of their inhabitants were a mixture of those of the barbarian settlers themselves, and of those which they found among the conquered Romans; the latter prevailing to a greater or less extent, according to the peculiar circumstances of the country. This was certainly the case in England among our Saxon forefathers; and it becomes a matter of interest to ascertain what were really the types which belonged to the Saxon race, and to distinguish them from those which they derived from

the Roman inhabitants of our island.

We have only one record of the manners of the Saxons before they settled in Britain, and that is neither perfect, nor altogether unaltered—it is the romance of Beowulf, a poem in pure Anglo-Saxon, which contains internal marks of having been composed before the people who spoke that language had quitted their settlements on the Continent. Yet we can hardly peruse it without suspecting that some of its portraitures are descriptive rather of what was seen in England than of what existed in the north of Germany. Thus we might almost imagine that the "street variegated with stones" (*stræt wœs stân-fáh*), along which the hero Beowulf and his followers proceeded from the shore to the royal residence of Hrothgar, was a picture of a Roman road as found in Britain.

It came into the mind of Hrothgar, we are told, that he would cause to be built a house, "a great mead-hall," which was to be his chief palace, or metropolis. The hall-gate, we are informed, rose aloft, "high and curved with pinnacles" (*heáh and horn-geáp*). It is elsewhere described as a "lofty house;" the hall was high; it was "fast within and without, with iron bonds, forged cunningly;" it appears that there were steps to it, and the roof is described as being variegated with gold; the walls were covered with tapestry (*web æfter wagum*), which also was "variegated with gold," and presented to the view "many a wondrous sight to every one that looketh upon such." The walls appear to have been of wood; we are repeatedly told that the roof was carved and lofty; the floor is described as being variegated (probably a tesselated pavement); and the seats were benches arranged round it, with the

exception of Hrothgar's chair or throne. In the vicinity of the hall stood the chambers or bowers, in which there were beds (*bed æfter búrum*).

These few epithets and allusions, scattered through the poem, give us a tolerable notion of what the house of a Saxon chieftain must have been in the country from whence our ancestors came, as well as afterwards in that where they finally settled. The romantic story is taken up more with imaginary combats with monsters, than with domestic scenes, but it contains a few incidents of private life. The hall of king Hrothgar was visited by a monster named Grendel, who came at night to prey upon its inhabitants; and it was Beowulf's mission to free them from this nocturnal scourge. By direction of the primeval coast-guards, he and his men proceeded by the "street" already mentioned to the hall of Hrothgar, at the entrance to which they laid aside their armour and left their weapons. Beowulf found the chief and his followers drinking their ale and mead, and made known the object of his journey. "Then," says the poem, "there was for the sons of the Geats (Beowulf and his followers), altogether, a bench cleared in the beer-hall; there the bold of spirit, free from quarrel, went to sit; the thane observed his office, he that in his hand bare the twisted ale-cup; he poured the bright sweet liquor; meanwhile the poet sang serene in Heorot (the name of Hrothgar's palace), there was joy of heroes." Thus the company passed their time, listening to the bard, boasting of their exploits, and telling their stories, until Wealtheow, Hrothgar's queen, entered and "greeted the men in the hall." She now served the liquor, offering the cup first to her husband, and then to the rest of the guests, after which she seated

herself by Hrothgar, and the festivities continued till it was time to retire to bed. Beowulf and his followers were left to sleep in the hall—"the wine-hall, the treasure-house of men, variegated with vessels" (*fættum fáhne*). Grendel came in the night, and after a dreadful combat received his death-wound from Beowulf. The noise in the hall was great; "a fearful terror fell on the North Danes, on each of those who from the walls heard the outcry." These were the watchmen stationed on the wall forming the chieftain's palace, that enclosed the whole mass of buildings (*of wealle*).

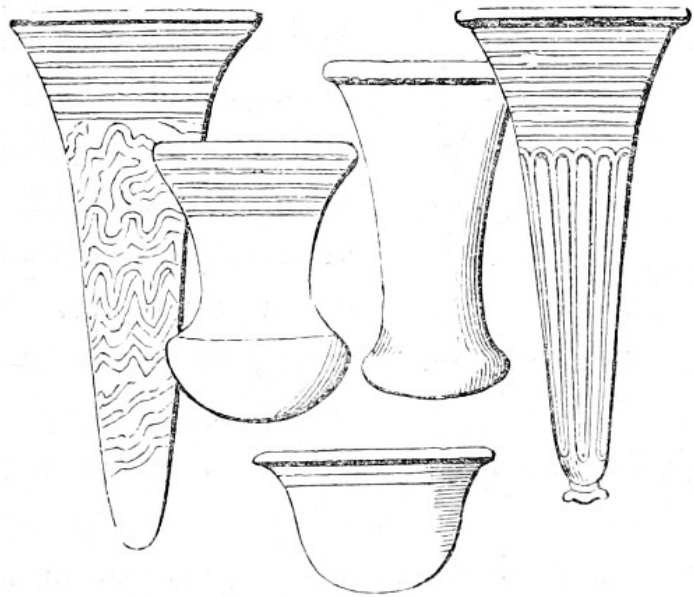
As far as we can judge by the description given in the poem, Hrothgar and his household in their bowers or bed-chambers had heard little of the tumult, but they went early in the morning to the hall to rejoice in Beowulf's victory. There was great feasting again in the hall that day, and Beowulf and his followers were rewarded with rich gifts. After dinner the minstrel again took up the harp, and sang some of the favourite histories of their tribe. "The lay was sung, the song of the gleeman, the joke rose again, the noise from the benches grew loud, cup-bearers gave the wine from wondrous vessels." Then the queen, "under a golden crown," again served the cup to Hrothgar and Beowulf. She afterwards went as before to her seat, and "there was the costliest of feasts, the men drank wine," until bed-time arrived a second time. While their leader appears to have been accommodated with a chamber, Beowulf's men again occupied the hall. "They bared the bench-planks; it was spread all over with beds and bolsters; at their heads they set their war-rims, the bright shield-wood; there, on the bench, might easily be seen, above the warrior, his helmet lofty in war, the ringed

mail-shirt, and the solid shield; it was their custom ever to be ready for war, both in house and in field."

Grendel had a mother (it was the primitive form of the legend of the devil and his dam), and this second night she came unexpectedly to avenge her son, and slew one of Hrothgar's favourite counsellors and nobles, who must therefore have also slept in the hall. Beowulf and his warriors next day went in search of this new marauder, and succeeded in destroying her, after which exploit they returned to their own home laden with rich presents.

These sketches of early manners, slight as they may be, are invaluable to us, in the absence of all other documentary record during several ages, until after the Anglo-Saxons had been converted to Christianity. During this long period we have, however, one source of invaluable information, though of a restricted kind—the barrows or graves of our primeval forefathers, which contain almost every description of article that they used when alive. In that solitary document, the poem of Beowulf, we are told of the arms which the Saxons used, of the dresses in which they were clad; of the rings, and bracelets, and ornaments, of which they were proud; of the "solid cup, the valuable drinking-vessel," from which they quaffed the mead, or the vases from which they poured it; but we can obtain no notions of the form or character of these articles. From the graves, on the contrary, we obtain a perfect knowledge of the form and design of all these various articles, without deriving any knowledge as to the manner in which they were used. The subject now becomes a more extensive one; and in the Anglo-Saxon barrows in England, we find a mixture, in these articles, of Anglo-Saxon and Roman, which

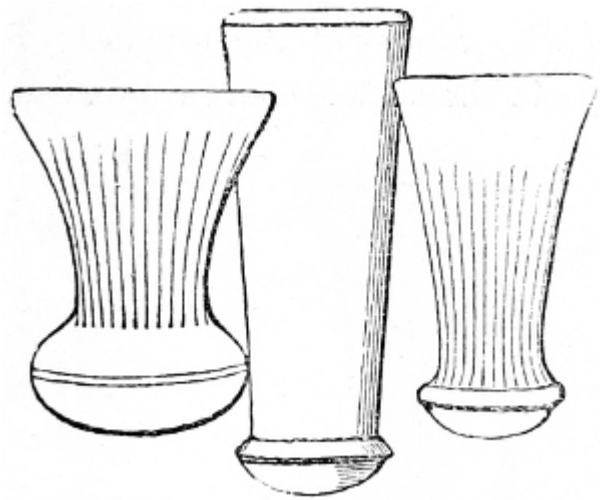
furnishes a remarkable illustration of the mixture of the races. We are all perfectly well acquainted with Roman types; and in the few examples which can be here given of articles found in early Anglo-Saxon barrows, I shall only introduce such as will enable us to judge what classes of the subsequent mediæval types were really derived from pure Saxon or Teutonic originals.



No. 1. Anglo-Saxon Drinking Glasses.

It is curious enough that the poet who composed the romance of Beowulf enumerates among the treasures in the ancient barrow, guarded by the dragon who was finally slain by his hero, “the dear, or precious drinking-cup” (*dryncfæt deóre*). Drinking-cups are frequently found in the Saxon barrows or graves in England. A group, representing the more usual

forms, is given in our cut, No. 1, found chiefly in barrows in Kent, and preserved in the collections of lord Londesborough and Mr. Rolfe, the latter of which is now in the possession of Mr. Mayer, of Liverpool. The example to the left no doubt represents the “twisted” pattern, so often mentioned in Beowulf, and evidently the favourite ornament among the early Saxons. All these cups are of glass; they are so formed that it is evident they could not stand upright, so that it was necessary to empty them at a draught. This characteristic of the old drinking-cups is said to have given rise to the modern name of tumblers.



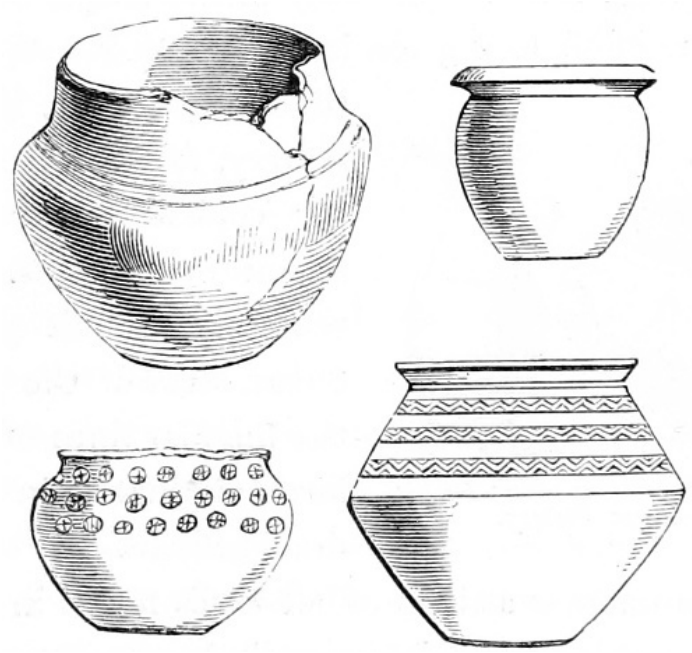
No. 2. Germano-Saxon Drinking Glasses.

That these glass drinking-cups—or, if we like to use the term, these glasses—were implements peculiar to the Germanic race to which the Saxons belonged, and not derived from the Romans, we have corroborative evidence in discoveries made on the Continent. I will only take examples from some

graves of the same early period, discovered at Selzen, in Rhenish Hesse, an interesting account of which was published at Maintz, in 1848, by the brothers W. and L. Lindenschmit. In these graves several drinking-cups were found, also of glass, and resembling in character the two middle figures in our cut, No. 1. Three specimens are given in the cut No. 2. In our cut, No. 5, (see page 8), is one of the cup-shaped glasses, also found in these Hessian graves, which closely resembles that given in the cut No. 1. None of the cups of the champagne-glass form, like those found in England, occur in these foreign barrows.



No. 3. Anglo-Saxon Pottery.



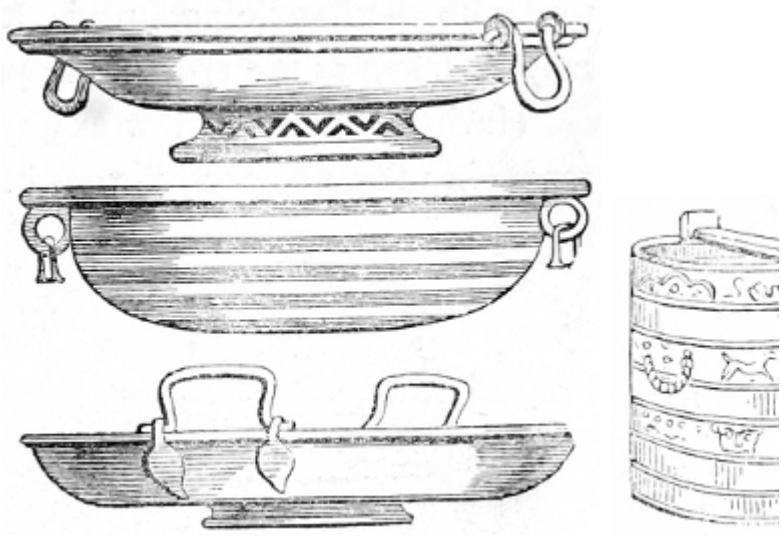
No. 4. Germano-Saxon Pottery.

We shall find also that the pottery of the later Anglo-Saxon period presented a mixture of forms, partly derived from those which had belonged to the Saxon race in their primitive condition, and partly copied or imitated from those of the Romans. In fact, in our Anglo-Saxon graves we find much purely Roman pottery intermingled with earthen vessels of Saxon manufacture; and this is also the case in Germany. As Roman forms are known to every one, we need only give the pure Saxon types. Our cut, No. 3, represents five examples, and will give a sufficient notion of their general character. The two to the left were taken, with a large quantity more, of similar character, from a Saxon cemetery at Kingston, near Derby; the vessel in the middle, and the upper one to

the right, are from Kent; and the lower one to the right is also from the cemetery at Kingston. Several of these were usually considered as types of ancient British pottery, until their real character was recently demonstrated, and it is corroborated by the discovery of similar pottery in what I will term the Germano-Saxon graves. Four examples from the cemetery at Selzen, are given in the cut No. 4. We have here not only the rude-formed vessels with lumps on the side, but also the characteristic ornament of crosses in circles. The next cut, No. 5, represents two earthen vessels of another description, found in the graves at Selzen. The one to the right is evidently the prototype of our modern pitcher. I am informed there is, in the Museum at Dover, a specimen of pottery of this shape, taken from an Anglo-Saxon barrow in that neighbourhood; and Mr. Roach Smith took fragments of another from an Anglo-Saxon tumulus near the same place. The other variation of the pitcher here given is remarkable, not on account of similar specimens having been found, as far as I know, in graves in England, but because vessels of a similar form are found rather commonly in the Anglo-Saxon illuminated manuscripts. One of these is given in the group No. 6, which represents three types of the later Anglo-Saxon pottery, selected from a large number copied by Strutt from Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. The figure to the left, in this group, is a later Saxon form of the pitcher; perhaps the singular form of the handle may have originated in an error of the draughtsman.



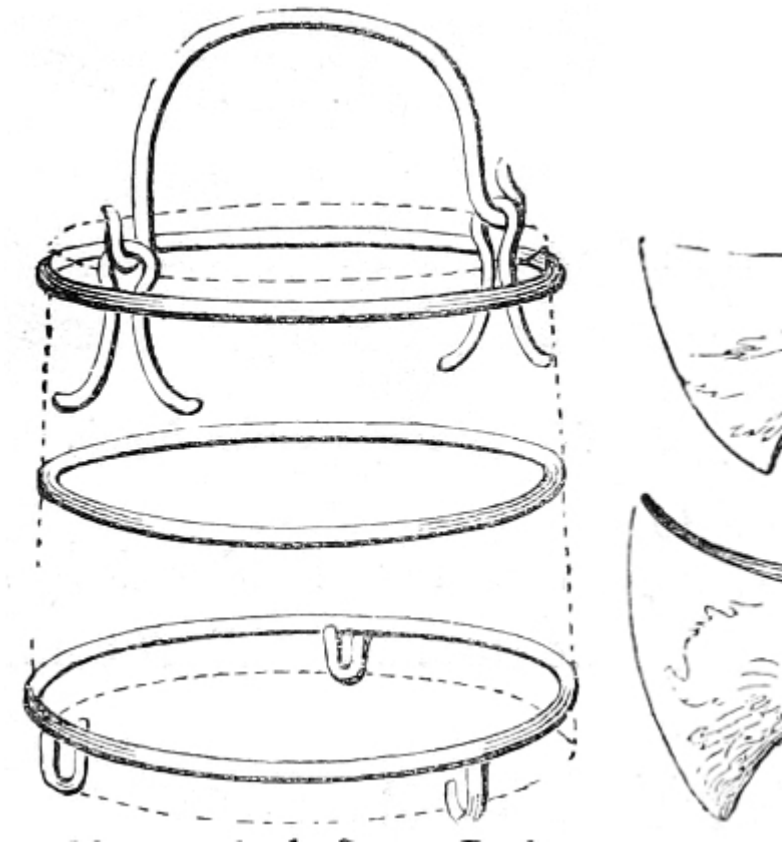
No. 5. Germano-Saxon Pottery and Glass.



No. 7. Anglo-Saxon Bowls.

Among the numerous articles of all kinds found in the early Anglo-Saxon graves, are bowls of metal (generally bronze or copper), often very thickly gilt, and of elegant forms; they are, perhaps, borrowed from the Romans. Three examples are given in the cut No. 7, all found in Kent. They were probably intended for the service of the table. Another class of utensils found rather commonly in the Anglo-Saxon barrows are buckets. The first of those represented in our cut, No. 8, was found in a Saxon barrow near Marlborough, in Wiltshire; the other was found on the Chatham lines. As far as my own experience goes, I believe these buckets are usually found with male skeletons, and from this circumstance, and the fact of their being usually ornamented, I am inclined to think they served some purposes connected with the festivities of the hall; probably they were used to carry the ale or mead. The Anglo-Saxon translation of the Book of Judges (ch. vii. ver. 20), rendered *hydrias confregissent* by *to-brœcon tha bucas*, "they broke the buckets." A common name for this implement, which was properly *buc*, was *æscen*, which signified literally a vessel made of ash, the favourite wood of the Anglo-Saxons. Our cut, No. 9, represents a bucket of wood with very delicately-formed bronze hoops and handle, found in a barrow in Bourne Park, near Canterbury. The wood was entirely decayed; but the hoops and handle are in the collection of lord Londesborough. Such buckets have, also, been found under similar circumstances on the Continent. The close resemblance between the weapons and other instruments found in the English barrows and in those at Selzen, may be illustrated by a comparison of the two axes represented in the cut, No. 10. The upper one was found at Selzen; the lower one is in the Museum of Mr. Rolfe, and was

obtained from a barrow in the Isle of Thanet. The same similarity is observed between the knives, which is the more remarkable, as the later Anglo-Saxon knives were quite of a different form. The example, cut No. 11, taken from a grave at Selzen, is the only instance I know of a knife of this early period of Saxon history with the handle preserved; it has been beautifully enamelled. This may be taken as the type of the primitive Anglo-Saxon knife.



No. 9. Anglo-Saxon Bucket. *1*

Having given these few examples of the general forms of the implements in use among the Saxons before their conversion to Christianity, as much to illustrate their manners as described by Beowulf, as to show what classes of types were originally Saxon, we will proceed to treat of their domestic manners as we learn them from the more numerous and more

definite documents of a later period. We shall find it convenient to consider the subject separately as it regards in-door life and out-door life, and it will be proper first that we should form some definite notion of an Anglo-Saxon house.



No. 11. Germano-Saxon Knife.

We can already form some notion of the primeval Saxon mansion from our brief review of the poem of Beowulf; and we shall find that it continued nearly the same down to a late period. The most important part of the building was the hall, on which was bestowed all the ornamentation of which the builders and decorators of that early period were capable. Halls built of stone are alluded to in a religious poem at the beginning of the Exeter book; yet, in the earlier period at least, there can be little doubt that the materials of building were chiefly wood. Around, or near this hall, stood, in separate buildings, the bed-chambers, or bowers (*búr*), of which the latter name is only now preserved as applied to a summer-house in a garden; but the reader of old English poetry will remember well the common phrase of a *bird in bure*, a lady in her bower or chamber. These buildings, and the household offices, were all grouped within an inclosure, or outward wall, which, I imagine, was generally of earth, for the Anglo-Saxon word, *weall*, was applied to an earthen rampart, as well as to masonry. What is termed in the poem of Judith, *wealles geát*, the gate of the wall, was the entrance through this inclosure

or rampart. I am convinced that many of the earth-works, which are often looked upon as ancient camps, are nothing more than the remains of the inclosures of Anglo-Saxon residences.

In Beowulf, the sleeping-rooms of Hrothgar and his court seem to have been so completely detached from the hall, that their inmates did not hear the combat that was going on in the latter building at night. In smaller houses the sleeping-rooms were fewer, or none, until we arrive at the simple room in which the inmates had board and lodging together, with a mere hedge for its inclosure, the prototype of our ordinary cottage and garden. The wall served for a defence against robbers and enemies, while, in times of peace and tranquillity, it was a protection from indiscreet intruders, for the doors of the hall and chambers seem to have been generally left open. Beggars assembled round the door of the wall—the *ostium domûs*—to wait for alms.

The vocabularies of the Anglo-Saxon period furnish us with the names of most of the parts of the ordinary dwellings. The entrance through the outer wall into the court, the strength of which is alluded to in early writers, was properly the gate (*geát*). The whole mass inclosed within this wall constituted the *burh* (burgh), or tun, and the inclosed court itself seems to have been designated as the *cafer-tun*, or *inburh*. The wall of the hall, or of the internal buildings in general, was called a *wag*, or *wah*, a distinctive word which remained in use till a late period in the English language, and seems to have been lost partly through the similarity of sound.[1] The entrance to the hall, or to the other buildings in the interior, was the *duru*, or door, which was thus distinguished from the gate. Another kind of door

mentioned in the vocabularies was a *hlid-gata*, literally a gate with a lid or cover, which was perhaps, however, a word merely invented to represent the Latin *valva*, which is given as its equivalent. The *door* is described in Beowulf as being "fastened with fire-bands" (*fyr-bendum fæst*, I. 1448), which must mean iron bars.[2] Either before the door of the hall, or between the door and the interior apartment, was sometimes a *selde*, literally a shed, but perhaps we might now call it a portico. The different parts of the architectural structure of the hall enumerated in the vocabularies are *stapul*, a post or log set in the ground; *stipere*, a pillar; *beam*, a beam; *ræfter*, a rafter; *læta*, a lath; *swer*, a column. The columns supported *bigels*, an arch or vault, or *fyrst*, the interior of the roof, the ceiling. The *hrof*, or roof, was called also *thecen*, or *thæcen*, a word derived from the verb *theccan*, to cover; but although this is the original of our modern word *thatch*, our readers must not suppose that the Anglo-Saxon *thæcen* meant what we call a thatched roof, for we have the Anglo-Saxon word *thæc-tigel*, a thatch-tile, as well as *hrof-tigel*, a roof-tile. There was sometimes one story above the ground-floor, for which the vocabularies give the Latin word *solarium*, the origin of the later mediæval word, *soler*; but it is evident that this was not common to Anglo-Saxon houses, and the only name for it was *up-flor*, an upper floor. It was approached by a *stæger*, so named from the verb *stigan*, to ascend, and the origin of our modern word *stair*. There were windows to the hall, which were probably improvements upon the ruder primitive Saxon buildings, for the only Anglo-Saxon words for a window are *eag-thyrl*, an eye-hole, and *eag-duru*, an eye-door.

We have unfortunately no special descriptions of Anglo-Saxon houses, but scattered incidents in the Anglo-Saxon historians show us that this general arrangement of the house lasted down to the latest period of their monarchy. Thus, in the year 755, Cynewulf, king of the West Saxons, was murdered at Merton by the atheling Cyneard. The circumstances of the story are but imperfectly understood, unless we bear in mind the above description of a house. Cynewulf had gone to Merton privately, to visit a lady there, who seems to have been his mistress, and he only took a small party of his followers with him. Cyneard, having received information of this visit, assembled a body of men, entered the inclosure of the house unperceived (as appears by the context), and surrounded the detached chamber (*búr*) in which was the king with the lady. The king, taken by surprise, rushed to the door (*on tha duru eode*), and was there slain fighting. The king's attendants, although certainly within the inclosure of the house, were out of hearing of this sudden fray (they were probably in the hall), but they were roused by the woman's screams, rushed to the spot, and fought till, overwhelmed by the numbers of their enemies, they also were all slain. The murderers now took possession of the house, and shut the entrance gate of the wall of inclosure, to protect themselves against the body of the king's followers who had been left at a distance. These, next day, when they heard what had happened, hastened to the spot, attacked the house, and continued fighting around the gate (*ymb thá gatu*) until they made their way in, and slew all the men who were there. Again, we are told, in the Ramsey Chronicle published by Gale, of a rich man in the Danish period, who was oppressive to his people, and, therefore, suspicious of them. He

accordingly had four watchmen every night, chosen alternately from his household, who kept guard at the outside of his hall, evidently for the purpose of preventing his enemies from being admitted into the inclosure by treachery. He lay in his chamber, or bower. One night, the watchmen having drunk more than usual, were unguarded in their speech, and talked together of a plot into which they had entered against the life of their lord. He, happening to be awake, heard their conversation from his chamber, and defeated their project. We see here the chamber of the lord of the mansion so little substantial in its construction that its inmates could hear what was going on out of doors. At a still later period, a Northumbrian noble, whom Hereward visited in his youth, had a building for wild beasts within his house or inclosure. One day a bear broke loose, and immediately made for the chamber or bower of the lady of the household, in which she had taken shelter with her women, and whither, no doubt, the savage animal was attracted by their cries. We gather from the context that this asylum would not have availed them, had not young Hereward slain the bear before it reached them. In fact, the lady's chamber was still only a detached room, probably with a very weak door, which was not capable of withstanding any force.

The Harleian Manuscript, No. 603 (in the British Museum), contains several illustrations of Anglo-Saxon domestic architecture, most of which are rather sketchy and indefinite; but there is one picture (fol. 57, vo.) which illustrates, in a very interesting manner, the distribution of the house. Of this, an exact copy is given in the accompanying cut, No. 12.[3] The manuscript is, perhaps, as old as the ninth

century, and the picture here given illustrates Psalm cxi., in the Vulgate version, the description of the just and righteous chieftain: the beggars are admitted within the inclosure (where the scene is laid), to receive the alms of the lord; and he and his lady are occupied in distributing bread to them, while his servants are bringing out of one of the bowers raiment to clothe the naked. The larger building behind, ending in a sort of round tower with a cupola, is evidently the hall—the stag's head seems to mark its character. The buildings to the left are chambers or bowers; to the right is the domestic chapel, and the little room attached is perhaps the chamber of the chaplain.



No. 12. Anglo-Saxon Mansion.

It is evidently the intention in this picture to represent the walls of the rooms as being formed, in the lower part, of masonry, with timber walls above, and all the windows are in the timber walls. If we make allowance for want of perspective and proportion in the drawing, it is probable that only a

small portion of the elevation was masonry, and that the wooden walls (*parietes*) were raised above it, as is very commonly the case in old timber-houses still existing. The greater portion of the Saxon houses were certainly of timber; in Alfric's colloquy, it is the carpenter, or worker in wood (*se treo-wyrhta*), who builds houses; and the very word to express the operation of building, *timbrian*, *getimbrian*, signified literally to construct of timber. We observe in the above representation of a house, that none of the buildings have more than a ground-floor, and this seems to have been a characteristic of the houses of all classes. The Saxon word *flór* is generally used in the early writers to represent the Latin *pavimentum*. Thus the "variegated floor" (*on fágre flór*) of the hall mentioned in Beowulf (l. 1454) was a paved floor, perhaps a tessellated pavement; as the road spoken of in an earlier part of the poem (*stræt wæs stán-fáh*, the street was stone-variegated, l. 644) describes a paved Roman road. The term upper-floor occurs once or twice, but only I think in translating from foreign Latin writers. The only instance that occurs to my memory of an upper-floor in an Anglo-Saxon house, is the story of Dunstan's council at Calne in 978, when, according to the Saxon Chronicle, the *witan*, or council, fell from an upper-floor (*of ane úp-floran*), while Dunstan himself avoided their fate by supporting himself on a beam (*uppon anum beame*). The buildings in the above picture are all roofed with tiles of different forms, evidently copied from the older Roman roof-tiles. Perhaps the flatness of these roofs is only to be considered as a proof of the draughtsman's ignorance of perspective. One of Alfric's homilies applies the epithet *steep* to a roof—*on tham sticelan hrofe*. The hall is not unfrequently described as lofty.

The collective house had various names in Anglo-Saxon. It was called *hús*, a house, a general term for all residences great or small; it was called *heal*, or hall, because that was the most important part of the building—we still call gentlemen's seats halls; it was called *ham*, as being the residence or home of its possessor; and it was called *tún*, in regard of its inclosure.

The Anglo-Saxons chose for their country-houses a position which commanded a prospect around, because such sites afforded protection at the same time that they enabled the possessor to overlook his own landed possessions. The Ramsey Chronicle, describing the beautiful situation of the mansion at "Schitlingdonia" (Shitlington), in Bedfordshire, tells us that the surrounding country lay spread out like a panorama from the door of the hall—*ubi ab ostio aulæ tota fere villa et late patens ager arabilis oculis subjacet intuentis*.

CHAPTER II.

IN-DOOR LIFE AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.—THE HALL AND ITS HOSPITALITY.—THE SAXON MEAL.—PROVISIONS AND COOKERY.—AFTER-DINNER OCCUPATIONS.—DRUNKEN

BRAWLS.

The introductory observations in the preceding chapter will be sufficient to show that the mode of life, the vessels and utensils, and even the residences of the Anglo-Saxons, were a mixture of those they derived from their own forefathers with those which they borrowed from the Romans, whom they found established in Britain. It is interesting to us to know that we have retained the ordinary forms of pitchers and basins, and, to a certain degree, of drinking vessels, which existed so many centuries ago among our ancestors before they established themselves in this island. The beautiful forms which had been brought from the classic south were not able to supersede national habit. Our modern houses derive more of their form and arrangement from those of our Saxon forefathers than from any other source. We have seen that the original Saxon arrangement of a house was preserved by that people to the last; but it does not follow that they did not sometimes adopt the Roman houses they found standing, although they seem never to have imitated them. I believe Bulwer's description of the Saxonised Roman house inhabited by Hilda, to be founded in truth. Roman villas, when uncovered at the present day, are sometimes found to have undergone alterations which can only be explained by supposing that they were made when later possessors adapted them to Saxon manners. Such alterations appear to me to be visible in the villa at Hadstock, in Essex, opened by the late lord Braybrooke; in one place the outer wall seems to have been broken through to make a new entrance, and a road of tiles, which was supposed to have been the bottom of a water course, was more

probably the paved pathway made by the Saxon possessor. Houses in those times were seldom of long duration; we learn from the domestic anecdotes given in saints' legends and other writings, that they were very frequently burnt by accidental fires; thus the main part of the house, the timber-work, was destroyed; and as ground was then not valuable, and there was no want of space, it was much easier to build a new house in another spot, and leave the old foundations till they were buried in rubbish and earth, than to clear them away in order to rebuild on the same site. Earth soon accumulated under such circumstances; and this accounts for our finding, even in towns, so much of the remains of the houses of an early period undisturbed at a considerable depth under the present surface of the ground.

It has already been observed that the most important part of the Saxon house was the hall. It was the place where the household (*hired*) collected round their lord and protector, and where the visitor or stranger was first received,—the scene of hospitality. The householder there held open-house, for the hall was the public apartment, the doors of which were never shut against those who, whether known or unknown, appeared worthy of entrance. The reader of Saxon history will remember the beautiful comparison made by one of king Edwin's chieftains in the discussion on the reception to be given to the missionary Paulinus. "The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the hall where you sit at your meal in winter, with your chiefs and attendants, warmed by a fire made in the middle of the hall, whilst storms of rain or snow prevail without; the sparrow, flying in

at one door and immediately out at another, whilst he is visible is safe from the wintry storm, but after this short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged." Dining in private was always considered disgraceful, and is mentioned as a blot in a man's character.

Internally, the walls of the hall were covered with hangings or tapestry, which were called in Anglo-Saxon *wah-hrægel*, or *wah-rift*, wall-clothing. These appear sometimes to have been mere plain cloths, but at other times they were richly ornamented, and not unfrequently embroidered with historical subjects. So early as the seventh century, Aldhelm speaks of the hangings or curtains being dyed with purple and other colours, and ornamented with images, and he adds that "if finished of one colour uniform they would not seem beautiful to the eye." Among the Saxon wills printed by Hickes, we find several bequests of *heall wah-riftas*, or wall-tapestries for the hall; and it appears that, in some cases, tapestries of a richer and more precious character than those in common use were reserved to be hung up only on extraordinary festivals. There were hooks, or pegs, on the wall, upon which various objects were hung for convenience. In an anecdote told in the contemporary life of Dunstan, he is made to hang his harp against the wall of the room. Arms and armour, more especially, were hung against the wall of the hall. The author of the "Life of Hereward" describes the Saxon insurgents who had taken possession of Ely, as suspending their arms in this manner; and in one of the riddles in the Exeter Book, a war-vest is introduced speaking of itself thus:—

hwilum hongige, *Sometimes I hang,*

hyrstum frætwed, *with ornaments adorned,*
wlitig on wage, *splendid on the wall,*
þær weras drinceð, *where men drink,*
freolic fyrd-sceorp. *a goodly war-vest.*

—Exeter Book, p. 395.

We have no allusion in Anglo-Saxon writers to chimneys, or fireplaces, in our modern acceptation of the term. When necessary, the fire seems to have been made on the floor, in the place most convenient. We find instances in the early saints' legends where the hall was burnt by incautiously lighting the fire too near the wall. Hence it seems to have been usually placed in the middle, and there can be little doubt that there was an opening, or, as it was called in later times, a louver, in the roof above, for the escape of the smoke. The historian Bede describes a Northumbrian king, in the middle of the seventh century, as having, on his return from hunting, entered the hall with his attendants, and all standing round the fire to warm themselves. A somewhat similar scene, but in more humble life, is represented in the accompanying cut, taken from a manuscript calendar of the beginning of the eleventh century (MS. Cotton. Julius, A. iv.). The material for feeding the fire is wood, which the man to the left is bringing from a heap, while his companion is administering to the fire with a pair of Saxon tongs (*tangan*). The vocabularies give *tange*, tongs, and *bylig*, bellows; and they speak of *col*, coal (explained by the Latin *carbo*), and *synder*, a cinder (*scorium*). As all these are Saxon words, and not derived from the Latin, we may suppose that they represent things known to the Anglo-Saxon race from an early period; and as charcoal does not produce *scorium*, or cinder, it is perhaps not going too far to suppose that the

Anglo-Saxons were acquainted with the use of mineral coal. We know nothing of any other fire utensils, except that the Anglo-Saxons used a *fyr-scofl*, or fire-shovel. The place in which the fire was made was the *heorth*, or hearth.



No. 13. A Party at the Fire.

The furniture of the hall appears to have been very simple, for it consisted chiefly of benches. These had carpets and cushions; the former are often mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon wills. The Anglo-Saxon poems speak of the hall as being “adorned with treasures,” from which we are perhaps justified in believing that it was customary to display there in some manner or other the richer and more ornamental of the household vessels. Perhaps one end of the hall was raised higher than the rest for the lord of the household, like the *dais* of later times, as Anglo-Saxon writers speak of the *heah-setl*, or high seat. The table can hardly be considered as furniture, in the ordinary sense of the word: it was literally, according to its Anglo-Saxon name *bord*, a board that was brought out for the occasion, and placed upon tressels, and taken away as soon as the meal was ended. Among the inedited Latin *ænigmata*, or riddles, of the Anglo-Saxon writer Tahtwin, who

flourished at the beginning of the eighth century, is one on a *table*, which is curious enough to be given here, from the manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 12, C. xxiii.). The table, speaking in its own person, says that it is in the habit of feeding people with all sorts of viands; that while so doing it is a quadruped, and is adorned with handsome clothing; that afterwards it is robbed of all it possesses, and when it has been thus robbed it loses its legs:—

DE MENSA.

Multiferis omnes dapibus saturare solesco,
Quadrupedem hinc felix ditem me sanxerit ætas,
Esse tamen pulchris fatim dum vestibus orner,
Certatim me prædones spoliare solescunt,
Raptis nudata exuviis mox membra relinquunt.

In the illuminated manuscripts, wherever dinner scenes are represented, the table is always covered with what is evidently intended for a handsome table-cloth, the *myse-hrægel* or *bord-clath*. The grand preparation for dinner was *laying the board*; and it is from this original character of the table that we derive our ordinary expression of receiving any one "to *board* and lodging."

The hall was peculiarly the place for eating—and for drinking. The Anglo-Saxons had three meals in the day,—the breaking of their fast (breakfast), at the third hour of the day, which answered to nine o'clock in the morning, according to our reckoning; the *ge-reordung* (repast), or *nón-mete* (noon-meat) or dinner, which is stated to have been held at the

canonical hour of noon, or three o'clock in the afternoon; and the *æfen-gereord* (evening repast), *æfen-gyfl* (evening food), *æfen-mete* (evening meat), *æfen-thenung* (evening refreshment), or supper, the hour of which is uncertain. It is probable, from many circumstances, that the latter was a meal not originally in use among our Saxon forefathers: perhaps their only meal at an earlier period was the dinner, which was always their principal repast; and we may, perhaps, consider noon as midday, and not as meaning the canonical hour.

As I have observed before, the table, from the royal hall down to the most humble of those who could afford it, was not refused to strangers. When they came to the hall-door, the guests were required to leave their arms in the care of a porter or attendant, and then, whether known or not, they took their place at the tables. One of the laws of king Cnut directs, that if, in the meantime, any one took the weapon thus deposited, and did hurt with it, the owner should be compelled to clear himself of suspicion of being cognisant of the use to be made of his arms when he laid them down. History affords us several remarkable instances of the facility of approach even to the tables of kings during the Saxon period. It was this circumstance that led to the murder of king Edmund in 946. On St. Augustin's day, the king was dining at his manor of Pucklechurch, in Gloucestershire; a bandit named Leofa, whom the king had banished for his crimes, and who had returned without leave from exile, had the effrontery to place himself at the royal table, by the side of one of the principal nobles of the court; the king alone recognised him, rose from his seat to expel him from the hall, and received his death-

wound in the struggle. In the eleventh century, when Hereward went in disguise as a spy to the court of a Cornish chieftain, he entered the hall while they were feasting, took his place among the guests, and was but slightly questioned as to who he was and whence he came.



No. 14. An Anglo-Saxon Dinner-Party Pledging.

In the early illuminated manuscripts, dinner scenes are by no means uncommon. The cut, No. 14 (taken from Alfric's version of Genesis, MS. Cotton. Claudius, B. iv., fol. 36, vo), represents Abraham's feast on the birth of his child. The guests are sitting at an ordinary long hall table, ladies and gentlemen being mixed together without any apparent special arrangement. This manuscript is probably of the beginning of the eleventh century. The cut, No. 15, represents another dinner scene, from a manuscript probably of the tenth century (Tiberius, C. vi., fol. 5, vo), and presents several peculiarities. The party here

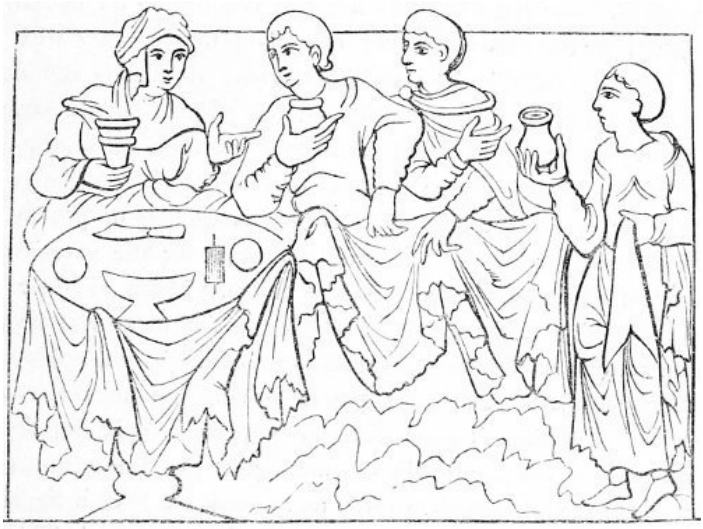
is a very small one, and they sit at a round table. The attendants seem to be serving them, in a very remarkable manner, with roast meats, which they bring to table on the spits (*spitu*) as they were roasted. Another festive scene is represented in the cut, No. 16, taken from a manuscript of the Psychomachia of the poet Prudentius (MS. Cotton. Cleopatra, C. viii., fol. 15, ro). The table is again a round one, at which Luxury and her companions are seated at supper (*seo Galnes æt hyre æfen-ge-reordum sitt*).



No. 15. Anglo-Saxons at Dinner.

It will be observed that in these pictures, the tables are tolerably well covered with vessels of different kinds, with the exception of plates. There are one or two dishes of different sizes in fig. 14, intended, no doubt, for holding bread and other articles; it was probably an utensil borrowed from the Romans, as the Saxon name *disc* was evidently taken from the Latin *discus*. It is not easy to identify the forms of vessels given in these pictures with the words which are found in the Anglo-Saxon language, in which the

general term for a vessel is *fæt*, a vat; *crocca*, a pot or pitcher, no doubt of earthenware, is preserved in the modern English word crockery; and *bolla*, a bowl, *orc*, a basin, *bledu* and *mele*, each answering to the Latin *patera*, *læfel* and *ceac*, a pitcher or urn, *hnæp*, a cup (identical in name with the *hanap* of a later period), *flaxe*, a flask, are all pure Anglo-Saxon words. Many of the forms represented in the manuscripts are recognised at once as identical with those which are found in the earlier Anglo-Saxon graves. In the vocabularies, the Latin word *amphora* is translated by *crocca*, a crock; and *lagena* by *æscen*, which means a vessel made of ash wood, and was, in all probability, identical with the small wooden buckets so often found in the early Saxon graves. In a document preserved in Heming's chartulary of Canterbury, mention is made of "an *æscen*, which is otherwise called a back-bucket" (*æscen the is othre namon hrygilebuc gecleopad*, Heming, p. 393), which strongly confirms the opinion I have adopted as to the purpose of the bucket found in the graves.

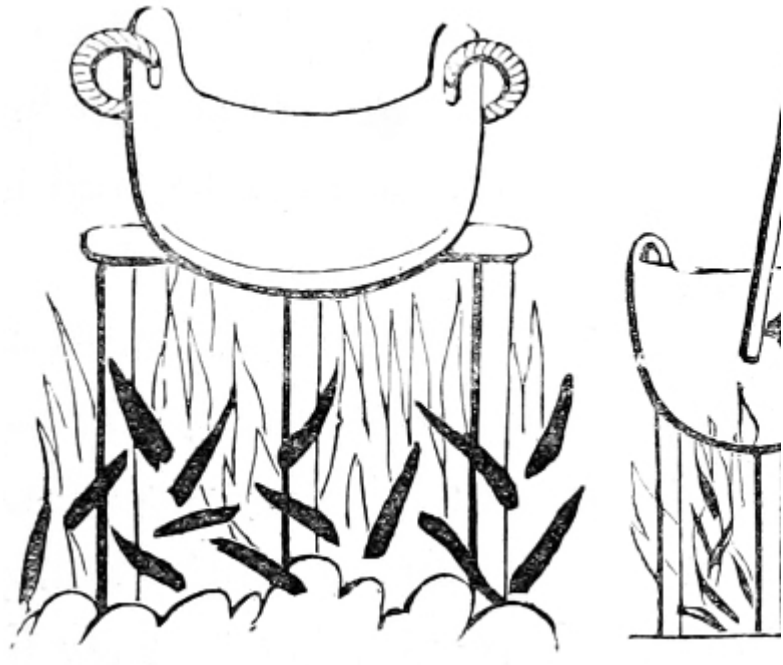


No. 16. A Supper Party.

The food of the Anglo-Saxons appears to have been in general rather simple in character, although we hear now and then of great feasts, probably consisting more in the quantity of provisions than in any great variety or refinement in gastronomy. Bread formed the staple, which the Anglo-Saxons appear to have eaten in great quantities, with milk, and butter, and cheese. A domestic was termed a man's *hlaf-ætan*, or loaf-eater. There is a curious passage in one of Alfric's homilies, that on the life of St. Benedict, where, speaking of the use of oil in Italy, the Anglo-Saxon writer observes, "they eat oil in that country with their food as we do butter." Vegetables (*wyrtan*) formed a considerable portion of the food of our forefathers at this period; beans (*beana*) are mentioned as articles of food, but I remember no mention of the eating of peas (*pisan*) in Anglo-Saxon writers. A variety of circumstances show that there was a great consumption of fish, as well as of

poultry. Of flesh meat, bacon (*spic*) was the most abundant, for the extensive oak forests nourished innumerable droves of swine. Much of their other meat was salted, and the place in which the salt meat was kept was called, on account of the great preponderance of the bacon, a *spic-hus*, or bacon-house; in latter times, for the same reason, named the larder. The practice of eating so much salt meat explains why boiling seems to have been the prevailing mode of cooking it. In the manuscript of Alfric's translation of Genesis, already mentioned, we have a figure of a boiling vessel (No. 17), which is placed over the fire on a tripod. This vessel was called a pan (*panna*—one Saxon writer mentions *isen panna*, an iron pan) or a kettle (*cytel*). It is very curious to observe how many of our trivial expressions at the present day are derived from very ancient customs; thus, for example, we speak of "a kettle of fish," though what we now term a kettle would hardly serve for this branch of cookery. In another picture (No. 18) we have a similar boiling vessel, placed similarly on a tripod, while the cook is using a very singular utensil to stir the contents. Bede speaks of a goose being taken down from a wall to be *boiled*. It seems probable that in earlier times among the Anglo-Saxons, and perhaps at a later period, in the case of large feasts, the cooking was done out of doors. The only words in the Anglo-Saxon language for cook and kitchen, are *cóc* and *cycene*, taken from the Latin *coquus* and *coquina*, which seems to show that they only improved their rude manner of living in this respect after they had become acquainted with the Romans. Besides boiled meats, they certainly had roast, or broiled, which they called *brœde*, meat which had been spread or displayed to the fire. The vocabularies explain the

Latin *coctus* by “boiled or baked” (*gesoden*, *gebacen*). They also fried meat, which was then called *hyrstyng*, and the vessel in which it was fried was called *hyrsting-panne*, a frying-pan. Broth, also (*broth*), was much in use.



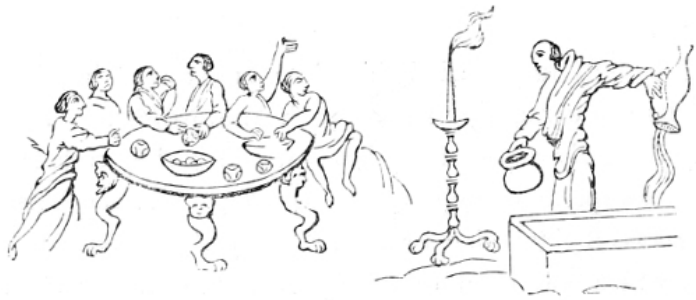
No. 17. A Saxon Kettle.

In the curious colloquy of Alfric (a dialogue made to teach the Anglo-Saxon youth the Latin names for

different articles), three professions are mentioned as requisite to furnish the table: first, the salter, who stored the store-rooms (*cleafan*) and cellars (*hedderne*), and without whom they could not have butter (*butere*)—they always used salt butter—or cheese (*cyse*); next, the baker, without whose handiwork, we are told, every table would seem empty; and lastly, the cook. The work of the latter appears not at this time to have been very elaborate. "If you expel me from your society," he says, "you will be obliged to eat your vegetables green, and your flesh-meat raw, nor can you have any fat broth." "We care not," is the reply, "for we can ourselves cook our provisions, and spread them on the table." Instead of grounding his defence on the difficulties of his profession, the cook represents that in this case, instead of having anybody to wait upon them, they would be obliged to be their own servants. It may be observed, as indicating the general prevalence of boiling food, that in the above account of the cook, the Latin word *coquere* is rendered by the Anglo-Saxon *seothan*, to boil.[4] Our words *cook* and *kitchen* are the Anglo-Saxon *cóc* and *cycene*, and have no connection with the French *cuisine*.

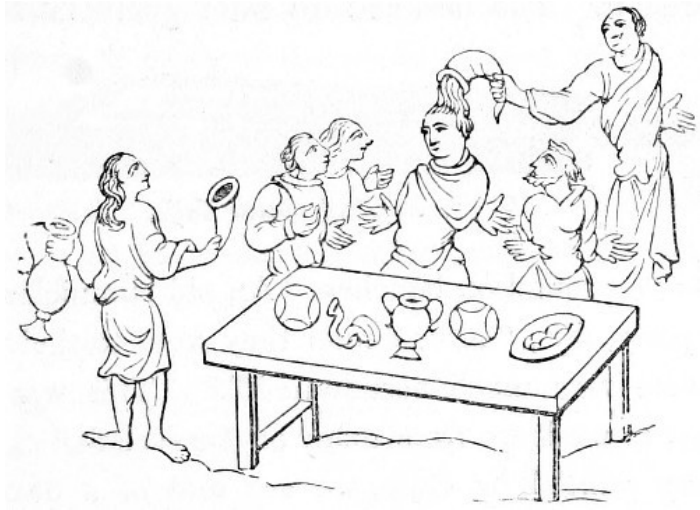
We may form some idea of the proportions in the consumption of different kinds of provisions among our Saxon forefathers, by the quantities given on certain occasions to the monasteries. Thus, according to the Saxon Chronicle, the occupier of an estate belonging to the abbey of Medeshamstede (Peterborough) in 852, was to furnish yearly sixty loads of wood for firing, twelve of coal (*græfa*), six of fagots, two tuns of pure ale, two beasts fit for slaughter, six hundred loaves, and ten measures of

Welsh ale.



No. 19. Anglo-Saxons at Table.

It will be observed in the dinner scenes given above, that the guests are helping themselves with their hands. Forks were totally unknown to the Anglo-Saxons for the purpose of carrying the food to the mouth, and it does not appear that every one at table was furnished with a knife. In the cut, No. 19 (taken from MS. Harl. No. 603, fol. 12, ro.), a party at table are eating without forks or knives. It will be observed here, as in the other pictures of this kind, that the Anglo-Saxon bread (*hlaf*) is in the form of round cakes, much like the Roman loaves in the pictures at Pompeii, and not unlike our cross-buns at Easter, which are no doubt derived from our Saxon forefathers. Another party at dinner without knives or forks is represented in the cut No. 20, taken from the same manuscript (fol. 51, vo.). The tables here are without table-cloths. The use of the fingers in eating explains to us why it was considered necessary to wash the hands before and after the meal.



No. 20. Anglo-Saxons at Table.

The knife (*cnif*), as represented in the Saxon illuminations, has a peculiar form, quite different from that of the earlier knife found in the graves, but resembling rather closely the form of the modern razor. Several of these Saxon knives have been found, and one of them, dug up in London, and now in the interesting museum collected by Mr. Roach Smith, is represented in the accompanying cut, No. 21.[5] The blade, of steel (*style*), which is the only part preserved, has been inlaid with bronze.

When the repast was concluded, and the hands of the guests washed, the tables appear to have been withdrawn from the hall, and the party commenced drinking. From the earliest times, this was the occupation of the after part of the day, when no warlike expedition or pressing business hindered it. The lord and his chief guests sat at the high seat, while the others sat round on benches. An old chronicler, speaking of a Saxon dinner party, says,

"after dinner they went to their cups, to which the English were very much accustomed."[6] This was the case even with the clergy, as we learn from many of the ecclesiastical laws. In the Ramsey History printed by Gale, we are told of a Saxon bishop who invited a Dane to his house in order to obtain some land from him, and to drive a better bargain, he determined to make him drunk. He therefore pressed him to stay to dinner, and "when they had all eaten enough, the tables were taken away, and they passed the rest of the day, till evening, drinking. He who held the office of cup-bearer, managed that the Dane's turn at the cup came round oftener than the others, as the bishop had directed him." We know by the story of Dunstan and king Eadwy, that it was considered a great mark of disrespect to the guests, even in a king, to leave the drinking early after dinner.



No. 21. An Anglo-Saxon Knife.

Our cut, No. 22, taken from the Anglo-Saxon calendar already mentioned (MS. Cotton. Julius, A. vi.), represents a party sitting at the *heah-setl*, the high seat, or dais, drinking after dinner. It is the lord of the household and his chief friends, as is shown by their attendant guard of honour. The cup-bearer, who is serving them, has a napkin in his hand. The seat is furnished with cushions, and the three persons seated on it appear to have large napkins or cloths spread over their knees. Similar cloths are evidently represented in our cut No. 16. Whether these are the *setl-hrœgel*, or seat-cloths, mentioned in some of the Anglo-Saxon wills, is uncertain.



No. 22. An Anglo-Saxon Drinking Party.

It will be observed that the greater part of the drinking-cups bear a resemblance in form to those of the more ancient period which we find in Anglo-Saxon graves, and of which some examples have been given in the preceding chapter. We cannot tell whether those seen in the pictures be intended for glass or other material; but it is certain that the Anglo-Saxons were ostentatious of drinking-cups and other vessels made of the precious metals. Sharon Turner, in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, has collected together a number of instances of such valuable vessels. In one will, three silver cups are bequeathed; in another, four cups, two of which were of the value of four pounds; in another, four silver cups, a cup with a fringed edge, a wooden cup variegated with gold, a wooden knobbed cup, and two very handsome drinking-cups (*smicere scencing-cuppan*). Other similar documents mention a golden cup, with a golden dish; a gold cup of immense weight; a dish adorned with gold, and another with Grecian workmanship (probably brought from Byzantium). A lady bequeathed a golden cup weighing four marks and a half. Mention of silver cups, silver basins, &c., is of frequent occurrence. In 833, a king gave his gilt cup, engraved outside with vine-dressers fighting dragons, which he called his

cross-bowl, because it had a cross marked within it, and it had four angles projecting, also like a cross. These cups were given frequently as marks of affection and remembrance. The lady Ethelgiva presented to the abbey of Ramsey, among other things, “two silver cups, for the use of the brethren in the refectory, in order that, while drink is served in them to the brethren at their repast, my memory may be more firmly imprinted on their hearts.”[7] It is a curious proof of the value of such vessels, that in the pictures of warlike expeditions, where two or three articles are heaped together as a kind of symbolical representation of the value of the spoils, vessels of the table and drinking-cups and drinking-horns are generally included. Our cut, No. 23, represents one of these groups (taken from the Cottonian Manuscript, Claudius, C. viii.); it contains a crown, a bracelet or ring, two drinking-horns, a jug, and two other vessels. The drinking-horn was in common use among the Anglo-Saxons. It is seen on the table or in the hands of the drinkers in more than one of our cuts. In the will of one Saxon lady, two buffalo-horns are mentioned; three horns worked with gold and silver are mentioned in one inventory; and we find four horns enumerated among the effects of a monastic house. The Mercian king Witlaf, with somewhat of the sentiment of the lady Ethelgiva, gave to the abbey of Croyland the horn of his table, “that the elder monks may drink from it on festivals, and in their benedictions remember sometimes the soul of the donor.”



No. 23. Articles of Value.

The liquors drunk by the Saxons were chiefly ale and mead; the immense quantity of honey that was then produced in this country, as we learn from Domesday-book and other records, shows us how great must have been the consumption of the latter

article. Welsh ale is especially spoken of. Wine was also in use, though it was an expensive article, and was in a great measure restricted to persons above the common rank. According to Alfric's Colloquy, the merchant brought from foreign countries wine and oil; and when the scholar is asked why he does not drink wine, he says he is not rich enough to buy it, "and wine is not the drink of children or fools, but of elders and wise men." There were, however, vineyards in England in the times of the Saxons, and wine was made from them; but they were probably rare, and chiefly attached to the monastic establishments. William of Malmesbury speaks of a vineyard attached to his monastery, which was first planted at the beginning of the eleventh century by a Greek monk who settled there, and who spent all his time in cultivating it.

In their drinking, the Anglo-Saxons had various festive ceremonies, one of which is made known to us by the popular story of the lady Rowena and the British king. When the ale or wine was first served, the drinkers pledged each other, with certain phrases of wishing health, not much unlike the mode in which we still take wine with each other at table, or as people of the less refined classes continue to drink the first glass to the health of the company; but among the Saxons the ceremony was accompanied with a kiss. In our cut, No. 14, the party appear to be pledging each other.



No. 24. Drinking and Minstrelsy.



No. 25. An Anglo-Saxon Fithelere.

The Anglo-Saxon potations were accompanied with various kinds of amusements. One of these was telling stories, and recounting the exploits of

themselves or of their friends. Another was singing their national poetry, to which the Saxons were much attached. In the less elevated class, where professed minstrels were not retained, each guest was minstrel in his turn. Cædmon, as his story is related by Bede, became a poet through the emulation thus excited. One of the ecclesiastical canons enacted under king Edgar enjoins "that no priest be a minstrel at the ale (*ealu-scóp*), nor in any wise act the gleeman (*gliwige*), with himself or with other men." In the account of the murder of king Ethelbert in Herefordshire, by the treachery of Offa's wicked queen (A.D. 792), we are told that the royal party, after dinner, "spent the whole day with music and dancing in great glee." The cut, No. 24 (taken from the Harl. MS., No. 603), is a perfect illustration of this incident of Saxon story. The cup-bearer is serving the guest with wine from a vessel which is evidently a Saxon imitation of the Roman amphora; it is perhaps the Anglo-Saxon *sester* or *sæster*; a word, no doubt, taken from the Latin sextarius, and carrying with it, in general, the notion of a certain measure. In Saxon translations from the Latin, *amphora* is often rendered by *sester*. We have here a choice party of minstrels and gleemen. Two are occupied with the harp, which appears, from a comparison of Beowulf with the later writers, to have been the national instrument. It is not clear from the picture whether the two men are playing both on the same harp, or whether one is merely holding the instrument for the other. Another is perhaps intended to represent the Anglo-Saxon *fithelere*, playing on the *fithele* (the modern English words *fiddler* and *fiddle*); but his instrument appears rather to be the cittern, which was played with the fingers, not with the bow. Another representation of this

performer, from the same manuscript, is given in the cut No. 25, where the instrument is better defined. The other two minstrels, in No. 24, are playing on the horn, or on the Saxon *pip*, or pipe. The two dancers are evidently a man and a woman, and another lady to the extreme right seems preparing to join in the same exercise. We know little of the Anglo-Saxon mode of dancing, but to judge by the words used to express this amusement, *hoppan* (to hop), *saltian* and *stellan* (to leap), and *tumbian* (to tumble), it must have been accompanied with violent movements. Our cut No. 26 (from the Cottonian MS., Cleopatra, C. viii. fol. 16, vo), represents another party of minstrels, one of whom, a female, is dancing, while the other two are playing on a kind of cithara and on the Roman double flute. The Anglo-Saxon names for the different kinds of musicians most frequently spoken of were *hearpere*, the harper; *bymere*, the trumpeter; *pipere*, the player on the pipe or flute; *fithelere*, the fiddler; and *horn-blawere*, the horn-blower. The *gligman*, or *gleeman*, was the same who, at a later period, was called, in Latin, *joculator*, and, in French, a *jougleur*; and another performer, called *truth*, is interpreted as a stage player, but was probably some performer akin to the gleeman. The harp seems to have stood in the highest rank, or, at least, in the highest popularity, of musical instruments; it was termed poetically the *gleó-beam*, or the glee-wood.



No. 26. Anglo-Saxon Minstrels.

Although it was considered a very fashionable accomplishment among the Anglo-Saxons to be a good singer of verses and a good player on the harp, yet the professed minstrel, who went about to every sort of joyous assemblage, from the festive hall to the village wake, was a person not esteemed respectable. He was beneath consideration in any other light than as affording amusement, and as such he was admitted everywhere, without examination. It was for this reason that Alfred, and subsequently Athelstan, found such easy access in this garb to the camps of their enemies; and it appears to have been a common disguise for such purposes. The group given in the last cut (No. 26) are intended to

represent the persons characterised in the text (of Prudentius) by the Latin word *ganeones* (vagabonds, ribalds), which is there glossed by the Saxon term gleemen (*ganeonum*, *gliwig-manna*). Besides music and dancing, they seem to have performed a variety of tricks and jokes, to while away the tediousness of a Saxon afternoon, or excite the coarse mirth of the peasant. That such performers, resembling in many respects the Norman jougleur, were usually employed by Anglo-Saxons of wealth and rank, is evident from various allusions to them. Gaimar has preserved a curious Saxon story of the murder of king Edward by his stepmother (A.D. 978), in which the queen is represented as having in her service a dwarf minstrel, who is employed to draw the young king alone to her house. According to the Anglo-Norman relator of this story, the dwarf was skilled in various modes of dancing and tumbling, characterised by words of which we can hardly now point out the exact distinction, "and could play many other games."

Wolstanet un naim aveit,
Ki baler e trescher saveit;
Si saveit sailler e tumber,
E altres gius plusurs juer.

In a Saxon manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Cotton. Tiberius, C. vi.), among the minstrels attendant on king David (represented in our cut, No. 27), we see a gleeman, who is throwing up and catching knives and balls, a common performance of the later Norman jougleurs, as well as of our modern mountebanks. Some of the tricks and gestures of these performers were of the coarsest description, such as could be only tolerated in a rude state of

society. An example will be found in a story told by William of Malmesbury of wandering minstrels, whom he had seen performing at a festival at that monastery when he was a child, and which we can hardly venture to give even under the veil of the original Latin. A poem in the Exeter manuscript describes the wandering character of the Saxon minstrels. He tells us:—

swa scriþende	*Thus roving*
gesceapum hweorfað	*with their lays go*
gleo-men gumena	*the gleemen of men*
geond grunda fela,	*over many lands,*
þearfe secgað,	*state their wants,*
þonc-word sprecaþ,	*utter words of thank,*
simle suð oþþe norð	*always south or north,*
sumne gemetað	*they find one*
gydda gleawne,	*knowing in songs,*
geofum unhneawne.	*who is liberal of gifts.*

—Exeter Book, p. 326.



No. 27. Anglo-Saxon Minstrels and Gleeman.

We are not to suppose that our Anglo-Saxon

forefathers remained at table, merely drinking and listening. On the contrary, the performance of the minstrels appears to have been only introduced at intervals, between which the guests talked, joked, propounded and answered riddles, boasted of their own exploits, disparaged those of others, and, as the liquor took effect, became noisy and quarrelsome. The moral poems often allude to the quarrels and slaughters in which feasts ended. One of these poems, enumerating the various endowments of men, says:—

sum bið wrœd tæfle;	*one is expert at dice;*
sum bið gewittig	*one is witty*
œt win-þege,	*at wine-bibbing,*
beor-hyrde god.	*a good beer-drinker.*

—Exeter Book, p. 297.

A "Monitory Poem," in the same collection, thus describes the manners of the guests in hall:—

þonne monige beoð	*but many are*
mœþel-hergendra,	*lovers of social converse,*
wlonce wig-smiþas,	*haughty warriors,*
win-burgum in,	*in pleasant cities,*
sittaþ œt symble	*they sit at the feast,*
soð-gied wrecað,	*tales recount,*
wordum wrixlað,	*in words converse,*
witan fundiað	*strive to know*
hwylc æsc-stede	*who the battle place,*
inne in rœcede	*within the house,*
mid werum wunige;	*will with men abide;*
þonne win hweteð	*then wine wets*
beornes breost-sefan,	*the man's breast-passions,*
breahtme stigeð	*suddenly rises*
cirm on corþre,	*clamour in the company,*
cwide-scral letaþ	*an outcry they send forth*

missenlice. *various.*

—Exeter Book, p. 314.

In a poem on the various fortunes of men, and the different ways in which they come by death, we are told:—

sumum meces ecg *from one the sword's edge*
on meodu-bence, *on the mead-bench,*
yrrum ealo-wosan, *angry with ale,*
ealdor oþþringeð, *life shall expel,*
were win-sadum. *a wine-sated man.*

—Exeter Book, p. 330.

And in the metrical legend of St. Juliana, the evil one boasts:—

sume ic larum geteah, *some I by wiles have drawn,*
te geflite fremede, *to strife prepared,*
þæt hy færinga *that they suddenly*
eald-afþoncan *old grudges*
edniwedan, *have renewed,*
beore druncne; *drunken with beer;*
ic him byrlade *I to them poured*
wreht of wege, *discord from the cup,*
þæt hi in win-sale *so that they in the social hall*
þurh sweord-gripe *through gripe of sword*
sawle forletan *the soul let forth*
of flæsc-homan. *from the body.*

—Exeter Book, p. 271.

There were other amusements for the long evenings besides those which belonged especially to the hall, for every day was not a feast-day. The hall was then left to the household retainers and their occupations. But we must now leave this part of the domestic establishment. The ladies appear not to have

remained at table long after dinner—it was somewhat as in modern times—they proceeded to their own special part of the house—the chamber—and thither it will be my duty to accompany them in the next chapter. I have described all the ordinary scenes that took place in the Anglo-Saxon hall.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHAMBER AND ITS FURNITURE.—BEDS AND BED-ROOMS.—INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.—CHARACTER AND MANNERS OF THE ANGLO-SAXON LADIES.—THEIR CRUELTY TO THEIR SERVANTS.—THEIR AMUSEMENTS.—THE GARDEN; LOVE OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS FOR FLOWERS.—ANGLO-SAXON PUNISHMENTS.—ALMSGIVING.

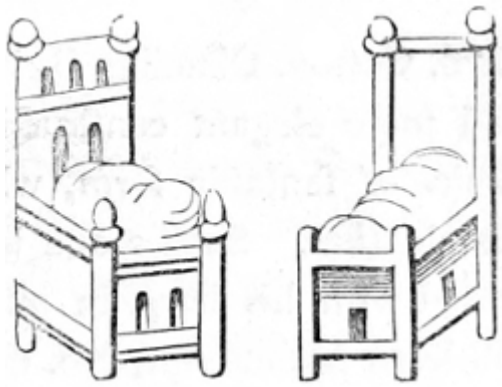
The bower or chamber, which, as before stated, was, in the original Saxon mansions, built separate from the hall, was a more private apartment than the latter, although it was still easy of access. In the

houses of the rich and the noble there were, as may easily be supposed, several chambers, devoted to the different purposes of the household, and to the reception of visitors. It was in the chamber that the lord of the household transacted his private business, and gave his private audiences. We see by the story of king Edwy that it was considered a mark of effeminacy to retire from the company in the hall after dinner, to seek more quiet amusement in the chamber, where the men rejoined the ladies of the family; yet there are numerous instances which show that, except on festive occasions, this was a very common practice. In some cases, where the party was not an ostentatious or public one, the meal was served in a chamber rather than in the hall. According to the story of Osbert king of Northumberland and Beorn the buzecarl, as told by Gaimar, it was in a chamber that Beorn's lady received the king, and caused the meal to be served to him which ended in consequences so fatal to the country. We have very little information relating to the domestic games and amusements of the Anglo-Saxons. They seem to have consisted, in a great measure, in music and in telling stories. They had games of hazard, but we are not acquainted with their character. Their chief game was named *tæfel* or *tæfl*, which has been explained by *dice* and by *chess*; one name of the article played with, *tæfl-stan*, a table-*stone*, would suit either interpretation; but another, *tæfl-mon*, a table-*man*, would seem to indicate a game resembling our chess.[8] The writers immediately after the conquest speak of the Saxons as playing at chess, and pretend that they learnt the game from the Danes. Gaimar, who gives us an interesting story relating to the deceit practiced upon king Edgar (A.D. 973) by Ethelwold, when sent to

visit the beautiful Elfthrida, daughter of Orgar of Devonshire, describes the young lady and her noble father as passing the day at chess.

Orgar jouout à un eschès,
Un giu k'il aprist des Daneis:
Od lui jouout Elstruet la bele.

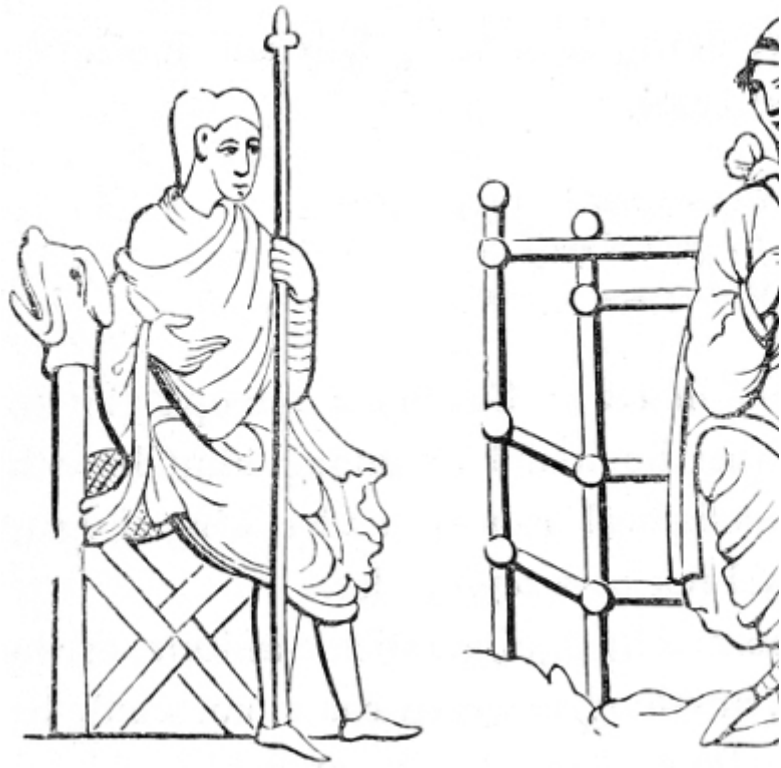
The Ramsey history, published by Gale, describing a bishop's visit to court late at night, says that he found the king amusing himself with similar games.[9] An ecclesiastical canon, enacted under king Edgar, enjoined that a priest should not be a *tæflere*, or gambler.



No. 28. Anglo-Saxon Chairs.

It was not usual, in the middle ages, to possess much furniture, for in those times of insecurity, anything moveable, which could not easily be concealed, was never safe from plunderers. Benches, on which several persons could sit together, and a stool or a chair for a guest of more consideration, were the only seats. Our word chair is Anglo-Norman, and the adoption of the name from that language would

seem to indicate that the moveable to which it was applied was unknown to the great mass of the Anglo-Saxon population of the island. The Anglo-Saxon name for it was *setl*, a seat, or *stol*; the latter preserved in the modern word stool. We find chairs of different forms in the illuminations of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, but they are always represented as the seats of persons of high rank and dignity, usually of kings. The two examples given in the accompanying cut (No. 28), are taken from the Harleian MS., No. 603, fol. 54, vo., already referred to in our preceding chapters. It will be observed that, although very simple in form, they are both furnished with cushions. The chair in our cut No. 29, taken from Alfric's translation of Genesis (MS. Cotton. Claudius, B. iv.), on which a king is seated, is of a different and more elegant construction. We sometimes find, in the manuscripts, chairs of fantastic form, which were, perhaps, creations of the artist's imagination. Such a one is the singular throne on which king David is seated with his harp, in our cut No. 30, which is also taken from the Harleian Manuscript, No. 603 (fol. 68, vo.). In addition to the seat, the ladies in the chamber had a *scamel*, or footstool.



No. 29. A King Seated. *No*

There was a table used in the chamber or bower, which differed altogether from that used in the hall. It was named *myse*, *disc* (from the Latin *discus*), and *beod*; all words which convey the idea of its being round—*beodas* (in the plural) was the term applied to the scales of a balance. The Latin phrase, of the 127th Psalm, *in circuitu mensæ tuæ*, which was evidently understood by the Anglo-Saxon translators as referring to a round table, is translated by one, *on ymbhwyrfte mysan thine*, and by another, *in*

ymbhwyrfte beodes thines. If we refer back to the preceding chapter, we shall see, in the subjects which appear to exhibit a small domestic party (see cuts No. 15, 19,, and 24), that the table is round; and this was evidently the usual form given among the Anglo-Saxons to the table used in the chamber or private room. This form has been preserved as a favourite one in England down to a very recent period, as that of the parlour-table among the class of society most likely to retain Anglo-Saxon tastes and sentiments. In the pictures, the round table is generally represented as supported on three or four legs, though there are instances in which it was represented with one. In the latter case, the board of the table probably turned up on a hinge, as in our old parlour tea-tables; and in the former it was perhaps capable of being taken off the legs; for there is reason for believing that it was only laid out when wanted, and that, when no longer in use, it was put away on one side of the room or in a closet, in the smallest possible compass.

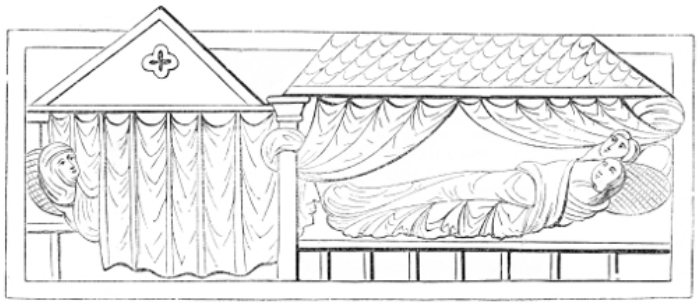


No. 31. A Lamp and Stand.

We have no information to explain to us how the bower or chamber was warmed. In the hall, it is probable that the fire gave warmth and light at the same time, although, in the fragment of the Anglo-Saxon poem relating to the fight at Finnesburg, there is an indistinct intimation that the hall was sometimes lighted with *horns*, or cressets; but, in the chamber, during the long evenings of winter, it was necessary to have an artificial light to enable its occupants to read, or work, or play. The Anglo-Saxon name for this article, so necessary for domestic comfort, was *candel* or *condel* (our *candle*); and, so general was the application of this term, that it was even used figuratively as we now use the word lamp. Thus, the Anglo-Saxon poets spoke of the sun as *rodores candel* (the candle of the firmament), *woruld-candel* (the candle of the world), *heofon-condel* (the

candle of heaven), *wyn-condel* (the candle of glory). The candle was, no doubt, originally a mere mass of fat plastered round a wick (*candel-weoc*), and stuck upon an upright stick. Hence the instrument on which it was afterwards supported received the name of *candel-sticca* or *candel-stæf*, a candlestick; and the original idea was preserved even when the candle supporter had many branches, it being then called a *candel-treow*, or candle-tree. The original arrangement of the stick was also preserved; for, down to a very recent period, the candle was not inserted in a socket in the candlestick as at present, but it was stuck upon a spike. The Anglo-Saxon writers speak of *candel-snytels*, or snuffers. Other names less used, for a candle or some article for giving light, were *blacern* or *blœcern*, which is explained in glossaries by the Latin *lucerna*, and *thœcela*, the latter signifying merely a light. It was usual, also, among our Saxon forefathers, as among ourselves, to speak of the instrument for illumination as merely *leoht*, a light—"bring me a light." A candlestick and candle are represented in one of the cuts in our last chapter (cut No. 19). The Anglo-Saxons, no doubt, derived the use of lamps from the Romans; and they were so utterly at a loss for a word to describe this mode of illumination, that they always called it *leoht-fœt*, a light-vat, or vessel of light. In our cut (No. 31) we have an Anglo-Saxon lamp, placed on a candelabrum or stand, exactly in the Roman manner. It will be remembered that Asser, a writer of somewhat doubtful authenticity, ascribes to king Alfred the invention of lanterns, as a protection to the candle, to prevent it from swealing in consequence of the wind entering through the crevices of the apartments—not a very bright picture of the comforts of an Anglo-Saxon chamber. The

candles were made of wax as well as tallow. The candlestick was of different materials. In one instance we find it termed, in Anglo-Saxon, a *leoht-isern*, literally a light-iron: perhaps this was the term used for the lamp-stand, as figured in our last cut. In the inventories we have mention of *ge-bonene candel-sticcan* (candlesticks of bone), of silver-gilt candlesticks, and of ornamented candlesticks.



No. 32. Anglo-Saxon Beds.

A bed was a usual article of furniture in the bower or chamber; though there were, no doubt, in large mansions, chambers set apart as bedrooms, as well as chambers in which there was no bed, or in which a bed could be made for the occasion. The account given by Gaimar, as quoted above, of the visit of king Osbert to Beorn's lady, seems to imply that the chamber in which the lady gave the king his meal had a bed in it. The bed itself seems usually to have consisted merely of a sack (*sæccing*) filled with straw, and laid on a bench or board. Hence words used commonly to signify the bed itself were *bænce* (a bench), and *streow* (straw): and even in king Alfred's translation of Bede, the statement, "he ordered to prepare a bed for him," is expressed in Anglo-Saxon by, *he heht him streowne ge-gearwian*, literally, he

ordered to prepare straw for him. All, in fact, that had to be done when a bed was wanted, was to take the bed-sack out of the *cyst*, or chest, fill it with fresh straw, and lay it on the bench. In ordinary houses it is probable that the bench for the bed was placed in a recess at the side of the room, in the manner we still see in Scotland; and hence the bed itself was called, among other names, *cota*, a cot; *cryb*, a crib or stall; and *clif* or *clyf*, a recess or closet. From the same circumstance a bedroom was called *bed-clyfa* or *bed-cleofa*, and *bed-cofa*, a bed-closet or bed-cove. Our cut (No. 32), taken from Alfric's version of Genesis (Claudius, B. iv.), represents beds of this description. Benches are evidently placed in recesses at the side of the chamber, with the beds laid upon them, and the recesses are separated from the rest of the apartment by a curtain, *bed-warft* or *hryfte*. The modern word *bedstead* means, literally, no more than "a place for a bed;" and it is probable that what we call bedsteads were then rare, and only possessed by people of rank. Two examples are given in the annexed cut (No. 33), taken from the Harleian MS., No. 603. Under the head were placed a *bolstar* and a *pyle* (pillow), which were probably also stuffed with straw. The clothes with which the sleeper was covered, and which appear in the pictures scanty enough, were *scyte*, a sheet, *bed-felt*, a coverlet, which was generally of some thicker material, and *bed-reaf*, bed-clothes. We know from a multitude of authorities, that it was the general custom of the middle ages to go into bed quite naked. The sketchy character of the Anglo-Saxon drawings renders it difficult sometimes to judge of minute details; but, from the accompanying cuts, it appears that an Anglo-Saxon going into bed, having stripped all his or her clothes off, first wrapped round his body a

sheet, and then drew over him the coverlet. Sharon Turner has given a list of the articles connected with the bed, mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon wills and inventories. In the will of a man we find bed-clothes (*bed-reafes*), with a curtain (*hyrfte*), and sheet (*hopp-scytan*), and all that thereto belongs; and he gives to his son the *bed-reafe*, or bed-cloth, and all its appurtenances. An Anglo-Saxon lady gives to one of her children two chests and their contents, her best bed-curtain, linen, and all the clothes belonging to it. To another child she leaves two chests, and "all the bed-clothes that to one bed belong." On another occasion we read of *pulvinar unum de palleo*: not a pillow of straw, as Sharon Turner very erroneously translates it, but a pillow of a sort of rich cloth made in the middle ages. A goat-skin bed-covering was sent to an Anglo-Saxon abbot; and bear-skins are sometimes noticed, as if a part of bed furniture.



No. 33. Anglo-Saxon Beds.

The bed-room, or chamber, and the sitting-room were usually identical; for we must bear in mind that in the domestic manners of the middle ages the same idea of privacy was not connected with the sleeping-room as at the present day. Gaimar has preserved an anecdote of Anglo-Saxon times curiously illustrative of this point. King Edgar—a second David in this respect—married the widow of Ethelwold, whom he had murdered in order to clear his way to her bed. The king and queen were sleeping in their bed, which is described as surrounded by a rich curtain, made of a stuff which we cannot easily explain, when Dunstan, uninvited, but unhindered, entered the chamber to expostulate with them on their

wickedness, and came to the king's bedside, where he stood over them, and entered into conversation—

A Londres ert Edgar li reis;	*King Edgar was at London;*
En son lit jut e la raine,	*He lay in his bed with the queen,*
Entur els out une curtine	*Round them was a curtain*
Delgé, d'un paille escariman.	*Spread, made of scarlet paille.*
Este-vus l'arcevesque Dunstan	*Behold archbishop Dunstan*
Très par matin vint en la chambre	*Came into the chamber very early in the morning.*
Sur un pecul de vermail lambre	*On a bed-post of red plank*
S'est apué cel arcevesque.	*The archbishop leaned.*

In the account of the murder of king Ethelbert by the instrumentality of the queen of king Offa, as it is told by Roger of Wendover, we see the queen ordering to be prepared for the royal guest, a chamber, which was adorned for the occasion with sumptuous furniture, as his bed-room. "Near the king's bed she caused a seat to be prepared, magnificently decked, and surrounded with curtains; and underneath it the wicked woman caused a deep pit to be dug." Into this pit the king was precipitated the moment he trusted himself on the treacherous seat. It is clear from the context that the chamber thus prepared for the king was a building apart, and that it had only a ground-floor.

It was in the chamber that the child, while an infant, was brought up by its mother. We have few

contemporary notices of the treatment of children at this early age by the Anglo-Saxons, but probably it differed little from the general practice of a later period. Towards the close of the thirteenth century, an Englishman named Walter de Bibblesworth, who wrote, as a great proportion of English writers at that day did, in French verse—French as it was then spoken and written in England—has left us a very curious metrical vocabulary, compiled in French with interlinear explanations of the words in English, which commences with man's infancy. "As soon as the child is born," says the author, "it must be swathed; lay it to sleep in its cradle, and you must have a nurse to rock it to sleep."

Kaunt le emfès sera nées,
Lors deyt estre maylolez,
En soun berz l'enfaunt chochet,
De une bercere vus purvoyet,
Où par sa norice seyt bercé.

This was the manner in which the new-born infant was treated in all grades of society. If we turn to one of the more serious romances, we find it practised among princes and feudal chiefs equally as among the poor. Thus, when the princess Parise, wandering in the wild woods, is delivered in the open air, she first wraps her child in a piece of *sendal*, torn apparently from her rich robe, and then binds, or swathels, it with a white cloth:—

La dame le conroie à un pan de cendex,
Puis a pris un blanc drap, si a ses fians bendez.
—Parise la Duchesse, p. 76.

When the robbers carry away the child by night, thinking they had gained some rich booty, they find that they have stolen a newly-born infant, "all swatheled."

Lai troverent l'anffant, trestot anmaloté.

—Ibid. p. 80.

This custom of swatheling children in their infancy, though evidently injurious as well as ridiculous, has prevailed from a very early period, and is still practised in some parts of Europe. We can hardly doubt that our Anglo-Saxon forefathers swatheled their children, although the practice is not very clearly described by any of their writers. We derive the word itself from the Anglo-Saxon language, in which *beswethan* means to swathe or bind, *suethe* signifies a band or swathe, and *swethel* or *swæthil*, a swaddling-band. These words appear, however, to have been used in a more extensive sense among the Anglo-Saxons than their representatives in more recent times, and as I have not met with them applied in this restricted sense in Anglo-Saxon writers, I should not hastily assume from them that our early Teutonic forefathers did swathe their new-born children. In an Anglo-Saxon poem on the birth of Christ, contained in the Exeter Book (p. 45), the poet speaks of—

Bearnes gebyrda,	*The child's birth,*
þa he in binne wæs	*when he in the bin was*
in cildes hiw	*in a child's form*
claþum biwunden.	*with cloths wound round.*

These words refer clearly to the practice of swaddling; and, though the Anglo-Saxon artist has

not here portrayed his object very distinctly, we can hardly doubt that, in our cut (No. 34), taken from the Anglo-Saxon manuscript of Cædmon, the child, which its mother is represented as holding, is intended to be swathed.



No. 34. Anglo-Saxon Mother and Child.

The word *bin*, used in the lines of the Anglo-Saxon poem just quoted, which means a hutch or a manger, has reference, of course, to the circumstances of the birth of the Saviour, and is not here employed to signify a cradle. This last word is itself Anglo-Saxon, and has stood its ground in our language successfully against the influence of the Anglo-Norman, in which it was called a *bers* or *bersel*, from the latter of which is derived the modern French *berçeau*. Another name for a cradle was *crib*; a poem in the Exeter Book (p. 87) speaks of *cild geong on crybbe* (a young child in a cradle). Our cut No. 35, also taken from the

manuscript of Cædmon, represents an Anglo-Saxon cradle of rather rude construction. The illuminators of a later period often represent the cradle of elegant form and richly ornamented. The Anglo-Saxon child appears here also to be swaddled, but it is still drawn too inaccurately to be decisive on this point. The latter illuminators were more particular and correct in their delineations, and leave no doubt of the universal practice of swaddling infants. A good example is given in our cut No. 36, taken from an illuminated manuscript of the fourteenth century, of which a copy is given in the large work of the late M. du Sommerard.



No. 35. Anglo-Saxon Child in its Cradle.

There is a very curious paragraph relating to infants in the Pœnitentiale of Theodore, archbishop of

Canterbury, which furnishes us with a singular picture of early Anglo-Saxon domestic life, for Theodore flourished in the latter half of the seventh century. It may be perhaps right to explain that a Pœnitentiale was a code of ecclesiastical laws directing the proportional degrees of penance for each particular class and degree of crimes and offences against public and private morals, and that these laws penetrate to the innermost recesses of domestic life. The Pœnitentiale of archbishop Theodore directs that "if a woman place her infant by the hearth, and the man put water in the cauldron, and it boil over, and the child be scalded to death, the woman must do penance for her negligence, but the man is acquitted of blame."[10] As this accident must have been of very frequent occurrence to require a particular direction in a code of laws, it implies great negligence in the Anglo-Saxon mothers, and seems to show that, commonly, at least at this early period, they had no cradles for their children, but laid them, swaddled as they were, on the ground close by the fire, no doubt to keep them warm, and that they left them in this situation.



No. 36. Mother and Child.

We are not informed if there were any fixed period during which the infant was kept in swaddling-cloths, but probably when it was thought no longer necessary to keep it in the arms or in the cradle, it was relieved from its bands, and allowed to crawl about the floor and take care of itself. Walter de Bibblesworth, the Anglo-Norman writer of the thirteenth century already quoted, tells us briefly that a child is left to creep about before it has learnt to go on its feet:—

Le enfaunt covent de chatouner
Avaunt ke sache à pées aler.

When the Anglo-Saxon youth, if a boy, had passed his infancy, he entered that age which was called *cnithad* (knighthood), which lasted from about eight years of age until manhood.

It is very rare that we can catch in history a glimpse

of the internal economy of the Anglo-Saxon household. Enough, however, is told to show us that the Saxon woman in every class of society possessed those characteristics which are still considered to be the best traits of the character of Englishwomen; she was the attentive housewife, the tender companion, the comforter and consoler of her husband and family, the virtuous and noble matron. Home was her especial place; for we are told in a poem in the Exeter Book (p. 337) that, “It beseems a damsel to be at her board (table); a rambling woman scatters words, she is often charged with faults, a man thinks of her with contempt, oft her cheek smites.” In all ranks, from the queen to the peasant, we find the lady of the household attending to her domestic duties. In 686, John of Beverley performed a supposed miraculous cure on the lady of a Yorkshire earl; and the man who narrated the miracle to Bede the historian, and who dined with John of Beverley at the earl’s house after the cure, said, “She presented the cup to the bishop (John) and to me, and continued serving us with drink as she had begun, till dinner was over.” Domestic duties of this kind were never considered as degrading, and they were performed with a simplicity peculiarly characteristic of the age. Bede relates another story of a miraculous cure performed on an earl’s wife by St. Cuthbert, in the sequel of which we find the lady going forth from her house to meet her husband’s visitor, holding the reins while he dismounts, and conducting him in. The wicked and ambitious queen Elfthrida, when her step-son king Edward approached her residence, went out in person to attend upon him, and invite him to enter, and, on his refusal, she served him with the cup herself, and it was while stooping to take it that he was

treacherously stabbed by one of her attendants. In their chamber, besides spinning and weaving, the ladies were employed in needlework and embroidery, and the Saxon ladies were so skilful in this art, that their work, under the name of English work (*opus Anglicum*), was celebrated on the continent. We read of a Saxon lady, named Ethelswitha, who retired with her maidens to a house near Ely, where her mother was buried, and employed herself and them in making a rich chasuble for the monks. The four princesses, the sisters of king Ethelstan, were celebrated for their skill in spinning, weaving, and embroidering; William of Malmesbury tells us that their father, king Edward, had educated them "in such wise, that in childhood they gave their whole attention to letters, and afterwards employed themselves in the labours of the distaff and the needle." The reader will remember in the story of the Saxon queen Osburgha, the mother of the great Alfred, how she sat in her chamber, surrounded by her children, and encouraging them in a taste for literature. The ladies, when thus occupied, were not inaccessible to their friends of either sex. When Dunstan was a youth, he appears to have been always a welcome visitor to the ladies in their "bowers," on account of his skill in music and in the arts. His contemporary biographer tells us of a noble lady, named Ethelwynn, who, knowing his skill in drawing and designs, obtained his assistance for the ornaments of a handsome stole which she and her women were embroidering. Dunstan is represented as bringing his harp with him into the apartment of the ladies, and hanging it up against the wall, that he might have it ready to play to them in the intervals of their work. Editha, the queen of Edward the Confessor, was well-known as a

skilful needle-woman, and as extensively versed in literature. Ingulf's story of his schoolboy-days, if it be true (for there is considerable doubt of the authenticity of Ingulf's "History"), and of his interviews with queen Edith, gives us a curious picture of the simplicity of an Anglo-Saxon court, even at the latest period of their monarchy. "I often met her," he says, "as I came from school, and then she questioned me about my studies and my verses; and willingly passing from grammar to logic, she would catch me in the subtleties of argument. She always gave me two or three pieces of money, which were counted to me by her handmaiden, and then sent me to the royal larder to refresh myself."

Several circumstances arising out of certain rivalries of social institutions render it somewhat difficult to form an estimate of the moral character of the Anglo-Saxons. In the first place, before the introduction of Christianity, marriage was a mere civil institution, consisted chiefly in a bargain between the father of the lady and the man who sought her, and was completed with few formalities, except those of feasting and rejoicing. After the young lady was out of the control of her parents, the two sexes were on a footing of equality to each other, and the marriage tie was so little binding, that, in case of disagreement, it was at the will of either of the married couple to separate, in which case the relatives or friends of each party interfered, to see that right was done in the proportional repayment of marriage money, dowry, &c., and after the separation each party was at liberty to marry again. This state of things is well illustrated in the Icelandic story of the Burnt Njal, recently translated by Dr. Dasent, and it was not abolished by the secular laws,

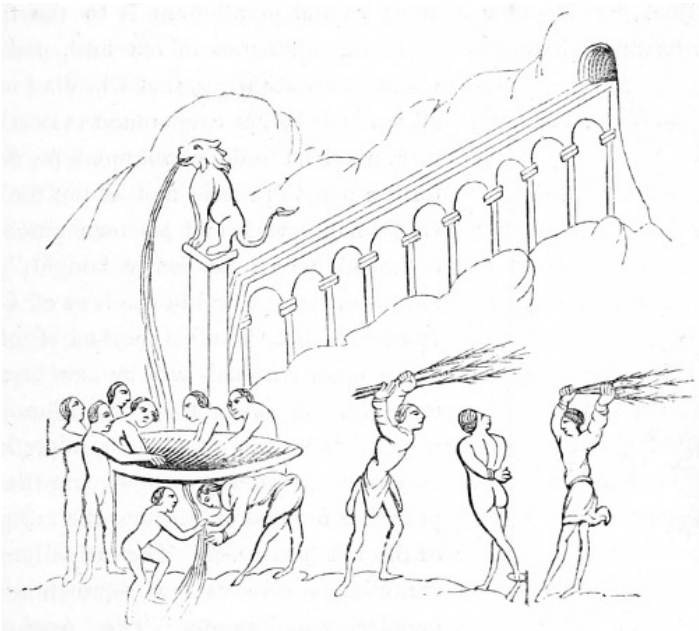
after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, marriage still continuing to be, in fact, a civil institution. But the higher clergy, at least, who were those who were most strongly inspired with the Romish sentiments, disapproved entirely of this view of the marriage state, and, although the Saxon priests appear not to have hesitated in being present at the second marriages after such separations, they were apparently forbidden by the ecclesiastical laws from giving their blessing to them.[11] With such views of the conjugal relations, we cannot be surprised if the associating together of a man and woman, without the ceremonies of marriage, was looked upon without disgust; in fact, this was the case throughout western Europe during the middle ages, in spite of the doctrines of the church, and the offspring was hardly considered as dispossessed of legal rights. It would be easy to point out examples illustrating this state of things. Again, the priesthood among the unconverted Saxons was probably, as it appears among the Icelanders in the story of the Burnt Njal just alluded to, a sort of family possession,[12] the priests themselves being what we should call family men; so that when the Anglo-Saxon people were Christians, and no longer pagans, the mass of the clergy, whatever may have been their sincerity as Christians, could not understand, or, at least, were unwilling to accept, the new Romish doctrine which required their celibacy. In both these cases, the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical writers, who are our chief authority on this subject, and were the most bigoted of the Romish party, speak in terms of exaggerated virulence, on the score of morality, against practices which the Anglo-Saxon people had not been used to consider as immoral at all. Thus, we should be led to believe, from the accounts of these ecclesiastical

moralists, that the Anglo-Saxon clergy were infamous for their incontinence, whereas their declamations probably mean only that the Anglo-Saxon priests persisted in having wives and families. The secular laws contain frequent allusions to the continuance of principles relating to the marriage state, which were derived from the older period of paganism, and some of these are extremely curious. Thus, the laws of king Ethelred provide that a man who seduces another man's wife, shall make reparation, not only as in modern times, by paying pecuniary damages, but also by procuring him another wife! or, in the words of the original, "If a freeman have been familiar with a freeman's wife, let him pay for it with his *wer-gild* (the money compensation for the killing of a man), and provide another wife with his own money, and bring her home to the other." By a law of king Ine, "if any man buy a wife (that is, if the bargain with her father has been completed), and the marriage take not place," he was required to pay the money, besides other compensation. And again, by one of Alfred's laws, it was provided, "If any one deceive an unbetrothed woman, and sleep with her, let him pay for her, and have her afterwards to wife; but if the father of the woman will not give her, let him pay money according to her dowry." Regulations relating to the buying of a wife, are found in the Anglo-Saxon laws.

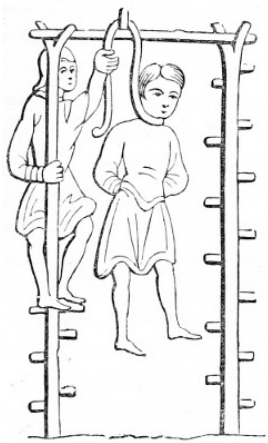
We learn nothing in the facts of history to the discredit of the Anglo-Saxon character in general. As in other countries, in the same condition of society, they appear capable of great crimes, and of equally great acts of goodness and virtue. Generally speaking, their least amiable trait was the treatment of their servants or slaves; for this class among the

Anglo-Saxons were in a state of absolute servitude, might be bought and sold, and had no protection in the law against their masters and mistresses, who, in fact, had power of life and death over them. We gather from the ecclesiastical canons that, at least in the earlier periods of Anglo-Saxon history, it was not unusual for servants to be scourged to death by or by order of their mistresses. Some of the collections of local miracles, such as those of St. Swithun, at Winchester (of the tenth century), furnish us with horrible pictures of the cruel treatment to which female slaves especially were subjected. For comparatively slight offences they were loaded with gyves and fetters, and subjected to all kinds of tortures. Several of these are curiously illustrative of domestic manners. On one occasion, the maid-servant of Teothic the bell-maker (*campanarius*), of Winchester, was, for "a slight offence," placed in iron fetters, and chained up by the feet and hands all night. Next morning she was taken out to be frightfully beaten, and she was put again into her bonds; but in the ensuing night she contrived to make her escape, and fled to the church to seek sanctuary at the tomb of St. Swithun, for being in a state of servitude there was no legal protection for her. On another occasion, a female servant had been stolen from a former master, and had passed into the possession of another master in Winchester. One day her former master came to Winchester, and the girl, hearing of it, went to speak to him. When her mistress heard that she had been seen to talk with a man from a distant province, she ordered her to be thrown into fetters, and treated very cruelly. Next day, while the mistress had gone out on some business, leaving her servant at home in fetters, the latter made her escape similarly to the sanctuary of

the church. Another servant-girl in Winchester, taking her master's clothes to wash in the river, was set upon by thieves, who robbed her of them. Her master, ascribing the mishap to her own negligence, beat her very severely, and then put her in fetters, from which she made her escape like the others. The interesting scene represented in our cut, No. 37, taken from the Harleian MS., No. 603, fol. 14, vo., may be regarded as showing us the scourging of a slave. In a picture in Alfric's version of Genesis, the man scourged, instead of being tied by the feet, is fixed by the body in a cloven post, in a rather singular manner. The aptness with which the Saxon ladies made use of the scourge is illustrated by one of William of Malmesbury's anecdotes, who tells us that, when king Ethelred was a child, he once so irritated his mother, that not having a whip, she beat him with some candles, which were the first thing that fell under her hand, until he was almost insensible. "On this account he dreaded candles during the rest of his life, to such a degree that he would never suffer the light of them to be introduced in his presence!"



No. 37. Washing and Scourging.



No. 38. Hanging.

The cruelty of the Anglo-Saxon ladies to their servants offers a contrast to the generally mild character of the punishments inflicted by the Anglo-Saxon laws. The laws of Ethelred contain the following injunction, showing how contrary capital punishment is to the spirit of Anglo-Saxon legislation:—"And the ordinance of our lord, and of his witan (parliament), is, that Christian men for all too little be not condemned to death; but in general let mild punishment be decreed, for the people's need; and let not for a little God's handywork and his own purchase be destroyed, which he dearly bought." This injunction is repeated in the laws of Canute. It appears that the usual method of inflicting death upon criminals was by hanging. Our cut, No. 38, taken from the illuminations to Alfric's version of Genesis, represents an Anglo-Saxon gallows (*galga*), and the rather primitive method of carrying the last penalty of the law into effect. The early illuminated manuscripts give us few representations of popular punishments. The Anglo-Saxon vocabularies enumerate the following implements of punishment, besides the *galga*, or gallows: fetters (*fæter*, *cops*), distinguished into foot-fetters and hand-fetters; shackles (*scacul*, or *sceacul*), which appear to have been used specially for the neck; a *swipa*, or scourge; *ostig gyrd*, a knotted rod; *tindig*, explained by the Latin *scorpio*, and meaning apparently a whip with knots or plummets at the end of thongs, like those used by the charioteers in the cuts in our next chapter; and an instrument of torture called a *threpel*, which is explained by the Latin *equuleus*. The following cut, No. 39, from the Harleian MS., No. 603 (so often quoted), shows us the stocks, generally placed by the side of the public road at the entrance to the town. Two other offenders are attached to the

columns of the public building, perhaps a court-house, by apparently a rope and a chain. The Anglo-Saxon laws prescribe few corporal punishments, but substitute for them the payment of fines, or compensation-money, and these are proportioned to the offences with very extraordinary minuteness. Thus, to select a few examples from the very numerous list of injuries which may be done to a man's person,—if any one struck off an ear, he was to pay twelve shillings, and, if an eye, fifty shillings; if the nose were cut through, the payment was nine shillings. "For each of the four front teeth, six shillings; for the tooth which stands next to them, four shillings; for that which follows, three shillings; and for all the others, a shilling each." If a thumb were struck off, it was valued at twenty shillings. "If the shooting finger were struck off" (a term which shows how incorrectly it has been assumed that the Anglo-Saxons were not accustomed to the bow), the compensation was eight shillings; for the middle finger, four shillings; for the ring-finger, six shillings; and for the little finger eleven shillings. The thumb-nail was valued at three shillings; and the finger-nails at one shilling each.



No. 39. Anglo-Saxon Punishments.

We have little information on the secrets of the toilette of the Anglo-Saxons. We know from many sources that washing and bathing were frequent practices among them. The use of hot baths they probably derived from the Romans. The vocabularies give *thermæ* as the Latin equivalent. They are not unfrequently mentioned in the ecclesiastical laws, and in the canons passed in the reign of king Edgar, warm baths and soft beds are proscribed as domestic luxuries which tended to effeminacy. If these were really the *thermæ* of the Romans, it is perhaps the hostility of the ascetic part of the Romish clergy which caused them to be discontinued and forgotten. Our cut No. 37 represents a party at their ablutions. We constantly find among the articles in the graves of Anglo-Saxon ladies tweezers, which were evidently intended for eradicating superfluous hairs, a circumstance which contributes to show that they paid special attention to hair-dressing. To judge from the colour of the hair in some of the illuminations, we might be led to suppose that sometimes they stained it. The young men seem to have been more foppish and vain of their persons than the ladies, and some of the old chronicles, such as the Ely history, tell us (which we should hardly have expected) that this was especially a characteristic of the Danish invaders, who, we are told, “following the custom of their country, used to comb their hair every day, bathed every Saturday, often changed their clothes, and used many other such frivolous means of setting off the beauty of their persons.”[13]

There is every reason for believing that the Anglo-Saxon ladies were fond of gardens and flowers, and many allusions in the writings of that period intimate

a warm appreciation of the beauties of nature. The poets not unfrequently take their comparisons from flowers. Thus, in a poem in the Exeter Book, a pleasant smell is described as being—

Swecca swetast,	*Of odours sweetest,*
swylce on sumeres tid	*such as in summer's tide*
stincað on stowum,	*fragrance send forth in places,*
staþelum fæste,	*fast in their stations,*
wynnum æfter wongum,	*joyously o'er the plains,*
wyrta geblowene	*blown plants*
hunig-flowende.	*honey-flowing.*

—Exeter Book, p. 178.

And one of the poetical riddles in the same collection contains the lines—

Ic eom on stence	*I am in odour*
strengre þonne ricels,	*stronger than incense,*
oþþe rosa sy,	*or the rose is,*
on eorþan tyrf	*which on earth's turf*
wynlic weaxeð;	*pleasant grows;*
ic eom wræstre þonne heo.	*I am more delicate than it.*
þeah þa lilie sy	*though that the lily be*
leof mon-cynne,	*dear to mankind,*
beorht on blostman,	*bright in blossom,*
ic eom betre þonne heo.	*I am better than it.*

—Exeter Book, p. 423.

So in another of these poems we read—

Fæger fugla reord,	*Sweet was the song of birds,*
folde geblowen,	*the earth was covered with flowers,*

geacas gear budon. cuckoos announced the year.
—Ibid. p. 146.

Before we quit entirely the Saxon hall, and its festivities and ceremonies, we must mention one circumstance connected with them. The laws and customs of the Anglo-Saxons earnestly enjoined the duty of almsgiving, and a multitude of persons partook of the hospitality of the rich man's mansion, who were not worthy to be admitted to his tables. These assembled at meal-times outside the gate of his house, and it was a custom to lay aside a portion of the provisions to be distributed among them, with the fragments from the table. In Alfric's homily for the second Sunday after Pentecost, the preacher, after dwelling on the story of Lazarus, who was spurned from the rich man's table, appeals to his Anglo-Saxon audience—"many Lazaruses ye have now lying at your gates, begging for your superfluity." Bede tells us of the good king Oswald, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on Easter-day, with his bishop, having a silver dish full of dainties before him, as they were just ready to bless the bread, the servant whose duty it was to relieve the poor, came in on a sudden and told the king that a great multitude of needy persons from all parts were sitting in the streets begging some alms of the king. The latter immediately ordered the provisions set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be cut in pieces and divided among them. In the picture of a Saxon house given in our first chapter (p. 15), we see the lord of the household on a sort of throne at the entrance to his hall, presiding over the distribution of his charity. This seat, generally under an arch or canopy, is often represented in the Saxon manuscripts, and the chief or lord seated under it,

distributing justice or charity. In the accompanying cut, No. 40, taken from the Anglo-Saxon manuscript of Prudentius, the lady Wisdom is represented seated on such a throne. It was, perhaps, the *burh-geat-setl*, or seat at the burh-gate, mentioned as characteristic of the rank of the thane in the following extract from a treatise on ranks in society, printed with the Anglo-Saxon laws: “And if a ceorl thrived, so that he had fully five hides of his own land, church (or perhaps private chapel), and kitchen (*kycenan*), bell-house, and burh-gate-seat, and special duty in the king’s hall, then was he thenceforth worthy of the dignity of thane.”



No. 40. Wisdom on her Throne.

CHAPTER IV.

OUT OF DOOR AMUSEMENTS OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.—HUNTING AND HAWKING.—HORSES AND CARRIAGES.—TRAVELLING.—MONEY-DEALINGS.

The progress of society from its first formation to the full development of civilization, has been compared not inaptly to the life of man. In the childhood and youth of society, when the population was not numerous, and a servile class performed the chief part of the labour necessary for administering to the wants or luxuries of life, people had a far greater proportion of time on their hands to fill up with amusements than at a later period, and many that are now considered frivolous, or are only indulged in at rare intervals of relaxation, then formed the principal occupations of men's lives. We have glanced at the in-door amusements of the Anglo-Saxons in a previous chapter; but their out-door recreations, although we have little information respecting them, were certainly much more numerous. The multitude of followers who, in Saxon times, attended on each lord or rich man as their military chief, or as their domestic supporter, had generally no serious occupation during the greater part of the day; and this abundance of unemployed time was not confined to one class of society, for the artisan had to work less to gain his subsistence, and both citizen and peasant were excused from work

altogether during the numerous holidays of the year.

That the Anglo-Saxons were universally fond of play (*plega*) is proved by the frequent use of the word in a metaphorical sense. They even applied it to fighting and battle, which, in the language of the poets, were *plega-gares* (play of darts), *æsc-plega* (play of shields), and *hand-plega* (play of hands).[14] In the glossaries, *plegere* (a player), and *plega-man* (a playman), are used to represent the Roman *gladiator*; and *plega-hús* (a playhouse), and *plega-stow* (a play-place), express a theatre, or more probably an amphitheatre. Recent discoveries have shown that there was a theatre of considerable dimensions in the Roman town of Verulamium (near St. Alban's); and old writers tell us there was one at the Silurian Isca (Caerleon), though these buildings were doubtless of rare occurrence; but every Roman town of any importance in the island had its amphitheatre outside the walls for gladiatorial and other exhibitions. The result of modern researches seems to prove that most of the Roman towns continued to exist after the Saxon settlement of the island, and we can have no doubt that the amphitheatres, at least for awhile, continued to be devoted to their original purposes, although the performances were modified in character. Some of them (like that at Richborough, in Kent, lately examined), were certainly surrounded by walls, while others probably were merely cut in the ground, and surrounded by a low embankment formed of the material thrown out. The first of these, the Saxons would naturally call a play-house, while the other would receive the no less appropriate appellation of a play-stow, or place for playing. Among the illustrations of the Anglo-Saxon manuscript of the Psalms (MS. Harl., No. 603), to which we have so

often had occasion to refer, there is a very curious picture, evidently intended to represent an amphitheatre outside a town. It is copied in our cut No. 41. The rude Anglo-Saxon draughtsman has evidently intended to represent an embankment, occupied by the spectators, around the spot where the performances take place. The spectator to the left is expressing his approbation by clapping with his hands. The performances themselves are singular: we have a party of minstrels, one of them playing on the Roman double pipes, so often represented in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, while another is dancing to him, and the third is performing with a tame bear, which is at the moment of the representation simulating sleep. Games of this kind with animals, succeeded no doubt among the Saxons to the Roman gladiatorial fights, but few have imagined that the popular English exhibition of the dancing bear dated from so remote a period. The manuscripts show that the double pipe was in use among the Anglo-Saxons; with a little modification, and a bag or bellows to supply the place of the human lungs, this instrument was transformed into a bagpipe.



No. 41. Games of the Amphitheatre.

Not the least curious part of this picture is the town in the background, with its entrance gateway, and public buildings. The Anglo-Saxon draughtsmen were imperfectly acquainted with perspective, and paid little attention to proportion in their representations of towns and houses, a circumstance which is fully illustrated in this picture. As the artist was unable from this circumstance to represent the buildings and streets of a town in their relative position, he put in a house to represent a multitude of houses, and here he has similarly given one building within the walls to represent all the public buildings of the town. An

exactly similar characteristic will be observed in our cut No. 42, taken from the same manuscript, where one temple represents the town. Here again we have a party of citizens outside the walls, amusing themselves as well as they can; some, for want of other employment, are laying themselves down listlessly on the ground.



No. 42. A Town.

The national sentiments and customs of the Anglo-Saxons would, however, lead to the selection of other places for the scenes of their games, and thus the Roman amphitheatres became neglected. Each village had its arena—its play-place—where persons of all ages and sexes assembled on their holidays to be players or lookers on; and this appears to have been usually chosen near a fountain, or some object hallowed by the popular creed, for customs of this

kind were generally associated with religious feelings which tended to consecrate and protect them. These holiday games, which appear to have been very common among our Saxon forefathers, were the originals of our village wakes. Wandering minstrels, like those represented in our cut No. 41, repaired to them to exhibit their skill, and were always welcome. The young men exerted themselves in running, or leaping, or wrestling. These games attracted merchants, and gradually became the centres of extensive fairs. Such was the case with one of the most celebrated in England during the middle ages, that of Barnwell, near Cambridge. It was a large open place, between the town and the banks of the river, well suited for such festivities as those of which we are speaking. A spring in the middle of this plain, we are told in the early chartulary of Barnwell Abbey, was called Beornawyl (the well of the youths), because every year, on the eve of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, the boys and youths of the neighbourhood assembled there, and, "after the manners of the English, practised wrestling and other boyish games, and mutually applauded one another with songs and musical instruments; whence, on account of the multitude of boys and girls who gathered together there, it grew a custom for a crowd of sellers and buyers to assemble there on the same day for the purpose of commerce."[15] This is a curious and a rather rare allusion to an Anglo-Saxon wake.

One of the great recreations of the Anglo-Saxons was hunting, for which the immense forests, which then covered a great portion of this island, gave a wide scope. The most austere and pious, as well as the most warlike, of the Anglo-Saxon monarchs, were

passionately attached to the pleasures of the chase. According to the writer who has assumed the name of Asser, the great Alfred was so attached to this amusement, that he condescended to teach his "falconers, hawkers, and dog-keepers" himself. His grandson, king Ethelstan, as we learn from William of Malmesbury, exacted from the Welsh princes, among other articles of tribute, "as many dogs as he might choose, which, from their sagacious scent, could discover the retreats and hiding-places of wild beasts; and birds trained to make prey of others in the air." The same writer tells us of the sainted Edward the Confessor, that "there was one earthly enjoyment in which he chiefly delighted, which was, hunting with fleet hounds, whose opening in the woods he used with pleasure to encourage; and again, with the pouncing of birds, whose nature it is to prey on their kindred species. In these exercises, after hearing divine service in the morning, he employed himself whole days." It is evident from the ecclesiastical laws, that it was difficult to restrain even the clergy from this diversion. One of the ecclesiastical canons passed in the reign of king Edgar, enjoins "that no priest be a hunter, or fowler, or player at tables, but let him play on his books, as becometh his calling." When the king hunted, it appears that men were employed to beat up the game, while others were placed at different avenues of the forest to hinder the deer from taking a direction contrary to the wishes of the hunter. Several provisions relating to the employment of men in this way, occur in the Domesday survey. A contemporary writer of the Life of Dunstan gives the following description of the hunting of king Edmund the Elder, at Ceoddri (Chedder). "When they reached the forest," he says, "they took various directions

along the woody avenues, and the varied noise of the horns, and the barking of the dogs, aroused many stags. From these, the king with his pack of hounds chose one for his own hunting, and pursued it long, through devious ways with great agility on his horse, with the hounds following. In the vicinity of Ceoddri were several steep and lofty precipices hanging over deep declivities. To one of these the stag came in his flight, and dashed headlong to his destruction down the immense depth, all the dogs following and perishing with him." The king with difficulty held in his horse.

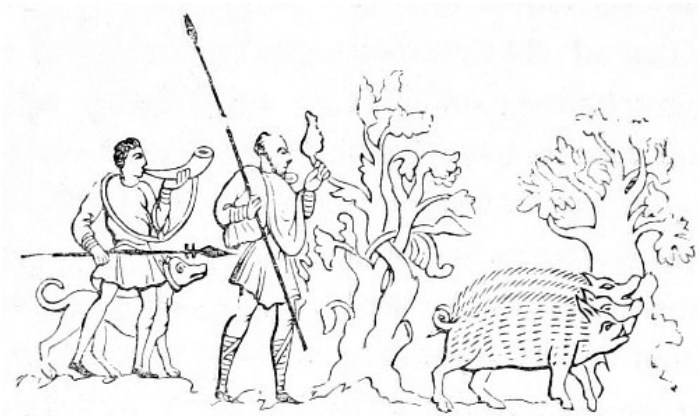


No. 43. Anglo-Saxon Dogs.

The dogs (*hundas*), used for the chase among the Anglo-Saxons, were valuable, and were bred with great care. Every noble or great landowner had his *hund-wealh*, or dog-keeper. The accompanying cut (No. 43), taken from the Harleian MS. No. 603, represents a dog-keeper, with his couple of hounds—they seem to have hunted in couples. The Anglo-Saxon name for a hunting-dog was *ren-hund*, a dog of

chase, which is interpreted by greyhound; and this appears, from the cut, to have been the favourite dog of our Saxon forefathers. It appears by an allusion given above, that the Saxons obtained hunting dogs from Wales; yet the antiquary will be at once struck with the total dissimilarity of the dogs pictured in the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, from the British dogs represented on the Romano-British pottery. The dogs were used to find the game, and follow it by the scent; the hunters killed it with spears, or with bows and arrows, or drove it into nets. In the Colloquy of Alfric, a hunter (*hunta*) of one of the royal forests gives a curious account of his profession. When asked how he practises his "craft," he replies, "I braid nets, and set them in a convenient place, and set on my hounds, that they may pursue the beasts of chase, until they come unexpectedly to the nets, and so become intangled in them, and I slay them in the nets." He is then asked if he cannot hunt without nets, to which he replies, "Yes, I pursue the wild animals with swift hounds." He next enumerates the different kinds of game which the Saxon hunter usually hunted—"I take harts, and boars, and deer, and roes, and sometimes hares." "Yesterday," he continues, "I took two harts and a boar, ... the harts with nets, and I slew the boar with my weapon." "How were you so hardy as to slay a boar?" "My hounds drove him to me, and I, there facing him, suddenly struck him down." "You were very bold then." "A hunter must not be timid, for various wild beasts dwell in the woods." It would seem by this, that boar-hunting was not uncommon in the more extensive forests of this island; but Sharon Turner has made a singular mistake, in supposing, from a picture in the Anglo-Saxon calendar, that boar-hunting was the ordinary occupation of the month of

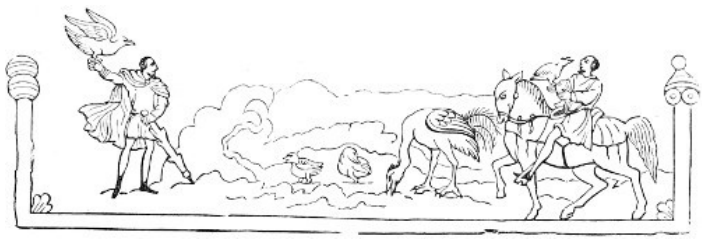
September. The scene which he has thus mistaken—or at least, a portion of it—is given in our cut No. 44 (from the Cottonian MS. Claudius, C. viii.); it represents swineherds driving their swine into the forests to feed upon acorns, which one of the herdsmen is shaking from the trees with his hand. The herdsmen were necessarily armed to protect the herds under their charge from robbers.



No. 44. Swine-Herds.

The Anglo-Saxons, as we have seen, were no less attached to hawking than hunting. The same Colloquy already quoted contains the following dialogue relating to the fowler (*fugelere*). To the question, “How dost thou catch birds?” he replies, “I catch them in many ways; sometimes with nets, sometimes with snares, sometimes with bird-lime, sometimes with whistling, sometimes with a hawk, sometimes with a trap.” “Hast thou a hawk?” “I have.” “Canst thou tame them?” “Yes, I can; of what use would they be to me unless I could tame them?” “Give me a hawk.” “I will give one willingly in exchange for a swift hound. What kind of hawk will

you have, the greater or the lesser?”... “How feedest thou thy hawks?” “They feed themselves and me in winter, and in spring I let them fly to the wood, and I catch young ones in autumn and tame them.” A party of hawkers is represented in our cut No. 45, taken from the manuscript last quoted, where it illustrates the month of October. The rude attempt at depicting a landscape is intended to represent a river running from the distant hills into a lake, and the hawkers are hunting cranes and other water-fowl. Presents of hawks and falcons are not unfrequently mentioned in Anglo-Saxon writers; and in a will, an Anglo-Saxon leaves to his natural lord “two hawks and all his stag-hounds.”



No. 45. Anglo-Saxons Hawking.



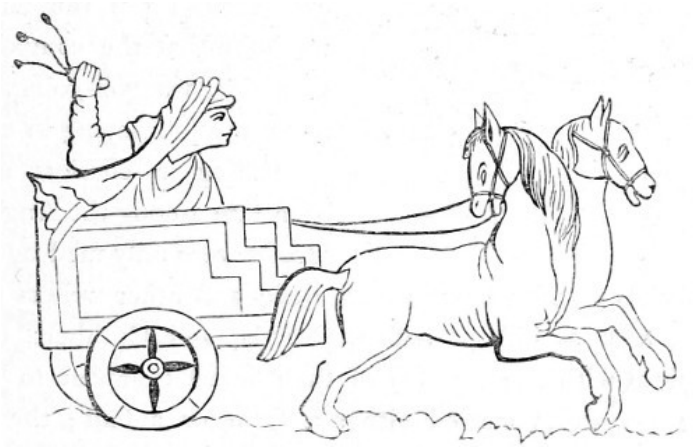
No. 46. Anglo-Saxons on a Journey.

The Saxon youths were proud of their skill in horsemanship. Bede relates an anecdote of the youthful days of Herebald, abbot of Tynemouth, when he attended upon bishop John of Beverley, from Herebald's own words—"It happened one day," the latter said, "that as we were travelling with him (the bishop), we came into a plain and open road, well adapted for galloping our horses. The young men that were with him, and particularly those of the laity, began to entreat the bishop to give them leave to gallop, and make trial of the goodness of their horses.... When they had several times galloped backwards and forwards, the bishop and I looking on, my wanton humour prevailed, and I could no longer refrain; but, though he forbade me, I struck in among them, and began to ride at full speed." Horses were used chiefly by the upper classes of society in travelling. Two of a party of Saxon travellers are

represented in our cut No. 46 (from MS. Cotton. Claudius, B. iv.). The lady, it will be observed, rides sideways, as in modern times, and the illuminated manuscripts of different periods furnish us with examples enough to show that such was always the practice; yet an old writer has ascribed the introduction of side-saddles into this country to Anne of Bohemia, the queen of Richard II., and the statement has been repeated by writers on costume, who too often blindly compile from one another without examining carefully the original sources of information.[16] The next cut, No. 47 (taken from MS. Harl. No. 603), represents a horseman with his arms, the spear, and the round shield, with its boss, which reminds us of those frequently found in the early Anglo-Saxon graves. The horse furniture is tolerably well defined in these figures. The forms of the spur (*spura*) and the stirrup (called in Anglo-Saxon *stirap* and *hlypa*) are very peculiar. Most of the furniture of the horse was then, as now, of leather, and was made by the shoemaker (*se sceowyrhta*), who seems to have been the general manufacturer of articles in this material. Alfric's Colloquy enumerates among the articles made by the shoemaker, bridle-thongs (*bridel-thwancgas*), harnesses (*gerœda*), spur-leathers (*spur-lethera*), and halters (*hælfra*). The form of the saddle is shown in the representation of a horse without a rider, given, from the manuscript last quoted, in our cut No. 48.



No. 47. An Anglo-Saxon Horseman. *No. 4*



No. 49. A Chariot.

In the Anglo-Saxon church histories, we meet with frequent instances of persons, who were unable to walk from sickness or other cause, being carried in carts or cars, but in most cases these seem to have

been nothing but the common agricultural carts adapted temporarily to this usage. A horse-litter is on one occasion used for the same purpose. It is certain, however, that the Anglo-Saxons had chariots for travelling. The usual names of all vehicles of this kind were *wægn* or *wæn* (from which, our *waggon*) and *crat* or *crœt* (which appears to be the origin of the English word *cart*). These two terms appear to have been used synonymously, for the words of the 18th Psalm, *hi in curribus*, are translated in one Anglo-Saxon version by *on wœnum*, and in another by *in crœtum*. The Anglo-Saxon manuscripts give us various representations of vehicles for travelling. The one represented in the cut No. 49 is taken from the Anglo-Saxon manuscript of Prudentius. It seems to have been a barbaric "improvement" upon the Roman *biga*, and is not much unlike our modern market-carts. The whip used by the lady who is driving so furiously, is of the same form as that used by the horsewoman in our cut No. 46. The artist has not shown the *wægne-thixl*, or shaft. A four-wheeled carriage, of rather a singular construction, is found often repeated, with some variations, in the illuminations of the manuscript of Alfric's translation of the Pentateuch. One of them is given in our cut No. 50. It is quite evident that a good deal of the minor detail of construction has been omitted by the draughtsman. Anglo-Saxon glosses give the word *rad* to represent the Latin *quadriga*. From the same source we learn that the compound word *wæn-fœr*, waggon-going, was used to express journeying in chariots.



No. 50. An Anglo-Saxon Carriage.

Riding in chariots must have been rare among the Anglo-Saxons. Horses were only used by the better classes of society; and we learn from Bede and other writers that pious ecclesiastics, such as bishops Aidan, Ceadda, and Cuthbert, thought it more consistent with the humility of their sacred character to journey on foot. The pedestrian carried either a spear or a staff; the rider had almost always a spear. It is noted of Cuthbert, in Bede's life of that saint, that one day when he came to Mailros (Melrose), and would enter the church to pray, having leaped from his horse, he "gave the latter and his travelling spear to the care of a servant, for he had not yet resigned the dress and habits of a layman." The weapon was, no doubt, necessary for personal safety. There is a very curious clause in the Anglo-Saxon laws of king Alfred, relating to an accident arising from the carrying the spear, which we can hardly understand, although to require a special law it must have been of frequent occurrence; this law provides that "if a man have a spear over his shoulder, and *any man*

stake himself upon it," the carrier of the spear incurred severe punishment, "if the point be three fingers higher than the hindmost part of the shaft." He was not considered blameable if he held the spear quite horizontally.

The traveller always wore a covering for his head, which, though of various shapes, none of which resembled our modern hat, was characterised by the general term of *hæt*. He seems to have been further protected against the inclemency of the weather by a cloak or mantle (*mentel*). One would be led to suppose that this outer garment was more varied in form and material than any other part of the dress, from the great number of names which we find applied to it, such as *basing*, *hæcce*, *hæcela*, or *hacela*, *pæll*, *pylca*, *scyccels*, *wæfels*, &c. The writings which remain throw no light upon the provisions made by travellers against rain; for the dictionary-makers who give *scúr-scead* (shower-shade) as signifying an umbrella, are certainly mistaken.[17] Yet that umbrellas were known to the Anglo-Saxons is proved beyond a doubt by a figure in the Harleian manuscript, No. 603, which is given in our cut No. 51. A servant or attendant is holding an umbrella over the head of a man who appears to be covered at the same time with the cloak or mantle.



No. 51. An Anglo-Saxon Umbrella.

Travelling to any distance must have been rendered more uncomfortable, especially when passing through wild districts where there were no inns. The word *inn* is itself Saxon, and signified a lodging, but it appears to have been more usually applied to houses of this kind in towns. A tavern was also called a *gest-hus* or *gest-bur*, a house or chamber for guests, and *cumena-hus*, a house of comers. Guest-houses, like caravanserais in the East, appear to have been established in different parts of Saxon England, near the high roads, for the reception of travellers. A traveller in Bede arrives at a *hospitium* in the north of England, which was kept by a *paterfamilias* (or father of a family) and his household. In the Northumbrian gloss on the Psalms, printed by the Surtees Society, the Latin words of Psalm liv., *in hospitiis eorum*, are rendered by *in gest-husum heara*. This shows that Bede's *hospitium* was really a guest-house: these guest-houses were kept up in various parts of England until Norman times; and Walter Mapes, in

his treatise de Nugis Curialium, has preserved a story relating to one of William the Conqueror's Saxon opponents, Edric the Wild, which tells how, returning from hunting in the forest of Dean, and accompanied only with a page, he came to a large house, "like the drinking houses of which the English have one in every parish, called in English gild-houses," perhaps an error for guest-houses (*quales Anglici in singulis singulas habebant diocesibus bibitorias, ghildhus Anglice dictas*). It seems not improbable, also, that the ruins of Roman villas and small stations, which stood by the sides of roads, were often roughly repaired or modified, so as to furnish a temporary shelter for travellers who carried provisions, &c., with them, and could therefore lodge themselves without depending upon the assistance of others. A shelter of this kind—from its consisting of bare walls, a mere shelter against the inclemency of the storm—might be termed a *ceald-hereberga* (cold harbour), and this would account for the great number of places in different parts of England, which bear this name, and which are almost always on Roman sites and near old roads. The explanation is supported by the circumstance that the name is found among the Teutonic nations on the continent —the German *Kalten-herberg*—borne by some inns at the present day.

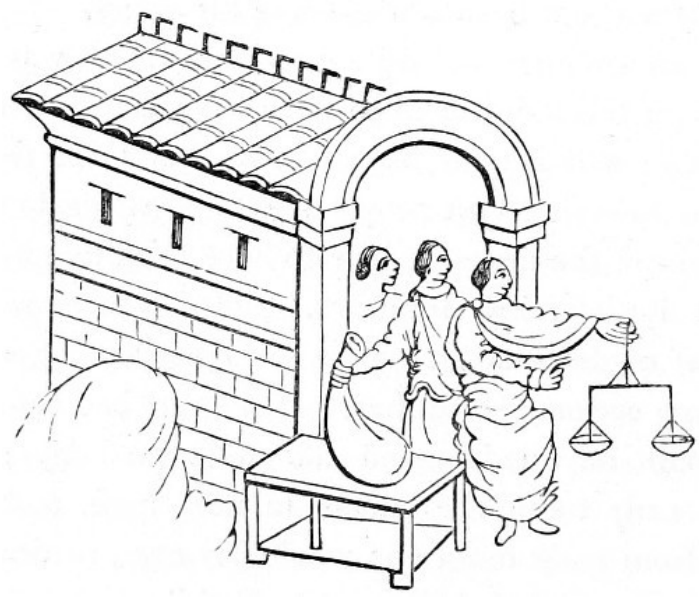
The deficiency of such comforts for travellers in Anglo-Saxon times was compensated by the extensive practice of hospitality, a virtue which was effectually inculcated by the customs of the people as well as by the civil and ecclesiastical laws. When a stranger presented himself at a Saxon door, and asked for board and lodging, the man who refused them was looked upon with contempt by his

countrymen. In the seventh century, as we learn from the Pœnitentiale of archbishop Theodore, the refusal to give lodging to a stranger (*quicunque hospitem non receperit in domum suam*) was considered worthy of ecclesiastical censure. And in the Ecclesiastical Institutes, drawn up at a later period, and printed in the collection of Anglo-Saxon laws, it is stated that "It is also very needful to every mass-priest, that he diligently exhort and teach his parishioners that they be hospitable, and not refuse their houses to any wayfaring man, but do for his comfort, for love of God, what they then will or can; ... but let those who, for love of God, receive every stranger, desire not any worldly reward." Bede describes as the first act of "the custom of hospitality" (*mos hospitalitatis*) the washing of the stranger's feet and hands; they then offered him refreshment, and he was allowed to remain two nights without being questioned, after which period the host became answerable for his character. The ecclesiastical laws limited the hospitality to be shown to a priest to one night, because if he remained longer it was a proof that he was neglecting his duties.

Taverns of an ordinary description, where there was probably no accommodation for travellers, seem to have been common enough under the Anglo-Saxons and it must be confessed that there seems to be too much reason for believing that people spent a great deal of their leisure time in them; even the clergy appear to have been tempted to frequent them. In the Ecclesiastical Institutes, quoted above, mass-priests are forbidden to eat or drink at ale-houses (*æt ceap-ealothelum*). And it is stated in the same curious record that, "It is a very bad custom that many men

practise, both on Sundays and also other mass-days; that is, that straightways at early morn they desire to hear mass, and immediately after the mass, from early morn the whole day over, in drunkenness and feasting they minister to their belly, not to God."

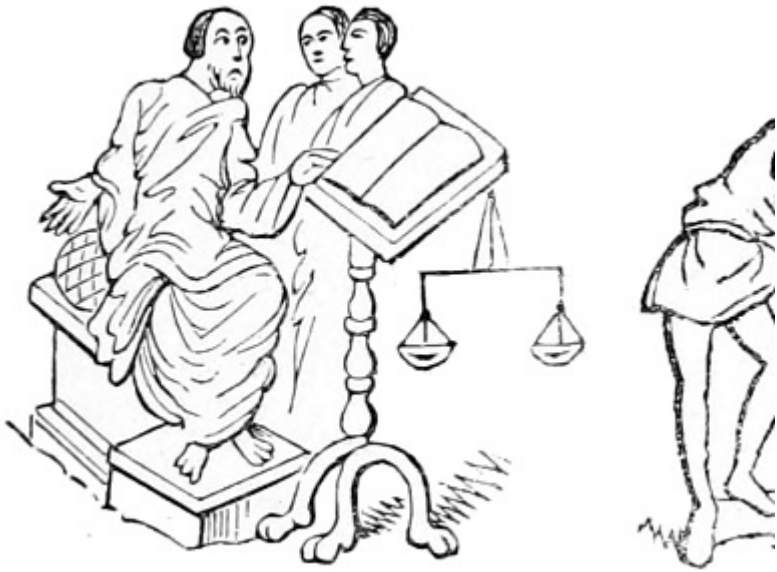
Merchant travellers seem, in general, to have congregated together in parties or small caravans, both for companionship and as a measure of mutual defence against robbers. In such cases they probably carried tents with them, and formed little encampments at night, like the pedlars and itinerant dealers in later times. Men who travelled alone were exposed to other dangers besides that of robbery; for a solitary wanderer was always looked upon with suspicion, and he was in danger himself of being taken for a thief. He was compelled, therefore, by his own interest and by the law of the land, to show that he had no wish to avoid observation; one of the earlier Anglo-Saxon codes of laws, that of king Wihtræd, directed that "if a man come from afar, or a stranger go out of the high way, and he then neither shout nor blow a horn, he is to be accounted a thief, either to be slain, or to be redeemed."



No. 52. Taking Toll.

So prevalent, indeed, was theft and unfair dealing among our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, and so much litigation and unjust persecution arose from disputed claims to property which had been, or was pretended to have been, purchased, that it was made illegal to buy or sell without witnesses. It would be easy to multiply examples of robbery and plunder from Anglo-Saxon writers; but I will only state that, according to the Ely history, some merchants from Ireland, having come to Cambridge in the time of king Edgar, to offer their wares for sale, perhaps at the annual festivities of the Beorna-wyl, mentioned above, a *priest* of the place was guilty of stealing a part of their merchandise. We know but little of the trades and forms of commercial dealings of the Anglo-Saxons; but we may take our leave of the period of which we have been hitherto treating, with

a few figures relating to money matters, from the Anglo-Saxon manuscript of the Psalms (MS. Harl. No. 603). The cut No. 52 represents, apparently, a man in the market, or at the gates of a city, taking toll for merchandise. The scales are for weighing, not the merchandise, but the money. The word *pund*, or pound, implies that the money was reckoned by weight; and the word *mancus*, another term for a certain sum of money, is also considered to have been a weight. Anglo-Saxon writings frequently speak of money as given by weight. Our cut No. 53 is a representation of the merchant, or the toll-taker, seated before his account book, with his scales hanging to the desk. In the first of these cuts, a man holds the bag or purse, in which the money received for toll or merchandise is deposited. The cut No. 54 represents the receiver pouring the money out of his bag into the *cyst*, or chest, in which it is to be locked up and kept in his treasury. It is hardly necessary to say that there were no banking-houses among the Anglo-Saxons. The chest, or coffer, in which people kept their money and other valuables, appears to have formed part of the furniture of the chamber, as being the most private apartment; and it may be remarked that a rich man's wealth usually consisted much more in jewels and valuable plate than in money.



No. 53. A Money Taker. N

We cannot but remark how little change the manners and the sentiments of our Saxon forefathers underwent during the long period that we are in any way acquainted with them. During the reign of Edward the Confessor, Norman fashions were introduced at court, but their influence on the nation at large appears to have been very trifling. Even after the Norman conquest the English manners and fashions retained their hold on the people, and at later periods they continually re-appear to assert their natural rights among the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons.

CHAPTER V.

THE EARLY NORMAN PERIOD.—LUXURIOUSNESS OF THE NORMANS.—ADVANCE IN DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE.—THE KITCHEN AND THE HALL.—PROVISIONS AND COOKERY.—BEES.—THE DAIRY.—MEAL-TIMES AND DIVISIONS OF THE DAY.—FURNITURE.—THE FALDESTOL.—CHAIRS AND OTHER SEATS.

A great change was wrought in this country by the entrance of the Normans. From what we have seen, in the course of the preceding chapters, society seems for a long time to have been at a standstill among the Anglo-Saxons, as though it had progressed as far as its own simple vitality would carry it, and wanted some new impulse to move it onwards. By the entrance of the Normans, the Saxon aristocracy was destroyed; but the lower and, in a great measure, the middle classes were left untouched in their manners and customs, which they appear to have preserved for a considerable length of time without any material change. The Norman historians, who write with prejudice when they speak of the Saxons, describe their nobility as having become

luxurious without refinement; and they tell us that the Normans introduced greater sobriety, accompanied with more ostentation. “The nobility,” says William of Malmesbury, “was given up to luxury and wantonness.... Drinking in parties was an universal practice, in which occupation they passed entire nights as well as days. They consumed their whole substance in mean and despicable houses; unlike the Normans and French, who, in noble and splendid mansions, lived with frugality. The vices attendant on drunkenness, which enervate the human mind, followed.... In fine, the English at that time (under king Harold) wore short garments, reaching to the mid-knee; they had their hair cropped, their beards shaven, their arms laden with golden bracelets, their skin adorned with punctured designs; they were accustomed to eat till they became surfeited, and to drink till they were sick. These latter qualities they imparted to their conquerors; whose manners, in other respects, they adopted.”

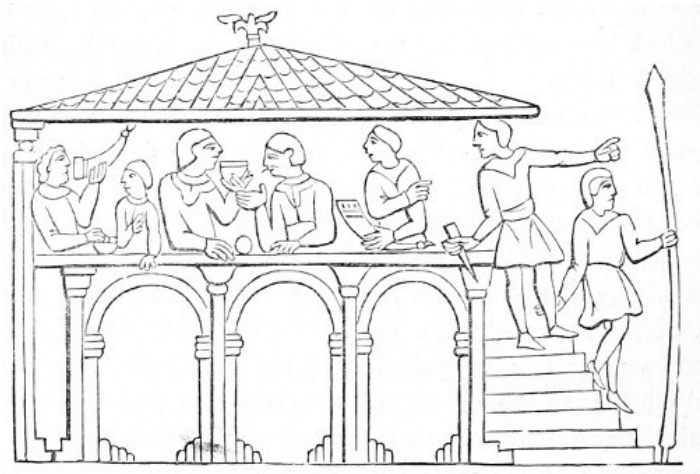
Whatever moderation the Normans may have brought with them, or however they may have been restrained by the first Anglo-Norman monarch, it disappeared entirely under his son and successor: “when,” in the words of William of Malmesbury, “everything was so changed, that there was no man rich except the money-changer, and no clerks but lawyers.... The courtiers then preyed upon the property of the country people, and consumed their substance, taking the very meat from their mouths. Then was there flowing hair and extravagant dress; and then was invented the fashion of shoes with curved points; then the model for young men was to rival women in delicacy of person, to mince their

gait, to walk with loose gesture, and half naked." This increasing dissoluteness of manners appears to have received no effectual check under the reign of the first Henry; in the twenty-ninth year of which, the writer just quoted tells us that "a circumstance occurred in England, which may seem surprising to our long-haired gallants, who, forgetting what they were born, transform themselves into the fashion of females, by the length of their locks. A certain English knight, who prided himself on the luxuriance of his tresses, being conscience-stung on the subject, seemed to feel in a dream as though some person strangled him with his ringlets. Awaking in a fright, he immediately cut off all his superfluous hair. The example spread throughout England; and, as recent punishment is apt to affect the mind, almost all the barons allowed their hair to be cropped in a proper manner, without reluctance. But this decency was not of long continuance; for scarcely had a year expired, before all those who thought themselves courtly, relapsed into their former vice; they vied with women in length of locks, and wherever these were wanting, put on false tresses; forgetful, or rather ignorant, of the saying of the Apostle, 'If a man nurture his hair, it is a shame to him.'" Public and private manners were gradually running into the terrible lawlessness of the reign of king Stephen.

William of Malmesbury points out as one of the more remarkable circumstances which distinguished the Normans from the Saxons, the magnitude and solidity of their domestic buildings. The Anglo-Saxons seem, indeed, to have preferred the old national prejudice of their race against confining themselves within stone walls, while the Normans and Franks, who were more influenced by Roman

traditions, had become great builders. We have scarcely any information relative to the progress of domestic architecture under William the Conqueror, but the Norman chiefs seem from the first to have built themselves houses of a much more substantial character than those which they found in existence. The residence of the Conqueror, while engaged in his operations against the insurgents in the isle of Ely, is imperfectly described by the anonymous author of the life of Hereward. It consisted of the hall, kitchen, and other buildings, which were inclosed by hedges and fosses (*per sepes et foveas*), and it had an interior and exterior court. Towards the end of the Conqueror's reign, and in that of his son, were raised those early Norman baronial castles, the masonry of which has withstood the ravages of so many centuries. Under William and his sons, few ordinary mansions and dwelling houses seem to have been built substantially of stone; I am not aware that there are any known remains of a stone mansion in this country older than the reign of Henry II. The miracles of St. Cuthbert, related by Reginald of Durham, contain one or two allusions to the private houses of the earlier part of the twelfth century. Thus a parishioner of Kellow, near Durham, in the time of bishop Walter Rufus (1133-1140), is described as passing the evening drinking with the parish priest; returning home late, he was pursued by dogs, and reaching his own house in great terror, contrived to shut the door (*ostium domus*) upon them. He then went up to what, from the context, appears to have been the window of an upper floor or garret (*ad fenestram parietis*), which he opened in order to look down with safety on his persecutors. He was suddenly seized with madness, and his family being roused, seized him, carried him down into the court

(*in area*), and bound him to the seats (*ad sedilia*). The same writer tells the story of a blind woman in the city of Durham, who used to run her head against the projecting windows of the houses (*ad fenestrarum dependentia foris laquearia*).



No. 55. A Norman Carousal.

We trace in the illuminations of the earlier Norman period the custom of placing the principal apartment at an elevation from the ground. The simple plan of the stone-built house of the latter part of this century, consisted of a square room on the ground floor, often vaulted, and of one room above it, which was the principal apartment, and the sleeping-room. This was approached by a staircase, sometimes external and sometimes internal, and it had a fire-place (*cheminée*), though this was not always the case in the room below. The lower room was the hall, and the upper apartment was called a *solar*, or *soller* (*solarium*), a word which has been supposed to be derived from *sol*, the sun, which was more felt in this

upper room than in the lower, inasmuch as it was better lighted—it was the sunny room. Yet, even here, the windows were small, and without glass. We learn from Joscelin de Brakelonde that, in the year 1182, Samson, abbot of Bury, while lodging in a grange, or manor-house, belonging to his abbey, narrowly escaped being burnt with the house, because the only door of the upper story in which he was lodged happened to be locked, and the windows were too narrow to admit of his passing through them. In the early English "Ancren Riewle," or rule of nuns, published by the Camden Society, there are several allusions to the windows of the parlour, or private room, which show that they were not glazed, but usually covered with a cloth, or blind, which allowed sufficient light to pass, and that they had shutters on hinges which closed them entirely. In talking of the danger of indulging the eyes, the writer of this treatise (p. 50) says, "My dear sisters, love your windows"—they are called in the original text *thurles*, holes through the wall—"as little as you may, and let them be small, and the parlour's least and narrowest; let the cloth in them be twofould, black cloth, the cross white within and without." The writer goes on to moralise on the white cross upon a black ground. In another part of the book (p. 97), the author supposes that men may come and seek to converse with the nuns through the window, and goes on to say, "If any man become so mad and unreasonable that he put forth his hand towards the windowcloth (*the thurl-cloth*), shut the window quickly and leave him." Under the hall, when it was raised above the level of the ground, there was often another vaulted room, which was the cellar, and which seems to have been usually entered from the inside of the building. In the accompanying cut (No.

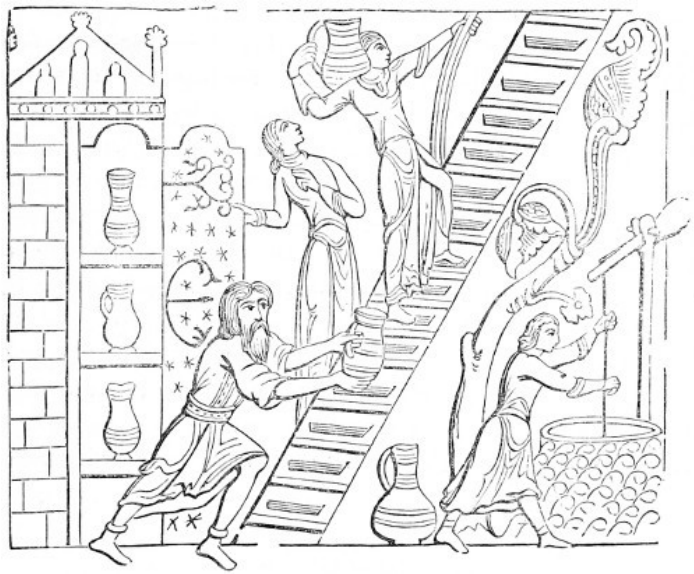
55), taken from the celebrated tapestry of Bayeux, are seen Harold and his companions carousing in an apartment thus situated, and approached by a staircase from without. The object of this was, perhaps, partly to be more private, for the ordinary public hall at dinner times seems to have been invaded by troops of hungry hangers on, who ate up or carried away the provisions which were taken from the table, and became so bold that they seem to have often seized or tried to seize the provisions from the cooks as they carried them to the table. William Rufus established ushers of the hall and kitchen, whole duty it was to protect the guests and the cooks from this rude rabble. Gaimar's description of that king's grand feast at Westminster, contains some curious allusions to this practice. After telling us that three hundred ushers (*ussers*, i.e. *huissiers*), or doorkeepers, were appointed to occupy the entrance passages (*us*), who were to hand with rods to protect the guests as they mounted the steps from the importunity of the *garsons*—

Cil cunduaient les barons
Par les degrez, pur les garçons;
Od les verges k'es mains teneient
As barons vaie fesaient,
Ke jà garçon ne s'apremast,
Si alcon d'els ne l' comandast—

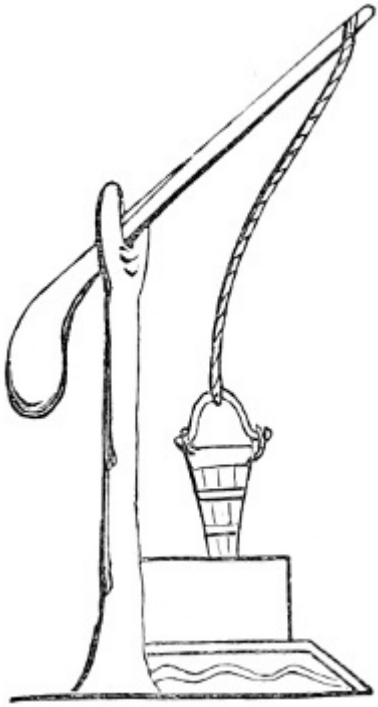
he adds, that those who carried the provisions and liquor to the table were also attended by these ushers, that the "*lecheurs*" might not snatch from them, or spoil, or break, the vessels in which they carried them:—

Ensement tut revenaient par els
Cil ki aportouent les mès
De la quisine e des mesters,
E li beveres e li mangers,
Icil usser les cunduaient,
Pur la vessele dunt servaient,
Ke lecheur ne les escheçast,
Ne malmeist, ne defrussast.

—Gaimar, Estorie des Englès, l. 5985.



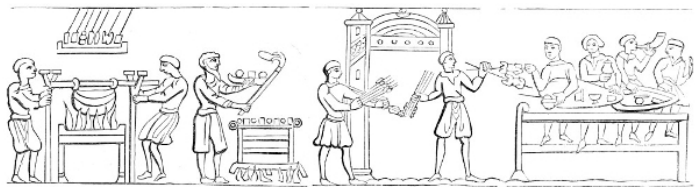
No. 56. The Norman Butler in his Office.



No. 57. A Draw-Well.

In the cut from the Bayeux tapestry, the feasting-room is approached by what is evidently a staircase of stone. In our cut No. 56, taken from a manuscript of the earlier half of the twelfth century in the Cottonian library (Nero, C. iv.), and illustrating the story of the marriage feast at Cana, the staircase is apparently of wood, little better than a ladder, and the servants who are carrying up the wine assist themselves in mounting by means of a rope. It is a picture which at the same time exhibits several characteristics of domestic life—the wine vessels, the cupboard in which they are kept, and the well in the court-yard, the latter being indicated by the tree. The butler, finding wine run short, sends the servant to

draw water from the well. It may be remarked that this appears to have been the common machinery of the draw-well among our forefathers in the middle ages—a rude lever, formed by the attachment of a heavy weight, perhaps of lead, at one end of the beam, which was sufficient to raise the other end, and thus draw up the bucket. It occurs in illuminations in manuscripts of various periods; our example in cut No. 57 is taken from MS. Harl. No. 1257, of the fourteenth century.



No. 58. Norman Cooks and the Attendants serving at Table.

Whatever truth there may be in William of Malmesbury's account of the sobriety of the Normans, there can be no doubt that the kitchen and the cooks formed with them a very important part of the household. According to the Bayeux tapestry, duke William brought with him from Normandy a complete kitchen establishment, and a compartment of that interesting monument, of which we here give a diminished copy, shows that when he landed he found no difficulty in providing a dinner. On the left two cooks are boiling the meat—for this still was the general way of cooking it, as it was usually eaten salted. Above them, on a shelf, are fowls, and other sorts of small viands, spitted ready for roasting. Another cook is engaged at a portable stove, preparing small cakes, pasties, &c., which he takes from the stove with a singularly formed fork to place

them on the dish. Others are carrying to the table the roasted meats, on the spits. It will be observed that having no "board" with them to form a table, the Norman knights make use of their shields instead.

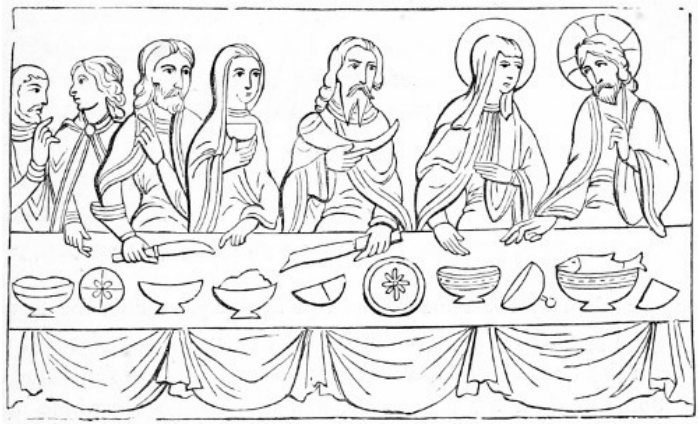
The reader of the life of Hereward will remember the scene in which the hero in disguise is taken into king William's kitchen, to entertain the cooks. After dinner the wine and ale were distributed freely, and the result was a violent quarrel between the cooks and Hereward; the former used the tridents and forks for weapons (*cum tridentibus et furcis*), while he took the spit from the fire (*de foco hastile*) as a still more formidable weapon of defence. In the early Chanson de Roland, Charlemagne is described also carrying his cooks with him to the war, as William the Conqueror is pictured in the Bayeux tapestry, and they held so important a position in his household, that, when one of his most powerful barons, Guenelon, was accused of treason, Charlemagne is made to deliver him in custody to the charge of his cooks, who place him under the guard of a hundred of the "kitchen companions," and these treat him much in the same way as king William's cooks sought to treat Hereward, by cutting or plucking out his beard and whiskers.

Li reis fait prendre le cunte Guenelun,
Si l' cumandat as cous de sa maisun,
Tut li plus maistre en apelet Besgun:
'Ben le me guarde, si cume tel felon,
De ma maisnée ad faite traisun.'
Cil le receit, si met c. cumpaignons
De la quisine, des mielz e des pejurs;
Icil li peilent la barbe e les gernuns.

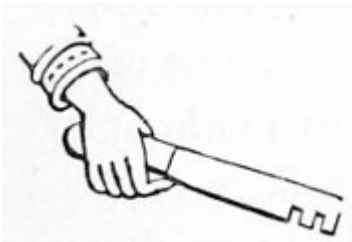
—Chanson de Roland, p. 71.

Alexander Neckam, in his Dictionarius (written in the latter part of the twelfth century), begins with the kitchen, as though he considered it as the most important part of a mansion, and describes its furniture rather minutely. There is good reason, however, for believing that the cooking was very commonly performed in the court of the house in the open air and perhaps it was intended to be represented so in the scene given above from the Bayeux tapestry. The cooks are there delivering the food through a door into the hall.

The Norman dinner-table, as shown in the Bayeux tapestry, differs not much from that of the Anglo-Saxons. A few dishes and basins contain viands which are not easy to be recognised, except the fish and the fowls. Most of the smaller articles seem to have been given by the cooks into the hands of the guests from the spits on which they had been roasted. Another dinner scene is represented in our cut No. 59, taken from the Cottonian manuscript already mentioned (Nero, C. iv.). We see again similarly formed vessels to those used at table by the Anglo-Saxons. The bread is still made in round flat cakes, and is marked with a cross, and with a flower in the middle. The guests use no forks; their knives are different and more varied in their forms than under the Anglo-Saxons. Sometimes, indeed, the shape of the knives is almost grotesque. The one represented below, in our cut No. 60, is taken from a group in the same manuscript which furnished the preceding cut; it is very singularly notched at the point.



No. 59. An Anglo-Saxon Dinner Party.



No. 60. A Knife.

We see in these dinner scenes that the Anglo-Normans used horns and cups for drinking, as the Anglo-Saxons did; but the use of the horn is becoming rare, and the bowl-shaped vessels appear to have been now the usual drinking cup. Among the wealthy these cups seem to have been made of glass. Reginald of Durham describes one of the monks as bringing water for a sick man to drink in a glass cup (*vase vitreo*), which was accidentally broken. In a splendidly illuminated manuscript of the Psalms, of the earlier half of the twelfth century, written by Eadwine, one of the monks of Canterbury, and which will afford much illustration for this period,[18] we

find a figure of a servant giving to drink, who holds one of the same description of drinking cups which were so popular at an earlier period among the Anglo-Saxons (see our cut No. 61). He holds in the left hand the jug, which had now become the usual vessel for carrying the liquor in any quantity. In our cut No. 62, furnished by the same manuscript as the preceding, the servant is taking the jug of liquor from the barrel. Our next cut, No. 63, also taken from the Cambridge MS., represents several forms of vessels for the table. Some of these are new to us; and they are on the whole more elegant than most of the forms we meet with in common pictures.



No. 61. A Cup-bearer.



No. 62. The Servant in the Cellar.



No. 63. Anglo-Norman Pottery.

Wine appears to have been now more frequently used than among the Anglo-Saxons. Neckam, in the latter part of the twelfth century, has given us a rather playful enumeration of the qualities of good wine; which he says should be as clear as the tears of a penitent, so that a man may see distinctly to the bottom of his glass; its colour "should represent the greenness of a buffalo's horn; when drunk, it should descend impetuously like thunder, sweet-tasted as an almond, creeping like a squirrel, leaping like a roebuck, strong like the building of a Cistercian monastery, glittering like a spark of fire, subtle as the logic of the schools of Paris, delicate as fine silk, and colder than crystal." Yet still ale and mead continued to be the usual drinks. The innumerable entries in Domesday Book show us how large a proportion of the productions of the country, in the reign of

William the Conqueror, still consisted in honey, which was used chiefly for the manufacture of mead. The manuscript in Trinity College Library, gives us a group of bee-hives (cut No. 64), with peasants attending to them; and is chiefly curious for the extraordinary forms which the artist, evidently no naturalist, has given to the bees.



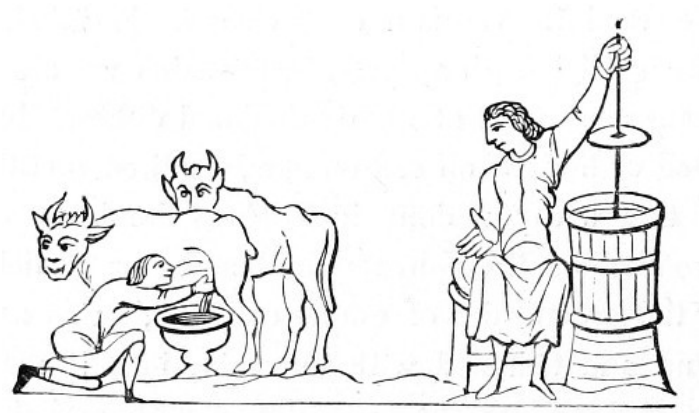
No. 64. Anglo-Norman Bee-keepers.

We have hardly any information on the cookery during the period we are now describing. It is clear that numerous delicacies were served to the tables of the noble and wealthy, but their culinary receipts are not preserved. We read in William of Malmesbury, incidentally, that a great prince ate garlick with a goose, from which we are led to suppose that the Normans were fond of highly-seasoned dishes. Neckam tells us that pork, roasted or broiled on red embers, required no other sauce than salt or garlick; that a capon done in gobbets should be well peppered; that a goose, roasted on the spit, required a strong garlick-sauce, mixed with wine or "the green juice of grapes or crabs;" that a hen, if boiled, should be cut up and seasoned with cummin, but, if

roasted, it should be basted with lard, and might be seasoned with garlick-sauce, though it would be more savoury with simple sauce; that fish should be cooked in a sauce composed of wine and water, and that they should afterwards be served with a sauce composed of sage, parsley, cost, ditany, wild thyme, and garlick, with pepper and salt. We learn from other incidental allusions of contemporary, or nearly contemporary, writers, that bread, butter, and cheese, were the ordinary food of the common people, probably with little else besides vegetables. It is interesting to remark that the three articles just mentioned, have preserved their Anglo-Saxon names to the present times, while all kinds of meat, beef, veal, mutton, pork, even bacon, have retained only the names given to them by the Normans, which seems to imply that flesh-meat was not in general use for food among the lower classes of society.

Bread seems almost always to have been formed in cakes, like our buns, round in the earlier pictures, and in later ones (as in our cut No. 63), shaped more fancifully. We see it generally marked with a cross, perhaps a superstitious precaution of the baker. The bread seems to have been in general made for the occasion, and eaten fresh, perhaps warm. In one of Reginald of Durham's stories, we are told of a priest in the forest of Arden, who, having nothing but a peck of corn left, and receiving a large number of visitors on a sacred festival, gave it out to be baked to provide for them. The corn was immediately ground, perhaps with querns, and having been mixed with "dewy" water, in the usual manner, was made into twelve loaves, and immediately placed in the hot oven.[19] Cheese and butter seem also to have been tolerably abundant. An illuminator of the Cambridge

MS., given in our cut No. 65, represents a man milking and another churning; he who churns appears, to use a vulgar phrase, to be "taking it at his ease." The milking-pail, too, is rather extraordinary in its form.



No. 65. Anglo-Normans Milking and Churning.

We have not any distinct account of the hours at which our Norman ancestors took their meals, but they appear to have begun their day early. In the Carlovingian romances, everybody, not excepting the emperor and his court, rises at daybreak; and in Huon de Bordeaux (p. 270), one of the chief heroes is accused of laziness, because he was in bed after the cock had crowed. In the romance of Doon de Mayence, the feudal lord of that great city and territory is introduced exhorting his son to rise betimes, for, he says, "he who sleeps too long in the morning, becomes thin and lazy, and loses his day, if he does not amend himself."

Qui trop dort au matin, maigre devient et las,

Et sa journée en pert, s'y n'en amende pas.
—Doon de Mayence, p. 76.

In the same romance, two of the heroes, Doon and Baudouin, also rise with the sun, and dress and wash, and then say their prayers; after which their attendant, Vaudri, "placed between them two a very large pasty, on a white napkin, and brought them wine, and then said to them in fair words, like a man of sense, 'Sirs, you shall eat, if it please you; for eating early in the morning brings great health, and gives one greater courage and spirit; and drink a little of this choice wine, which will make you strong and fierce in fight.' ... And when Doon saw it, he laughed, and began to eat and drink, and they breakfasted very pleasantly and peacefully." John of Bromyard, who wrote at a later period, has handed down a story of a man who despaired of overcoming the difficulty he found in keeping the fasts, until he succeeded in the following manner: at the hour of matins (three o'clock in the morning), when he was accustomed to break his fast, and was greatly tempted to eat, he said to himself, "I will fast until tierce (nine o'clock), for the love of God;" and when tierce came, he said he would fast unto sext (the hour of noon), and so again he put off eating until none (three o'clock in the afternoon); and so he gradually learnt to fast all day. We may perhaps conclude that, at the time when this story was made, nine o'clock was the ordinary hour of dinner.

This last-mentioned meal was certainly served early in the day, and was often followed by recreations in the open air. In the romance of Huon de Bordeaux (p. 252), the Christian chiefs, after their dinner, go to amuse themselves on the sea-shore. In Doon de Mayence (p. 245), they play at chess and dice after

dinner; and on another occasion, in the same romance (p. 314), the barons, after their dinner, sing and dance together; while in Fierabras (p. 185), Charlemagne and his court ride out on horseback, and set up a quintain, at which they justed all day (*tout le jour*—which would imply that they began early), until vespers (probably seven o'clock), when they returned into the palace to refresh themselves, and afterwards to go to bed. Supper was certainly served in the evening, and in these romances people are spoken of as going to bed immediately after it. On one occasion, in Doon de Mayence (p. 303), Charlemagne's barons take no supper, but, after their beds are prepared, they are served plentifully with fruits and wine. In the same romance (p. 16), the guards of a castle go out, because it was a warm evening in summer, and have their supper laid out on a table in the field, where they remain long amusing themselves. In Fierabras (p. 68), the barons take a hot bath after dinner.



No. 66. A Faldestol.

Of the articles of household furniture during the period of which we are now writing, we cannot give many examples. We have every reason to believe that they were anything but numerous. A board laid upon tressels formed the usual dining table, and an ordinary bench or form the seat. In the French Carlovingian romances, the earlier of which may be considered as representing society in the twelfth century, even princes and great barons sit ordinarily upon benches. Thus, in the romance of Huon de Bordeaux (pp. 33, 36), Charlemagne invites the young chieftain, Huon, who had come to visit him in his palace, to sit on the bench and drink his wine; and in the same romance (p. 263), when Huon was received in the abbey of St. Maurice, near Bordeaux, he and the abbot sit together on a bench. Chairs belonged to great people. Our cut No. 66, taken from

the Trinity College Psalter, represents a chair of state, with its covering of drapery thrown over it. In some instances the cushion appears placed upon the drapery. This seat was the *faldestol*, a word which has been transformed in modern French to *fauteuil* (translated in English by elbow-chair). We read in the Chanson de Roland of the *faldestol* which was placed for princes, and of the covering of white "*palie*" (a rich stuff) which was spread over it. That of Charlemagne was of gold—

Un faldestoed i unt fait tut d'or mer:
Là siet li reis qui dulce France tient.

—Chanson de Roland, p. 5.

The *faldestol* of the Saracen king of Spain was covered with a "palie" of Alexandrian manufacture, —

Un faldestoet out suz l'umbre d'un pin,
Envolupet fut d'un palie Alexandrin;
Là fut li reis ki tute Espaigne tint.

—Ib. p. 17.

The infidel emir from Egypt, when he arrives in Spain, is seated in the midst of his host, on a *faldestol* of ivory.

Sur l'erbe verte getent un palie blanc,
Un faldestoed i unt mis d'olifan;
Desuz s'asiet li paien Baligant.

—Ib. p. 102.

The *faldestol* was not always made of such rich materials. In the romance of Huon de Bordeaux,

Charlemagne is represented as sitting in a *faldestol* made of elm.

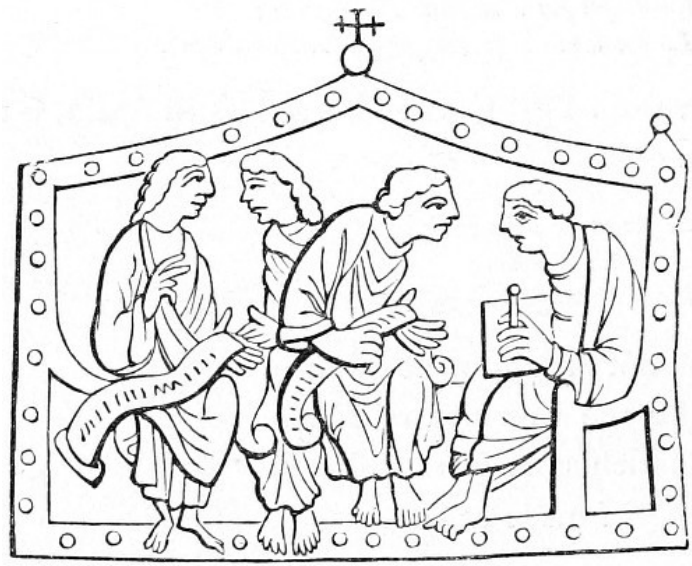
Karles monta ens el palais plenier;
Il est asis u faudestuef d'ormier.
Huon de Bordeaux, p. 286.



No. 67. Two Chiefs Seated.

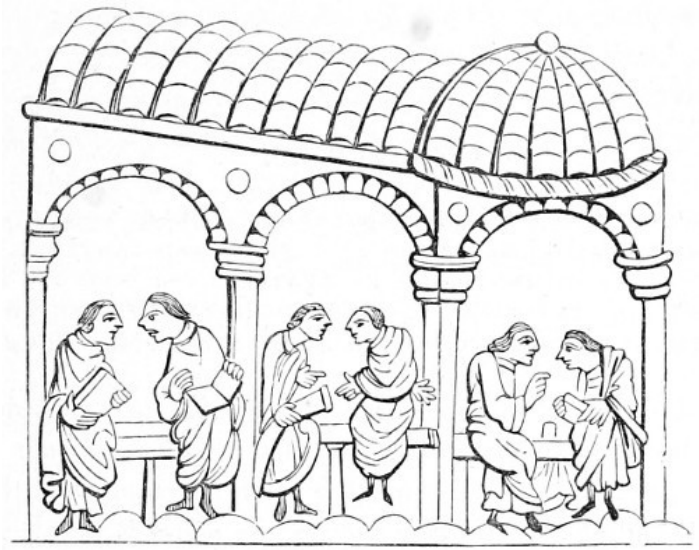
The mouldings of the *faldestol* in the cut No. 66 will be recognised as exactly the same which are found

on old furniture of a much more recent period, and which, in fact, are those which offer themselves most readily to ordinary turners. The same ornament is seen on the chair represented in our cut No. 67, taken from the same manuscript as the last, in which two men are seated, in a very singular manner. It was not uncommon, however, to have seats which held several persons together, such as the one represented in an Anglo-Saxon illumination given in a former chapter (p. 31), and such as are still to be seen in country public-houses, where they have preserved the Anglo-Saxon name of *settle*. One of these is represented in our cut No. 68. The persons seated in it, in this case, are learned men, and the cross above seems to show that they are monks. One has a table-book, and two of the others have rolls of parchment, which are all evidently the subject of anxious discussion.



No. 68. An Anglo-Norman Settle.

Chairs, and even stools, were, as has been already observed, by no means abundant in these early times, and we can easily suppose that it would be a difficult thing to accommodate numerous visitors with seats. To remedy this, when houses were built of stone, it was usual to make, in the public apartments, seats, like benches, in recesses in the wall, or projecting from it, which would accommodate a number of persons at the same time. We find such seats usually in the cloisters of monasteries, as well as in the chapter-houses of our cathedral churches. In the latter they generally run round the room, and are divided by arches into seats which were evidently intended to accommodate two persons each, for the convenience of conversation. This practice is illustrated by our cut No. 69, taken, like the preceding one, from the Cambridge Manuscript; it represents a group of seats of this kind, in which monks (apparently) are seated and conversing two and two.



No. 69. Seats in the Wall.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NORMAN HALL.—SOCIAL SENTIMENTS UNDER THE ANGLO-NORMANS.—DOMESTIC AMUSEMENTS.—CANDLES AND LANTERNS.—FURNITURE.—BEDS.—OUT-OF-DOOR RECREATIONS.—HUNTING.—ARCHERY.—CONVIVIAL INTERCOURSE AND

HOSPITALITY.—TRAVELLING.—PUNISHMENTS.—THE STOCKS.—A NORMAN SCHOOL.—EDUCATION.

Alexander Neckam has left us a sufficiently clear description of the Norman hall. He says that it had a vestibule or screen (*vestibulum*), and was entered through a porch (*porticus*), and that it had a court, the Latin name of which (*atrium*) he pretends was derived from *ater* (black), "because the kitchens used to be placed by the side of the streets, in order that the passers-by might perceive the smell of cooking." This explanation is so mysterious, that we may suppose the passage to be corrupt, but the *coquinæ* of which Neckam is speaking are evidently cook's shops. In the interior of the hall, he says, there were posts (or columns) placed at regular distances. The few examples of Norman halls which remain are divided internally by two rows of columns. Neckam enumerates the materials required in the construction of the hall, which seem to show that he is speaking of a timber building. A fine example of a timber hall, though of a later period, is, or was recently, standing in the city of Gloucester, with its internal "posts" as here described. There appears also to have been an inner court-yard, in which Neckam intimates that poultry were kept. The whole building, and the two court-yards, were no doubt surrounded by a wall, outside of which were the garden and orchard. The Normans appear to have had a taste for gardens, which formed a very important adjunct to the mansion, and to the castle, and are not unfrequently alluded to in mediæval

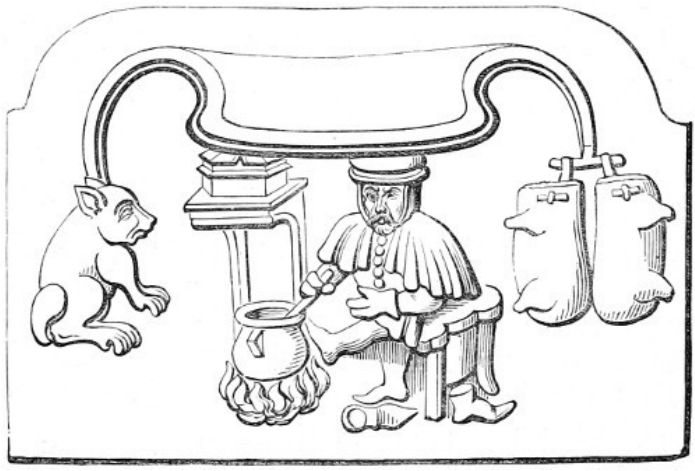
writers, even as far back as the twelfth century. Giraldus Cambrensis, speaking of the castle of Manorbeer (his birthplace), near Pembroke, said that it had under its walls, besides a fine fish-pond, “a beautiful garden, inclosed on one side by a vineyard, and on the other by a wood, remarkable for the projection of its rocks, and the height of its hazel-trees.” In the twelfth century, vineyards were not uncommon in England.



No. 70. A Man warming himself.

A new characteristic was introduced into the Norman

houses, and especially into the castles, the massive walls of which allowed chimney-flues to be carried up in their thickness. The piled-up fire in the middle of the hall was still retained, but in the more private apartments, and even sometimes in the hall itself, the fire was made on a hearth beneath a fire-place built against the side wall of the room. An illumination, in the Cottonian MS. Nero, C. iv., which we have already had occasion to refer to more than once, represents a man warming himself at a fireplace of this description. It appears, from a comparison of this (No. 70) with similar figures of a later period, that it was a usual practice to sit at the fire bare-legged and bare-foot, with the object of imbibing the heat without the intermediation of shoes or stockings. On a carved stall in Worcester Cathedral, represented in our cut No. 71, which belongs to a later date (the latter part of the fourteenth century), and the scene of which is evidently intimated to be in the winter season, a man, while occupied in attending to the culinary operations, has taken off his shoes in order to warm himself in this manner. The winter provisions, two flitches of bacon, are suspended to the left of him, and on the other side the faithful dog seems to enjoy the fire equally with his master. From a story related by Reginald of Durham, it appears to have been a practice among the ladies to warm themselves by sitting over hot water, as well as by the fire.[20] In some of the illuminations of mediæval manuscripts, ladies are represented as warming themselves, even in the presence of the other sex, in a very free and easy manner. The fuel chiefly employed was no doubt still wood, but the remark of Giraldus Cambrensis that the name of Coleshulle (in Flintshire) signified the hill of coals (*carbonum collis*) implies that mineral coals were then known.



No. 71. Indications of Cold Weather.

It is hardly necessary to remark that, in the change in the mode of living which had suddenly taken place in this country, a form of society had also been introduced abruptly which differed entirely from that of the Anglo-Saxons. On the continent, throughout the now disjointed empire which had once been ruled by Charlemagne, there had arisen, during the tenth century, amid frightful misgovernment and the savage invasions of the northmen, a new form of society, which received the name of feudalism, because each landholder held, either direct from the crown or from a superior baron, by a feudal tenure, or fee (*feodum*, *feudum*), which obliged him to military service. Each baron had sovereignty over all those who held under him, and, in turn, acknowledged the nominal sovereignty of a superior baron or of the crown, which the latter practically was only sometimes able to enforce. One great principle of this system was the right of private warfare; and, as not only did the great barons obtain

land in feudal tenure in different countries under different independent princes, but the lesser holders of sub-fees obtained such tenures under more than one superior lord, and as these, when they quarrelled with one superior, made war upon him, and threw themselves upon the protection of another who felt bound to defend his feudatory, war became the normal state of feudal society, and peace and tranquillity were the exceptions. One effect of feudalism was to divide the population of the country into two distinct classes—the landholders, or fighting-men, who alone were free, and the agricultural population, who had no political rights whatever, and were little better than slaves attached to the land. The towns alone, by their own innate force, preserved their independence, but in France the influence of feudalism extended even over them, and the combined hostility of the crown and the aristocracy finally overthrew their municipal independence. Feudalism was brought into England by the Normans, but it was never established here so completely or so fully as on the continent. The towns here never lost their independence, but they sided sometimes with the aristocracy, and sometimes with the crown, until finally they assisted greatly in the overthrow of feudalism itself. Yet the whole territory of England was now distributed in great fees, and in sub-fees; amid which a few of the old Saxon gentry retained their position, and many of the Norman intruders married the Saxon heiresses, in order, as they thought, to strengthen the right of conquest; but the mass of the agricultural population were confounded under the one comprehensive name of *villains* (*villani*), and reduced to a much more wretched condition than under the Anglo-Saxon constitution. The light in which the villain was

regarded in the twelfth century in England is well illustrated in a story told in the English "Rule of Nuns," printed by the Camden Society. A knight, who had cruelly plundered his poor villains, was complimented by one of his flatterers, who said, "Ah, sir! truly thou dost well. For men ought always to pluck and pillage the churl, who is like the willow—it sprouteth out the better for being often cropped."

The power and wealth of the great Norman baron were immense, and before him, during a great part of the period of which we are now speaking, the law of the land was a mere nominal institution. He was in general proud, very tyrannical, and often barbarously cruel. A type of the feudal baron in his worst point of view is presented to us in the character of the celebrated Robert de Belesme, who succeeded his father Roger de Montgomery in the earldom of Shropshire, and of whom Henry of Huntingdon, who lived in his time, tells us, "He was a very Pluto, Megæra, Cerberus, or anything that you can conceive still more horrible. He preferred the slaughter of his captives to their ransom. He tore out the eyes of his own children, when in sport they hid their faces under his cloak. He impaled persons of both sexes on stakes. To butcher men in the most horrible manner was to him an agreeable feast." Of a contemporary feudal chieftain in France, the same writer tells us, "When any one, by fraud or force, fell into his hands, the captive might truly say, 'The pains of hell compassed me round.' Homicide was his passion and his glory. He imprisoned his own countess, an unheard-of outrage; and, cruel and lewd at once, while he subjected her to fetters and torture by day, to extort money, he forced her to cohabit with him by night, in order to mock her. Each night

his brutal followers dragged her from her prison to his bed, each morning they carried her from his chamber back to her prison. Amicably addressing any one who approached him, he would plunge a sword into his side, laughing the while; and for this purpose he carried his sword naked under his cloak more frequently than sheathed. Men feared him, bowed down to him, and worshipped him." Women of rank are met with in the histories of this period who equalled these barons in violence and cruelty; and the relations between the sexes were marked by little delicacy or courtesy. William the Conqueror beat his wife even before they were married. The aristocratic class in general lived a life of idleness, which would have been insupportable without some scenes of extraordinary excitement, and they not only indulged eagerly in hunting, but they continually sallied forth in parties to plunder. They looked upon the mercantile class especially as objects of hostility; and, as they could seldom overcome them in their towns, they waylaid them on the public roads, deprived them of their goods and money, and carried them to their castles, where they tortured them in order to force them to pay heavy ransoms. The young nobles sometimes joined together to plunder a fair or market. On the other hand, men who could not claim the protection of aristocratic blood for their evil deeds, established themselves under that of the wild forests, and issued forth no less eagerly to plunder the country, and to perpetrate every description of outrage on the persons of its inhabitants, of whatever class they might be, who fell into their power. The purity of womanhood was no longer prized, where it was liable to be outraged with impunity; and immorality spread widely through all classes and ranks of society. The

declamations of the ecclesiastics and the satires of the moralists of the twelfth century may give highly-painted pictures, but they lead us to the conclusion that the manners and sentiments of the female sex during the Norman period were very corrupt.

Nevertheless, feudalism did boast of certain dignified and generous principles, and there were noble examples of both sexes, who shine forth more brightly through the general prevalence of vice and of selfishness and injustice. It was in the walls of the feudal castle, amid the familiar intercourse which the want of amusement caused among its inmates, that the principle, or practice, arose, which we in modern times call gallantry, and which, though at first it only led to refinement in the forms of social manners, ended in producing refinement of sentiments. It was among the feudal aristocracy, too, that originated the sentiment we term chivalry, which has varied considerably in its meaning at different periods, and which, in its best sense, existed more in romance than in reality. After the possession of personal strength and courage, the quality which the feudal baron admired most, was what was termed generosity, but which meant lavish expenditure and extravagance; it was the contrast between the baron, who spent his money, and the burgher or merchant, who gained it, and laid it up in his coffers. “Noblemen and gentlemen,” says the “Rule of Nuns,” already quoted, “do not carry packs, nor go about trussed with bundles, nor with purses; it belongs to beggars to bear bag on back, and to burgesses to bear purses.” In fact, it was the principle of the feudal aristocracy to extort their gains from all who laboured and trafficked, in order to squander them on those who lived in idleness, violence, and vice.

Under such circumstances, a new class had arisen which was peculiar to feudal society, who lived entirely upon the extravagance of the aristocracy, and who had so completely abandoned every sentiment of morality or shame, that, in return for the protection of the nobles, they were the ready instruments of any base work. They were called, among various other names, *ribalds* (*ribaldi*) and *letchers* (*leccatores*); the origin of the first of these words is not known, but the latter is equivalent to dish-lickers, and did not convey the sense now given to the word, but was applied to them on account of their gluttony. We have already seen how, in the crowd which attended the feasts of the princes and nobles, the letchers (*lecheurs*) were not content with waiting for what was sent away from table, but seized upon the dishes as they were carried from the kitchen to the hall, and how it was found necessary to make a new office, that of ushers of the hall, to repress the disorder. “In those great courts,” says the author of the “Rule of Nuns,” “they are called letchers who have so lost shame, that they are ashamed of nothing, but seek how they may work the greatest villany.” This class spread through society like a great sore, and from the terms used in speaking of them we derive a great part of the opprobrious words which still exist in the English language.

The early metrical romances of the Carlovingian cycle give us an insight into what were considered as the praiseworthy features in the character of the feudal knight. In Doon of Mayence, for example, when (p. 74) the aged count Guy sends his young son Doon into the world, he counsels him thus: “You shall always ask questions of good men, and you

shall never put your trust in a stranger. Every day, fair son, you shall hear the holy mass, and give to the poor whenever you have money, for God will repay you double. Be liberal in gifts to all; for the more you give, the more honour you will acquire, and the richer you will be; for a gentleman who is too sparing will lose all in the end, and die in wretchedness and disgrace; but give without promising wherever you can. Salute all people when you meet them, and if you owe anything, pay it willingly, but if you cannot pay, ask for a respite. When you come to the hostelry, don't stand squabbling, but enter glad and joyously. When you enter the house, cough very loud, for there may be something doing which you ought not to see, and it will cost you nothing to give this notice of your approach, while those who happen to be there will love you the better for it. Do not quarrel with your neighbour, and avoid disputing with him before other people; for if he know anything against you, he will let it out, and you will have the shame of it. When you are at court, play at tables, and if you have any good points of behaviour (*depors*), show them; you will be the more prized, and gain the more advantage. Never make a noise or joke in church; this is only done by unbelievers, whom God loves not. Honour all the clergy, and speak fairly to them, but leave them as little of your goods as you can; the more they get from you, the more you will be laughed at; you will never profit by enriching them. And if you wish to save your honour undiminished, meddle with nothing you do not understand, and don't pretend to be a proficient in what you have never learnt. And if you have a valet, take care not to seat him at the table by you, or take him to bed with you; for the more honour you do to

a low fellow, the more will he despise you. If you should know anything that you would wish to conceal, tell it by no means to your wife, if you have one; for if you let her know it, you will repent of it the first time you displease her." The estimate of the female character at this period, even when given in the romances of chivalry, is by no means flattering.

With these counsels of a father, we may compare those of a mother to her son. In the romance of Huon de Bordeaux (p. 18), when the youthful hero leaves his home to repair to the court of Charlemagne, the duchess addresses her son as follows: "My child," she said, "you are going to be a courtier; I require you, for God's love, have nothing to do with a treacherous flatterer; make the acquaintance of wise men. Attend regularly at the service of holy church, and show honour and love to the clergy. Give your goods willingly to the poor; be courteous, and spend freely, and you will be the more loved and cherished." On the whole, higher sentiments are placed in the mouth of the lady than in that of the baron. We must, however, return to the outward, and therefore more apparent, characteristics of social life during the Norman period.

The in-door amusements of the ordinary classes of society appear not to have undergone much change during the earlier Norman period, but the higher classes lived more splendidly and more riotously; and, as far as we can judge, they seem to have been coarser in manners and feelings. The writer of the life of Hereward has left us a curious picture of Norman revelry. When the Saxon hero returned to Brunne, to the home of his fathers, and found that it had been taken possession of by a Norman intruder, he secretly took his lodging in the cottage of a

villager close by. In the night he was roused from his pillow by loud sounds of minstrelsy, accompanied with boisterous indications of merriment, which issued from his father's hall, and he was told that the new occupants were at their evening cups. He proceeded to the hall, and entered the doorstead unobserved, from whence he obtained a view of the interior of the hall. The new lord of Brunne was surrounded by his knights, who were scattered about helpless from the extent of their potations, and reclining in the laps of their women. In the midst of them stood a jougleur, or minstrel, alternately singing and exciting their mirth with coarse and brutal jests. It is a first rough sketch of a part of mediæval manners, which we shall find more fully developed at a somewhat later period. The brutality of manners exhibited in the scene which I have but imperfectly described, and which is confirmed by the statements of writers of the following century, soon degenerated into heartless ferocity, and when we reach the period of the civil wars of Stephen's reign, we find the amusements of the hall varied with the torture of captive enemies.

In his more private hours of relaxation, the Norman knight amused himself with games of skill or hazard. Among these, the game of chess became now very popular, and many of the rudely carved chessmen of the twelfth century have been found in our island, chiefly in the north, where they appear to have been manufactured. They are usually made of the tusk of the walrus, the native ivory of Western Europe, which was known popularly as whale's bone. The whalebone of the middle ages is always described as white, and it was a common object of comparison among the early English poets, who, when they

would describe the delicate complexion of a lady, usually said that she was “white as whale’s bone.” These, as well as dice, which were now in common use, were also made of horn and bone, and the manufacture of such articles seems to have been a very extensive one. Even in the little town of Kirkcudbright, on the Scottish border, there was, in the middle of the twelfth century, a maker of combs, draughtsmen, chessmen, dice, spigots, and other such articles, of bone and horn, and stag’s horn appears to have been a favourite material.[21]

In the Chanson de Roland, Charlemagne and his knights are represented, after the capture of Cordova from the Saracens, as sitting in a shady garden, some of them playing at tables, and others at chess.

Sur palies blancs siedent cil cevalers,
As tables juent pur els esbaneier,
E as eschecs li plus saive e li veill
E escremissent cil bacheler leger.

Chess, as the higher game, is here described as the amusement of the chiefs, the old, and the wise; the knights play at tables, or draughts; but the young bachelors are admitted to neither of these games, they amuse themselves with bodily exercises—sham fights.



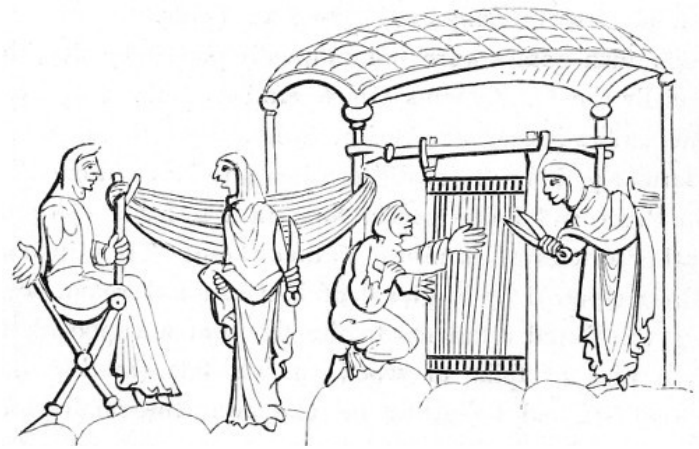
No. 72. A Norman Lantern.

Although such games were not unusually played by day, they were more especially the amusements which employed the long evenings of winter, and candles appear at this time to have been more generally used than at a former period. They still continued to be fixed on candlesticks, and not in them, and spikes appear sometimes to have been attached to tables or other articles of furniture, to hold them. Thus, in one of the pretended miracles told by Reginald of Durham, a sacristan, occupied in committing the sacred vestments to the safety of a cupboard, fixed his candle on a stick or spike of wood on one side (*candelam ... in assere collaterali confixit*), and forgetting to take away the candle, locked the cupboard door, and only discovered his negligence when he found the whole cupboard in flames. Another ecclesiastic, reading in bed, fixed his candle on the top of one of the sides (*spondilia*) of his bed. Another individual bought two small candles (*candelas modicas*) for an *obolus*, but the value of the coin thus named is not very exactly known. The

candle appears to have been usually placed at night in or on the chimney, or fire-place, with which the chamber was now furnished. In Fierabras (p. 93), a thief, having obtained admission in the night to the chamber of the princess Floripas, takes a candle from the chimney, and lights it at the fire, from which we are led to suppose that it was usual to keep the fire alight all night.

Isnelement et tost vient à la ceminée,
Une chandelle a prinse, au fu l'a alumée.

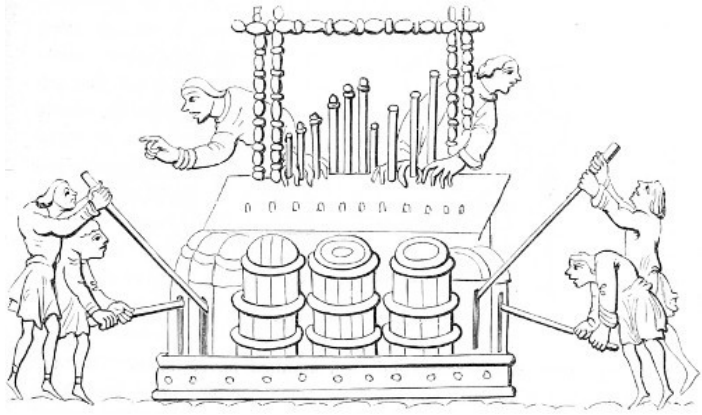
On another occasion (p. 67), a fire is lit in the chimney of Floripas's chamber, and afterwards a table is laid there, and dinner served. Lanterns were now also in general use. The earliest figure of a lantern that I remember to have met with in an English manuscript is one furnished by MS. Cotton. Nero, C. iv., which is represented in our cut (No. 72). It differs but little from the same article as used in modern times; the sides are probably of horn, with a small door through which to put the candle, and the domed cover is pierced with holes for the egress of the smoke.



No. 73. Occupations of the Ladies.

We begin now to be a little better acquainted with the domestic occupations of the ladies, but we shall be able to treat more fully of these in a subsequent chapter. Not the least usual of these was weaving, an art which appears to have been practised very extensively by the female portion of the larger households. The manuscript Psalter in Trinity College, Cambridge, furnishes us with the very curious group of female weavers given in our cut No. 73. It explains itself, as much, at least, as it can easily be explained, and I will only observe that the scissors here employed are of the form common to the Romans, to the Saxons, and to the earlier Normans; they are the Saxon *scear*, and this name, as well as the form, is still preserved in that of the "shears" of the modern clothiers. Music was also a favourite occupation, and the number of musical instruments appears to be considerably increased. Some of these seem to have been elaborately constructed. The manuscript last mentioned furnishes us with the accompanying figure of a large organ, of

laborious though rather clumsy workmanship.

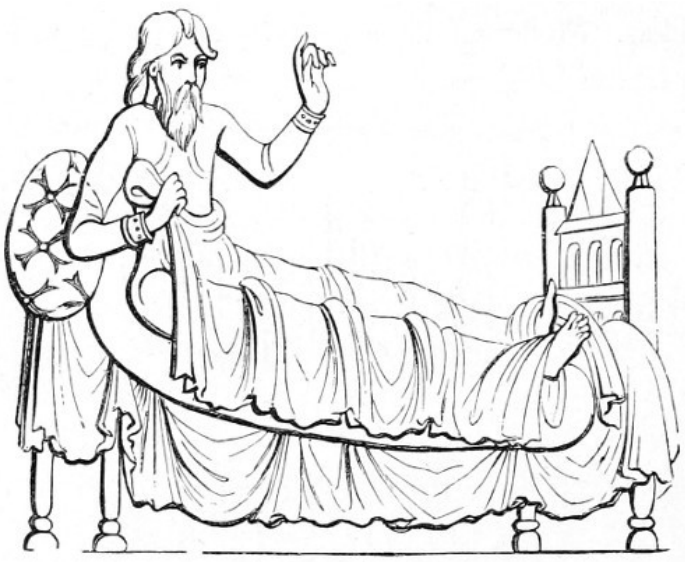


No. 74. A Norman Organ.

In the dwellings of the nobles and gentry, there was more show of furniture under the Normans than under the Saxons. Cupboards (*armaria, armoires*) were more numerous, and were filled with vessels of earthenware, wood, or metal, as well as with other things. Chests and coffers were adorned with elaborate carving, and were sometimes inlaid with metal, and even with enamel. The smaller ones were made of ivory, or bone, carved with historical subjects. Rich ornamentation generally began with ecclesiastics, and we find by the subjects carved upon them that the earlier ivory coffers or caskets belonged to churchmen. When they were made for lords and ladies, they were usually ornamented with subjects from romance, or from the current literature of the day. The beds, also, were more ornamental, and assumed novel forms. Our cut No. 75, taken from MS. Cotton. Nero, C. iv., differs little from some of the Anglo-Saxon figures of beds. But the tester

bed, or bed with a roof at the head, and hangings, was now introduced. In Reginald of Durham, we are told of a sacristan who was accustomed to sit in his bed and read at night. One night, having fixed his candle upon one of the sides of the bed (*supra spondilia lectuli suprema*), he fell accidentally asleep. The fire communicated itself from the candle to the bed, which, being filled with straw, was soon enveloped in flame, and this communicated itself with no less rapidity to the combination of arches and planks of which the frame of the bed was composed (*ligna materies archarum et asserum copiosa*). Above the bed was a wooden frame (*quœdam tabularia stratura*), on which he was accustomed to pile the curtains, dorsals, and other similar furniture of the church. Neckam, in the latter part of the twelfth century, describes the chamber as having its walls covered with a curtain, or tapestry. Besides the bed, he says, there should be a chair, and at the foot of the bed a bench. On the bed was placed a quilt (*culcitra*) of feathers (*plumalis*), to which is joined a pillow; and this is covered with a pointed (*punctata*) or striped (*stragulata*) quilt, and a cushion is placed upon this, on which to lay the head. Then came sheets (*lintheamina, linceuls*), made sometimes of rich silks, but more commonly of linen, and these were covered with a coverlet made of green say, or of cloth made of the hair of the badger, cat, beaver, or sable. On one side of the chamber was a *perche*, or pole, projecting from the wall, for the falcons, and in another place a similar perch for hanging articles of dress. It was not unusual to have only one chamber in the house, in which there were, or could be made, several beds, so that all the company, even if of different sexes, slept in the same room. Servants and persons of lower degree might sleep

unceremoniously in the hall. In the romance of Huon de Bordeaux (p. 270), Huon, his wife, and his brother, when lodged in a great abbey, sleep in three different beds in the same room, no doubt in the guest-house. Among the Anglo-Normans, the chamber seems to have frequently, if not generally, occupied an upper floor, so that it was approached by stairs.

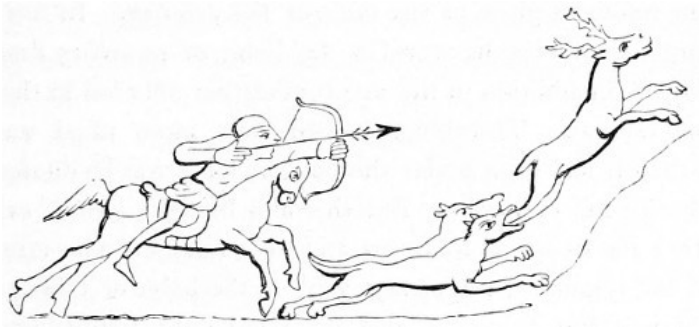


No. 75. A Norman Bed.

The out-of-doors amusements of this period appear in general to have been rude and boisterous. The girls and women seem to have been passionately fond of the dance, which was their common amusement at all public festivals. The young men applied themselves to gymnastic exercises, such as wrestling, and running, and boxing; and they had bull-baitings, and sometimes bear-baitings. On

Roman sites, the ancient amphitheatres seem still to have been used for such exhibitions; and the Roman amphitheatre at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, was known by the title of “The Bull-ring” down to a very late period. The higher ranks among the Normans were extraordinarily addicted to the chace, to secure which they adopted severe measures for preserving the woods and the beasts which inhabited them. Every reader of English history knows the story of the New Forest, and of the fate which there befell the great patron of hunting—William Rufus. The Saxon Chronicle, in summing up the character of William the Conqueror, tells us that he “made large forests for the deer, and enacted laws therewith, so that whoever killed a hart or a hind, should be blinded. As he forbade killing the deer, so also the boars; and he loved the tall stags as if he were their father. He also appointed concerning the hares, that they should go free.” The passion of the aristocracy for hunting was a bane to the rural population in more ways than one. Not only did they ride over the cultivated lands, and destroy the crops, but wherever they came they lived at free quarter on the unfortunate population, ill-treating the men, and even outraging the females, at will. John of Salisbury complains bitterly of the cruelty with which the country-people were treated, if they happened to be short of provisions when the hunters came to their houses. “If one of these hunters come across your land,” he says, “immediately and humbly lay before him everything you have in your house, and go and buy of your neighbours whatever you are deficient of, or you may be plundered and thrown into prison for your disrespect to your betters.” The weapons generally used in hunting the stag were bows and arrows. It was a barbed arrow which pierced the

breast of the second William, when he was hunting the stag in the wilds of the New Forest. Our cut (No. 76), from the Trinity College Psalter, represents a horseman hunting the stag. The noble animal is closely followed by a brace of hounds, and just as he is turning up a hill, the huntsman aims an arrow at him. As far as we can gather from the few authorities in which it is alluded to, the Saxon peasantry were not unpractised hands at the bow. We find them enjoying the character of good archers very soon after the Norman conquest, under circumstances which seem to preclude the notion that they derived their knowledge of this arm from the invaders. In the miracles of St. Bega, printed by Mr. G. C. Tomlinson, in 1842, there is a story which shows the skill of the young men of Cumberland in archery very soon after the entrance of the Normans; and the original writer, who lived perhaps not much after the middle of the twelfth century, assures us that the Hibernian Scots, and the men of Galloway, who were the usual enemies of the men of Cumberland, "feared these sort of arms more than any others, and called an arrow, proverbially, a *flying devil*." We learn from this and other accounts, that the arrows of this period were barbed and fledged, or furnished with feathers. It may be observed, in support of the assertion that the use of bows and arrows was derived from the Saxons, that the names *bow* (*boga*) and *arrow* (*arewe*), by which they have always been known, are taken directly from their language; whereas, if the practice of archery had been introduced by the Normans, it is probable we should have called them *arcs* and *fletches*.



No. 76. A Stag-hunt.

After the entrance of the Normans, we begin to find more frequent allusions to the convivial meetings of the middle and lower orders in ordinary inns or private houses. Thus, we have a story in Reginald of Durham, of a party of the parishioners of Kellow, who went to a drinking party at the priest's, and passed in this manner a great portion of the night.[22] This occurred in the time of bishop Geoffrey Rufus, between 1133 and 1140. A youth and his monastic teacher are represented on another occasion as going to a tavern, and passing the whole of the night in drinking, till one of them becomes inebriated, and cannot be prevailed on to return home. Another of Reginald's stories describes a party in a private house, sitting and drinking round the fire. We are obliged thus to collect together slight and often trivial allusions to the manners of a period during which we have so few detailed descriptions. Hospitality was at this time exercised among all classes freely and liberally; the misery of the age made people meet together with more kindliness. The monasteries had their open guest-houses, and the unknown traveller was seldom refused a place at the table of the yeoman. In towns, most of the burgesses or citizens were in the habit of receiving

strangers as private lodgers, in addition to the accommodation afforded in the regular *hospitia* or taverns. Travelling, indeed, was more usual under the Normans than it had been under the Saxons, for it was facilitated by the more extensive use of horses. But this also brought serious evils upon the country; for troops of followers and rude retainers who attended on the proud and tyrannical aristocracy, were in the habit of taking up their lodgings at will and discretion, and living upon the unfortunate householders without pay. It had been, even during the Anglo-Saxon period, a matter of pride and ostentation among men of rank—especially the king's officers—to travel about accompanied with a great multitude of followers,[23] and this practice certainly did not diminish under the Normans. But, whether in great numbers or in small, the travellers of the twelfth century sought the means of amusing themselves during their journey, and these amusements resembled some of those which were employed at the dinner-table—they told stories, or repeated episodes from romances, or sung, and they sometimes had minstrels to accompany them. In the romance of Huon de Bordeaux, Huon, on his journey from his native city to Paris, asks his brother Gerard to sing, to enliven them on the road,—

Cante, biau frere, pour nos cors esjoir.

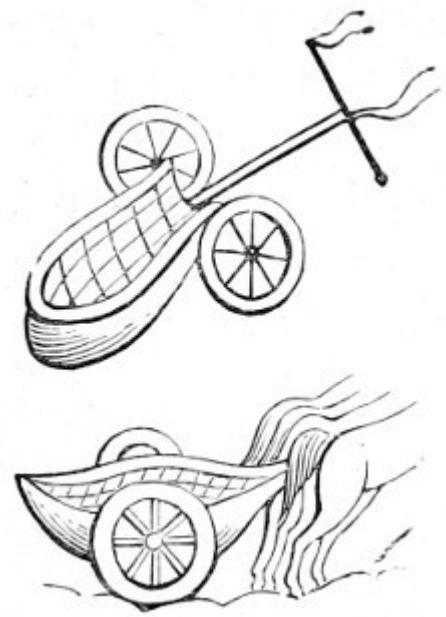
—Huon de Bordeaux, p. 18.

But Gerard declines, because a disagreeable dream of the preceding night has made his heart sorrowful. When we turn from romance to sober history, we learn from Giraldus Cambrensis how Gilbert de Clare, journeying from England to his great possessions in Cardiganshire, was preceded by a

minstrel and a singing-man, who played and sang alternately, and how the noise they made gave notice of his approach to the Welshmen who lay in ambush to kill him.



No. 77. Norman Travellers.



No. 78. Cars.

A group of Norman travellers is here given from the Cottonian MS. Nero, C. iv. It is intended to represent Joseph and the Virgin Mary travelling into Egypt. The Virgin on the ass, or mule, is another example of the continued practice among ladies of riding sideways. Mules appear to have been the animals on which ladies usually rode at this period. In the romance of Huon de Bordeaux (p. 60), when Huon, immediately after his marriage, proceeds on his journey homeward, he mounts his young duchess on a mule; so also, in the romance of Gaufrey (p. 62), the princess Flordespine is mounted on “a rich mule,” the trappings of which are rather minutely described. “The saddle was of ivory, inset with gold; on the bridle there was a gem of such power that it gave light in the darkness of night, and whoever bore

it was preserved from all disease; the saddle-cloth (*sambue*) was wonderfully made; she had thirty little bells behind the *cuirie*, which, when the mule ambled, made so great a melody that harp or viol were worth nothing in comparison." The Anglo-Norman historian, Ordericus Vitalis, has preserved a legend of a vision of purgatory, in which the priest who is supposed to have seen it describes, among other suffering persons, "a crowd of women who seemed to him to be innumerable. They were mounted on horseback, riding in female fashion, with women's saddles.... In this company the priest recognised several noble ladies, and beheld the palfreys and mules, with the women's litters, of others who were still alive." The Trinity College Psalter furnishes us with the two figures of cars given in our cut No. 78; but they are so fanciful in shape, that we can hardly help concluding they must have been mere rude and grotesque attempts at imitating classical forms.

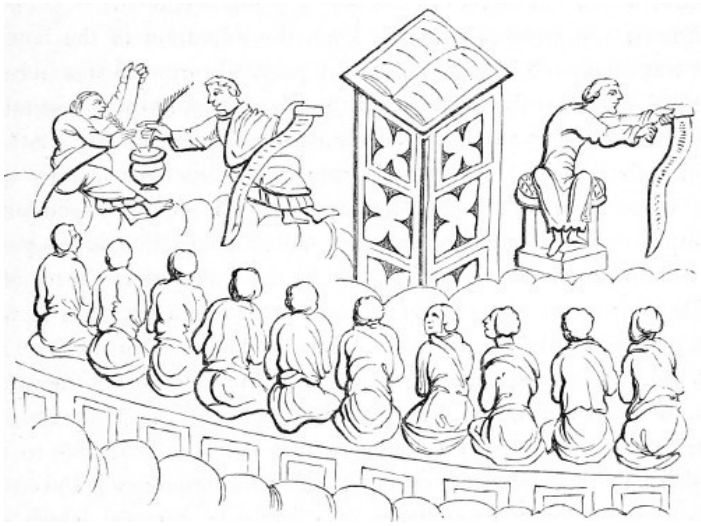


No. 79. The Stocks.

The manuscript last mentioned affords us two other curious illustrations of the manners of the earlier half of the twelfth century. The first of these (No. 79) represents two men in the stocks, one held by one leg only, the other by both. The men to the left are

hooting and insulting them. The second, represented in our cut No. 80, is the interior of a Norman school. We give only a portion of the original, where the bench, on which the scholars are seated, forms a complete circle. The two writers, the teacher, who seems to be lecturing *viva voce*, and his seat and desk, are all worthy of notice. We have very little information on the forms and methods of teaching in schools at this period, but schools seem to have been numerous in all parts of the country. We have more than one allusion to them in the *naïve* stories of Reginald of Durham. From one of these we learn that a school, according to a custom "now common enough," was kept in the church of Norham, on the Tweed, the parish priest being the teacher. One of the boys, named Aldene, had incurred the danger of correction, to escape which he took the key of the church door, which appears to have been in his custody, and threw it into a deep pool in the river Tweed, then called Padduwel, and now Pedwel or Peddle, a place well known as a fishing station. He hoped by this means to escape further scholastic discipline, from the circumstance that the scholars would be shut out by the impossibility of opening the church door. Accordingly, when the time of vespers came, and the priest arrived, the key of the door was missing, and the boy declared that he did not know where it was. The lock was too strong and ponderous to be broken or forced, and, after a vain effort to open the door, the evening was allowed to pass without divine service. The story goes on to say, that in the night St. Cuthbert appeared to the priest, and inquired wherefore he had neglected his service. On hearing the explanation, the saint ordered him to go next morning to the fishing station at Padduwel, and buy the first net of fish that was drawn out of the

river. The priest obeyed, and in the net was a salmon of extraordinary magnitude, in the throat of which was found the lost key of Norham church.



No. 80. A Norman School.

Among the aristocracy of the land, the education of the boy took what was considered at that time a very practical turn—he was instructed in behaviour, in manly exercises and the use of arms, in carving at table—then looked upon as a most important accomplishment among gentlemen—and in some other branches of learning which we should hardly appreciate at present; but school learning was no mediæval gentleman's accomplishment, and was, in that light, quite an exception, unless perhaps to a certain degree among the ladies. In the historical romances of the middle ages, a prince or a baron is sometimes able to read, but it is the result of accidental circumstances. Thus, in the romance of the "Mort de Garin," when the empress of the Franks

writes secret news from Paris to duke Garin, the head of the family of the Loherains, it is remarked, as an unusual circumstance, that the latter was able to read, and that he could thus communicate the secret information of the empress to his friends without the assistance of a scholar or secretary, which was a great advantage, as it prevented one source of danger of the betrayal of the correspondence. "Garin the Loherain," says the narrator, "was acquainted with letters, for in his infancy he was put to school until he had learned both Roman (French) and Latin."

De letres sot li Loherens Garins;
Car en s'enfance fu à escole mis,
Tant que il sot et Roman et Latin.

—Mort de Garin, p. 105.

Education of this kind was bestowed more generally on the *bourgeoisie*—on the middle and even the lower classes; and to these school-education was much more generally accessible than we are accustomed to imagine. From Anglo-Saxon times, indeed, every parish church had been a public school. The Ecclesiastical Institutes (p. 475, in the folio edition of the Laws, by Thorpe) directs that "Mass-priests ought always to have at their houses a school of disciples; and if any one desire to commit his little ones (*lytlingas*) to them for instruction, they ought very gladly to receive them, and kindly teach them." It is added that "they ought not, however, for that instruction, to desire anything from their relatives, except what they shall be willing to do for them of their own accord." In the Ecclesiastical Canons, published under king Edgar, there is an enactment which would lead us to suppose that the clergy performed their scholastic duties with some zeal, and

that priests were in the habit of seducing their scholars from each other, for this enactment (p. 396) enjoins "that no priest receive another's scholar without leave of him whom he previously followed." This system of teaching was kept up during at least several generations after the Norman conquest.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY ENGLISH HOUSES.—THEIR GENERAL FORM AND DISTRIBUTION.

After the middle of the twelfth century, we begin to be better acquainted with the domestic manners of our forefathers, and from that period to the end of the fourteenth century the change was very gradual, and in many respects they remained nearly the same. In the middle classes, especially in the towns, there had been a gradual fusion of Norman and Saxon manners, while the Norman fashions and the Norman language prevailed in the higher classes, and the manners of the lower classes remained, probably, nearly the same as before the Conquest.

We now obtain a more perfect notion of the houses of all classes, not only from more frequent and exact descriptions, but from existing remains. The principal part of the building was still the hall, or, according to the Norman word, the *salle*, but its old Saxon

character seems to have been so universally acknowledged, that the first or Saxon name prevailed over the other. The name now usually given to the whole dwelling-house was the Norman word *manoir* or manor, and we find this applied popularly to the houses of all classes, excepting only the cottages of labouring people. In houses of the twelfth century, the hall, standing on the ground floor, and open to the roof, still formed the principal feature of the building. The chamber generally adjoined to it at one end, and at the other was usually a stable (*croiche*). The whole building stood within a small enclosure, consisting of a yard or court in front, called in Norman *aire* (area), and a garden, which was surrounded usually with a hedge and ditch. In front, the house had usually one door, which was the main entrance into the hall. From this latter apartment there was a door into the chamber at one end, and one into the *croiche* or stable at the other end, and a back door into the garden. The chamber had also frequently a door which opened also into the garden; the stable, as a matter of course, would have a large door or outlet into the yard. The chief windows were those of the hall. These, in common houses, appear to have been merely openings, which might be closed with wooden shutters; and in other parts of the building they were nothing but holes (*pertuis*); there appears to have been usually one of these holes in the partition wall between the chamber and the hall, and another between the hall and the stable. There was also an outer window, or *pertuis*, to the chamber.

In the popular French and Anglo-Norman *fabliaux*, or tales in verse, which belong mostly to the thirteenth century, we meet with many incidents illustrating

this distribution of the apartments of the house, which no doubt continued essentially the same during that and the following century. Thus in a fabliau published by M. Jubinal, an old woman of mean condition in life, dame Auberée, is described as visiting a burgher's wife, who, with characteristic vanity, takes her into the chamber adjoining (*en une chambre ilueques près*), to show her her handsome bed. When the lady afterwards takes refuge with dame Auberée, she also shows her out of the hall into a chamber close adjoining (*en une chambre iluec de joste*). In a fabliau entitled *Du prestre crucifié*, published by Méon, a man returning home at night, sees what is going on in the hall through a *pertuis*, or hole made through the wall for a window, before he opens the door (*par un pertuis les a veuz*). In another fabliau published in the larger collection of Barbazan, a lady in her chamber sees what is passing in the hall *par un pertuis*. In the fabliau of *Le povre clerc* (or scholar), the clerc, having asked for a night's lodging at the house of a miller during the miller's absence, is driven away by the wife, who expects a visit from her lover the priest, and is unwilling to have an intruder. The clerc, as he is going away, meets the miller, who, angry at the inhospitable conduct of his dame, takes him back to the house. The priest in the meantime had arrived, and is sitting in the hall with the good wife, who, hearing a knock at the door, makes her lover hide himself in the stable (*croiche*). From the stable the priest watches the company in the hall through a window (*fenestre*), which is evidently only another name for the *pertuis*. In one fabliau the gallant comes through the court or garden, and is let into the hall by the back door; in another a woman is introduced into the chamber by a back door, or, as it is called in the text, a false door

(*par un fax huis*), while the hall is occupied by company.

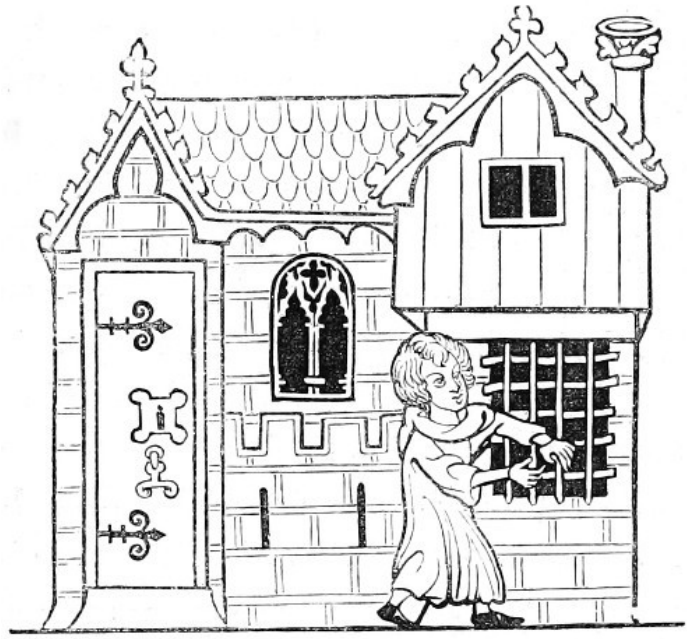
The arrangements of an ordinary house in the country are illustrated in the fabliau *De Barat et de Haimet*, printed in the collection of Barbazan. Two thieves undertake to rob a third of "a bacon," which he (Travers) had hung on the beam or rafter of his house, or hall:—

Travers l'avoit à une hart
Au tref de sa meson pendu.

The thieves make a hole in the wall, by which one enters without waking Travers or his wife, although they were sleeping with the door of their chamber open. The bacon is thus stolen and carried away. Travers, roused by the noise of their departure, rises from his bed, follows the thieves, and ultimately recaptures his bacon. He resolves now to cook the bacon, and eat some of it, and for this purpose a fire is made, and a cauldron full of water hung over it. This appears to be performed in the middle of the hall. The thieves return, and, approaching the door, one of them looked through the *pertuis*, and saw the bacon boiling:—

Baras mist son oeil au pertuis,
Et voit que la chaudiere bout.

The thieves then climb the roof, uncover a small space at the top silently, and attempt to draw up the bacon with a hook.



No. 81. An Anglo-Norman House.



No. 82. The Hall and Chamber.

From the unskilfulness of the mediæval artists in representing details where any knowledge of perspective was required, we have not so much information as might be expected from the illuminated manuscripts relating to the arrangements of houses. But a fine illuminated copy of the romances of the San Graal and the Round Table, executed at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and now preserved in the British Museum (MS. Addit. Nos. 10,292-10,294), furnishes us with one or two rather interesting illustrations of this subject. The romances themselves were composed in Anglo-Norman, in the latter half of the twelfth century. The first cut which we shall select from this manuscript is a complete view of a house; it belongs to a chapter entitled *Ensi que Lancelot ront les fers d'une fenestre, et si entre dedens pour gesir avoec la royne*. The queen

has informed Lancelot that the head of her bed lies near the window of her chamber, and that he may come by night to the window, which is defended by an iron grating, to talk with her, and she tells him that the wall of the adjacent hall is in one part weak and dilapidated enough to allow of his obtaining an entrance through it; but Lancelot prefers breaking open the grating in order to enter directly into the chamber, to passing through the hall. The grating of the chamber window appears to have been common in the houses of the rich and noble; in the records of the thirteenth century, the grating of the chamber windows of the queen is often mentioned. The window behind Lancelot in our cut is that of the hall, and is distinguished by architectural ornamentation. The ornamental hinges of the door, with the lock and the knocker, are also curious. Our next cut (No. 82), taken from this same manuscript, represents part of the house of a knight, whose wife has an intrigue with one of the heroes of these romances, king Claudas. The knight lay in wait to take the king, as he was in the lady's chamber at night, but the king, being made aware of his danger, escaped by the chamber-window, while the knight expected to catch him by entering at the hall door. The juxtaposition of hall and chamber is here shown very plainly. In another chapter of the same romances, the king takes Lancelot into a chamber to talk with him apart, while his knights wait for them in the hall; this is pictorially represented in an illumination copied in the accompanying cut (No. 83), which shows exactly the relative position of the hall and chamber. The door here is probably intended for that which led from the hall into the chamber.



No. 83. The Knights in waiting.

We see from continual allusions that an ordinary house, even among men of wealth, had usually only one chamber, which served as his sleeping-room, and as the special apartment of the female portion of the household—the lady and her maids, while the hall was employed indiscriminately for cooking, eating and drinking, receiving visitors, and a variety of other purposes, and at night it was used as a common sleeping-room. These arrangements, and the construction of the house, varied according to the circumstances of the locality and the rank of the occupiers. Among the rich, a stable did not form part of the house, but its site was often occupied by the kitchen, which was almost always placed close to the hall. Among the higher classes other chambers were built, adjacent to the chief chamber, or to the hall,

though in larger mansions they sometimes occupied a tower or separate building adjacent. The form, however, which the manor-house generally took was a simple oblong square. A seal of the thirteenth century, attached to a deed by which, in June, 1272, William Moraunt grants to Peter Picard an acre of land in the parish of Otteford in Kent, furnishes us with a representation of William Moraunt's manor-house. It is a simple square building, with a high-pitched roof, as appears always to have been the case in the early English houses, and a chimney. The hall door, it will be observed, opens outwardly, as is the case in the preceding cuts, which was the ancient Roman manner of opening of the outer door of the house; it may be added that it was the custom to leave the hall door or *huis* (*ostium*) always open by day, as a sign of hospitality. It will also be observed that there is a curious coincidence in the form of chimney with the cuts from the illuminated manuscript. We must not overlook another circumstance in these delineations,—the position of the chimney, which is usually over the chamber, and not over the hall. Fireplaces in the wall and chimneys were first introduced in the chamber.



No. 84. Seal of W. Moraunt.

As the grouping together of several apartments on the ground-floor rendered the whole building less compact and less defensible, the practice soon rose, especially in the better *manoirs*, of making apartments above. This upper apartment was called a *soler* (*solarium*, a word supposed to be derived from *sol*, the sun, as being, by its position, nearer to that luminary, or as receiving more light from it). It was at first, and in the lesser mansions, but a small apartment raised above the chamber, and approached by a flight of steps outside, though (but more rarely) the staircase was sometimes internal. In our first cut from the Museum manuscript (No. 81),

there is a soler over the chamber, to which the approach appears to be from the inside. In the early metrical tales the *soler*, and its exterior *staircase*, are often alluded to. Thus, in the fabliau *D'Estourmi*, in Barbazan, a burgher and his wife deceive three monks of a neighbouring abbey who make love to the lady; she conceals her husband in the soler above, to which he ascends by a flight of steps:—

Tesiez, vous monterez là sus
En cel solier tout coiement.

The monk, before he enters the house, passes through the court (*cortil*), in which there is a sheepcot (*bercil*), or perhaps a stable. The husband from the soler above looks through a lattice or grate and sees all that passes in the hall—

Par la treillie le porlingne.

The stairs seem, therefore, to have been outside the hall, with a latticed window looking into it from the top. The monk appears to have entered the hall by the back door, and the chamber is adjacent to the hall (as in houses which had no soler), on the side opposite to that on which were the stairs. When another monk comes, the husband hides himself under the stairs (*souz le degré*). The bodies of the monks (who are killed by the husband) are carried out *parmi une fausse posterne* which leads into the fields (*aus chans*). In the fabliau of *La Saineresse*, a woman who performs the operation of bleeding comes to the house of a burgher, and finds the man and his wife seated on a bench in the yard before the hall—

En mi l'aire de sa meson.

The lady says she wants bleeding, and takes her upstairs into the soler:—

Montez là sus en cel solier,
Il m'estuet de vostre mestier.

They enter, and close the door. The apartment on the soler, although there was a bed in it, is not called a chamber, but a room or saloon (*perrin*):—

Si se descendent del perrin,
Contreval les degrez enfin
Vindrent errant en la maison.

The expression that they came down the stairs, and *into the house*, shows that the staircase was outside.

In another fabliau, *De la borgoise d'Orliens*, a burgher comes to his wife in the disguise of her gallant, and the lady, discovering the fraud, locks him up in the soler, pretending he is to wait there till the household is in bed—

Je vous metrai privéement
En un solier dont j'ai la clef.

She then goes to meet her *ami*, and they come from the garden (*vergier*) direct into the chamber without entering the hall. Here she tells him to wait while she goes *in there* (*là dedans*), to give her people their supper, and she leaves him while she goes into the hall. The lady afterwards sends her servants to beat

her husband, pretending him to be an importunate suitor whom she wishes to punish! “he waits for me up there in that room:”—

Là sus m’atent en ce perin.
* * * * *
Ne souffrez pas que il en isse,
Ainz l’acueillier al solier haut.

They beat him as he descends the stairs, and pursue him into the garden, all which passes without entering the lower apartments of the house. The *soler*, or upper part of the house, appears to have been considered the place of greatest security—in fact it could only be entered by one door, which was approached by a flight of steps, and was therefore more easily defended than the ground floor. In the beautiful story *De l’ermite qui s’acompaigna à l’ange*, the hermit and his companion seek a night’s lodging at the house of a rich but miserly usurer, who refuses them admittance into the house, and will only permit them to sleep under the staircase, in what the story terms an *auvent* or shed. The next morning the hermit’s young companion goes upstairs into the soler to find the usurer, who appears to have slept there for security—

Le vallet les degrez monta,
El solier son hoste trova.

It was in the thirteenth century a proverbial characteristic of an avaricious and inhospitable person, to shut his hall door and live in the soler. In a poem of this period, in which the various vices of the age are placed under the ban of

excommunication, the miser is thus pointed out:—

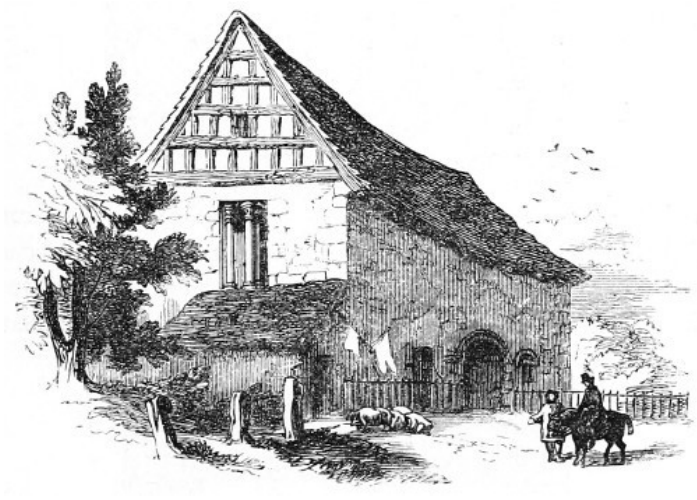
Encor escommeni-je plus
Riche homme qui ferme son huis,
Et va mengier en solier sus.

The *huis* was the door of the hall. The soler appears also to have been considered as the room of honour for rich lodgers or guests who paid well. In the fabliau *Des trois avugles de Compiengne*, three blind men come to the house of a burgher, and require to be treated better than usual; on which he shows them upstairs—

En la haute logis les maine.

A clerc, who follows, after putting his horse in the stable, sits at table with his host in the hall, while the three other guests are served “like knights” in the soler above—

Et li avugle du solier
Furent servi com chevalier.

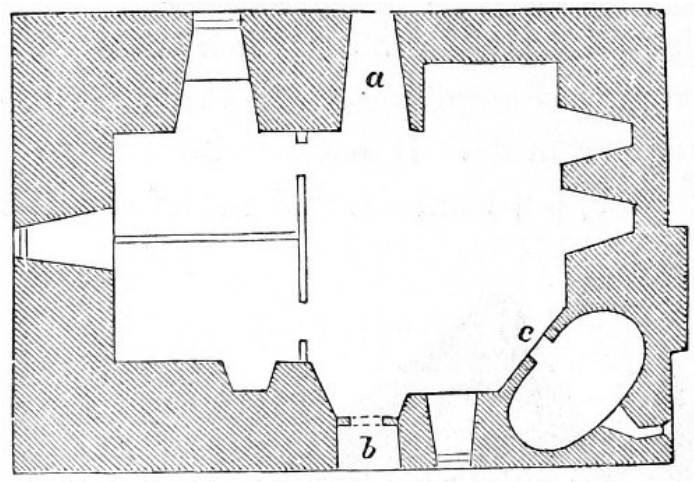


No. 85. Ancient Manor-House, Millichope, Shropshire.

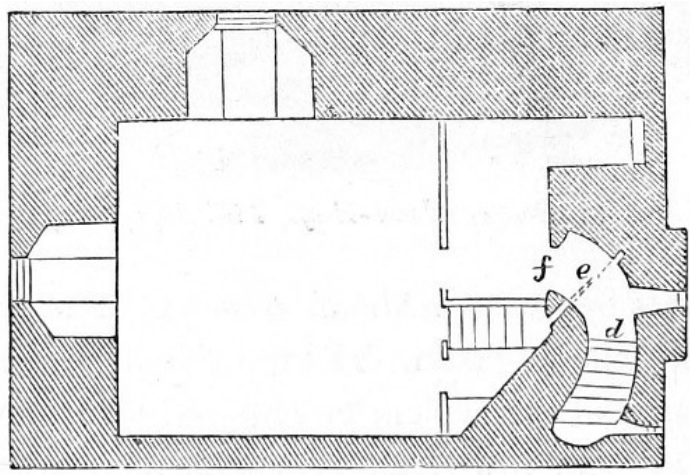
During the period of which we are speaking, the richer the householder, the greater need he had of studying strength and security, and hence with him the soler, or upper story, became of more importance, and was often made the principal part of the house, at least that in which himself and his family placed themselves at night. This was especially the case in stone buildings, where the ground-floor was often a low vaulted apartment, which seems to have been commonly looked upon as a cellar, while the principal room was on the first-floor, approached usually by a staircase on the outside. A house of this kind is represented in one of our cuts taken from the Bayeux tapestry, where the guests are carousing in the room on the first-floor. Yet still the vaulted room on the ground-floor was perhaps more often considered as the public apartment. In this manner the two apartments of the house, instead of standing side by side, were raised one upon the other, and formed externally a square

mass of masonry. Several examples of early manor-houses of this description still remain, among which one of the most remarkable is that at Millichope in Shropshire; which evidently belongs to the latter half of the twelfth century. It has not been noticed in any work on domestic architecture, but I am enabled to describe it from two private lithographed plates by Mrs. Stackhouse Acton, of Acton Scott, from which the accompanying cuts are taken. The first (No. 85) represents the present outward appearance of the ancient building, which is now an adjunct to a farm-house. The plan is a rectangle, considerably longer from north to south than in the transverse direction. The walls are immensely thick on the ground-floor in comparison to the size of the building, as will be seen from the plan of the ground-floor given in the next cut (No. 86). The original entrance was at *b*, by a late Norman arch, slightly ornamented, which is seen in the view. To the right of this is seen one of the original windows, also round arched. On the north and east sides were two other windows, the openings of them all being small towards the exterior, but enlarging inwards. The interior must have been extremely dark; nevertheless it contains a fireplace, and was probably the public room. The opening at *a* is merely a modern passage into the farm-house. As this house stands on the borders of Wales, and therefore security was the principal consideration, the staircase, from the thickness of the walls, was safer inside than on the exterior. We accordingly find that it was worked into the mass of the wall in the south-west corner, the entrance being at *c*. The steps of the lower part—it was a stone staircase—are concealed or destroyed, so that we hardly know how it commenced, but there are steps of stone now running up to the soler or upper

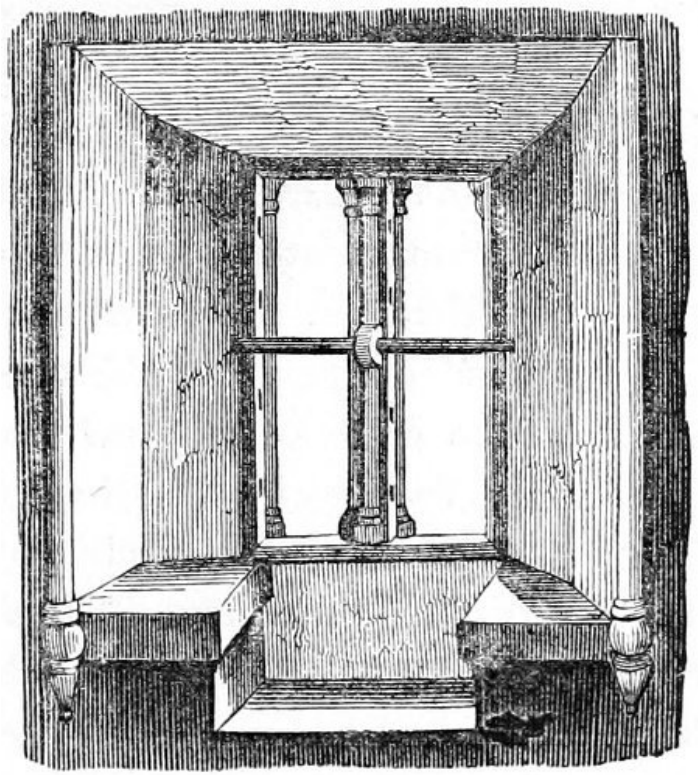
apartment, as represented in our plan of the upper floor. This staircase received light at the bottom and at the top, by a small loop-hole worked through the wall. Although the walls were so massive in the lower room, the staircase was secured by extraordinary precautions. At the top of the steps at *d*, again at *e*, and a third time at *f*, were strong doors, secured with bolts, which it would have required great force to break open. The last of these doors led into the upper apartment, which was rather larger than the lower one, the west wall being here much thinner. This was evidently the family apartment; it had two windows, on the north and east sides, each having seats at the side, with ornamentation of early English character. A view of the northern window from the interior, with its seats, is given in our cut No. 88; it is the same which is seen externally in our sketch of the house: this room had no fireplace.



No. 86. Plan of Ground-Floor of House at Millichope.



No. 87. Plan of the Upper Floor.



No. 88. Inside of Window at Millichope.

Towards the fourteenth century, the rooms of houses began to be multiplied, and they were often built round a court; the additions were made chiefly to the offices, and to the number of chambers. They were still built more of wood than of stone, and the carpenter was the chief person employed in their construction. In the fabliau of Trubert, printed by Méon, a duke, intending to build a new house, employs a carpenter to make the design, and takes him into his woods to select timber for materials. It may give some notion of the simplicity of the arrangement of a house, and the small number of

rooms, even when required for royalty itself, when we state that in the January of 1251, king Henry III., intending to visit Hampshire, and requiring a house for himself with his queen and court, gave orders to the sheriff of Southampton to build at Freemantle a hall, a kitchen, and a chamber with an upper story (*cum estagio*, sometimes called in documents written in French *chambre estagée*), and a chapel on the ground, for the king's use; and a chamber with an upper story, with a chapel at the end of the same chamber, for the queen's use. Under the chamber was to be made a cellar for the king's wines.

The chamber had, indeed, now become so important a part of the building, that its name was not unusually given to the whole house, which, in the documents of the thirteenth century, is sometimes called a *camera ad estagiam*—an upper-storied chamber. Such was the case with a house built in 1285 for Edward I. and his queen in the forest at Woolmer, in Hampshire, the account of the expenses of which are preserved in the Pipe Rolls. This house was seventy-two feet long, and twenty-eight feet wide. It had two chimneys, a chapel, and two wardrobes. The chapel and wardrobe had six glazed windows. There was also a hall in it, but the two chimneys appear to have belonged to the chamber. The windows of the chamber and hall had wooden shutters (*hostia*), but do not appear to have had glass. The kitchen was the only other apartment in the house. The ordinary windows of a house at this time were not usually glazed; but they were either latticed, or consisted of a mere opening, which was covered by a cloth or curtain by day, and was closed by a shutter, which turned upon hinges, either sideways, like an ordinary door, or up and down,

and which seems generally to have opened outwards. The rooms were, in this manner, very imperfectly protected against the weather, even in palaces. A precept of Henry III. has been quoted, which directs glass to be substituted for wood in a window in the queen's wardrobe at the Tower, "in order that that chamber might not be so windy;" and in the same reign a charge is made in the accounts relating to the royal manor at Kennington, "for closing the windows better than usual (*et in fenestris melius solito claudendis*)."[24]

These remarks on the general character of the house are, of course, intended to apply to the ordinary dwelling-house, and not to the more extensive mansion—which already in the thirteenth century was made to surround, wholly or partly, an interior court—or to the castle. These more extensive edifices consisted only of a greater accumulation of the rooms and details which were found in the smaller house. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, no great change took place in the general characteristics of a private house. The hall was still the largest and most important room, and was now usually raised on an under vaulted room, which, to whatever use it may have been applied, was usually called the *cellar*. Part of it appears to have been sometimes employed as the stable. In the carpenter's house, in Chaucer's Milleres Tale, the hall, which is evidently the main part of the building, was open to the roof, with cross beams, on which they hanged the troughs, and the stable was attached to it, and intervened between the house and the garden. In the Cokes Tale of Gamelyn, the hall has its posts, or columns, and there is attached to it a room called a *spence*, which was more frequently called the *buttery*,

in which victuals of different kinds, and the wine and plate, were locked up, and the man who had the charge of it was called the *spencer* or *despencer*, which it is hardly necessary to say was the origin of two common English surnames. The gentleman's house, in Chaucer's Sompnoures Tale, was a "large halle," and is called a *court*, which had now become an ordinary term for a manor-house.

A stordy paas doun to the court he goth,
Wher as ther wonyd a man of gret honour.
—Chaucer's Cant. Tales, l. 7,744.

In the Nonne Prestes Tale, the poor widow's cottage also has its hall and *bour*, or chamber, although they were all sooty, of course, from the fires, which had no chimney to carry off the smoke.

Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir halle.
—Ib. l. 16,318.

This house was situated within a court, or, as it is called, *yard*, which was enclosed by a hedge of sticks, and by a ditch:—

A yerd sche had, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dich withoute.

In the Tale of Gamelyn, the yard, or court, as we use the Anglo-Saxon or the Anglo-Norman name for it, had a stronger fence, with a gate and wicket fastened by lock and bolt, and apparently a lodge for the porter. In the yard there was a draw-well, seven fathoms deep. While Gamelyn took possession of the hall, his brother shut himself up in the cellar, which

could be made a safe place of refuge, when all the rest of the house was in the power of an enemy. The yard here had also a postern-gate. In the carpenter's house, in Chaucer's Milleres Tale, the chamber has a low window, to swing outwardly—

So mote I thryve, I schal at cokkes crowe
Ful pryvely go knokke at his wyndowe,
That stant ful lowe upon his bowres wal—

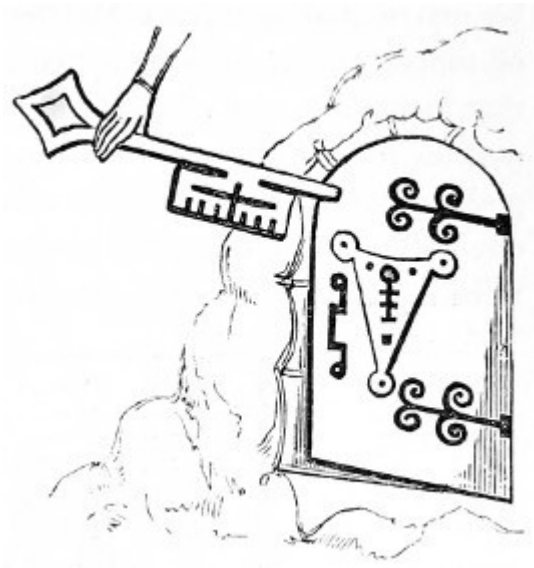
which is immediately afterwards called the "schot wyndowe"—

Unto his brest it raught, it was so lowe.

A new apartment had now been added to the house, called in Anglo-Norman a parlour (*parloir*), because it was literally the talking-room. It belonged originally to the monastic houses, where the parlour was the room for receiving people who came to converse on business, and, when introduced into private houses, it was a sort of secondary hall, where visitors might be received more privately than in the great hall, and yet with less familiarity than in the chamber. In the story of Sir Cleges, the knight finds the king seated in his parlour, and listening to a harper. In a Latin document of the year 1473, printed in Rymer's Fœdera, a citizen of London has, in his mansion-house there, a parlour adjoining the garden (*in quadam parlura adjacente gardino*).

Houses were, as I have before stated, usually built in great part of timber, and it was only where unusual strength was required, or else from a spirit of ostentation, that they were made of stone. There

appear to have been very few fixtures in the inside, and, as furniture was scanty, the rooms must have appeared very bare. In timber houses, of course, it was not easy to make cupboards or closets in the walls, but this was not the case when they were built of stone. Even in the latter case, however, the walls appear not to have been much excavated for such purposes. Our cut No. 89 represents a cupboard door, taken from an illuminated manuscript of the thirteenth century, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; it is curious for its ironwork, especially the lock and key. The smaller articles of domestic use were usually deposited in chests, or placed upon sideboards and moveable stands. In the houses of the wealthy a separate room was built for the wardrobe.



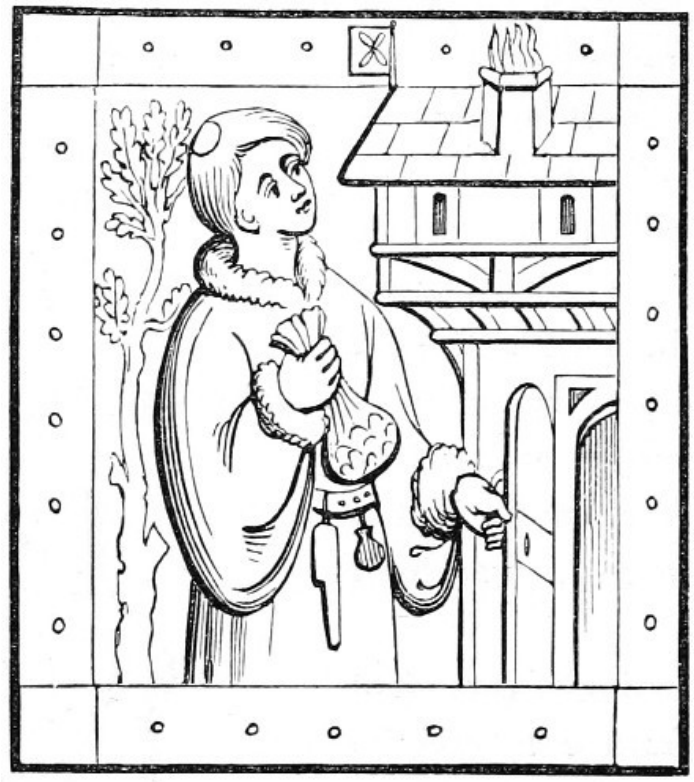
No. 89. A Cupboard Door.



No. 90. The

The accompanying figure (cut No. 90), taken from a manuscript in the Cottonian Library (Nero, D. vii.), represents the cellarer, or house-steward, of the abbey of St. Alban's, in the fourteenth century, carrying the keys of the cellar door, which appear to be of remarkably large dimensions; he holds the two keys in one hand, and a purse, or, rather, a bag of money, in the other, the symbols of his office. A drawing in the same MS., copied in our cut No. 91, shows us the entrance-door to an ordinary house, with a soler, or upper room, above. The individual intended to be represented was Alan Middleton, who

is recorded in the catalogue of officers of St. Alban's as "collector of rents of the obedientiaries of that monastery, and especially of those of the bursar." A small tonsure denotes him as a monastic officer, while the penner and inkhorn at his girdle denote the nature of his office; and he is just opening the door of one of the abbey tenants to perform his function. The door is intended to be represented opening outwards. These Benedictines of St. Alban's have also immortalised another of their inferior officers, Walterus de Hamuntesham, who was attacked and grievously wounded by the rabble of St. Alban's, while standing up for the rights and liberties of the church. He appears (cut No. 92) to be attempting to gain shelter in a house, which also has a soler.

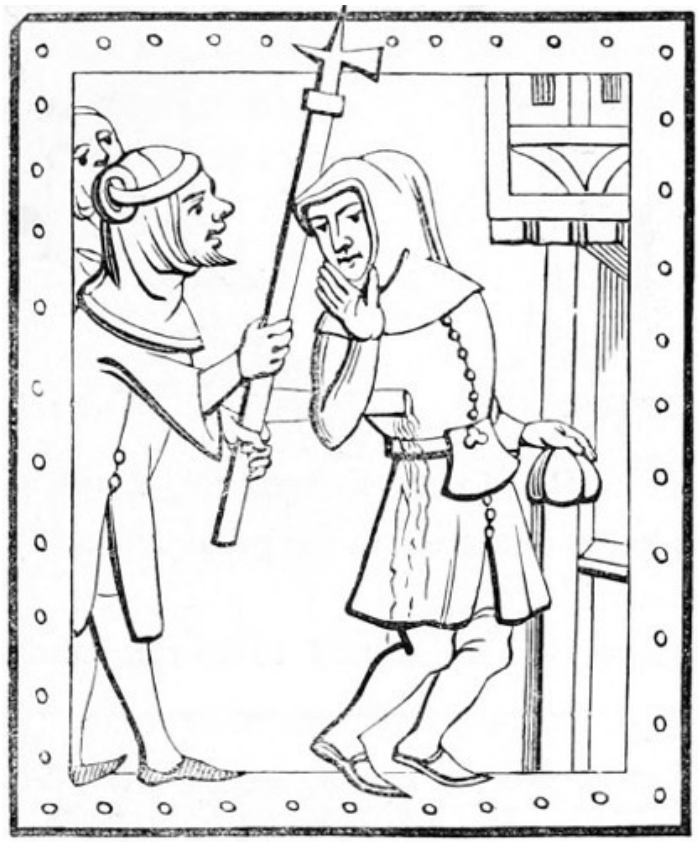


No. 91. Alan Middleton.

There was one fixture in the interior of the house, which is frequently mentioned in old writers, and must not be overlooked. It was frequently called a *perche* (*pertica*), and consisted of a wooden frame fixed to the wall, for the purpose of hanging up articles of clothing and various other things. The curious tract of Alexander Neckam, entitled *Summa de nominibus utensilium*, states that each chamber should have two perches, one on which the domestic birds, hawks and falcons, were to sit, the other for suspending shirts, kerchiefs, breeches, capes, mantles, and other articles of clothing. In reference

to the latter usage, one of the mediæval Latin poets has the memorial line—

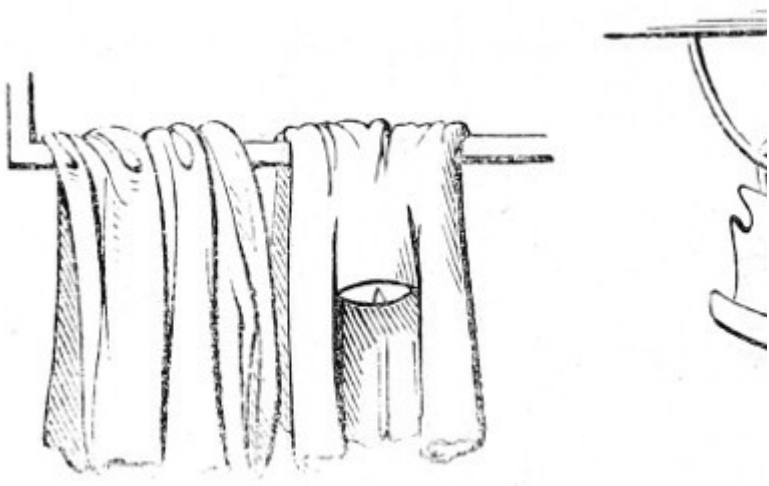
Pertica diversos pannos retinere solebat.



No. 92. Walter de Hamuntesham attacked by a Mob.

Our cut No. 93, taken from a manuscript of the *Roman de la Rose*, written in the fourteenth century, and now preserved in the National Library in Paris (No. 6985, fol. 2, vo), represents a perche, with two

garments suspended upon it. The one represented in our next cut (No. 94) is of rather a different form, and is made to support the arms of a knight, his helmet, sword, and shield, and his coat of mail; but how the sword and helmet are attached to it is far from clear. This example is taken from an illuminated manuscript of a well-known work by Guillaume de Deguilleville, *Le Pelerinage de la Vie humaine*, of the latter end of the fourteenth century, also preserved in the French National Library (No. 6988): another copy of the same work, preserved in the same great collection (No. 7210), but of the fifteenth century, gives a still more perfect representation of the perche, supporting, as in the last example, a helmet, a shield, and coats of mail. In the foreground, a queen is depositing the staff and scrip of a hermit in a chest, for greater security. This subject is represented in our cut No. 95.



No. 93. A Perche.



No. 95. Scene in a Chamber.

Furniture of every kind continued to be rare, and chairs were by no means common articles in ordinary houses. In the chambers, seats were made in the masonry by the side of the windows, as represented in our cut No. 88, and sometimes along the walls. Common benches were the usual seats, and these were often formed by merely laying a plank upon two trestles. Such a bench is probably represented in the accompanying cut (No. 96), taken from a manuscript of the romance of Tristan, of the fourteenth century, preserved in the National Library

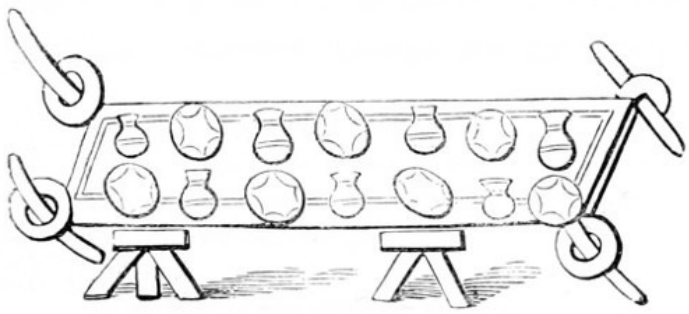
at Paris (No. 7178). Tables were made in the same manner. We now, however, find not unfrequent mention of a *table dormant* in the hall, which was of course a table fixed to the spot, and which was not taken away like the others: it was probably the great table of the *dais*, or upper end of the hall. To "begin the table dormant" was a popular phrase, apparently equivalent to taking the first place at the feast. Chaucer, in the prologue to the Canterbury Tales, describing the profuse hospitality of the Frankeleyn, says—

His table dormant in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.

Yet, during the whole of this period, it continued to be the common practice to make the table for a meal, by merely laying a board upon trestles. The second cut on the preceding page (No. 97) is a very curious representation of such a table, from a manuscript of the thirteenth century, preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (MS. Arch. A. 154). It must be understood that the objects which are ranged alternately with the drinking-vessels are loaves of bread, not plates.



No. 96. A Bench on Trestles.



No. 97. A Table on Trestles.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OLD ENGLISH HALL.—THE

KITCHEN, AND ITS CIRCUMSTANCES.—THE DINNER-TABLE.—MINSTRELSY.

As I have already stated, the hall continued to be the most important part of the house; and in large mansions it was made of proportional dimensions. It was a general place of rendezvous for the household, especially for the retainers and followers, and in the evening it seems usually to have been left entirely to them, and they made their beds and passed the night in it. Strangers or visitors were brought into the hall. In the curious old poem edited by Mr. Halliwell, entitled "The Boke of Curtasye," we find especial directions on this subject. When a gentleman or yeoman came to the house of another, he was directed to leave his weapons with the porter at the outward gate or wicket, before he entered. It appears to have been the etiquette that if the person thus presenting himself were of higher rank than the person he visited, the latter should go out to receive him at the gate; if the contrary, the visitor was admitted through the gate, and proceeded to the hall.

Whanne thou comes to a lordis gate,
The porter thou shalle fynde therate;
Take (give) *hym thow shalt thy wepyn tho* (then),
And aske hym leve in to go.
* * * * *
... yf he be of logh (low) *degré,*
Than hym falles to come to the.

At the hall door the visitor was to take off his hood

and gloves—

When thow come tho halle dor to,
Do of thy hode, thy gloves also.

If, when he entered the hall, the visitor found the family at meat, he stood at the bottom of the apartment in a respectful attitude, till the lord of the house sent a servant to lead him to a place where he was to sit at table. As you descended lower in society, such ceremonies were less observed; and the clergy in general seem to have been allowed a much greater licence than the laity. In the Sompneres Tale, in Chaucer, when the friar, who has received an insult from an inferior inhabitant, goes "to the court" to complain to the lord of the village, he finds the latter in his hall at the dinner table—

This frere com, as he were in a rage,
Wher that this lord sat etyng at his bord.
—Chaucer's Cant. Tales, l. 7748.

The lord, surprised at the agitation in the countenance of the friar, who had come in without any sort of introduction, invites him to sit down, and inquires into his business. There is a scene in the early English metrical romance of Ipomydon, in which this hero and his preceptor Tholoman go to the residence of the heiress of Calabria. At the castle gate they were stopped by the porter, whom they ask to announce them in the hall:—

The porter to theyme they gan calle,
And prayd hym, 'Go into the halle,
And say thy lady gent and fre,

That come ar men of ferre contré,
And, if it plese hyr, we wold hyr prey
That we myght ete with hyr to-day.'

—Weber, Metr. Rom. ii. 290.

The porter "courteously" undertook the message, and, at the immediate order of the lady, who was sitting at her meat, he went back, took charge of their horses and pages, and introduced them into the hall. Then they asked to be taken into the lady's service, who accepted their offer, and invited them to take their place at the dinner:—

He thankid the lady cortesly,
She comandyth hym to the mete;
But, or he satte in any sete,
He saluted theym grate and smalle,
As a gentille man shuld in halle.

—Weber, ii. 292.

Perhaps, before entering the mediæval hall, we shall do well to give a glance at the kitchen. It is an opinion, which has not unfrequently been entertained, that living in the middle ages was coarse and not elaborate; and that old English fare consisted chiefly in roast beef and plum-pudding. That nothing, however, could be more incorrect, is fully proved by the rather numerous mediæval cookery books which are still preserved, and which contain chiefly directions for made dishes, many of them very complicated, and, to appearance, extremely delicate. The office of cook, indeed, was one of great importance, and was well paid; and the kitchens of the aristocracy were very extensive, and were furnished with a considerable variety of implements of cookery. On account, no doubt, of this importance,

Alexander Neckam, although an ecclesiastic, commences his vocabulary (or, as it is commonly entitled, Liber de Utensilibus), compiled in the latter part of the twelfth century, with an account of the kitchen and its furniture. He enumerates, among other objects, a table for chopping and mincing herbs and vegetables; pots, trivets or tripods, an axe, a mortar and pestle, a mover, or pot-stick, for stirring, a crook or pot-hook (*uncus*), a caldron, a frying-pan, a gridiron, a posnet or saucepan, a dish, a platter, a saucer, or vessel for mixing sauce, a hand-mill, a pepper-mill, a mier, or instrument for reducing bread to crumbs. John de Garlande, in his "Dictionarius," composed towards the middle of the thirteenth century, gives a similar enumeration; and a comparison of the vocabularies of the fifteenth century, shows that the arrangements of the kitchen had undergone little change during the intervening period. From these vocabularies the following list of kitchen utensils is gathered:—a brandreth, or iron tripod, for supporting the caldron over the fire; a caldron, a dressing-board and dressing-knife, a brass-pot, a posnet, a frying-pan, a gridiron, or, as it is sometimes called, a roasting-iron; a spit, a "gobard," explained in the MS. by *ipegurgium*; a mier, a flesh-hook, a scummer, a ladle, a pot-stick, a slice for turning meat in the frying-pan, a pot-hook, a mortar and pestle, a pepper-quern, a platter, a saucer.



No. 98. Making the Pot boil.

The older illuminated manuscripts are rarely so elaborate as to furnish us with representations of all these kitchen implements; and, in fact, it is not in the more elaborately illuminated manuscripts that kitchen scenes are often found. But we meet with representations of some of them in artistic sketches of a less elaborate character, though these are generally connected with the less refined processes of cookery. The mediæval landlords were obliged to consume the produce of the land on their own estates, and, for this and other very cogent reasons, a large proportion of the provisions in ordinary use consisted of salted meat, which was laid up in store in vast quantities in the baronial larders. Hence boiling was a much more common method of cooking meat than roasting, for which, indeed, the mediæval fire, placed on the ground, was much less convenient; it is, no doubt, for this reason that the cook is most frequently represented in the mediæval drawings with the caldron on the fire. In some instances, chiefly of the fifteenth century, the caldron is supported from above by a pot-hook, but more usually it stands over the fire upon three legs of its own, or upon a three-legged frame. A manuscript in

the British Museum of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 10, E. iv.), belonging formerly to the monastery of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield, contains a series of such illustrations, from which the following are selected. In the first of these (No. 98) it is evidently a three-legged caldron which stands over the fire, to increase the heat of which the cook makes use of a pair of bellows, which bears a remarkably close resemblance to the similar articles made in modern times. Bellows were certainly in common use in Anglo-Saxon times, for the name is Anglo-Saxon, *bælg*, *bælig*, and *bylig*; but as the original meaning of this word was merely a *bag*, it is probable that the early Anglo-Saxon bellows was of very rude character: it was sometimes distinguished by the compound name, *blast-bælg*, a blast-bag, or bellows. Our second example from this MS. (cut No. 99) is one of a series of designs belonging to some mediæval story or legend, with which I am not acquainted. A young man carrying the vessel for the holy water, and the aspersoir with which it was sprinkled over the people, and who may therefore be supposed to be the holy-water clerc, is making acquaintance with the female cook. The latter seems to have been interrupted in the act of taking some object out of the caldron with a flesh-hook. The caldron here again is three-legged. In the sequel, the acquaintance between the cook and the holy-water clerc appears to have ripened into love; but we may presume from the manner in which it was represented (No. 100), that this love was not of a very disinterested character on the part of the clerc, for he is taking advantage of her affection to steal the animal which she is boiling in the caldron. The conventional manner in which the animal seems to be drawn, renders it difficult to decide what that

animal is. The mediæval artists show a taste for playful delineations of this kind, which occur not unfrequently in illuminated manuscripts, and in carvings and sculptures. One of the stalls in Hereford cathedral, copied in the accompanying cut (No. 101), represents a scene of this description. A man is attempting to take liberties with the cook, who has in return thrown a platter at his head. In our next cut (No. 102), taken from another MS. in the British Museum, also of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 16, E. viii.), the object cooked in the caldron is a boar's head, which the cook, an ill-favoured and hump-backed man, is placing on a dish to be carried to the table. The caldron, in this instance, appears to be intended to have been of more ornamental character than the others.



No. 99. The Holy-Water Clerc and the Cook.



No. 100. Interested Friendship.

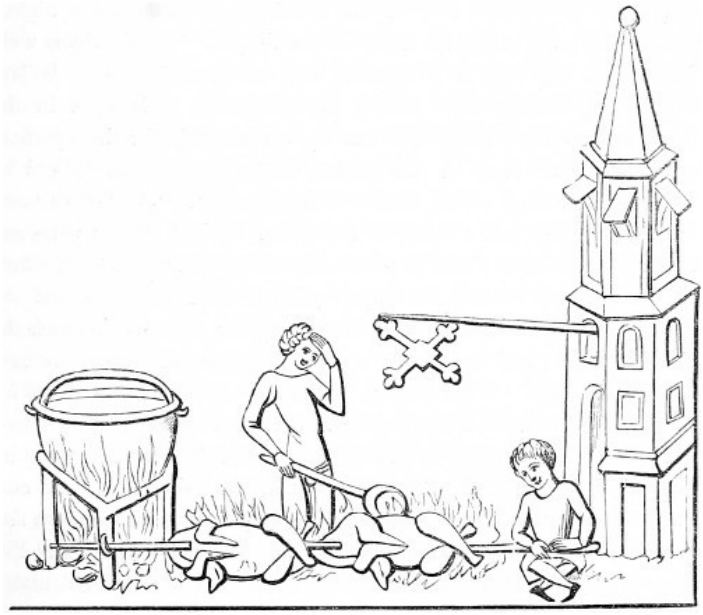


No. 101. A Kitchen Scene.



No. 102. The Boar's Head.

It will have been remarked that in most of these pictures the process of cookery appears to have been carried on in the open air, for, in one instance, a tree stands not far from the caldron. This appears, indeed, to have been frequently the case, and there can be no doubt that it was intended to be so represented in our next cut (No. 103), taken from the well-known manuscript of the romance of "Alexander," in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford. We have here the two processes of boiling and roasting, but the latter is only employed for fowls (geese in this case). While the cook is basting them, the *quistron*, or kitchen-boy, is turning the spit, which is supported in a very curious manner on one leg of the tripod or trivet, on which the caldron is here supported. The building to the right is shown by the sign to be an inn, and we are, probably, to suppose, that this out-of-door cooking is required by some unusual festivity.



No. 103. Boiling and Roasting.

Although meat was, doubtless, sometimes roasted, this process seems to have been much more commonly applied to poultry and game, and even fresh meat was very usually boiled. One cause of this may, perhaps, have been, that it seems to have been a common practice to eat the meat, and even game, fresh killed—the beef or mutton seems to have been often killed for the occasion on the day it was eaten. In the old fabliau of the "Bouchier d'Abbeville" (Barbazan, tom. iv. p. 6), the butcher, having come to Bailueil late in the evening, and obtained a night's lodging at the priest's, kills his sheep for the supper. The shoulders were to be roasted, the rest, as it appears, was recommended to be boiled. The butchers, indeed, seem usually to have done their work in the kitchen, and to have killed and cut up the animals for the occasion. There is a curious story

in the English Gesta Romanorum (edited by Sir Frederic Madden), which illustrates this practice. “Cæsar was emperor of Rome, that had a forest, in the which he had planted vines and other divers trees many; and he ordained over his forest a steward, whose name was Jonatas, bidding him, upon pain, to keep the vines and the plants. It fell, after this ordinance of the emperor, that Jonatas took the care of the forest; and upon a day a swine came into the forest, the new plants he rooted up. When Jonatas saw the swine enter, he cut off his tail, and the swine made a cry, and went out. Nevertheless, he entered again, and did much harm in the forest. When Jonatas saw that, he cut off his left ear; and the hog made a great cry, and went out. Notwithstanding this, he entered again the third day; and Jonatas saw him, and cut off his right ear, and with a horrible cry he went out. Yet the fourth day the swine re-entered the forest, and did much damage. When Jonatas saw that the hog would not be warned, he smote him through with his spear, and slew him, and delivered the body to the cook for to array the next day to the emperor’s meat. But when the emperor was served of this swine, he asked of his servants, ‘Where is the heart of this swine?’—because the emperor loved the heart best of any beast, and more than all the beast. The servants asked the cook where the heart of the swine was, for the lord inquired after it. The cook, when he had arrayed the heart, saw it was good and fat, and eat it; and he said to the servants, ‘Say to the emperor that the hog had no heart.’ The emperor said, ‘It may not be; and therefore say to him, upon pain of death, that he send me the heart of the swine, for there is no beast in all the world without a heart.’ The servants went to the cook with the emperor’s orders; and he

replied, ‘Say to my lord, but if I prove mightily by clear reasons that the swine had no heart, I put me fully to his will, to do with me as he likes.’ The emperor, when he heard this, assigned him a day to answer. When the day was come, the cook, with a high voice, said before all men, ‘My lord, this is the day of my answer. First I shall show you that the swine had no heart; this is the reason. Every thought cometh from the heart, therefore every man or beast feeleth good or evil; it followeth of necessity that by this the heart thinketh.’ The emperor said, ‘That is truth.’ ‘Then,’ said the cook, ‘now shall I show by reasons that the swine had no heart. First he entered the forest, and the steward cut off his tail; if he had had a heart, he should have thought on his tail that was lost, but he thought not thereupon, for afterwards he entered the forest, and the forester cut off his left ear. If he had had a heart, he should have thought on his left ear, but he thought not, for the third time he entered the forest. That saw the forester, and cut off his right ear; where, if he had had a heart, he should have thought that he had lost his tail and both his ears, and never should have gone again where he had so many evils. But yet the fourth time he entered the forest, and the steward saw that, and slew him, and delivered him to me to array to your meat. Here may ye see, my lord, that I have shown, by worthy reasons, that the swine had no heart.’ And thus escaped the cook.”

The story which follows this in the Gesta, tells of an emperor named “Alexaundre,” “who of great need ordained for a law, that no man should turn the plaice in his dish, but that he should only eat the white side, and in no wise the black side; and if any man did the contrary, he should die!” It is hardly

necessary to remark, that fish was a great article of consumption in the middle ages, and especially among the ecclesiastics and monks. The accompanying cut on the following page (No. 104), from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Harl. No. 1527), represents probably the steward of a monastery receiving a present of fish.



No. 104. A Present of Fish. *No. 10*

In large houses, and on great occasions, the various

meats and dishes were carried from the kitchen to the hall with extraordinary ceremony by the servants of the kitchen, who delivered them at the entrance of the hall to other attendants of a higher class, who alone were allowed to approach the tables. Our cut No. 105, from MS. Reg. 10, E. iv., represents one of these servants carrying a pot and platter, or stand for the pot, which, perhaps, contained gravy or soup. The roasts appear to have been usually carried into the hall on the spits, which, among people of great rank, were sometimes made of silver; and the guests at table seem to have torn, or cut, from the spit what they wanted. Several early illuminations represent this practice of people helping themselves from the spits, and it is alluded to, not very unfrequently, in the mediæval writers. In the romance of "Parise la Duchesse," when the servants enter the hall with the meats for the table, one is described as carrying a roasted peacock on a spit:—

Atant ez les serjanz qui portent le mangier;
Li uns porte .i. paon roti en un astier.

—Romans de Parise, p. 172.

In the romance of "Garin le Loherain," on an occasion when a quarrel began in the hall at the beginning of the dinner, the duke Begon, for want of other weapons, snatched from the hands of one of the attendants a long spit "full of plovers, which were hot and roasted:"—

Li dus avoit un grant hastier saisi,
Plain de ploviers, qui chaut sunt et rosti.

—Romans de Garin, ii. 19.

But the most curious illustration of the universality of this practice is found in a Latin story, probably of the thirteenth century, in which we are told of a man who had a glutton for his wife. One day he roasted for their dinner a fowl, and when they had sat down at the table, the wife said, “Give me a wing?” The husband gave her the wing; and, at her demand, all the other members in succession, until she had devoured the whole fowl herself, at which, no longer able to contain his anger, he said, “Lo, you have eaten the whole fowl yourself, and nothing remains but the spit, which it is but right that you should taste also.” And thereupon he took the spit, and beat her severely with it.



No. 106. Bringing the Dinner into Hall.



No. 107. Serving in Hall.

Our cut (No. 106), taken from a large illumination, given from a manuscript of the fifteenth century by the late M. du Sommerard, in his great work on mediæval art, represents the servants of the hall, headed by the steward, or *maître d'hôtel*, with his rod of office, bringing the dishes to the table in formal procession. Their approach and arrival were usually announced by the sounding of trumpets and music. The servants were often preceded by music, as we see in our cut No. 107, taken from a very fine MS. of the early part of the fourteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2, B. vii.). A representation of a similar scene occurs at the foot of the large Flemish brass of Robert Braunche and his two wives at St. Margaret's Church, Lynn, which is intended as a delineation of a feast given by the corporation of Lynn to king Edward III. Servants from both sides of the picture are bringing in that famous dish of chivalry, the peacock with his tail displayed; and two bands of minstrels are ushering in the banquet with their strains; the date of the brass is about 1364 A.D. Those who served at the table itself, whose business was chiefly to carve and present the wine, were of still higher rank—never less than esquires—and often, in the halls of princes and great

chiefs, nobles and barons. The meal itself was conducted with the same degree of ceremony, of which a vivid picture may be drawn from the directions given in the work called the “Ménagier de Paris,” composed about the year 1393. When it was announced that the dinner was ready, the guests advanced to the hall, led ceremoniously by two *maîtres d’hôtel*, who showed them their places, and served them with water to wash their hands before they began. They found the tables spread with fine table-cloths, and covered with a profusion of richly-ornamented plate, consisting of salt-cellars, goblets, pots or cups for drinking, spoons, &c. At the high table, the meats were eaten from slices of bread, called trenchers (*tranchoirs*), which, after the meats were eaten, were thrown into vessels called *coulouers*. In a conspicuous part of the hall stood the dresser or cupboard, which was covered with vessels of plate, which two esquires carried thence to the table, to replace those which were emptied. Two other esquires were occupied in bringing wine to the dresser, from whence it was served to the guests at the tables. The dishes, forming a number of courses, varying according to the occasion, were brought in by valets, led by two esquires. An *asséeur*, or placer, took the dishes from the hands of the valets, and arranged them in their places on the table. After these courses, fresh table-cloths were laid, and the *entremets* were brought, consisting of sweets, jellies, &c., many of them moulded into elegant or fantastic forms; and, in the middle of the table, raised above the rest, were placed a swan, peacocks, or pheasants, dressed up in their feathers, with their beaks and feet gilt. In less sumptuous entertainments the expensive course of *entremets* was usually omitted. Last of all came the dessert, consisting of cheese,

confectionaries, fruit, &c., concluded by what was called the *issue* (departure from table), consisting usually of a draught of hypocras, and the *boute-hors* (turn out), wine and spices served round, which terminated the repast. The guests then washed their hands, and repaired into another room, where they were served with wine and sweetmeats, and, after a short time, separated. The dinner, served slowly and ceremoniously, must have occupied a considerable length of time. After the guests had left the hall, the servers and attendants took their places at the tables.



No. 108. The Seat on the Dais.

The furniture of the hall was simple, and consisted of but a few articles. In large residences, the floor at the upper end of the hall was raised, and was called the *dais*. On this the chief table was placed, stretching lengthways across the hall. The subordinate tables

were arranged below, down each side of the hall. In the middle was generally the fire, sometimes in an iron grate. At the upper end of the hall there was often a cup-board or a dresser for the plate, &c. The tables were still merely boards placed on tressels, though the table dormant, or stationary table, began to be more common. Perhaps the large table on the dais was generally a table dormant. The seats were merely benches or forms, except the principal seat against the wall on the dais, which was often in the form of a settle, with back and elbows. Such a seat is represented in our cut No. 108, taken from a manuscript of the romance of Meliadus, in the National Library at Paris, No. 6961. On special occasions, the hall was hung round with tapestry, or curtains, which were kept for that purpose, and one of these curtains seems commonly to have been suspended against the wall behind the dais. A carpet was sometimes laid on the floor, which, however, was more usually spread with rushes. Sometimes, in the illuminations, the floor appears to be paved with ornamental tiles, without carpet or rushes. It was also not unusual to bring a chair into the hall as a mark of particular respect. Thus, in the English metrical romance of Sir Isumbras:—

The riche qwene in haulle was sett,
Knyghttes hir serves to handes and fete,
Were clede in robis of palle;
In the floure a clothe was layde,
"This poore palmere," the stewarde sayde,
"Salle sytte abowene yow alle."
Mete and drynke was forthe broghte,
Sir Isambrace sett and ete noghte,
Bot luked abowte in the haulle.
* * * * *

So lange he satt and ete noghte,
That the lady grete wondir thoghte,
And tille a knyghte gane saye,
"Bryng a chayere and a qwyschene (cushion),
And sett yone poore palmere therin."
* * * * *
A riche chayere than was ther fett,
This poore palmere therin was sett,
He tolde hir of his laye.

Until comparatively a very recent date, the hour of dinner, even among the highest classes of society, was ten o'clock in the forenoon. There was an old proverb which defined the divisions of the domestic day as follows:—

Lever à six, disner à dix,
Souper à six, coucher à dix.

Which is preserved in a still older and more complete form as follows:—

Lever à cinq, diner à neuf,
Souper à cinq, coucher à neuf,
Fait vivre d'ans nonante et neuf.

Five o'clock was the well-known hour of the afternoon meal; and nine seems formerly to have been an ordinary hour for dinner. In the time of Chaucer, the hour of *prime* appears to have been the usual dinner hour, which perhaps meant nine o'clock. At least the monk, in the Schipmannes Tale, calls for dinner at prime:—

"*Goth now your way," quod he, "al stille and softe,*

And let us dyne as sone as ye may,
For by my chilindre it is prime of day.”

And the lady to whom this is addressed, in reply, expresses impatience, lest they should pass the hour. The dinner appears to have been usually announced by the blowing of horns. In the romance of Richard Cœur de Lion, on the arrival of visitors, the tables were laid out for dinner—

They sette tresteles, and layde a borde;
* * * * *
Trumpet begonne for to blowe.

—Weber, ii. 7.



No. 109. Washing before Dinner.

Before the meal, each guest was served with water to wash. It was the business of the ewer to serve the

guests with water for this purpose, which he did with a jug and basin, while another attendant stood by with a towel. Our cut No. 109, represents this process; it is taken from a fine manuscript of the "Livre de la Vie Humaine," preserved in the National Library in Paris, No. 6988. In the originals of this group, the jug and basin are represented as of gold. In the copy of the Seven Sages, printed by Weber (p. 148), the preparations for a dinner are thus described:—

Thai set trestes, and bordes on layd;
Thai spred clathes and salt on set,
And made redy unto the mete;
Thai set forth water and towelle.

The company, however, sometimes washed before going to the table, and for this purpose there were lavours, or lavatories, in the hall itself, or sometimes outside. The signal for washing was then given by the blowing of trumpets, or by the music of the minstrels. Thus, in the English metrical romance of Richard Cœur de Lion,

At noon à laver the waytes blewe,

meaning, of course, the canonical hour of *none*. Grace was also said at the commencement, or at the end, of the meal, but this part of the ceremony is but slightly alluded to in the old writers.

Having washed, the guests seated themselves at table. Then the attendants spread the cloths over the tables; they then placed on them the salt-cellars and the knives; and next the bread, and the wine in

drinking cups. All this is duly described in the following lines of an old romance:—

Quant lavé orent, si s'asistrent,
Et li serjant les napes mistrent,
Desus les dobliers blans et biax,
Les saliers et les coutiax,
Après lou pain, puis lo vin
Et copes d'argent et d'or fin.

Spoons were also usually placed on the table, but there were no forks, the guests using their fingers instead, which was the reason they were so particular in washing before and after meat. The tables being thus arranged, it remained for the cooks to serve up the various prepared dishes.

At table the guests were not only placed in couples, but they also eat in couples, two being served with the same food and in the same plate. This practice is frequently alluded to in the early romances and fabliaux. In general the arrangement of the couples was not left to mere chance, but individuals who were known to be attached to each other, or who were near relatives, were placed together. In the poem of La Mule sanz Frain, the lady of the castle makes Sir Gawain sit by her side, and eat out of the same plate with her, as an act of friendly courtesy. In the fabliau of Trubert, a woman, taken into the household of a duke, is seated at table beside the duke's daughter, and eats out of the same plate with her, because the young lady had conceived an affectionate feeling for the visitor. So, again, in the story of the provost of Aquilée, the provost's lady, receiving a visitor sent by her husband (who was absent), placed him at table beside her, to eat with

her, and the rest of the party were similarly seated, "two and two:"—

La dame première s'assist,
Son hoste lez lui seoir fist,
Car mengier voloit avec lui;
Li autre furent dui et dui.

—Méon Fabliaux, ii. 192.

In one of the stories in the early English Gesta Romanorum, an earl and his son, who dine at the emperor's table, are seated together, and are served with one plate, a fish, between them. The practice was, indeed, so general, that the phrase "to eat in the same dish" (*manger dans la même écuelle*), became proverbial for intimate friendship between two persons.

There was another practice relating to the table which must not be overlooked. It must have been remarked that, in the illuminations of contemporary manuscripts which represent dinner scenes, the guests are rarely represented as eating on plates. In fact, only certain articles were served in plates. Loaves were made of a secondary quality of flour, and these were first pared, and then cut into thick slices, which were called, in French, *tranchoirs*, and, in English, *trenchers*, because they were to be carved upon. The portions of meat were served to the guests on these *tranchoirs*, and they cut it upon them as they eat it. The gravy, of course, went into the bread, which the guest sometimes, perhaps always at an earlier period, eat after the meat, but in later times, and at the tables of the great, it appears to have been more frequently sent away to the alms-basket, from which the leavings of the table were distributed to

the poor at the gate. All the bread used at table seems to have been pared, before it was cut, and the parings were thrown into the alms-dish. Walter de Bibblesworth, in the latter part of the thirteenth century, among other directions for the laying out of the table, says, “Cut the bread which is pared, and let the parings be given to the alms”—

Tayllet le payn ke est parée,
Les biseaus à l’amoyne soyt doné.

The practice is alluded to in the romance of Sir Tristrem (fytte i. ft. 1.)—

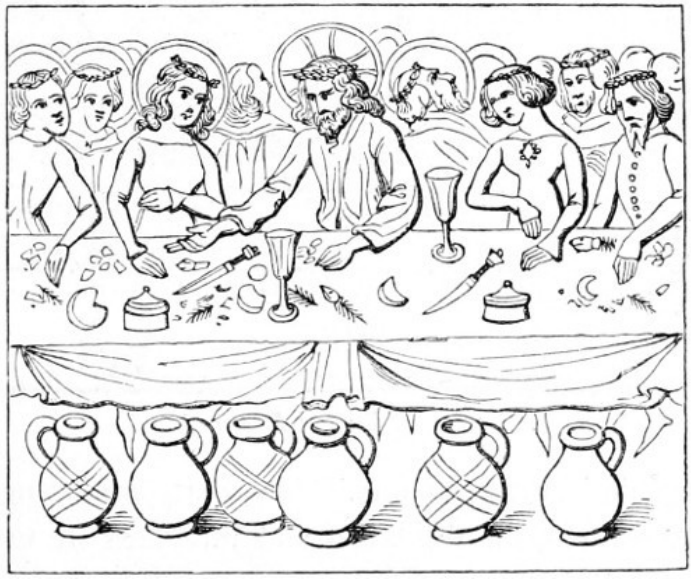
The kyng no seyd no more,
But wesche and yede (went) *to mete;*
Bred thai pard and schare (cut),
Ynough thai hadde at ete.

It was the duty of the almoner to say grace. The following directions are given in the Boke of Curtasye (p. 30):—

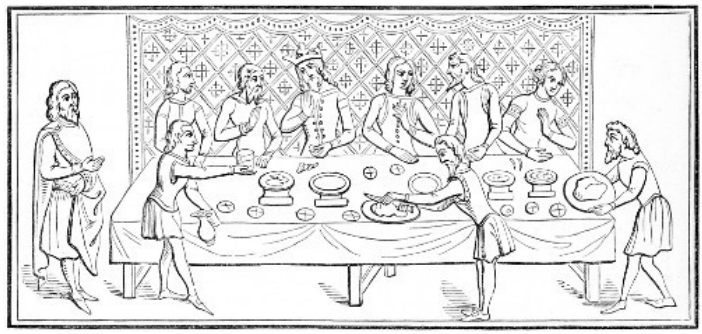
The aumenere by this hathe sayde grace,
And the almes-dysshe hase sett in place;
Therin the karver a lofe schalle sette,
To serve God fyrst withouten lette;
These othere lofes be parys aboute,
Lays hit myd (with) *dysshe withouten doute.*

The use of the *tranchoir*, which Froissart calls a *tailloir*, is not unfrequently alluded to in the older French writers. That writer tells the story of a prince who, having received poison in a powder, and suspecting it, put it on a *tailloir* of bread, and thus

gave it to a dog to eat. One of the French poets of the fifteenth century, Martial de Paris, speaking against the extravagant tables kept by the bishops at that time, exclaims, “Alas! what have the poor? They have only the tranchoirs of bread which remain on the table.” An ordinance of the dauphin Humbert II., of the date of 1336, orders that there should be served to him at table every day “loaves of white bread for the mouth, and four small loaves to serve for tranchoirs” (*pro incisorio faciendo*). For great people, a silver platter was often put under the tranchoir, and it was probable from the extension of that practice that the tranchoirs became ultimately abandoned, and the platters took their place.



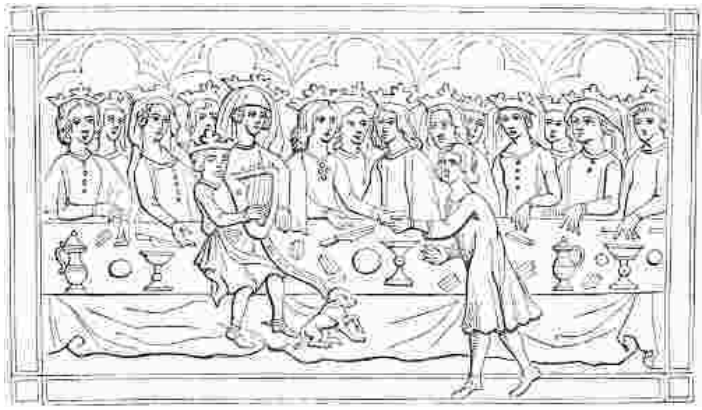
No. 110. A Dinner Scene.



No. 111. A King at Dinner.

We give three examples of dinner-scenes, from manuscripts of the fourteenth century. The first, cut No. 110 (on the last page), is taken from a manuscript belonging to the National Library in Paris, No. 7210, containing the "Pélerinage de la Vie Humaine." The party are eating fish, or rather have been eating them, for the bones and remnants are strewed over the table. We have, in addition to these, the bread, knives, salt-cellars, and cups; and on the ground a remarkable collection of jugs for holding the liquors. Our second example, cut No. 111, is taken from an illuminated manuscript of the romance of Meliadus, preserved in the British Museum (Additional MS., No. 12,228). We have here the curtain or tapestry hung behind the single table. The man to the left is probably the steward, or the superior of the hall; next to him is the cup-bearer serving the liquor; further to the right we have the carver cutting the meat; and last of all the cook bringing in another dish. The table is laid much in the same manner in our third example, cut No. 112. We have again the cups and the bread, the latter in round cakes; in our second example they are marked with crosses, as in the Anglo-Saxon illuminations; but there are no forks, or even spoons, which, of course,

were used for pottage and soups, and were perhaps brought on and taken off with them. All the guests seem to be ready to use their fingers.



No. 112. A Royal Feast.

There was much formality and ceremony observed in filling and presenting the cup, and it required long instruction to make the young cup-bearer perfect in his duties. In our cut No. 111, it will be observed that the carver holds the meat with his fingers while he cuts it. This is in exact accordance with the rules given in the ancient "Boke of Kervyng," where this officer is told, "Set never on fyshe, flesche, beest, ne fowle, more than two fyngers and a thombe." It will be observed also that in none of these pictures have the guests any plates; they seem to have eaten with their hands, and thrown the refuse on the table. We know also that they often threw the fragments on the floor, where they were eaten up by cats and dogs, which were admitted into the hall without restriction of number. In the "Boke of Curtasye," already mentioned, it is blamed as a mark of bad breeding to play with the cats and dogs while seated at table—

Whereso thou sitt at mete in borde (at table),
Avoide the cat at on bare worde,
For yf thou stroke cat other dogge,
Thou art lyke an ape teyghed with a clogge.

Some of these directions for behaviour are very droll, and show no great refinement of manners. A guest at table is recommended to keep his nails clean, for fear his fellow next him should be disgusted—

Loke thy naylys ben clene in blythe,
Lest thy felaghe lothe therwyth.

He is cautioned against spitting on the table—

If thou spit on the borde or elles opone,
Thou shalle be holden an uncurtayse mon.

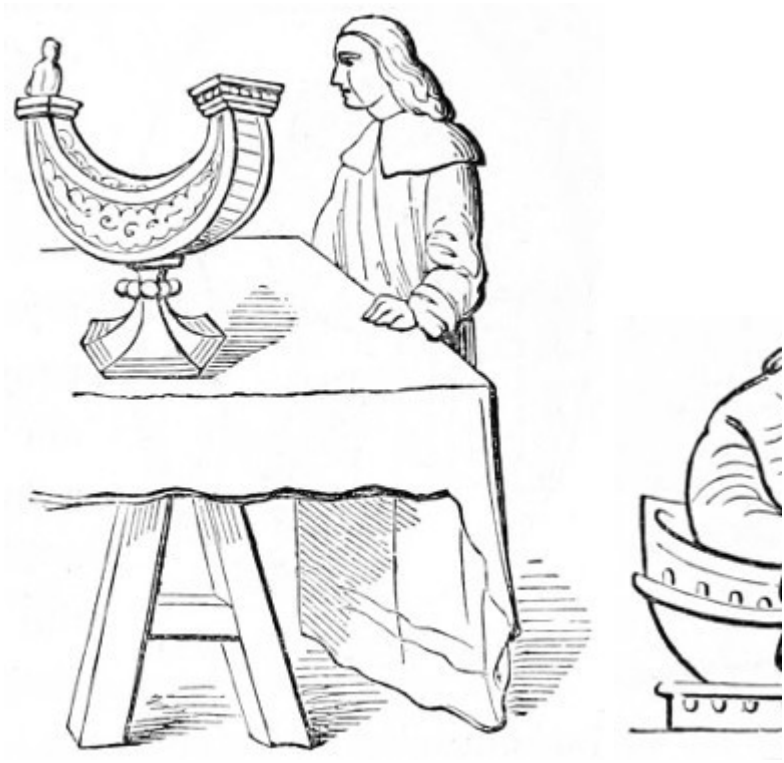
When he blows his nose with his hand (handkerchiefs were not, it appears, in use), he is told to wipe his hand on his skirt or on his tippet—

Yf thy nose thou clense, as may befalle,
Loke thy honde thou clense withalle,
Prively with skyrt do hit away,
Or ellis thurgh thi tepet that is so gay.

He is not to pick his teeth with his knife, or with a straw or stick, nor to clean them with the table-cloth; and, if he sits by a gentleman, he is to take care he does not put his knee under the other's thigh!

The cleanliness of the white table-cloth seems to have been a matter of pride; and to judge by the

illuminations great care seems to have been taken to place it neatly and smoothly on the table, and to arrange tastefully the part which hung down at the sides. Generally speaking, the service on the table in these illuminations appears to be very simple, consisting of the cups, stands for the dishes of meat (messes, as they were called) brought by the cook, the knives, sometimes spoons for soup and liquids, and bread. Ostentatious ornament is not often introduced, and it was perhaps only used at the tables of princes and of the more powerful nobles. Of these ornaments, one of the most remarkable was the nef, or ship—a vessel, generally of silver, which contained the salt-cellar, towel, &c., of the prince, or great lord, on whose table it was brought with great ceremony. It was in the form of a ship, raised on a stand, and on one end it had some figure, such as a serpent, or castle, perhaps an emblem or badge chosen by its possessor. Our cut No. 113, taken from a manuscript in the French National Library, represents the nef placed on the table. The badge or emblem at the end appears to be a bird.



No. 113. The Nef.

Our forefathers seem to have remained a tolerably long time at table, the pleasures of which were by no means despised. Indeed, to judge by the sermons and satires of the middle ages, gluttony seems to have been a very prevalent vice among the clergy as well as the laity; and however miserably the lower classes lived, the tables of the rich were loaded with every delicacy that could be procured. The monks were proverbially *bons vivants*; and their failings in this respect are not unfrequently satirised in the illuminated ornaments of the mediæval manuscripts.

We have an example in our cut No. 114, taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Arundel Collection in the British Museum (No. 91); a monk is regaling himself on the sly, apparently upon dainty tarts or patties, while the dish is held up by a little cloven-footed imp who seems to enjoy the spirit of the thing, quite as much as the other enjoys the substance. Our next cut (No. 115) is taken from another manuscript in the British Museum of the same date (MS. Sloane, No. 2435), and forms an appropriate companion to the other. The monk here holds the office of cellarer, and is taking advantage of it to console himself on the sly.



No. 115. Monastic Devotions.

When the last course of the dinner had been served, the ewer and his companion again carried round the water and towel, and each guest washed. The tables were then cleared and the cloths withdrawn, but the drinking continued. The minstrels were now introduced. To judge by the illuminations, the most common musical attendant on such occasions was a harper, who repeated romances and told stories, accompanying them with his instrument. In one of our cuts of a dinner party (No. 112), given in a former page, we see the harper, apparently a blind man, led by his dog, introduced into the hall while the guests are still occupied with their repast. We frequently find a harper thus introduced, who is sometimes represented as sitting upon the floor, as in the accompanying illustration (No. 116) from the MS. Reg. 2 B. vii. fol. 71, vo. Another similar representation occurs at folio 203, vo of the same MS.



No. 116. The Harper in the Hall.

The barons and knights themselves, and their ladies,

did not disdain to learn the harper's craft; and Gower, in his "Confessio Amantis," describes a scene in which a princess plays the harp at table. Appolinus is dining in the hall of king Pentapolin, with the king and queen and their fair daughter, and all his lords, when, reminded by the scene of the royal estate from which he is fallen, he sorrowed and took no meat; therefore the king, sympathising with him, bade his daughter take her harp and do all that she could to enliven that "sorry man:"—

And she to don her faderes heste,
Her harpe fette, and in the feste
Upon a chaire which thei fette,
Her selve next to this man she sette.

Appolinus in turn takes the harp, and proves himself a wonderful proficient, and

When he hath harped alle his fille,
The kingis hest to fulfille,
Awaie goth dishe, awaie goth cup,
Doun goth the borde, the cloth was up,
Thei risen and gone out of the halle.



No. 117. A Harper.

The minstrels, or jougleurs, formed a very important class of society in the middle ages, and no festival was considered as complete without their presence. They travelled singly or in parties, not only from house to house, but from country to country, and they generally brought with them, to amuse and please their hearers, the last new song, or the last new tale. When any great festival was announced, there was sure to be a general gathering of minstrels from all quarters, and as they possessed many methods of entertaining, for they joined the profession of mountebank, posture-master, and conjurer with that of music and story-telling, they were always welcome. No sooner, therefore, was the business of eating done, than the jougleur or

jougleurs were brought forward, and sometimes, when the guests were in a more serious humour, they chanted the old romances of chivalry; at other times they repeated satirical poems, or party songs, according to the feelings or humour of those who were listening to them, or told love tales or scandalous anecdotes, or drolleries, accompanying them with acting, and intermingling them with performances of various kinds. The hall was proverbially the place for mirth, and as merriment of a coarse description suited the mediæval taste, the stories and performances of the jougleurs were often of an obscene character, even in the presence of the ladies. In the illuminated manuscripts, the minstrel is most commonly a harper, perhaps because these illuminations are usually found in the old romances of chivalry where the harper generally acts an important part, for the minstrels were not unfrequently employed in messages and intrigues. In general the harp is wrapped in some sort of drapery, as represented in our cut No. 117, taken from a MS. in the National Library of Paris, which was perhaps the bag in which the minstrel carried it, and may have been attached to the bottom of the instrument. The accompanying scene of minstrelsy is taken from a manuscript of the romance of Guyron le Courtois in the French National Library, No. 6976.



No. 118. Minstrelsy.

The dinner was always accompanied by music, and itinerant minstrels, mountebanks, and performers of all descriptions, were allowed free access to the hall to amuse the guests by their performances. These were intermixed with dancing and tumbling, and often with exhibitions of a very gross character, which, however, amid the looseness of mediæval manners, appear to have excited no disgust. These practices are curiously illustrated in some of the mediæval illuminations. In the account of the death of John the Baptist, as given in the gospels (Matthew xiv. 6, and Mark vi. 21), we are told, that at the feast given by Herod on his birthday, his daughter Herodias came into the feasting-hall, and (according to our English version) danced before him and his guests. The Latin vulgate has *saltasset*, which is equivalent to the English word but the mediæval writers took the lady's performances to be those of a regular wandering jougleur; and in two illuminated manuscripts of the early part of the fourteenth century, in the British Museum, she is pictured as

performing tricks very similar to those exhibited by the modern beggar-boys in our streets. In the first of these (No. 119), taken from MS. Reg. 2 B. vii., the princess is supporting herself upon her hands with her legs in the air, to the evident admiration of the king, though the guests seem to be paying less attention to her feats of activity. In the second (No. 120), from the Harleian MS. No. 1527, she is represented in a similar position, but more evidently making a somersault. She is here accompanied by a female attendant, who expresses no less delight at her skill than the king and his guests.



No. 119. King Herod and his Daughter Herodias.



No. 120. Herod and Herodias.

It would appear from various accounts that it was not, unless perhaps at an early period, the custom in France to sit long after dinner at table drinking wine, as it certainly was in England, where, no doubt, the practice was derived from the Anglo-Saxons. Numerous allusions might be pointed out, which show how much our Anglo-Saxon forefathers were addicted to this practice of sitting in their halls and drinking during the latter part of their day; and it was then that they listened to the minstrel's song, told stories of their own feats and adventures, and made proof of their powers in hard drinking. From some of these allusions, which we have quoted in an earlier chapter, it is equally clear, that these drinking-bouts often ended in sanguinary, and not unfrequently in fatal, brawls. Such scenes of discord in the hall occur also in the early French metrical romances, but they take place usually at the

beginning of dinner, when the guests are taking their places, or during the meal. In “Parise la Duchesse,” a scene of this description occurs, in which the great feudal barons and knights fight with the provisions which had been served at the tables: “There,” says the poet, “you might see them throw cheeses, and quartern-loaves, and great pieces of flesh, and great steel knives”—

Là veissiez jeter fromages et cartiers,
Et granz pieces de char, et granz cotiauz d’acier
—Roman de Parise, p. 173.

In “Garin le Loherain” (vol. ii. p. 17), at a feast at which the emperor and his empress were present, a fight commences between the two great baronial parties who were their guests, by a chief of one party striking one of the other party with a goblet; the cooks are brought out of the kitchen to take part in it, with their pestles, ladles, and pot-hooks, led by duke Begon, who had seized a spit, full of birds, as the weapon which came first to hand; and the contest is not appeased until many are killed and wounded.

The preceding remarks, of course, apply chiefly to the tables of the prince, the noble, and the wealthy gentleman, where alone this degree of profusion and of ceremony reigned; and to those of the monastic houses and of the higher clergy, where, if possible, the luxury even of princes was overpassed. The examples of clerical and monastic extravagance in feasting are so numerous, that I will not venture on this occasion to enter upon them any further. All recorded facts would lead us to conclude, that the ordinary course of living of the monks was much

more luxurious than that of the clerical lords of the land, who, indeed, seem to have lived, on ordinary occasions, with some degree of simplicity, except that the great number of people who dined at their expense, required a very large quantity of provisions. Even men of rank, when dining alone, or hastily, are described as being satisfied with a very limited variety of food. In the romance of "Garin," when Rigaud, one of the barons of "Garin's" party, arrives at court with important news, and very hungry, the empress orders him to be served with a large vessel of wine (explained by a various reading to be equivalent to a pot), four loaves (the loaves appear usually to have been small), and a roasted peacock—

On li aporte plain un barris de vin,
Et quatre pains, et un paon rosti.
—Garin le Loherain, vol. ii. p. 257.

In a pane of painted glass in the possession of Dr. Henry Johnson, of Shrewsbury, of Flemish workmanship of about the beginning of the sixteenth century, and representing the story of the Prodigal Son, the Prodigal is seated at table with a party of dissolute women, feasting upon a pasty. It is reproduced in our cut No. 121. They appear to have only one drinking-cup among them, but the wine is served from a very rich goblet. We cannot, however, always judge the character of a feast by the articles placed on the table by the mediæval illuminators, for they were in the constant habit of drawing things conventionally, and they seem to have found a difficulty—perhaps in consequence of their ignorance of perspective—in representing a crowded table. Our cut No. 122, on the following page, taken from MS. Reg. 10 E. iv., in which we recognize again our old

friend the holy-water clerc, represents a table which is certainly very sparingly furnished, although the persons seated at it seem to belong to a respectable class in society. Some cooked articles, perhaps meat, on a stand, bread, a single knife to cut the provisions, and one pot, probably of ale, from which they seem to have drunk without the intervention of a glass, form the whole service.



No. 121. Feasting on a Pasty.

We find allusions from time to time to the style of living of the class in the country answering to our yeomanry, and of the *bourgeoisie* in the towns, which appears to have been sufficiently plain. In the romance of “Berte” (p. 78), when Berte finds shelter at the house of the farmer Symon, they give her, for

refreshment, a chicken and wine. In the fabliau of the "*Vilain mire*" (Barbazan, vol. iii. p. 3), the farmer, who had saved money, and become tolerably rich, had no such luxuries as salmon or partridge, but his provisions consisted only of bread and wine, and fried eggs, and cheese in abundance—

N'orent pas saumon ne pertris,
Pain et vin orent, et oés fris,
Et du fromage à grant plenté.



No. 122. A Dinner tête-à-tête.

The franklin, in Chaucer, is put forward as an example of great liberality in the articles of provisions:—

An householdere, and that a gret, was he,
Seynt Julian he was in his countré,
His breed, his ale, was alway after oon;
A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.
Withoute bake mete was never his hous,

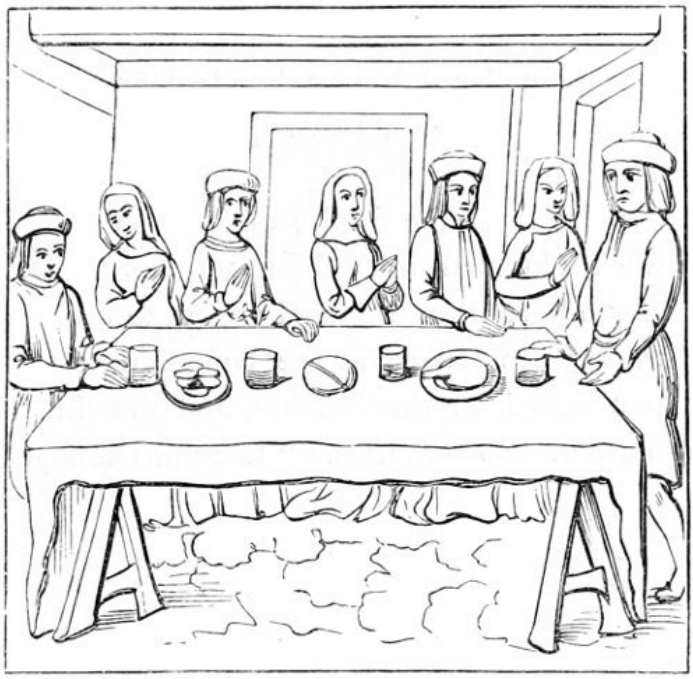
Of fleissch and fissch, and that so plentyvous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,
Of alle deyntees that men cowde thynke.
Aftur the sondry sesouns of the yeer,
He chaunged hem at mete and at soper.
Ful many a fat partrich had he in mewe,
And many a brem and many a luce in stewe (fish pond),
Woo was his cook, but if his sauce were
Poynant and scharp, and redy al his gere;
His table dormant in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.

—Chaucer's Cant. Tales, l. 341.

A story in the celebrated collection of the Cent. Nouvelles Nouvelles (Nouv. 83), composed soon after the middle of the fifteenth century, gives us some notion of the store of provisions in the house of an ordinary burgher. A worthy and pious *demoiselle*—that is, a woman of the respectable class of *bourgeoisie*, who was, in this case, a widow—invited a monk to dine with her, out of charity. They dined without other company, and were served by a *chambrière* or maid-servant, and a man-servant or valet. The course of meat, which was first placed on the table, consisted of *porée*, or soup, bacon, pork tripes, and a roasted ox's tongue. But the demoiselle had miscalculated the voracity of her guest, for, before she had made much progress in her *porée*, he had devoured everything on the table, and left nothing but empty dishes. On seeing this, his hostess ordered her servants to put on the table a piece of good salt beef, and a large piece of choice mutton; but he ate these also, to her no little astonishment, and she was obliged to send for a fine ham, which had been cooked the day before, and which appears

to have been all the meat left in the house. The monk devoured this, and left nothing but the bone. The course which would have followed the first service was then laid on the table, consisting of a "very fine fat cheese," and a dish well furnished with tarts, apples, and cheese, which also quickly followed the meat. It appears from this story that the ordinary dinner of a respectable burgher consisted of a soup, and two or three plain dishes of meat, followed by cheese, pastry, and fruit. An illumination, illustrative of another tale in this collection, in the unique manuscript preserved in the Hunterian Library, at Glasgow, and copied in the annexed cut (No. 123), represents a dinner-table of an ordinary person of this class of society, which is not over largely furnished. We see only bread in the middle, what appears to be intended for a ham at one end, and at the other a dish, perhaps of cakes or tarts. The lower classes lived, of course, much more meanly than the others; but we have fewer allusions to them in the earlier mediæval literature, as they were looked upon as a class hardly worth describing. This class was, no doubt, much more miserable in France than in England. A French moral poem of the fourteenth century, entitled "*Le Chemin de Pauvreté et de Richesse*," represents the poor labourers as having no other food than bread, garlic, and salt, with water to drink:—

N'y ot si grant ne si petit
Qui ne preist grant appetit
En pain sec, en aux, et en sel,
Ne il ne mengoit riens en el,
Mouton, buef, oye, ne poucin;
Et puis prenoient le bacin,
A deux mains, plain d'eaue, et buvoient.



No. 123. A Frugal Repast.

As I have said, the dresser (*dressoir*) or cupboard was the only important article of furniture in the hall, besides the tables and benches. It was a mere cupboard for the plate, and had generally steps to enable the servants to reach the articles that were placed high up in it, but it is rarely represented in pictured manuscripts before the fifteenth century, when the illuminators began to introduce more detail into their works. The reader may form a notion of its contents, from the list of the service of plate given by Edward I. of England to his daughter Margaret, after her marriage with the duke of Brabant; it consisted of forty-six silver cups with feet, for drinking; six wine pitchers, four ewers for water, four basins with

gilt escutcheons, six great silver dishes for entremets; one hundred and twenty smaller dishes; a hundred and twenty salts; one gilt salt, for her own use; seventy-two spoons; and three silver spice-plates with a spice-spoon.

The dresser, as well as all the furniture of the hall, was in the care of the groom; it was his business to lay them out, and to take them away again. It appears to have been the usual custom to take away the boards and tressels (forming the tables) at the same time as the cloth. The company remained seated on the benches, and the drinking-cups were handed round to them. So tells us the "Boke of Curtasye"—

Whenne they have wasshen, and grace is sayde,
Away he takes at a brayde (at once),
Avoydes the borde into the store,
Tase away the trestles that been so store.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MINSTREL.—HIS POSITION UNDER THE ANGLO-SAXONS.—THE NORMAN TROUVERE, MENESTREL, AND JOUGLEUR.—THEIR CONDITION.—RUTEBEUF.

—DIFFERENT MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN USE AMONG THE MINSTRELS.—THE BEVERLEY MINSTRELS.

The minstrel acted so very prominent a part in the household and domestic arrangements during the middle ages, that a volume on the history of domestic manners would be incomplete without some more detailed account of his profession than the slight and occasional notices given in the preceding pages.

Our information relating to the Anglo-Saxon minstrel is very imperfect. He had two names—*scop*, which meant literally a "maker," and belonged probably to the primitive bard or poet; and *glig-man*, or *gleo-man*, the modern gleeman, which signifies literally a man who furnished joy or pleasure, and appears to have had a more comprehensive application, which included all professional performers for other people's amusement. In Beowulf (l. 180), the "song of the bard" (*sang scopes*) is accompanied by the sound of the harp (*hearpan swég*); and it is probable that the harp was the special instrument of the old Saxon bard, who chanted the mythic and heroic poems of the race. The gleemen played on a variety of instruments, and they also exhibited a variety of other performances for the amusement of the hearers or spectators. In our engraving from an Anglo-Saxon illumination (p. 37), one of the gleemen is tossing knives and balls, which seems to have been considered a favourite exhibition of skill down to a much later period. The early English Rule of Nuns

(printed by the Camden Society) says of the wrathful man, that "he skirmishes before the devil with knives, and he is his knife-tosser, and plays with swords, and balances them upon his tongue by the sharp point." In the Life of Hereward, the gleeman (whose name is there translated by *joculator*) is represented as conciliating the favour of the new Norman lords by mimicking the unrefined manners of the Saxons, and throwing upon them indecent jests and reproaches. But, in the later Anglo-Saxon period at least, the words *scop* and *gleóman* appear to have been considered as equivalent; for, in another hall-scene in Beowulf, where the scop performs his craft, we are told that—

Leoð wæs asungen,	*The lay was sung,*
gleómannes gyd,	*the gleeman's recital,*
gamen eft astáh,	*pastime began again,*
beorhtode benc-swég.	*the bench-noise became loud.*

—Beowulf, l. 2323.

There is here evidently an intimation of merrier songs than those sung by the *scop*, and whatever his performances were, they drew a louder welcome. And in a fragment of another romance which has come down to us, the gleeman Widseth bears witness to the wandering character of his class, and enumerates in a long list the various courts of different chiefs and peoples which he had visited. We learn, also, that among the Anglo-Saxons there were gleemen attached to the courts or households of the kings and great chieftains. Under Edward the Confessor, as we learn from the Domesday Survey, Berdic, the king's *joculator*, possessed three villas in Gloucestershire.

On the continent, when we first become acquainted

with the history of the popular literature, we find the minstrels, the representatives of the ancient bards, appearing as the composers and chanters of the poems which told the stories of the old heroes of romance, and they seem also to have been accompanied usually with the harp, or with some other stringed instrument. They speak of themselves, in these poems, as wandering about from castle to castle, wherever any feasting was going on, as being everywhere welcome, and as depending upon the liberality either of the lord of the feast, or of the guests, for their living. Occasional complaints would lead us to suppose that this liberality was not always great, and the poems themselves contain formules of begging appeals, which are not very dignified or delicate. Thus, in the romance of "Gui de Bourgogne," the minstrel interrupts his narrative, to inform his hearers that "Whoever wishes to hear any more of this poem, must make haste to open his purse, for it is now high time that he give me something"—

Qui or voldra chançon oïr et escouter,
Si voist isnelement sa boursse desfermer,
Qu'il est hui mès bien tans qu'il me doie doner.
—Gui de Bourgogne, l. 4136.

In like manner, in the romance of "Huon de Bordeaux," the minstrel, after having recited nearly five thousand lines, makes his excuse for discontinuing until another day. He reminds his auditors that it is near vespers, and that he is weary, and invites them to return next day after dinner, begging each of them to bring with him a *maille*, or halfpenny, and complaining of the meanness of those who were accustomed to give so small a coin as the

poitivine “to the courteous minstrel.” The minstrel seems to have calculated that this hint might not be sufficient, and that they would require being reminded of it, for, after some two or three hundred lines of the next day’s recital, he introduces another formule of appeal to the purses of his hearers. “Take notice,” he goes on to say, “as may God give me health, I will immediately put a stop to my song; ... and I at once excommunicate all those who shall not visit their purses in order to give something to my wife”—

Mais saciés bien, se Dix me doinst santé,
Ma cançon tost vous ferai desiner;
Tous chiaus escumenie, ...
* * * * *
Qui n’iront à lour bourses pour ma feme donner.
—Huon de Bordeaux, l. 5482.

These minstrels, too, display great jealousy of one another, and especially of what they term the new minstrels, exclaiming against the decadence of the profession.

It would appear, indeed, that these French minstrels, the poets by profession, who now become known to us by the name of *trouvères*, or inventors (in the language of the south of France, *trobadors*), held a position towards the *jougleurs*, or *jogleurs*[25] (from the Latin *joculatores*, and this again from *jocus*, game), which the Anglo-Saxon *scop* held towards the gleeman. Though the mass of the minstrels did get their living as itinerant songsters, they might be respectable, and sometimes there was a man of high rank who became a minstrel for his pleasure; but the jougleurs, as a body, belonged to the lowest and

most degraded class of mediæval society, that of the ribalds or letchers, and the more respectable minstrels of former days were probably falling gradually into their ranks. It was the class which abandoned itself without reserve to the mere amusement and pleasure of the aristocracy, and it seems to have been greatly increased by the Crusades, when the jougleurs of the west were brought into relations with those of the east, and learnt a multitude of new ways of exciting attention and making mirth, of which they were previously ignorant. The jougleurs had now become, in addition to their older accomplishments, magicians and conjurers, and wonderfully skilled in every description of sleight of hand, and it is from these qualities that we have derived the modern signification of the word *juggler*. They had also adopted the profession of the eastern story-tellers, as well as their stories, which, however, they turned into verse; and they brought into the west many other exhibitions which did not tend to raise the standard of western morals.

The character of the minstrels, or jougleurs, their wandering life, and the ease with which they were admitted everywhere, caused them to be employed extensively as spies, and as bearers of secret news, and led people to adopt the disguise of a minstrel, as one which enabled them to pass through difficulties unobserved and unchallenged. In the story of Eustace the monk, when Eustace sought to escape from England, to avoid the pursuit of king John, he took a fiddle and a bow (a fiddlestick), and dressed himself as a minstrel, and in this garb he arrived at the coast, and, finding a merchant ready to sail, entered the ship with him. But the steersman, who did not

recognise the minstrel as one of the passengers, ordered him out. Eustace expostulated, represented that he was a minstrel, and, after some dispute, the steersman, who seems to have had some suspicions either of his disguise or of his skill, concluded by putting the question, “At all events, if thou knowest any song, friend, let us have it.” The monk was not skilled in singing, but he replied boldly, “Know I one? Yea! of Agoulant, and Aymon, or of Blonchadin, or of Florence of Rome (these were all early metrical romances); there is not a song in the whole world but I know it. I should be delighted, no doubt, to afford you amusement; but, in truth, the sea frightens me so much at present, that I could not sing a song worth hearing.” He was allowed to pass. Some of those who adopted the disguise of the jougleur were better able to sustain it, and minstrelsy became considered as a polite accomplishment, perhaps partly on account of its utility. There is, in the history of the Fitz-Warines, a remarkable character of this description named John de Raunpaygne. Fulke Fitz-Warine had formed a design against his great enemy, Moris Fitz-Roger, and he established himself, with his fellow outlaws, in the forest near Whittington, in Shropshire, to watch him. Fulke then called to him John de Raunpaygne. “John,” said he, “you know enough of minstrelsy and joglery; dare you go to Whittington, and play before Moris Fitz-Roger, and spy how things are going on?” “Yea,” said John. He crushed a herb, and put it in his mouth, and his face began immediately to swell, and became so discoloured, that his own companions hardly knew him; and he dressed himself in poor clothes, and “took his box with his instruments of joglery and a great staff in his hand;” and thus he went to Whittington, and presented himself at the castle, and

said that he was a jogeleur. The porter carried him to Sir Moris, who received him well, inquired in the first place for news, and receiving intelligence which pleased him (it was designedly false), he gave the minstrel a valuable silver cup as a reward. Now, "John de Raunpaygne was very ill-favoured in face and body, and on this account the ribalds of the household made game of him, and treated him roughly, and pulled him by his hair and by his feet. John raised his staff, and struck a ribald on the head, that his brain flew into the middle of the place. 'Wretched ribald,' said the lord, 'what hast thou done?' 'Sir,' said he, 'for God's mercy, I cannot help it; I have a disease which is very grievous, which you may see by my swollen face. And this disease takes entire possession of me at certain hours of the day, when I have no power to govern myself.' Moris swore a great oath, that if it were not for the news he had brought, he would have his head cut off immediately. The jogeleur hastened his departure, for the time he remained there seemed very long." The result of this adventure was the attack upon and slaughter of Moris Fitz-Roger by Fulk Fitz-Warine. Some time after this, Fulk Fitz-Warine, having recovered his castle of Whittington, was lamenting over the loss of his friend, Sir Audulf de Bracy, who had fallen into the hands of king John's emissaries, and was a prisoner in Shrewsbury castle, where king John had come to make his temporary residence, and again asked the aid of John de Raunpaygne, who promised to make a visit to the king. "John de Raunpaygne knew enough of tabor, harp, fiddle, citole, and joglery; and he attired himself very richly, like an earl or baron, and he caused his hair and all his body to be entirely dyed as black as jet, so that nothing was white except his teeth. And he hung

round his neck a very handsome tabor, and then, mounting a handsome palfrey, rode through the town of Shrewsbury to the gate of the castle; and by many a one was he looked at. John came before the king, and placed himself on his knees, and saluted the king very courteously. The king returned his salutation, and asked him whence he came. 'Sire,' said he, 'I am an Ethiopian minstrel, born in Ethiopia.' Said the king, 'Are all the people in your land of your colour?' 'Yea, my lord, man and woman.' ... John, during the day, made great minstrelsy of tabor and other instruments. When the king was gone to bed, Sir Henry de Audeley sent for the black minstrel, and led him into his chamber. And they made great melody; and when Sir Henry had drunk well, then he said to a valet, 'Go and fetch Sir Audulf de Bracy, whom the king will put to death to-morrow; for he shall have a good night of it before his death.' The valet soon brought Sir Audulf into the chamber. Then they talked and played. John commenced a song which Sir Audulf used to sing; Sir Audulf raised his head, looked at him full in the face, and with great difficulty recognised him. Sir Henry asked for some drink; John was very serviceable, jumped nimbly on his feet, and served the cup before them all. John was sly, he threw a powder into the cup, which nobody perceived, for he was a good jogeleur, and all who drunk became so sleepy that, soon after drinking, they lay down and fell asleep. John de Raunpaygne and Sir Audulf de Bracy took the opportunity for making their escape. We have here a mysterious intimation of the fact that the minstrel was employed also in dark deeds of poisoning. Still later on in the story of Fulk Fitz-Warine, the hero himself goes to a tournament in France in disguise, and John de Raunpaygne resumes

his old character of a jougleur." "John," says the narrative, "was very richly attired, and well mounted, and he had a very rich tabor, and he struck the tabor at the entry to the lifts, that the hills and valleys rebounded, and the horses became joyful."

All these anecdotes reveal to us minstrels who were perfectly free, and wandered from place to place at will; but there were others who were retained by and in the regular employ of individuals. The king had his minstrels, and so most of the barons had their household minstrels. In one of the mediæval Latin stories, current in this country probably as early as the thirteenth century, we are told that a jougleur (*mimus* he is called in the Latin, a word used at this time as synonymous with *joculator*) presented himself at the gate of a certain lord to enter the hall and eat (for the table in those days was rarely refused to a minstrel), but he was stopped by the porter, who asked him to what lord he was attached, evidently thinking, as was thought some three centuries later, that the treatment merited by the servant depended on the quality of the master. The minstrel replied that his master was God. When the porter communicated this response to his churlish lord, or equally churlish steward, they replied that if he had no other lord, he should not be admitted there. When the jougleur heard this, he said that he was the devil's own servant; whereupon he was received joyfully, "because he was a good fellow" (*quia bonus socius erat*). The records of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries contain many entries of payments to the king's minstrels, and the names of some of them are preserved. On great festivals at the king's court, minstrels came to seek employment from every part of the world which acknowledged

the reign of feudalism. Four hundred and twenty-six minstrels were present at the marriage festivities of the princess Margaret, daughter of Edward I.; and several hundred played before the same monarch at the Whitsuntide of 1306. This affluence of minstrels gave rise to the practice of building a large music-gallery at one end of the mediæval hall, which seems to have been introduced in the fourteenth century. At this time minstrels were sometimes employed for very singular purposes, such as for soothing the king when undergoing a disagreeable operation. We learn from the wardrobe accounts that, in the twenty-fifth year of the reign of Edward I. (A.D. 1297) twenty shillings, or about fifteen pounds in modern money, was given to the minstrel of Sir John Maltravers as a reward for performing before the king while he was bled.

The king's minstrels, and those of the great lords, were very well paid, but the great mass of the profession, who depended only on what they obtained in gifts at each particular feast, which they recklessly squandered away as soon as they got it, lived a hard as it was a vagabond life. The king's minstrels, in the fourteenth century in England, received from sixpence to sevenpence halfpenny a day, that is from seven shillings and sixpence to nine shillings and fourpence halfpenny, during the whole year. On the other hand, Colin Muset, one of the best of the French song-writers of the thirteenth century, complains of the want of liberality shown to him by the great baron before whom he had played on the viol in his hostel, and who had given him nothing, not even his wages:—

Sire quens, j'ai vielé

Devant vos en vostre ostel;
Si ne m'avez riens donné,
Ne mes gages acquiter.

And he laments that he is obliged to go home in poverty, because his wife always received him ill when he returned to her with an empty purse, whereas, when he carried back his *malle* well stuffed, he was covered with caresses by his whole family. The French poet Rutebeuf, whose works have been collected and published by M. Jubinal, may be considered as the type of the better class of minstrels at this period, and he has become an object of especial interest to us in consequence of the number of his shorter effusions which describe his own position in life. The first piece in the collection has for its subject his own poverty. He complains of being reduced to such distress, that he had been obliged for some time to live upon the generosity of his friends; that people no longer showed any liberality to poor minstrels; that he was perishing with cold and hunger; and that he had no other bed but the bare straw. In another poem, entitled Rutebeuf's Marriage, he informs us that his privations were made more painful by the circumstance of his having a shrew for his wife. In a third he laments over the loss of the sight of his right eye, and informs us that, among other misfortunes, his wife had just been delivered of a child, and his horse had broke its leg, so that, while he had no means of supporting a nurse for the former, the latter accident had deprived him of the power of going to any distance to exercise his minstrelsy craft. Rutebeuf repeats his laments on his extreme poverty in several other pieces, and they have an echo in those of other minstrels of his age. We find, in fact,

in the verse-writers of the latter half of the thirteenth century, and in some of those of the fourteenth, a general complaint of the neglect of the minstrels, and of the degeneracy of minstrelsy. In a poem against the growing taste for the tabor, printed in M. Jubinal's volume, entitled "Jougleurs et Trouvères," the low state into which the minstrels' art had fallen is ascribed to a growing love for instruments of an undignified character, such as the tabor, which is said to have been brought to us from the Arabs, and the pipe. If an ignorant shepherd from the field, says the writer of this poem, but play on the tabor and pipe, he becomes more popular than the man who plays on the viol ever so well—

Quar s'uns bergiers de chans tabore et chalemele,
Plus tost est apelé que cil qui bien viele.

Everybody followed the tabor, he says, and the good minstrels were no longer in vogue, though their fiddles were so much superior to the flutes, and flajolets (*flajols*), and tabors of the others. He consoles himself, however, with the reflection that the holy Virgin Mary never loved the tabor, and that no such vulgar instrument was admitted at her wedding; while she had in various ways shown her favour to the jougleurs. "I pray God," our minstrel continues, "that he will send mischief to him who first made a tabor, for it is an instrument which ought to please nobody. No rich man ought to love the sound of a tabor, which is bad for people's heads; for, if stretched tight, and struck hard, it may be heard at half a league's distance:"—

Qui primes sist tabor. Diex li envoit contraire!

Que c'estrument i est qu' à nului ne doit plaire.

Nus riches hom ne doit son de tabour amer.
Quant il est bien tendu et on le vent hurter,
De demie grant lieue le puet-on escouter;
Ci a trop mauvès son por son chief conforter.



No. 124. An Organ Player.

The musical instruments used by the mediæval gleemen and minstrels form in themselves a not uninteresting subject. Those enumerated in the

Anglo-Saxon vocabularies are the harp (*hearpe*, *cithara*), the *byme*, or trumpet, the pipe, "or whistle," the *fithele*, viol, or fiddle, the horn, and the trumpet, the latter of which was called in Anglo-Saxon *truth* and *særga*. To these we must certainly add a few others, for the drum or tabor seems to have been in use among them under some form, as well as the cymbal, hand-bells, lyre struck by a plectrum, and the organ, which latter was already the favourite church instrument. A portable organ was in use in the middle ages, of which we give a figure (No. 124), from a manuscript in the British Museum of the earlier part of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 14 E. iii.). This hand-organ was known also by the name of the dulcimer. It occurs again in the following group (No. 125), taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Addit. No. 10,293), where the performer on the dulcimer is accompanied by two other minstrels, one playing on the bagpipe, the other on the viol or fiddle.



No. 125. A Group of Minstrels.



No. 126. David and his Musicians.

Each of the figures in this group is dressed in a costume so different from the others that one might almost suppose them engaged in a masquerade, and they seem to discountenance the notion that the minstrels were in the habit of wearing any dress peculiar to their class. In this respect, their testimony seems to be confirmed by the circumstance that minstrels are mentioned sometimes as wearing the dresses which have been given them, among other gifts, as a reward for their performances. The illuminated letter here introduced (No. 126), which is taken from a manuscript of the thirteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Harl. No. 5102), represents king David singing his psalms to the harp,

while three musicians accompany him. The first, who sits beside him, is playing on the shalm or psaltery, which is frequently figured in the illuminations of manuscripts. One of the two upper figures is playing on bells, which also is a description of music often represented in the illuminations of different periods; and the other is blowing the horn. These are all instruments of solemn and ecclesiastical music. In the next cut (No. 127), taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.), the shalm is placed in the hands of a nun, while a friar is performing on a rather singularly shaped cittern, or lute.



No. 127. Musicians of the Cloister.



No. 128. The Angelic Choir.



No. 129. An Angel Playing on the Shalm.

In other manuscripts we find the ordinary musical instruments placed in the hands of the angels; as in

the early fourteenth century MS. Reg. 2 B. vii., in a representation (copied in our cut No. 128) of the creation with the morning stars singing together, and all the sons of God shouting for joy, an angelic choir are making melody on the trumpet, fiddle, cittern, shalm, and harp. There is another choir of angels at p. 168 of the same MS., with two citterns and two shalms, a fiddle and a trumpet. Similar representations occur in the choirs of churches. In the bosses of the ceiling of Tewkesbury abbey church we see angels playing the cittern (with a plectrum), the harp (with its cover seen enveloping the lower half of the instrument), and the cymbals. In the choir of Lincoln cathedral, some of the series of angels which fill the spandrels of its arcades, and which have given to it the name of the angel choir, are playing instruments, such as the trumpet, double pipe, pipe and tabret, dulcimer, viol and harp, as if to represent the heavenly choir attuning their praises in harmony with the human choir below: —"therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name." We will introduce here another drawing of an angelic minstrel (No. 129), playing a shalm, from the Royal MS. 14 E. iii.; others occur at folio 1 of the same MS. It has been suggested that the band of village musicians with flute, violin, clarionet, and bass-viol, whom most of us have seen occupying the singing-gallery of some country church, are probably not inaccurate representatives of the band of minstrels who occupied the rood-lofts in mediæval times. In this period of the middle ages, indeed, music seems to have had a great charm for all classes of society, and each class appears in turn in the minstrel character in the illuminations of the manuscripts. Even the shepherds, throughout the

middle ages, seem to have been musical, like the swains of Theocritus or Virgil; for we constantly find them represented playing upon instruments; and in confirmation we give a couple of goatherds (No. 130), from MS. Reg. 2 B. vii. fol. 83, of early fourteenth century date: they are playing on the pipe and horn. But, besides these instruments, the bagpipe was also a rustic instrument: there is a shepherd playing upon one on folio 112 of the same MS. (given in our cut No. 131): and again, in the early fourteenth century MS. Reg. 2 B. vi., on the reverse of folio 8, is a group of shepherds, one of whom plays a small pipe, and another the bagpipes. Chaucer (in the "House of Fame") mentions—

Pipes made of grene corne,
As han thise lytel herde gromes,
That kepen bestis in the bromes.

It is curious to find that even at so late a period as the reign of queen Mary, they still officiated at weddings and other merrymakings in their villages, and even sometimes excited the jealousy of the professors of the joyous science, as we have seen in the early French poem against the taborers.



No. 130. A Group of Shepherds.



No. 131.



No. 132. The Lady and Tambourine.

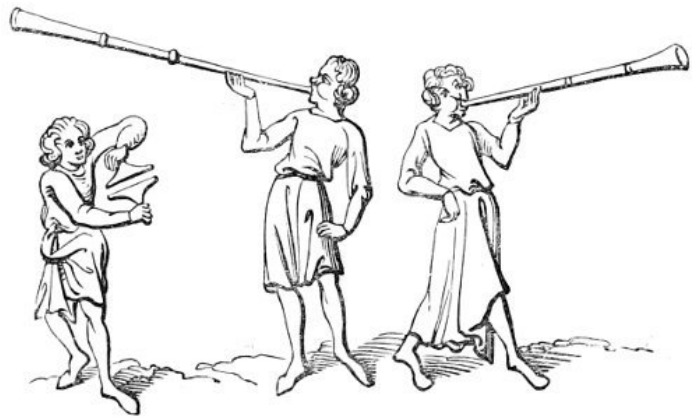


No. 133. A Drummer.

I give next (cut No. 132) a representation of a female

minstrel playing the tambourine; it is also taken from a MS. of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii. fol. 182).

The earliest instance yet met with of the modern-shaped drum is contained in the Coronation Book of Richard II., preserved in the Chapter-house. Westminster, and is represented in the annexed cut (No. 133). This mediæval drummer is clearly intended to be playing on two drums at once; and, in considering their forms and position, we must make some allowance for the mediæval neglect of perspective.



No. 134. Blowing the Trumpet and Playing on the Cymbals.

In the mediæval vocabularies we find several lists of musical instruments then best known. Thus John de Garlande, in the middle of the thirteenth century, enumerates, as the minstrels who were to be seen in the houses of the wealthy, individuals who performed on the instruments which he terms in Latin, *lyra* (meaning the harp), *tibia* (the flute), *cornu* (the horn), *vidula* (the fiddle), *sistrum* (the drum),

giga (the gittern), *symphonia* (a symphony), *psalterium* (the psaltery), *chorus*, *citola* (the cittern), *tympanum* (the tabor), and *cymbala* (cymbals). The English glossaries of the fifteenth century add to these the trumpet, the *ribibe* (a sort of fiddle), organs, and the crowd. The forms of these instruments of various periods will be found in the illustrations which have been given in the course of the present chapter. It will be well perhaps to enumerate again the most common; they are the harp, fiddle, cittern or lute, hand-organ or dulcimer, the shalm or psaltery, the pipe and tabor, pipes of various sizes played like clarionets, but called flutes, the double pipe, hand-bells, trumpets and horns, bagpipes, tambourine, tabret, drum, and cymbals. We give two further groups of figures in illustration of these instruments, both taken from the Royal MS. so often quoted, 2 B. vii. In the first (No. 134) we have a boy (apparently) playing the cymbals; and in the second (No. 135) an example of the double flute, which we have already seen in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts (see before, pp. 35 and 65), and which appears to have been one of the musical instruments borrowed immediately from the Romans. In conclusion of this subject we give a group of musical instruments (No. 136) from one of the illustrations of the celebrated book entitled “Der Weise König,” a work of the close of the fifteenth century.



No. 135. The Dulcimer and Double Flute.



No. 136. Musical Instruments.

The early commentator on the Dictionarius, or Vocabulary, of John de Garlande, calls the musical instruments *instrumenta leccatorum*, (instruments of the letchers or ribalds), and I have already stated that the minstrels, or jougleurs, were considered as belonging generally to that degraded class of society. In the vocabularies of the fifteenth century, they are generally classed under the head of reprehensible or

disgraceful professions, along with ribalds, heretics, harlots, and so forth. It was the same character which led them, a little later, to be proscribed in acts of parliament, under the titles of rogues and vagabonds. In the older poetry, too, they are often joined with disgraceful epithets. There is a curious early metrical story, or fabliau, which was made, no doubt, to be recited by the minstrels themselves, although it throws ridicule on their profession; it is entitled *Les deux Troveors ribauz*, "the two ribald trouvères," and consists in a ludicrous dispute between them on their qualifications as minstrels. My readers must not suppose that at this time the reciters of poetry were a different or better class than those who performed jugglery and low buffoonery—for, in this poem, either of the two claimants to superiority boasts of his skill equally in possessing in his memory completely, and being able to recite well, the early Chansons de Geste, or Carlovingian romances, the later romances of chivalry, and the fabliaux or metrical stories; in playing upon the most fashionable musical instruments, such as the citole, the fiddle, and the *gigue* (gittern); in performing extraordinary feats and in sleight of hand; and even in making chaplets of flowers, and in acting as a spy or as a go-between in love intrigues. No doubt there were minstrels who kept themselves more respectable, but they were exceptions to the general character of the class, and were chiefly men in the service of the king or of the great barons. There appears also to have been, for a long time, a continued attempt to raise minstrelsy to a respectable position, and out of this attempt arose, in different places, companies and guilds. Of these, the most remarkable of which we have any knowledge in this country, was the ancient fraternity of minstrels

of Beverley, in Yorkshire. When this company originated is not known; but it was of some consideration and wealth in the reign of Henry VI., when the church of St. Mary's, in that town, was built; for the minstrels gave a pillar to it, on the capital of which a band of minstrels were sculptured. The cut below (No. 137) is copied from the engraving of this group, given in Carter's "Ancient Painting and Sculpture." The oldest existing document of the fraternity is a copy of laws of the time of Philip and Mary, similar to those by which all trade guilds were governed: their officers were an alderman and two stewards or seers (*i. e.* searchers); and the only items in their laws which throw any light upon the history or condition of the minstrels are—one which requires that they should not take "any new brother except he be mynstrell to some man of honour or worship, or waite of some towne corporate or other ancient town, or else of such honestye and conyng (*knowledge*) as shall be thought laudable and pleasant to the hearers there;" and another, to the effect that "no mylner, shepherd, or of other occupation, or husbandman, or husbandman servant, playing upon pype or other instrument, shall sue (*follow*) any wedding, or other thing that pertaineth to the said science, except in his own parish." Institutions like these, however, had little effect in counteracting the natural decline of minstrelsy, for the state of society in which it existed was passing away. It would be curious to trace the changes in its history by the instruments which became especially characteristic of the popular jougleur. The harp had given way to the fiddle, and already, towards the end of the thirteenth century, the fiddle was yielding its place to the tabor. In the Anglo-Norman romance of Horn, of the thirteenth

century, we are told of a ribald “who goes to marriages to play on the tabor”—

A li piert qu’il est las un lechur
Ki à ces nocces vient pur juer od tabur;

and the curious fabliau of the king of England and the jougleur of Ely describes the latter as carrying his tabor swung to his neck—

Entour son col porta soun tabour.



No. 137. The Minstrels of Beverley.

CHAPTER X.

AMUSEMENTS AFTER DINNER.—GAMBLING.—THE GAME OF CHESS.—ITS HISTORY.—DICE.—TABLES.—DRAUGHTS.

The dinner hour, even among the highest ranks of society, was, as I have stated, early in the forenoon; and, except in the case of great feasts, it appears not to have been customary to sit long after dinner. Thus a great part of the day was left on people's hands, to fill up with some description of amusement or occupation. After the dinner was taken away, and the

ceremony of washing had been gone through, the wine cup appears to have been at least once passed round, before they all rose from table. The Camden Society has recently published an early French metrical romance ("Blonde of Oxford," by Philippe de Reimes), which gives us a very interesting picture of the manners of the thirteenth century. Jean of Dammartin is represented as the son of a noble family in France, who comes to England to seek his fortune, and enters the service of an earl of Oxford, as one of the esquires in his household. There his duty is to attend upon the earl's daughter, the lady Blonde, and to serve her at table. "After the meal, they wash their hands and then go to play, as each likes best, either in forests or on rivers (*i.e.* hunting or hawking), or in amusements of other kinds. Jean goes to which of them he likes, and, when he returns, he often goes to play in the chambers of the countess, with the ladies, who oblige him to teach them French." Jean does his best to please them, for which he was qualified by his education, "For he was very well acquainted with chamber games, such as chess, tables, and dice, with which he entertains his damsel (Blonde); he often says 'check' and 'mate' to her, and he taught her to play many a game:"—

De jus de cambres seut assés,
D'eschés, de tables, et de dés,
Dont il sa damoisele esbat;
Souvent li dist eschek et mat;
De maint jeu à juer l'aprist.

—Blonde of Oxford, l. 399.

This is a correct picture of the usual occupations of the after-part of the day among the superior classes of society in the feudal ages; and scenes in

accordance with it are often found in the illuminations of the mediæval manuscripts. One of these is represented in the engraving (No. 138) on the following page, taken from a manuscript of the fifteenth century, containing the romance of the "Quatre Fils d'Aymon," and preserved in the Library of the Arsenal, in Paris. In the chamber in front a nobleman and one of the great ladies of his household are engaged at chess, while in the background we see other ladies enjoying themselves in the garden, which is shown to us with its summer-house and its flower-beds surrounded with fences of lattice-work. It may be remarked, that the attention of the chess-players is withdrawn suddenly from their game by the entrance of an armed knight, who appears in another compartment of the illumination in the manuscript.

Of the chamber games enumerated in the foregoing extract from the romance of "Blonde of Oxford," that of chess was no doubt looked upon as by far the most distinguished. To play well at chess was considered as a very important part of an aristocratic education. Thus, in the "Chanson de Geste" (metrical romance) of Parise la Duchessse, the son of the heroine, who was brought up by the king in his palace, had no sooner reached his fifteenth year, than "he was taught first his letters, until he had made sufficient progress in them, and then he learnt to play at tables and chess," and learnt these games so well, "that no man in this world was able to mate him:"—

Quant l'anfès ot xv. anz et compliz et passez,
Premiers aprist à lettres, tant qu'il en sot assez;
Puis aprist-il as tables et à eschas joier,
It n'a ome an cest monde qui l'en peust mater.

—Parise la Duchesse, p. 86.

In this numerous cycle of romances, scenes in which kings and princes, as well as nobles, are represented as occupying their leisure with the game of chess, occur very frequently, and sometimes the game forms an important incident in the story. In "Garin le Loherain," a messenger hurries to Bordeaux, and finds count Thiebaut playing at chess with Berengier d'Autri. Thiebaut is so much excited by his news, that he pushes the chess-board violently from him, and scatters the chess-men about the place—

Thiebaus l'oït, à pou n'enrage vis,
Li eschés boute, et le jeu espandit.

—Garin le Loherain, ii. 77.

So, in the same romance, the emperor Pepin, arriving at his camp, had no sooner entered his tent than, having put on a loose tunic (*bliaut*), and a mantle, he called for a chess-board, and sat down to play—

Eschés demande, si est au jeu assis.

—Ib., ii. 127.

Even Witikind, the king of the pagan Saxons, is represented as amusing himself with this game. When the messenger, who carried him news that Charlemagne was on the way to make war upon him, arrived at "Tremoigne," the palace of the Saxon king, he found Witikind playing at chess with Escorfaus de Lutise, and the Saxon queen. Sebile, who was also well acquainted with the game, looking on—

A lui joe as eschas Escorfaus de Lutise;

Sebile les esgarde, qi do jeu est aprise.
—Chanson des Saxons, i. 91.

Witikind was so angry at this intelligence, that his face “became as red as a cherry,” and he broke the chess-board to pieces—

D’ire et de mautalant rugist comme cerise;
Le message regarde, le geu peçoie et brise.

In the “Chanson de Geste” of Guerin de Montglaive, the story turns upon an imprudent act of Charlemagne, who stakes his whole kingdom upon a game of chess, and losing it to Guerin, is obliged to compound with him by surrendering to him his right to the city of Montglaive, then in the possession of the Saracens.



No. 138. A Mediæval after-dinner Scene.

These “Chansons de Geste,” formed upon the traditions of the early Carlovingian period, can only of course be taken as a picture of the manner of the age at which they were composed, that is, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and we know, from

historical evidence, that the picture is strictly true. At that period chess certainly was what has been termed the royal game. The celebrated Walter Mapes, writing in the latter half of the twelfth century, gives a curious anecdote relating to tragical events which had occurred at the court of Britany, apparently in the earlier part of the same century. Alan of Britany, perhaps the last of the name who had ruled over that country, had, at the suggestion of his wife, entrapped a feudatory prince, Remelin, and subjected him to the loss of his eyes and other mutilations. Remelin's son, Wigan, having escaped a similar fate, made war upon Alan, and reduced him to such extremities that, through the interference of the king of France, he made his peace with Wigan, by giving him his daughter in marriage, and thus for many years the country remained in peace. But it appears that the lady always shared in her father's feuds, and looked with exulting contempt on her father's mutilated enemy. One day she was playing with her husband at chess, and, towards the end of the game, Wigan, called away by some important business, asked one of his knights to take his place at the chess-board. The lady was the conqueror, and when she made her last move, she said to the knight, "It is not to you, but to the son of the mutilated that I say 'mate.'" Wigan heard this sarcasm, and, deeply offended, hurried to the residence of his father-in-law, took him by surprise, and inflicted upon him the same mutilations which had been experienced by Remelin. Then, returning home, he engaged in another game with his wife, and, having gained it, threw the eyes and other parts of which her father had been deprived on the chess-board, exclaiming, "I say *mate*, to the daughter of the mutilated." The story goes on to say that the lady concealed her desire of

vengeance, until she found an opportunity of effecting the murder of her husband.

We need not be surprised if, among the turbulent barons of the middle ages, the game of chess often gave rise to disputes and sanguinary quarrels. The curious history of the Fitz-Warines, reduced to writing certainly in the thirteenth century, gives the following account of the origin of the feud between king John and Fulk Fitz-Warine, the outlaw:—"Young Fulk," we are told, "was bred with the four sons of king Henry II., and was much beloved by them all except John; for he used often to quarrel with John. It happened that John and Fulk were sitting all alone in a chamber playing at chess; John took the chess-board and struck Fulk a great blow. Fulk felt himself hurt, raised his foot and struck John in the middle of the stomach, that his head went against the wall, and he became all weak and fainted. Fulk was in consternation; but he was glad that there was nobody in the chamber but they two, and he rubbed John's ears, who recovered from his fainting-fit, and went to the king his father, and made a great complaint. 'Hold your tongue, wretch,' said the king, 'you are always quarrelling. If Fulk did anything but good to you, it must have been by your own desert;' and he called his master, and made him beat him finely and well for complaining." Similar incidents recur continually in the early romances I have just quoted as the "Chansons de Geste," which give us so vivid a picture of feudal times. A fatal quarrel of this kind was the cause of the feud between Charlemagne and Ogier le Danois. At one of the Easter festivals of the court of Charlemagne, the emperor's son, Charles, and Bauduin, the illegitimate son of Ogier, went to play together. Bauduin and

young Charles took a chess-board and sat down to the game for pastime. “They have arranged their chess-men on the board. The king’s son first moved his pawn, and young Bauduin moved his *aufin* (bishop) backwards. The king’s son thought to press him very hard, and moves his knight upon the other *aufin*. The one moved forward and the other backward so long, that young Bauduin said ‘mate’ to him in the corner:”—

Il et Callos prisent un esquekier,
Au ju s’asisent por aus esbanier.
S’ont lor esches assis sor le tabler.
Li fix au roi traist son paon premier,
Bauduinés traist son aufin arier.
Li fix au roi le volt forment coitier,
Sus l’autre aufin a trait son chevalier.
Tant traist li uns avant et l’autre arier,
Bauduinés li dist mat en l’angler.

—Ogier de Danemarche, l. 3159.

The young prince was furious at his defeat, and, not content with treating the son of Ogier with the most insulting language, he seized the chess-board in his two hands, and struck him so violent a blow on the forehead, that he split his head, and scattered his brains over the floor. In a well-known illuminated manuscript of the fifteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 15 E. vi.), containing a copy of the romance of “Ogier le Danois,” this scene is represented in an illumination which is copied in our cut No. 139. Similar incidents are rather common in these old romances. In that of “Parise la Duchesse,” her young son, brought up as a foundling at the court of the king of Hungary, becomes an object of jealousy to the old nobles. Four of the sons of the

latter conspire to murder him, and it is arranged that they shall invite him to go and play at chess with them in a retired cellar, and, having secretly provided themselves with knives, insult him, in order to draw him into a quarrel, and then stab him to death. “Hugues,” they said, “will you come with us to play at chess? you may gain a hundred francs on the gilt chess-board, and at the same time you will teach us chess and dice; for certainly you know the games much better than any of us.” Hugues seems to have been conscious of the frequency of quarrels arising from the game, for it was not until they had promised him that they would not seek any cause of dispute, that he accepted their invitation. They then led him into the cellar, and sat down at the chess-board. “He began by playing with the son of duke Granier; and each put down a hundred francs in coined money; but he had soon vanquished and mated them all, that not one of them was able to mate him:”—

Au fil au duc Graner comença à juer;
Chascuns mist c. frans de deniers moniez;
Mais il les a trestoz et vancus et matez,
Que il n’i ot i. sol qui l’an poüft mater.

—Parise la Duchesse, p. 105.

Hugues, in kindness, offered to teach them better how to play, without allowing them to risk their money, but they drew their knives upon him, and insulted him in the most outrageous terms. He killed the foremost of them with a blow of his fist, and seizing upon the chess-board for a weapon, for he was unarmed, he “brained” the other three with it. We learn from this anecdote that it was the custom in the middle ages to play at chess for money.



No. 139. A Quarrel at Chess.

As I have already remarked, these romances picture to us the manners of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and not those of the Carlovingian era. The period when the game of chess was first introduced into western Europe can only be conjectured, for writers of all descriptions were so much in the habit of employing the notions belonging to their own time in relating the events of the past, that we can place no dependence on anything which is not absolute contemporary evidence. The chess-board and men so long preserved in the treasury of St. Denis, and said to have belonged to Charlemagne, were, I think, probably, not older than the eleventh century, and

appear to have had a Byzantine origin. If the game of chess had been known at the court of Charlemagne, I cannot but think that we should have found some distinct allusion to it. The earliest mention of this game that we know is found in a letter from Damianus, cardinal bishop of Ostia, to Alexander II., who was elected to the papacy in 1061, and enjoyed it till 1073. Damianus tells the pope how he was travelling with a bishop of Florence, when, "having arrived in the evening at a hostel, I withdrew," he says, "into the cell of a priest, while he remained with the crowd of travellers in the spacious house. In the morning, I was informed by my servant that the aforesaid bishop had been playing at the game of chess; which information, like an arrow, pierced my heart very acutely. At a convenient hour, I sent for him, and said in a tone of severe reproof, 'The hand is stretched out, the rod is ready for the back of the offender.' 'Let the fault be proved,' said he, 'and penance shall not be refused.' 'Was it well,' I rejoined, 'was it worthy of the character you bear, to spend the evening in the vanity of chess-play (*in vanitate scachorum*), and defile the hands and tongue, which ought to be the mediator between man and the Deity? Are you not aware that, by the canonical law, bishops, who are dice-players, are ordered to be deposed?' He, however, making himself a shield of defence from the difference in the names, said that dice was one thing, and chess another; consequently that the canon only forbade dice, but that it tacitly allowed chess. To which I replied, 'Chess,' I said, 'is not named in the text, but the general term of dice comprehends both the games. Wherefore, since dice are prohibited, and chess is not expressly mentioned, it follows, without doubt, that both kinds of play are included under one term, and equally condemned?'"

This occurred in Italy, and it is evident from it that the game of chess was then well known there, though I think we have a right to conclude from it, that it had not been long known. There appears to be little room for doubting, that chess was, like so many other mediæval practices, an oriental invention, that the Byzantine Greeks derived it from the Saracens, and that from them it came by way of Italy to France.

The knowledge of the game of chess, however, seems to have been brought more directly from the East by the Scandinavian navigators, to whom such a means of passing time in their distant voyages, and in their long nights at home, was most welcome, and who soon became extraordinarily attached to it, and displayed their ingenuity in elaborately carving chess-men in ivory (that is, in the ivory of the walrus), which seem to have found an extensive market in other countries. In the year 1831, a considerable number of these carved ivory chess-men were found on the coast of the Isle of Lewis, probably the result of some shipwreck in the twelfth century, for to that period they belong. They formed part of at least seven sets, and had therefore probably been the stock of a dealer. Some of them were obtained by the British Museum, and a very learned and valuable paper on them was communicated by sir Frederic Madden to the Society of Antiquaries, and printed in the twenty-fourth volume of the *Archæologia*. Some of the best of them, however, remained in private hands, and have more recently passed into the rich museum of the late lord Londesborough. We give here two groups of these curious chess-men, taken from the collection of lord Londesborough, and from those in the British

Museum as engraved in the volume of the *Archæologia* just referred to. The first group, forming our cut No. 140, consists of a king (1), from the collection of lord Londesborough, and a queen (2), bishop (3), and knight (4), all from the *Archæologia*; and the second group (No. 141) presents us with the warriors on foot, to which the Icelanders gave the name of *hrokr*, and to which sir Frederic Madden gives the English name of warders, one of them (5) from lord Londesborough's collection, the other (6) from the British Museum. The rest are pawns, all from the latter collection; they are generally plain and octagonal, as in the group to the right (7), but were sometimes ornamented, as in the case of the other example (8).



No. 140. Icelandic Chess-men of the Twelfth Century.

It will be seen at once that in name and character these chess-men are nearly identical with those in common use, although in costume they are purely

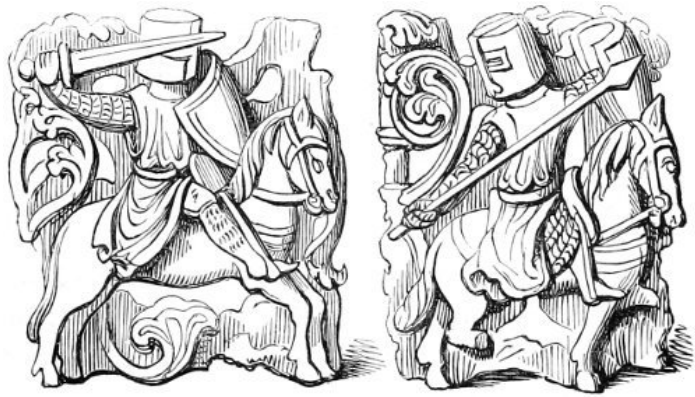
Scandinavian. The king sits in the position, with his sword across his knee, and his hand ready to draw it, which is described as characteristic of royalty in the old northern poetry. The queen holds in her hand a drinking horn, in which at great festivals the lady of the household, of whatever rank, was accustomed to serve out the ale or mead to the guests. The bishops are some seated, and others standing, but all distinguished by the mitre, crosier, and episcopal costume. The knights are all on horseback, and are covered with characteristic armour. The armed men on foot, just mentioned by the name of warders, were peculiar to the Scandinavian set of chess-men, and supplied the place of the rocks, or rooks, in the mediæval game, and of the modern castle.



No. 141. Icelandic Chess-men of the Twelfth Century.

Several of the chess-men had indeed gone through more than one modification in their progress from the East. The Arabs and Persians admitted no female among the persons on their chess-board, and the piece which we call the queen was with them the *pherz* (vizier or councillor). The oriental name, under

the form *fers*, *ferz*, or *ferce*, in Latin *ferzia*, was long preferred in the middle ages, though certainly as early as the twelfth century the original character of the piece had been changed for that of a queen, and the names *fers* and queen became synonymous. It is hardly necessary to say that a bishop would not be found on a Saracenic chess-board. This piece was called by the Persians and Arabs *pil* or *phil*, meaning an elephant, under the form of which animal it was represented. This name was also preserved in its transmission to the west, and with the Arab article prefixed became *alfil*, or more commonly *alfin*, which was again softened down into *aufin*, the usual name of the piece in the old French and English writers. The character of the bishop must have been adopted very early among the Christians, and it is found under that character among the Northerns, and in England. Such, however, was not the case everywhere. The Russians and Swedes have preserved the original name of the elephant. In Italy and France this piece was sometimes represented as an archer; and at an early period in the latter country, from a supposed confusion of the Arabic *fil* with the French *fol*, it was sometimes called by the latter name, and represented as a court jester. *Roc*, the name given by the Saracens to the piece now called the castle, meant apparently a hero, or champion, Persian *rokh*; the name was preserved in the middle ages, but the piece seems to have been first represented under the character of an elephant, and it was no doubt, from the tower which the elephant carried on its back, that our modern form originated. The Icelanders seem alone to have adopted the name in its original meaning, for with them, as shown in cut No. 141, the *hrokr* is represented as a warrior on foot.



No. 142. Chess-man of the Thirteenth Century.

A few examples of carved chess-men have been found in different parts of England, which show that these highly-ornamented pieces were in use at all periods. One of these, represented in our cut No. 142, is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and, to judge by the costume, belongs to the earlier part of the thirteenth century. Its material is the tooth of the walrus (the northern ivory); it represents a knight on both sides, one wielding a lance, the other a sword, the intervening spaces being filled with foliage. Another knight, made of real ivory, is represented in our cut No. 143, taken from an engraving in the third volume of the *Archæological Journal*, where it is stated to be in the possession of the Rev. J. Eagles, of Worcester. It belongs to the reign of Edward III. Here the knight is on horseback, and wears chain-mail and plate. The body of the horse is entirely covered with chain-mail, over which housings are placed, and the head with plate-armour.



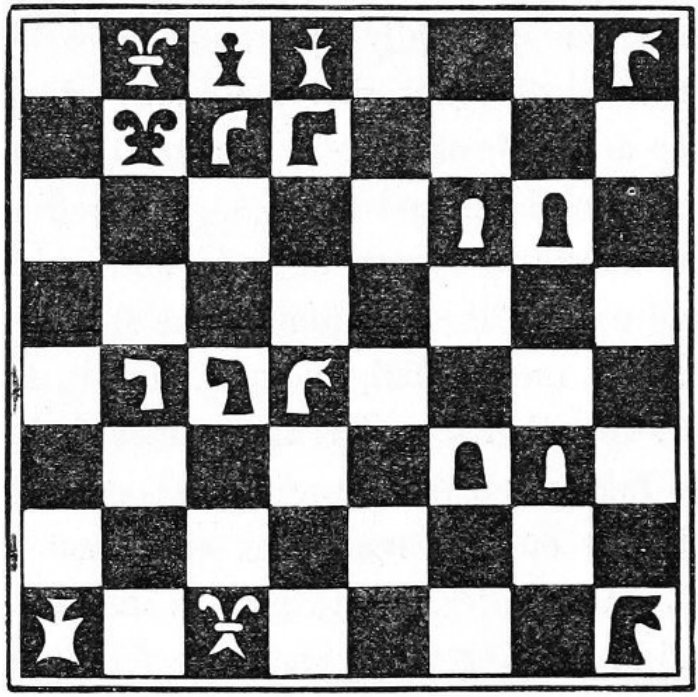
No. 143. Chess-man of the Fourteenth Century.

All who are acquainted with the general character of mediæval carving will suppose that these ornamental chess-men were of large dimensions, and consequently rather clumsy for use. The largest of those found in the Isle of Lewis, a king, is upwards of four inches in height, and nearly seven inches in circumference. They were hence rather formidable weapons in a strong hand, and we find them used as such in some of the scenes of the early romances. According to one version of the death of Bauduin, the illegitimate son of Ogier, the young prince Charles struck him with the rook so violent a blow that he made his two eyes fly out:—

Là le dona Callos le cop mortel
Si com juoit as eskés et as dés;
Là le feri d'un rok par tel fiertés,
Que andus les elx li fist du cief voler.

—Ogier de Danemarche, l. 90.

A rather rude illumination is one of the manuscripts, of which M. Barrois has given a fac-simile in his edition of this romance, representing Charles striking his opponent with the rook. According to another version of the story, the young prince, using the rook as a missile, threw it at him. An incident in the romance of the "Quatre Fils d'Aymon," where the agents of Regnault go to arrest the duke Richard of Normandy, and find him playing at chess, is thus told quaintly in the English version, printed by Copeland:—"When duke Richarde saw that these sergeauntes had him thus by the arm, and helde in his hande a lady of ivery, wherewith he would have given a mate to Yonnet, he withdrew his arme, and gave to one of the sergeauntes such a stroke with it into the forehead, that he made him tumble over and over at his feete; and than he tooke a rooke, and smote another withall upon his head, that he all to-brost it to the brayne."



No. 144. An Early Chess-board and Chess-men.

The chess-boards were naturally large, and were sometimes made of the precious metals, and of other rich materials. In one romance, the chess-board and men are made of crystal; in another, that of "Alexander," the men are made of sapphires and topazes. A chess-board, preserved in the museum of the Hôtel de Cluny, at Paris, and said to have been the one given by the old man of the mountains (the sheikh of the Hassassins) to St. Louis, is made of rock-crystal, and mounted in silver gilt. In the romances, however, the chess-board is sometimes spoken of as made of *ormier*, or elm. In fact, when the game of chess came into extensive use, it became necessary not only to make the chess-board and men

of less expensive materials and smaller, but to give to the latter simple conventional forms, instead of making them elaborate sculptures. The foundation for this latter practice had already been laid by the Arabs, whose tenets, contrary to those of the Persians, proscribed all images of living beings. The mediæval conventional form of the rook, a figure with a bi-parted head, somewhat approaching to the heraldic form of the fleur-de-lis, appears to have been taken directly from the Arabs. The knight was represented by a small upright column, the upper part of it bent to one side, and is supposed to have been meant for a rude representation of the horse's head. The aufin, or bishop, had the same form as the knight, except that the bent end was cleft, probably as an indication of the episcopal mitre. The accompanying figure of a chess-board (No. 144), taken from a manuscript of the earlier part of the fourteenth century (MS. Cotton. Cleopat. B. ix.), but no doubt copied from one of the latter part of the thirteenth century, when the Anglo-Norman metrical treatise on chess which it illustrates was composed, gives all the conventional forms of chess-men used at that time. The piece at the left-hand extremity of the lower row is evidently a king. The other king is seen in the centre of the upper row. Immediately to the left of the latter is the queen, and the two figures below the king and queen are knights, while those to the left of the queen and white knight are rooks. Those in the right-hand corner, at top and bottom, are aufins, or bishops. The pawns on this chess-board bear a striking resemblance to those found in the Isle of Lewis. The same forms, with very slight variations, present themselves in the scenes of chess-playing as depicted in the illuminated manuscripts. Thus, in a manuscript of the French prose romance of

"Meliadus," in the British Museum (MS. Addit. No. 12,228, fol. 23, vo), written between the years 1330 and 1350, we have an interesting sketch (given in our cut No. 145) of two kings engaged in this game. The rooks and the bishops are distinctly represented, but the others are less easily recognised, in consequence of the imperfect drawing. Our next cut (No. 146) is taken from the well-known manuscript of the poetry of the German Minnesingers, made for Rudiger von Manesse, early in the fourteenth century, and now preserved in the National Library in Paris, and represents the prince poet, Otto of Brandenburg, playing at chess with a lady. We have here the same conventional forms of chess-men, a circumstance which shows that the same types prevailed in England, France, and Germany. Another group, in which a king is introduced playing at chess, forms the subject of our cut No. 147, and is taken from a manuscript of the thirteenth century, in the Harleian collection in the British Museum (No. 1275), consisting of a numerous series of illustrations of the Bible history, executed evidently in England. It will be seen that the character of chess as a royal game is sustained throughout.



No. 145. A Royal Game at Chess.



No. 146. A Game at Chess in the Fourteenth Century.



No. 147. A King at Chess.

In this century the game of chess had become extremely popular among the feudal aristocracy—including under that head all who could aspire to knighthood. Already, in the twelfth century, directions for the game had been composed in Latin verse, which seems to show that, in spite of the zeal of men like cardinal Damianus, it was popular among the clergy. Towards the latter end of the thirteenth century, a French dominican friar, Jacques de Cessoles, made the game the subject of a moral work, entitled *Moralitas de Scaccario*, which became very popular in later times, was published in a French version by Jean de Vignay, and translated from this French version into English, by Caxton, in his "Boke of Chesse," so celebrated among bibliographers. To the age of Jacques de Cessoles belongs an Anglo-Norman metrical treatise on chess, of which several copies are preserved in manuscript (the one I have used is in MS. Reg. 13 A. xviii. fol. 161, vo), and which presents us with the first collection of games. These games are distinguished by quaint names, like those given to the old dances;

such as *de propre confusion* (one's own confusion), *ky perde, sey sauve* (the loser wins), *ky est larges, est sages* (he that is liberal is wise), *meschief fet hom penser* (misfortune makes a man reflect), *la chace de ferce et de chivaler* (the chace of the queen and the knight), *de dames et de damyceles* (ladies and damsels), *la batalie de rokes* (the battle of the rooks), and the like.

It is quite unnecessary to attempt to point out the numerous allusions to the game of chess during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when it continued to be extremely popular. Chaucer, in one of his minor poems, the "Boke of the Duchesse," introduces himself in a dream as playing at chess with Fortune, and speaks of false moves, as though dishonest tricks were sometimes practised in the game. He tells us,—

At chesse with me she gan to pleye,
With hir fals draughtes (moves) *dyvers*
She staale on me, and toke my fers (queen);
And whanne I saugh my fers awaye,
Allas! I kouthe no lenger playe,
But seyde, "Farewel, swete! ywys,
And farewel al that ever ther ys!"
Therwith Fortune seyde, "Chek here!"
And "mate" in the myd poynt of the chekkere (chess-board),
With a powne (pawn) *errante, allas!*
Ful craftier to pleye she was
Than Athalus, that made the game
First of the chesse, so was hys name.

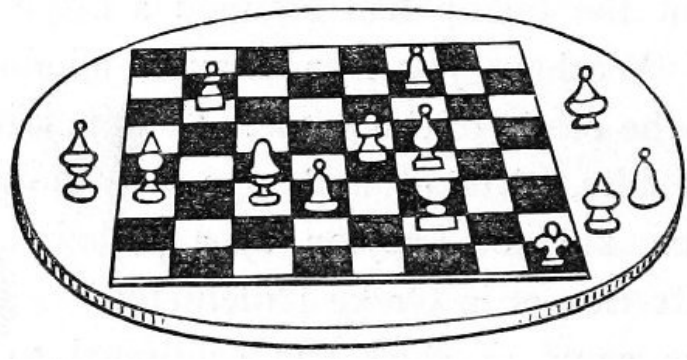
—ROBERT BELL'S Chaucer, vol. vi. p. 157.

With the breaking up of feudalism, the game of chess seems to have gone to a great extent out of practice, and made way for a comparatively new game,—that

of cards, which now became very popular. When Caxton printed his “Boke of Chesse” in 1474, he sought only to publish a moral treatise, and not to furnish his countrymen with a book of instructions in the game. The cut of the chess-player given in this book, copied in our cut No. 148, shows some modifications in the forms of the chess-men. The knight, the rook, and the pawn, have preserved their old forms; but we are led to suppose, by the number of pieces with the bi-partite head, that the bishop had assumed a shape nearly resembling that of the rook. We have just seen Chaucer alluding to one of the legends relating to the origin of this game. Caxton, after Jean de Vignay and Jacques de Cessoles, gives us a strange story how it was invented under Evylmerodach, king of Babylon, by a philosopher, “whyche was named in Caldee Exerses, or in Greke Philemetor.”



No. 148. Chess in the Fifteenth Century.



No. 149. An Italian Chess-board.

Meanwhile, the game of chess had continued to flourish in Italy, where it appears to have experienced improvements, and where certainly the forms of the men were considerably modified. An Italian version of the work of Jacques de Cessoles was printed at Florence in 1493, under the title of *Libro de Giuocho delli Scacchi*, among the engravings to which, as in most of the editions of that work, there is a picture of a group of chess-players, who are here seated at a round table. The chess-board is represented in our cut, No. 149, and it will be seen at a glance that the chess-men present a far greater resemblance to those used at the present day than those given in the older illuminations. Within a few years of the date of this book, a Portuguese, named Damiano, who was perhaps residing in Italy, as his work seems to have appeared there first, drew up a book of directions for chess with a set of eighty-eight games, which display considerable ingenuity. An edition of this book was published at Rome as early as 1524, and perhaps this was not the first. The figures of the chess-men are given in this treatise; that of the king is vase-shaped, not unlike our modern chess-king, but with two crowns; the queen is similar in shape, but has one crown; the *delfino* (bishop) differs from them in being smaller, and having no crown; the *cavallo* (knight) has the form of a horse's head; the *rocho*, as it is still called, is in the form of a tower, like our modern castle; and the *pedona* (pawn) resembles a cone, with a knob at the apex. In England, the game of chess seems not to have been much in vogue during the sixteenth century; it is, I believe, only alluded to once in Shakespeare, in a well-known scene in the Tempest, which may have been taken from a foreign story, to

which he owed his plot. The name of the game had been corrupted into *chests* or *cheasts*. The game of chess was expressly discouraged by our "Solomon," James I., as "overwise and philosophicke a folly." An attempt to bring it into more notice appears to have been made early in the reign of Elizabeth, under the patronage of lord Robert Dudley, afterwards the celebrated earl of Leicester, who displayed on many occasions a taste for refinements of this sort. Instructions were again sought from Italy through France; for there was printed and published in London, in the year 1562, a little volume dedicated to lord Robert Dudley, under the title of "The Pleasaunt and wittie Playe of the Cheasts reniewed, with Instructions both to Learn it Easily and to Play it Well; lately translated out of Italian into French, and now set forth in Englishe by James Rowbotham." Rowbotham gives us some remarks of his own on the character of the game, and on the different forms of the chess-men, which are not uninteresting. He says:—"As for the fashion of the pieces, that is according to the fantasie of the workman, which maketh them after this manner. Some make them lyke men, whereof the kynge is the highest, and the queene (whiche some name amasone or ladye) is the next, bothe two crowned. The bishoppes some name alphins, some fooles, and some name them princes, lyke as also they are next unto the kinge and the queene, other some cal them archers, and thei are fashioned accordinge to the wyll of the workeman. The knights some call horsemen, and thei are men on horse backe. The rookes some cal elephantes, cariyng towres upon their backes, and men within the towres. The paunes some cal fote men, as they are souldiours on fote, cariyng some of them pykes, other some

harquebushes, other some halbards, and other some the javelyn and target. Other makers of cheastmen make them of other fashions; but the use thereof wyll cause perfect knowledge." "Our Englishe cheastmen," he adds, "are commonly made nothing like unto these foresayde fashions: to wit, the kynge is made the highest or longest; the queene is longest nexte unto him; the bishoppe is made with a sharpe toppe, and cloven in the middest not muche unlyke to a bishop's myter; the knight hath his top cut asloope, as thoughe beynge dubbed knight; the rooke is made lykest to the kynge and the queene, but that he is not so long; the paunes be made the smalest and least of all, and thereby they may best be knowen."

At an early period the German tribes, as known to the Romans, were notoriously addicted to gambling. We are informed by Tacitus that a German in his time would risk not only his property, but his own personal liberty, on a throw of the dice; and if he lost, he submitted patiently, as a point of honour, to be bound by his opponent, and carried to the market to be sold into slavery. The Anglo-Saxons appear to have shared largely in this passion, and their habits of gambling are alluded to in different writers. A well-known writer of the first half of the twelfth century, Ordericus Vitalis, tells us that in his time even the prelates of the church were in the habit of playing at dice. A still more celebrated writer, John of Salisbury, who lived a little later in the same century, speaks of dice-playing as being then extremely prevalent, and enumerates no less than ten different games, which he names in Latin, as follows:—*tessera*, *calculus*, *tabula* (tables), *urio vel Dardana pugna* (Troy fight), *tricolus*, *senio* (sice), *monarchus*,

orbiculi, *taliorchus*, and *vulpes* (the game of fox).—"De Nugis Curialium," lib. i. c. 5. The sort of estimation in which the game was then held is curiously illustrated by an anecdote in the Carlovingian romance of "Parise la Duchesse," where the king of the Hungarians wishes to contrive some means of telling the real character (aristocratic or plebeian) of his foundling, young Hugues, not then known to be the son of the duchess Parise. A party of robbers (which appears not to have been a specially disreputable avocation among the Hungarians of the romance) are employed, first to seduce the youth to "the chess and the dice," and afterwards to lead him against his will to a thieving expedition, the object of which was to rob the treasury of the king, his godfather. They made a great hole in the wall, and thrust Hugues through it. The youth beheld the heaps of gold and silver with astonishment, but, resolved to touch none of the wealth he saw around him, his eyes fell upon a coffer on which lay three dice, "made and pointed in fine ivory"—

Garde for i. escrin, si a veu iij. dez,
Qui sont de fin yvoire et fait et pointuré.
—Parise la Duchesse, p. 94.

Hugues seized the three dice, thrust them into his bosom, and, returning through the breach in the wall, told the robbers that he had carried away "the worth of four cities." When the robbers heard his explanation, they at once concluded, from the taste he had displayed on this occasion, that he was of gentle blood, and the king formed the same opinion on the result of this trial.

During the period of which we are now speaking—

the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the use of dice had spread itself from the highest to the very lowest class of the population. In its simpler form, that of the game of hazard, in which the chance of each player rested on the mere throw of the dice, it was the common game of the low frequenters of the taverns,—that class which lived upon the vices of society, and which was hardly looked upon as belonging to society itself. The practice and results of gambling are frequently referred to in the popular writers of the later middle ages. People could no longer stake their personal liberty on the throw, but they played for everything they had—even for the clothes they carried upon them, on which the tavern-keepers, who seem to have acted also as pawnbrokers, readily lent small sums of money. We often read of men who got into the taverner's hands, playing as well as drinking themselves naked; and in a well-known manuscript of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii. fol. 167 vo) we find an illumination which represents this process very literally (cut No. 150). One, who is evidently the more aged of the two players, is already perfectly naked, whilst the other is reduced to his shirt. The illuminator appears to have intended to represent them as playing against each other till neither had anything left, like the two celebrated cats of Kilkenny, who ate one another up until nothing remained but their tails.



No. 150. Mediæval Gamblers.



No. 151. A Dice-Player.

A burlesque parody on the church service, written in Latin, perhaps as early as the thirteenth century, and printed in the "*Reliquiæ Antiquæ*," gives us rather a curious picture of tavern manners at that early period. The document is profane,—much more so than any of the parodies for which Hone was prosecuted; but it is only a moderate example of the general laxness in this respect which prevailed, even among the clergy, in what have been called "the ages of faith." This is entitled "The Mass of the Drunkards," and contains a running allusion to the throwing of the three dice, and to the loss of clothing which followed; but it is full of Latin puns on the words of the church service, and the greater part of it would not bear a translation.

It will have been already remarked that, in all these anecdotes and stories, the ordinary number of the dice is three. This appears to have been the number used in most of the common games. In our cut No. 151, taken from the illumination in a copy of Jean de Vignay's translation of Jacobus de Cessolis (MS. Reg. 19 C. xi.), the dice-player appears to hold but two dice in his hand; but this is to be laid solely to the charge of the draughtsman's want of skill, as the text tells us distinctly that he has three. We learn also from the text, that in the jug he holds in his right hand he carries his money, a late example of the use of earthen vessels for this purpose. Two dice were, however, sometimes used, especially in the game of hazard, which appears to have been the great gambling game of the middle ages. Chaucer, in the "Pardoneres Tale," describes the hazardours as playing with two dice. But in the curious scene in the "Towneley Mysteries" (p. 241), a work apparently contemporary with Chaucer, the tormentors, or

executioners, are introduced throwing for Christ's unseamed garment with three dice; the winner throws fifteen points, which could only be thrown with that number of dice.



No. 152. Ornamental Dice.

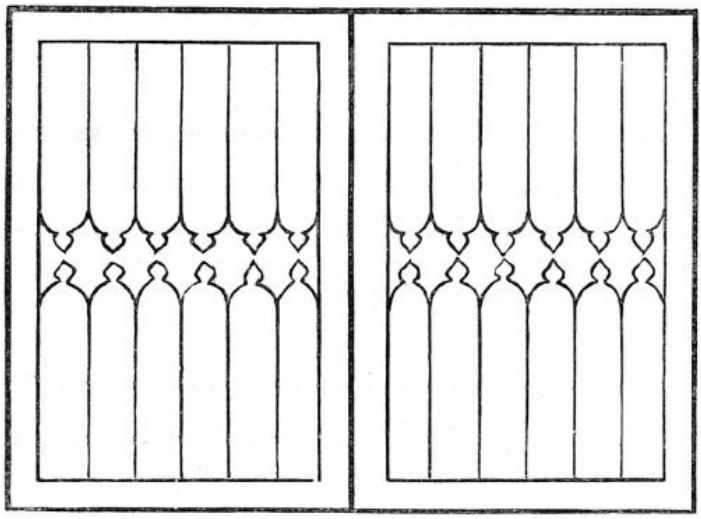
It would not seem easy to give much ornamentation to the form of dice without destroying their utility, yet this has been attempted at various times, and not only in a very grotesque but in a similar manner at very distant periods. This was done by giving the die the form of a man, so doubled up, that when thrown he fell in different positions, so as to show the points uppermost, like an ordinary die. The smaller example represented in our cut No. 152 is Roman, and made of silver, and several Roman dice of the same form are known. It is singular that the same idea should have presented itself at a much later period, and, as far as we can judge, without any room for supposing that it was by imitation. Our second example, which is larger than the other, and carved in box-wood, is of German work, and apparently as old as the beginning of the sixteenth century. Both are now in the fine and extensive collection of the late lord Londesborough.



No. 153. A Party at Tables.

The simple throwing of the dice was rather an excitement than an amusement; and at an early period people sought the latter by a combination of the dice-throwing with some other system of movements or calculations. In this way, no doubt, originated the different games enumerated by John of Salisbury, the most popular of which was that of tables (*tabula* or *tabulæ*). This game was in use among the Romans, and was in all probability borrowed from them by the Anglo-Saxons, among whom it was in great favour, and who called the game *tæfel* (evidently a mere adoption of the Latin name), and the dice *teoselas* and *tæfel-stanas*. The former evidently represents the Latin *tessellæ*, little cubes; and the latter seems to show that the Anglo-Saxon dice were usually made of stones. At a later period, the game of *tables*, used nearly always in the plural, is continually mentioned along with chess, as the two most fashionable and aristocratic games in use. An early and richly illuminated manuscript in the British Museum—perhaps of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Harl. No. 1257)—furnishes us with the figures of players at tables represented in our cut No. 153. The table, or board, with bars or

points, is here clearly delineated, and we see that the players use both dice and men, or pieces—the latter round discs, like our modern draughtsmen. In another manuscript, belonging to a rather later period of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 13 A. xviii. fol. 157, vo), we have a diagram which shows the board as composed of two tables, represented in our cut No. 154. It was probably this construction which caused the name to be used in the plural; and as the Anglo-Saxons always used the name in the singular, as is the case also with John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, while the plural is always used by the writers of a later date, we seem justified in concluding that the board used by the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans consisted of one table, like that represented in our cut No. 153, and that this was afterwards superseded by the double board. It is hardly necessary to point out to our readers that these two pictures of the boards show us clearly that the mediæval game of tables was identical with our modern backgammon, or rather, we should perhaps say, that the game of backgammon, as now played, is one of the games played on the tables.



No. 154. A Table-Board (Backgammon) of the Fourteenth Century.

In the manuscript last quoted (MS. Reg. 13 A. xviii.) the figure of the board is given to illustrate a very curious treatise on the game of tables, written in Latin, in the fourteenth, or even perhaps in the thirteenth, century. The writer begins by informing us, that "there are many games at tables with dice, of which the first is the long game, and is the game of the English, and it is common, and played as follows" (*multi sunt ludi ad tabulas cum taxillis, quorum primus est longus ludus, et est ludus Anglicorum, et est communis, et est talis naturæ*), meaning, I presume, that it was the game usually played in England. From the directions given for playing it, this game seems to have had a close general resemblance to backgammon. The writer of the treatise says that it was played with three dice, or with two dice, in which latter case they counted six at each throw for the third dice. In some of the other games described here, two dice only were used. We

learn from this treatise the English terms for two modes of winning at the "long game" of tables—the one being called "lympoldyng," the other "lurchyng;" and a person losing by the former was said to be "lympolded." The writer of this tract gives directions for playing at several other games of tables, and names some of them—such as "paume carie," the Lombard's game (*ludus Lombardorum*), the "imperial," the "provincial," "baralie," and "faylys."

This game continued long to exist in England under its old name of *tables*. Thus Shakespeare:—

This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,
That, when he plays at tables, *chides the dice*.
—Love's Labour's Lost, Act v. Sc. 2.

The game appears at this time to have been a favourite one in the taverns and ordinaries. Thus, in a satirical tract in verse, printed in 1600, we are told of—

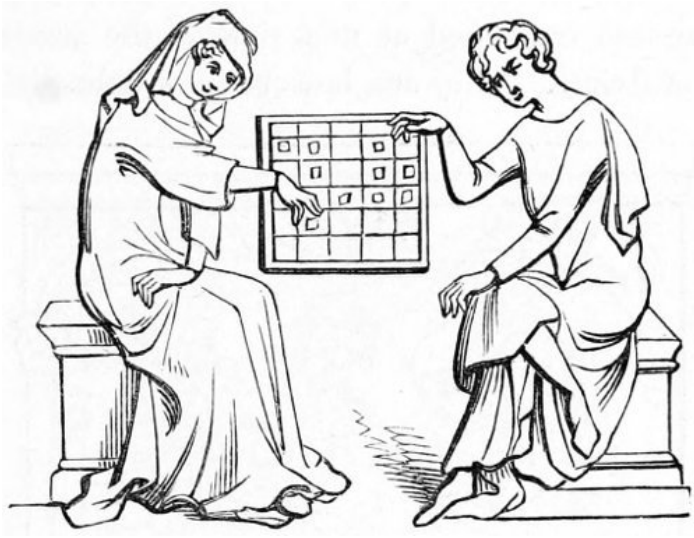
An honest vicker, and a kind consort,
That to the alehouse friendly would resort,
To have a game at tables *now and than,*
Or drinke his pot as soone as any man.
—Letting of Humours Blood, 1600.

And one of the most popular of the satirical writers of that period, Dekker, in his "Lanthorne and Candle-Light," printed in 1620, says, punningly,—"And knowing that your most selected gallants are the onelye *table-men* that are plaid withal at ordinaries, into an ordinarye did he most gentleman-like convay himselfe in state." We learn from another tract of the

same author, the “Gul’s Hornbooke,” that the table-men at this time were usually painted.

We hardly perceive how the name of tables disappeared. It seems probable that at this time the game of tables meant simply what we now call backgammon, a word the oldest mention of which, so far as I have been able to discover, occurs in Howell’s “Familiar Letters,” first printed in 1646. It is there written *baggamon*. In the “Compleat Gamester,” 1674, backgammon and ticktack occur as two distinct games at what would have formerly been called tables; and another similar game was called Irish. Curiously enough, in the earlier part of the last century the game of backgammon was most celebrated as a favourite game among country parsons.

Another game existing in the middle ages, but much more rarely alluded to, was called *dames*, or ladies, and has still preserved that name in French. In English, it was changed for that of *draughts*, derived no doubt from the circumstance of *drawing* the men from one square to another. Our cut No. 155, taken from a manuscript in the British Museum of the beginning of the fourteenth century, known commonly as Queen Mary’s Psalter (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.), represents a lady and gentleman playing at dames, or draughts, differing only from the character of the game at the present day in the circumstance that the draughtsmen are evidently square.



No. 155. A Game at Draughts.



No. 156. Cards in the Fourteenth Century.

The mediæval games were gradually superseded by a new contrivance, that of playing-cards, which were introduced into Western Europe in the course of the fourteenth century. It has been suggested that the idea of playing-cards was taken from chess—in fact, that they are the game of chess transferred to paper, and without a board, and they are generally understood to have been derived from the East. Cards, while they possessed some of the characteristics of chess, presented the same mixture of chance and skill which distinguished the game of

tables. An Italian writer, probably of the latter part of the fifteenth century, named Cavelluzzo, author of a history of Viterbo, states that “in the year 1379 was brought into Viterbo the game of cards, which comes from the country of the Saracens, and is with them called *naib*.” Cards are still in Spanish called *naipes*, which is said to be derived from the Arabic: but they were certainly known in the west of Europe before the date given by Cavelluzzo. Our cut No. 156 is taken from a very fine manuscript of the romance of “Meliadus,” in the British Museum (MS. Addit. 12,228, fol. 313, vo), which was written apparently in the south of France between the years 1330 and 1350; it represents a royal party playing at cards, which was therefore considered at that time as the amusement of the highest classes of society. They are, however, first distinctly alluded to in history in the year 1393. In that year Charles VI. of France was labouring under a visitation of insanity; and we find in the accounts of his treasurer, Charles Poupart, an entry to the following effect:—“Given to Jacquemin Gringonneur, painter, for three packs of cards, gilt and diversly coloured, and ornamented with several devices, to deliver to the lord the king for his amusement, fifty-six sols of Paris.” It is clear from this entry that the game of cards was then tolerably well known in France, and that it was by no means new, though it was evidently not a common game, and the cards had to be made by a painter—that is, as I suppose, an illuminator of manuscripts. We find as yet no allusion to them in England: and it is remarkable that neither Chaucer, nor any of the numerous writers of his and the following age, ever speak of them. An illuminated manuscript of apparently the earlier part of the fifteenth century, perhaps of Flemish workmanship (it contains a copy

of Raoul de Presle's French translation of St. Augustine's "Civitas Dei"), presents us with another card-party, which we give in our cut No. 157. Three persons are here engaged in the game, two of whom are ladies. After the date at which three packs of cards were made for the amusement of the lunatic king, the game of cards seems soon to have become common in France; for less than four years later—on the 22nd of January, 1397—the provost of Paris considered it necessary to publish an edict, forbidding working people to play at tennis, bowls, dice, *cards*, or ninepins, on working days. By one of the acts of the synod of Langres, in 1404, the clergy were expressly forbidden to play at cards. These had now made their way into Germany, and had become so popular there, that early in the fifteenth century card-making had become a regular trade.



No. 157. Cards in the Fifteenth Century.

In England, in the third year of the reign of Edward IV. (1463), the importation of playing-cards, probably from Germany, was forbidden, among other things, by act of parliament; and as that act is understood to have been called for by the English manufacturers, who suffered by the foreign trade, it can hardly be doubted that cards were then manufactured in England on a rather extensive scale. Cards had then, indeed, evidently become very popular in England; and only twenty years afterwards they are spoken of as the common

Christmas game, for Margery Paston wrote as follows to her husband, John Paston, on the 24th of December in 1483:—"Please it you to weet (know) that I sent your eldest son John to my lady Morley, to have knowledge of what sports were used in her house in the Christmas next following after the decease of my lord her husband; and she said that there were none disguisings, nor harpings, nor luting, nor singing, nor none loud disports, but playing at the tables, and the chess, and *cards*—such disports she gave her folks leave to play, and none other.... I sent your younger son to the lady Stapleton, and she said according to my lady Morley's saying in that, and as she had seen used in places of worship (*gentlemen's houses*) there as she had been."

From this time the mention of cards becomes frequent. They formed the common amusement in the courts of England and Scotland under the reigns of Henry VII. and James IV.; and it is recorded that when the latter monarch paid his first visit to his affianced bride, the young princess Margaret of England, "he founde the quene playing at the cardes."

It must not be forgotten that it is partly to the use of playing cards that we owe the invention which has been justly regarded as one of the greatest benefits granted to mankind. The first cards, as we have seen, were painted with the hand. They were subsequently made more rapidly by a process called stencilling—that is, by cutting the rude forms through a piece of pasteboard, parchment, or thin metal, which, placed on the cardboard intended to receive the impression, was brushed over with ink or colour, which passed through the cut out lines, and imparted the figure to

the material beneath. A further improvement was made by cutting the figures on blocks of wood, and literally printing them on the cards. These card-blocks are supposed to have given the first idea of wood-engraving. When people saw the effects of cutting the figures of the cards upon blocks, they began to cut figures of saints on blocks in the same manner, and then applied the method to other subjects, cutting in like manner the few words of necessary explanation. This practice further expanded itself into what are called block-books, consisting of pictorial subjects, with copious explanatory text. Some one at length hit upon the idea of cutting the pages of a regular book on so many blocks of wood, and taking impressions on paper or vellum, instead of writing the manuscript; and this plan was soon further improved by cutting letters or words on separate pieces of wood, and setting them up together to form pages. The wood was subsequently superseded by metal. And thus originated the noble art of PRINTING.

CHAPTER XI.

DOMESTIC AMUSEMENTS AFTER DINNER.—THE CHAMBER AND ITS FURNITURE.—PET ANIMALS. —OCCUPATIONS AND MANNERS OF THE LADIES.—SUPPER.—

CANDLES, LAMPS, AND LANTERNS.

When the dinner was over, and hands washed, a drink was served round, and then the ladies left the table, and went to their chambers or to the garden or fields, to seek their own amusements, which consisted frequently of dancing, in which they were often joined by the younger of the male portion of the household, while the others remained drinking. They seem often to have gone to drink in another apartment, or secondary hall, perhaps in the parlour. In the romance of "La Violette" (p. 159), we read of the father of a family going to sleep after dinner. In the same romance (p. 152), the young ladies and gentlemen of a noble household are described as spreading themselves over the castle, to amuse themselves, attended by minstrels with music. From other romances we find that this amusement consisted often in dancing, and that the ladies sometimes sang for themselves, instead of having minstrels. We find these amusements alluded to in the fabliaux and romances of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In one of the fabliaux, a knight having been received hospitably at a feudal castle, after dinner they wash, and drink round, and then they go to dance—

Ses mains
Lava, et puis l'autre gent toute,
Et puis se burent tout à route,
Et por l'amor dou chevalier
Se vont trestuit apparillier
De faire karoles et dances.

In the early English romance of “Sir Degrevant,” after dinner the ladies go to their chambers to arrange themselves, and then some proceed to amuse themselves in the garden—

When the lordys were drawin (withdrawn),
Ladyes rysen, was not to leyn,
And wentten to chaumbur ageyne,
Anon thei hom dythus (dight);
Dame Mildore and hyr may (maid)
Went to the orcherd to play.

In the romance of “Lanfal,” we have the same circumstance of dancing after dinner:—

And after mete Syr Gaweyn,
Sir Gyeryes and Agrafayn,
And Syr Launfal also,
Went to daunce upon the grene,
Unther the tour ther lay the quene,
Wyth syxty ladyes and mo.
* * * * *
They hadde menstrayles (minstrels) *of moch honours,*
Fydelers, sytolyrs, and trompours,
And elles hyt were unryght;
Ther they playde, for sothe to say,
After mete the somerys day,
Alle what (till) *hyt was neygh nyght.*

It was only on extraordinary occasions, however, that the dancing or walking in the garden continued all day. In the romance of “Blonde of Oxford,” the dinner-party quit the table, to wander in the fields and forests round the castle, and the young hero of the story, on their return thence, goes to play in the

chambers with the ladies:—

Après manger lavent leurs mains,
Puis s'en vont juer, qui ains ains,
Ou en forès ou en rivieres,
Ou en deduis d'autres manieres.
Jehans au quel que il veut va,
Et quant il revent souvant va
Jouer és chambres la contesse
O les dames.

There were two classes of dances in the middle ages, the domestic dances, and the dances of the jougleurs or minstrels. After the first crusades, the western jougleurs had adopted many of the practices of their brethren in the east, and, among others, it is evident from many allusions in old writers that they had brought westward that of the "almehs," or eastern dancing-girls. These dances formed, like the vulgar fabliaux, a part of the jougleur's budget of representations, and were mostly, like those, gross and indecent. The other class of dances were of a simpler character,—the domestic dances, which consisted chiefly of the *carole*, in which ladies and gentlemen, alternately, held by each other's hands and danced in a circle. This mode of dance prevailed so generally, that the word *carole* became used as a general term for a dance, and *caroler*, to carole, was equivalent with *to dance*. The accompanying cut (No. 158), taken from a manuscript of the Roman de Tristan, of the fourteenth century, in the National Library at Paris (No. 6956), represents a party dancing the carole to the music of pipe and tabor. A dance of another description is represented in our next cut (No. 159), taken from a manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii. fol. 174), also of

the fourteenth century. Here the minstrels themselves appear to be joining in the saltitation which they inspire. It is a good illustration of the scene described from the romance of “La Violette.” On festive occasions this dancing often continued till supper-time.



No. 158. Dancing the Carole.



No. 159. A Mediæval Dance.



No. 160. The Game of Hoodman-blind.



No. 161. A Game at Hot-cockles.

Other quieter games were pursued in the chambers. Among these the most dignified was chess, after which came tables, draughts, and, in the fourteenth century, cards. Sometimes, as described in the preceding chapter, they played at sedentary games, such as chess and tables; or at diversions of a still more frolicsome character. These latter seem to have been most in vogue in the evening after supper. The

author of the "Ménagier de Paris," written about the year 1393 (tom. i. p. 71), describes the ladies as playing, in an evening, at games named *bric*, and *qui fery?* (who struck?), and *pince merille*, and *tiers*, and others. The first of these games is mentioned about a century and a half earlier by the *trouvère* Rutebeuf, and by other mediæval writers; but all we seem to know of it is, that the players were seated, apparently on the ground, and that one of them was furnished with a rod or stick. We know less still of *pince merille*. *Qui fery?* is evidently the game which was, at a later period, called hot-cockles; and *tiers* is understood to be the game now called blindman's buff. These, and other games, are not unfrequently represented in the fanciful drawings in the margins of mediæval illuminated manuscripts; but as no names or descriptions are given with these drawings, it is often very difficult to identify them. Our cut (No. 160), which is given by Strutt, from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, is one of several subjects representing the game of blindman's buff, or, as it was formerly called in England, *hoodman-blind*, because the person blinded had his eyes covered with a hood. It is here played by females, but, in other illuminations, or drawings, the players are boys or men—the latter plainly indicated by their beards. The word hoodman-blind is not found at an earlier period than the Elizabethan age, yet this name, from its allusion to the costume, was evidently older. A personage in Shakespeare (Hamlet, Act iii. Scene 4) asks—

What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?

Hot-cockles seems formerly to have been a very

favourite game. One of the players was blindfolded, and knelt down, with his face on the knee of another, and his hand held out flat behind him; the other players in turn struck him on the hand, and he was obliged to guess at the name of the striker, who, if he guessed right, was compelled to take his place. A part of the joke appears to have consisted in the hardness of the blows. Our cut (No. 161), from the Bodleian manuscript (which was written in 1344), is evidently intended to represent a party of females playing at hot-cockles, though the damsel who plays the principal part is not blindfolded, and she is touched on the back, and not on the hand. Our next cut (No. 162), which represents a party of shepherds and shepherdesses engaged in the same game, is taken from a piece of Flemish tapestry, of the fifteenth century, which is at present to be seen in the South Kensington Museum. Allusions to this game are found in the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Among the "commendatory verses" to the second edition of "Gondibert" (by William Davenant), printed in 1653, is the following rather curious piece of wit, which explains itself, and is, at the same time, an extremely good description of this game:—

THE POET'S HOT-COCKLES.

Thus poets, passing time away.
Like children at hot-cockles *play*;
All strike by turn, and Will is strook
(And he lies down that writes a book).
Have at thee, Will, for now I come,
Spread thy hand faire upon thy bomb;

For thy much insolence, bold bard,
And little sense I strike thus hard.
"Whose hand was that?" "'Twas Jaspar Mayne."
"Nay, there you're out; lie down again."
With Gondibert, prepare, and all
See where the doctor comes to maul
The author's hand, 'twill make him reel;
No, Will lies still, and does not feel.
That book's so light, 'tis all one whether
You strike with that or with a feather.
But room for one, new come to town,
That strikes so hard, he'll knock him down;
The hand he knows, since it the place
Has toucht more tender than his face;
Important sheriff, now thou lyst down,
We'll kiss thy hands, and clap our own.

The game of hot-cockles has only become obsolete in recent times, if it be even now quite out of use. Most readers will remember the passage in Gay's "Pastorals:"—

As at hot-cockles *once I laid me down,*
And felt the weighty hand of many a clown,
Buxoma gave a gentle tap, and I
Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye.

This passage is aptly illustrated by the cut from the tapestry. The same Bodleian manuscript gives us a playful group, reproduced in our cut No. 163, which Strutt believes to be the game called, in more modern times, "frog-in-the-middle." One of the party, who played frog, sat on the ground, while his comrades surrounded and buffeted him, until he could catch and hold one of them, who then had to take his place. In our cut, the players are females.



No. 162. Shepherds and Shepherdesses.



No. 163. The Game of Frog-in-the-Middle.

Games of questions and commands, and of forfeits, were also common in mediæval society. Among the poems of Baudouin and Jean de Condé (poets of the

thirteenth century), we have a description of a game of this kind. “One time,” we are told, “there was play among ladies and damsels; there were among them both clever and handsome; they took up many games, until, at last, they elected a queen to play at *roy-qui-ne-ment* (the king who does not lie); she, whom they chose, was clever at commands and at questions:”—

Une foi ierent en dosnoi
Entre dames et damoiselles;
De cointes i ot et de belles.
De plusieurs deduits s’entremistrent,
Et tant c’une royne fistrent
Pour jouer au roy-qui-ne-ment.
Ele s’en savoit finement
Entremettre de commander
Et de demandes demander.

—Barbazan Fabliaux, tom. i. p. 100.

The aim of the questions was, of course, to provoke answers which would excite mirth; and the sequel of the story shows the great want of delicacy which prevailed in mediæval society. Another sort of amusement was furnished, by what may be called games of chance; in which the players, in turn, drew a character at hazard. These characters were generally written in verse, in burlesque and often very coarse language, and several sets of them have been preserved in old manuscripts. They consist of a series of alternate good and bad characters, sometimes only designed for females, but at others for women and men: two of these sets (printed in my “Anecdota Literaria”) were written in England; one, of the thirteenth century, in Anglo-Norman, the other, of the fifteenth century, in English. From these

we learn that the game, in England, was called Rageman, or Ragman, and that the verses, describing the characters, were written on a roll called Ragman's Roll, and had strings attached to them, by which each person drew his or her chance. The English set has a short preface, in which the author addresses himself to the ladies, for whose special use it was compiled:—

My ladyes and my maistresses echone,
Lyke hit unto your humbylle wommanhede
Resave in gré (good part) *of my sympille persone*
This rolle, which withouten any drede
Kynge Ragman me bad mesoure in brede,
And cristyned yt the meroure of your chaunce;
Draweth a strynge, and that shal streight yow leyde
Unto the verry path of your governaunce—

i. e. it will tell you exactly how you behave yourself, what is your character. This game is alluded to by the poet Gower in the "Confessio Amantis:"—

Venus, whiche stant withoute lawe,
In non certeyne, but as men drawe
Of Ragemon *upon the chaunce,*
Sche leyeth no peys (weight) *in the balaunce.*

The ragman's roll, when rolled up for use, would present a confused mass of strings hanging from it, probably with bits of wax at the end, from which the drawer had to select one. This game possesses a peculiar historical interest. When the Scottish nobles and chieftains acknowledged their dependence on the English crown in the reign of Edward I., the deed by which they made this acknowledgment, having all

their seals hung to it, presented, when rolled up, much the appearance of the roll used in this game; and hence, no doubt, they gave it in derision the name of the *Ragman's Roll*. Afterwards it became the custom to call any roll with many signatures, or any long catalogue, the various headings of which were perhaps marked by strings, by the same name. This game of chance or fortune was continued, under other names, to a late period. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the burlesque characters were often inscribed on the back of roundels, which were no doubt dealt round to the company like cards, with the inscribed side downwards.



No. 164. Ball-Playing.

Sometimes the ladies and young men indulged within doors in more active games—among which we may mention especially different games with the ball, and also, perhaps, the whipping-top. We learn from many sources that hand-ball was from a very early period a favourite recreation with the youth of both sexes. It is a subject not unfrequently met with

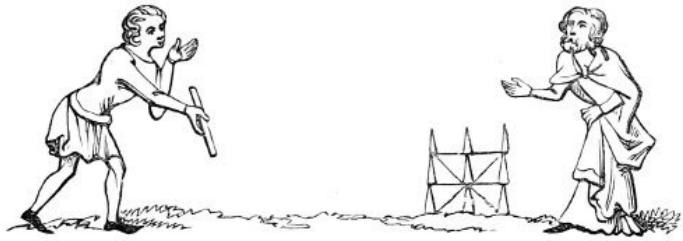
in the marginal drawings of mediæval manuscripts. The annexed example (cut No. 164), from MS. Harl. No. 6563, represents apparently two ladies playing with a ball. In other instances, a lady and a gentleman are similarly occupied. Our cut No. 165 is taken from one of the carvings of the *miserere* seats in Gloucester cathedral. The long tails of the hoods belong to the costume of the latter part of the fourteenth century. The whipping-top was also a plaything of considerable antiquity; I think it may be traced to the Anglo-Saxon period. Our cut No. 166 is taken from one of the marginal drawings of a well-known manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.) of the beginning of the fourteenth century. It may be remarked that the knots on the lashes merely mark a conventional manner of representing a whip, for every boy knows that a knotted whip would not do for a top. Mediæval art was full of such conventionalities.



No. 165. A Game at Ball.



No. 166. Whipping-Top.



No. 167. The Game of Kayles.

Most of these recreations of young people in the middle ages were gradually left to a still younger age, and became children's games, and of these the margins of the illuminated manuscripts furnish abundant examples. One of these (taken from the margin of the Royal MS., 10 E. iv., of the fourteenth century) will be sufficient for the present occasion. A favourite game, during at least the later periods of the middle ages, was that which is now called nine-pins. The French gave it the name *quilles*, which in our language was corrupted into *keyles* and *kayles*. The lad in our cut (No. 167) is not, as at present, bowling at the pins, but throwing with a stick, a form of the game which was called in French the *jeu*

de quilles à baston, and in English *club-kayles*. Money was apparently played for, and the game was looked upon as belonging to the same class as hazard. In a series of metrical counsels to apprentices, compiled in the fifteenth century, and printed in the "Reliquiæ Antiquæ," ii. 223, they are recommended to—

Exchewe allewey eville company,
Caylys, carding, and haserdy.

When no gaiety was going on, the ladies of the household were employed in occupations of a more useful description, among which the principal were spinning, weaving, knitting, embroidering, and sewing. Almost everything of this kind was done at home at the period of which we are now speaking, and equally in the feudal castle or manor, and in the house of the substantial burgher, the female part of the family spent a great part of their time in different kinds of work in the chambers of the lady of the household. Such work is alluded to in mediæval writers, from time to time, and we find it represented in illuminated manuscripts, but not so frequently as some of the other domestic scenes. In the romance of the "Death of Garin le Loherain," when count Fromont visited the chamber of fair Beatrice, he found her occupied in sewing a very beautiful *chainsil*, or petticoat:—

Vint en la chambre à la bele Beatriz;
Ele cosoit un molt riche chainsil.

—Mort de Garin, p. 10.

In the romance of "La Violette," the daughter of the burgher, in whose house the count Girard is lodged,

is described as being "one day seated in her father's chambers working a stole and amice in silk and gold, very skilfully, and she made in it, with care, many a little cross and many a star, singing all the while a *chanson-à-toile*," meaning, it is supposed, a song of a grave measure, composed for the purpose of being sung by ladies when weaving:—

I. jor sist es chambres son pere,
Une estole et i. amit pere
De soie et d'or molt soutilment,
Si i fait ententevement
Mainte croisete et mainte estoile,
Et dist ceste chanchon à toile.

—Roman de la Violette, p. 113.

In one of Rutebeuf's fabliaux, a woman makes excuse for being up late at night that she was anxious to finish a piece of linen cloth she was weaving:—

Sire, fet-elle, il me faut traimer
A une toile que je fais.

And in another fabliau, that of "Guillaume au Faucon," a young "bacheler" entering suddenly the chamber of the ladies, finds them all occupied in embroidering a piece of silk with the ensigns of the lord of the castle. Embroidery, indeed, was a favourite occupation: a lady thus employed is represented in our cut No. 168, taken from a richly illuminated manuscript of the fourteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.) The ladies, too, not only made up the cloths into dresses and articles of other kinds, but they were extensively employed in the various processes of making the

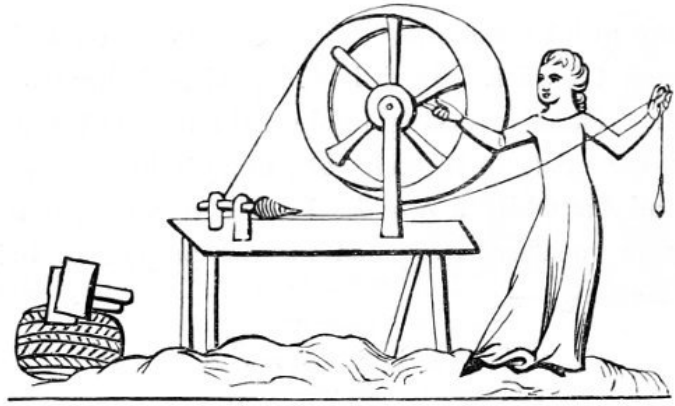
cloth itself. Our cut No. 169, taken from a manuscript of about the same period (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), represents the process of carding the wool; and the same manuscript furnishes us with another cut (No. 170), in which a lady appears in the employment of spinning it into yarn. Our next cut (No. 171), taken from an illumination in an early French translation of the Metamorphoses of Ovid (in the National Library, MS. 6986), represents three ladies (intended for the three Fates) employed in these domestic occupations, and will give us a notion of the implements they used.



No. 168. Embroidery.



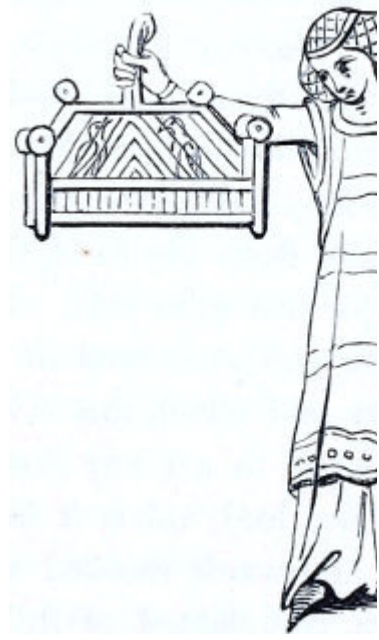
No. 169. A Lady Ca



No. 170. A Lady Spinning.



No. 171. The Three Fates.



No. 172. Birds Encaged

Domestic animals, particularly dogs and birds, were favourite companions of the ladies in their chambers. A favourite falcon had frequently its "perche" in a corner of the chamber; and in the illuminations we sometimes see the lady seated with the bird on her wrist. Birds in cages are also not unfrequently alluded to through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In the romance of "La Violette" a tame lark plays rather an important part in the story. Our cut No. 172, where we see two birds in a cage together, and which is curious for the form of the cage, is given by Willemin from a manuscript of the fourteenth century at Paris. The hawk, though usually kept only for hunting, sometimes became a pet, and persons carried their hawks on the fist even in social parties within doors. The jay is spoken of as a cage-bird. The parrot, under the name of *papejay*, *popinjay*, or *papingay*, is also often spoken of during the middle ages, although, in all probability, it was very rare. The favourite talking-bird was the pie, or magpie, which often plays a very remarkable part in mediæval stories. The aptness of this bird for imitation led to an exaggerated estimate of its powers, and it is frequently made to give information to the husband of the weaknesses of his wife. Several mediæval stories turn upon this supposed quality. The good chevalier de la Tour-Landry, in his book of counsels to his daughters, composed in the second half of the fourteenth century, tells a story of a magpie as a warning of the danger of indulging in gluttony. "I will tell you," he says, "a story in regard to women who eat dainty morsels in the absence of their lords. There was a lady who had a pie in a cage, which talked of everything which it saw done. Now it happened that the lord of the household preserved a large eel in a pond, and kept it very

carefully, in order to give it to some of his lords or of his friends, in case they should visit him. So it happened that the lady said to her female attendant that it would be good to eat the great eel, and accordingly they eat it, and agreed that they would tell their lord that the otter had eaten it. And when the lord returned, the pie began to say to him, ‘My lord, my lady has eaten the eel.’ Then the lord went to his pond, and missed his eel; and he went into the house, and asked his wife what had become of it. She thought to excuse herself easily, but he said that he knew all about it, and that the pie had told him. The result was that there was great quarrelling and trouble in the house; but when the lord was gone away, the lady and her female attendant went to the pie, and plucked all the feathers from his head, saying, ‘You told about the eel.’ And so the poor pie was quite bald. But from that time forward, when it saw any people who were bald or had large foreheads, the pie said to them, ‘Ah! you told about the eel!’ And this is a good example how no woman ought to eat any choice morsel by gluttony without the knowledge of her lord, unless it be to give it to people of honour; for this lady was afterwards mocked and jeered for eating the eel, through the pie which complained of it.” The reader will recognise in this the origin of a much more modern story.

One of the stories in the celebrated mediæval collection, entitled “The Seven Sages,” also turns upon the talkative qualities of this bird. There was a burgher who had a pie which, on being questioned, related whatever it had seen, for it spoke uncommonly well the language of the people. Now the burgher’s wife was a good-for-nothing woman, and as soon as her husband went from home about

business, she sent for her friend out of the town; but the pie, which was a great favourite of the burgher, told him all the goings on when he returned, and the husband knew that it always spoke the truth. So he became acquainted with his wife's conduct. One day the burgher went from home, and told his wife he should not return that night, and she immediately sent for her friend; but he was afraid to enter, for "the pie was hung up in his cage on a high perch in the middle of the porch of the house." Encouraged, however, by the lady, the friend ventured in, and passed through the hall to the chamber. The pie, which saw him pass, and knew him well on account of some tricks he had played upon it, called out, "Ah, sir! you who are in the chamber there, why don't you pay your visits when the master is at home?" It said no more all the day, but the lady set her wits to work for a stratagem to avert the danger. So when night came, she called her chamber-maiden, and gave her a great jug full of water, and a lighted candle, and a wooden mallet, and about midnight the maiden mounted on the top of the house, and began to beat with the mallet on the laths, and from time to time showed the light through the crevices, and threw the water right down upon the pie till the bird was wet all over. Next morning the husband came home, and began to question his pie. "Sir," it said, "my lady's friend has been here, and stayed all night, and is only just gone away. I saw him go." Then the husband was very angry, and was going to quarrel with his wife, but the pie went on—"Sir, it has thundered and lightened all night, and the rain was so heavy that I have been wet through." "Nay," said the husband, "it has been fine all night, without rain or storm." "You see," said the crafty dame, "you see how much your bird is to be believed. Why should

you put more faith in him when he tells tales about me, than when he talks so knowingly about the weather?" Then the burgher thought he had been deceived, and turning his wrath upon the pie, drew it from the cage and twisted its neck; but he had no sooner done so than, looking up, he saw how the laths had been deranged. So he got a ladder, mounted on the roof, and discovered the whole mystery. If, says the story, he had not been so hasty, the life of his bird would have been saved. In the English version of this series of tales, printed by Weber, the pie's cage is made to hang in the hall:—

The burgeis hadde a pie in his halle,
That couthe telle tales alle
Apertlich (openly), *in French langage,*
And heng in a faire cage.

In the other English version, edited by the author of this work for the Percy Society, the bird is said to have been, not a pie, but a "popynjay," or parrot, and there are other variations in it which show that it had been taken more directly from the Oriental original, in which, as might be expected, the bird is a parrot.



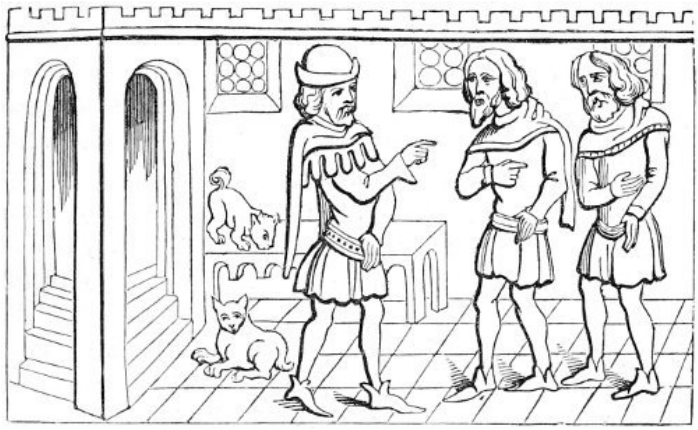
No. 173. Lady and Dog.

Among the animals mentioned as pets we sometimes find monkeys. One of the Latin stories in the collection printed by the Percy Society, tells how a rustic, entering the hall of a certain nobleman, seeing a monkey dressed in the same suit as the nobleman's family, and supposing, as its back was turned, that it was one of his sons, began to address it with all suitable reverence; but when he saw that it was only a monkey chattering at him, he exclaimed, "A curse upon you! I thought you had been Jenkin, my lord's son."[26] The favourite quadruped, however, has always been the dog, of which several kinds are mentioned as lady's pets. Chaucer tells us of his prioress,—

Of smale houndes hadde sche, that sche fedde

With rostud fleissh and mylk and wastel breed.
—Cant. Tales, l. 147.

Our cut No. 173, from a manuscript of the St. Graal, in the British Museum (MS. Addit. No. 10,293, fol. 31), written in the thirteenth century, represents a queen seated in conversation, with her dog in her lap. The next cut (No. 174), from an illumination in the interesting manuscript of the Roman de Meliadus in the British Museum (MS. Addit. 12,228, fol. 310), belonging to the latter half of the fourteenth century (the reign of our Edward III.), represents the interior of a chamber, with two little dogs gamboling about. In the singular work on domestic economy, entitled the "Ménagier de Paris," written about the year 1393, the lady of the household is particularly recommended to think of the "chamber beasts," such as little dogs, the "chamber birds," &c., inasmuch as these creatures, not having the gift of speech, could not ask for themselves.[27] I have printed in the "Reliquiæ Antiquæ" a curious Anglo-Norman poem, of the beginning of the fourteenth century, written as a satire on the ladies of the time, who were too fond of their dogs, and fed them delicately, while the servants were left to short commons (Reliq. Antiq. vol. i. p. 155). Cats are seldom mentioned as pets, except of ill-famed old women. There was a prejudice against them in the middle ages, and they were joined in people's imagination with witchcraft, and with other diabolical agencies. The accompanying group of an old lady and her cats (cut No. 175) is taken from a carving on one of the *misereres* in the church of Minster, in the Isle of Thanet. Curiously enough, the English "Rule of Nuns," of the earlier half of the thirteenth century, forbids the nuns to keep any "beast" but a cat.



No. 174. Interior of a Chamber.



No. 175. The Lady and herCats.

The chamber was, as might be expected, more comfortably furnished than the hall. The walls were covered with curtains, or tapestry, whence this apartment is frequently termed in the fabliaux and

romances the *chambre encortinée*. The story of a fabliau printed in my "Anecdota Literaria" turns upon the facility with which a person might be concealed behind the "curtains" of the chamber. Besides a bench or stool to sit upon, there was usually a chair in the chamber. In the fabliau of the Bouchier d'Abbeville, the priest's lady, when she rises out of bed to dress, is represented as placing herself in a chair—

En le caiere s'est assisse.

In the early English romance of "Horn," the lady, receiving a gentleman into her chamber, gives him a rich chair which would hold seven people, and which is covered, in true regal style, with a baldekin: —

The miri maiden, also sone
As Hatherof into chamber come,
Sche wend (thought) *that it were Horn;*
A riche cheir was undon,
That seiven might sit theron,
In swiche craft y-corn (chosen).
* * * *
A baudekin theron was spred,
Thider the maiden hadde him led
To siten hir beforn,
Frout (fruit) *and spices sche him bede,*
Wine to drink, wite and rede,
Bothe of coppe and horn.

The chamber was especially distinguished by its fireplace and chimney. The form of the mediæval

fireplace is well-known from the numerous examples still remaining in the chambers of our old castles and mansion houses. The fire was made on the hearth, upon iron dogs, which had often very ornamental forms. The old romances frequently represent people sitting round the chamber fireplace to hold private conversation. It was here also that the heads of the family, or individual members of it in their own chambers, assembled in the evening when no ceremonious feasting was going on. In a story in the text of the "Seven Sages," printed by Weber, a young married woman is represented sitting in the evening with her lord by the chamber fireside, attended by their squire, and playing with a dog—

The yonge levedi and hire lord
Sete an even by the fer (fire);
Biforen hem stod here squier.
* * * * *
The bichche lai in hire barm (bosom).

—Weber, iii. 71.

In "Gautier d'Aupais," when the young damsel sends for her mother, her messenger finds the old lady sitting on a richly-worked counterpoint by a coal fire (probably of charcoal)—

Sor une coutepointe ouvré d'auqueton
Trova seant la dame lez i. feu de charbon.

—Gautier d'Aupais, p. 25.

In the romance of "Sir Degrevant," when the lady Myldore has sent for her lover to come privately to her chamber at night, she orders her maiden to prepare a fire, and place fagots of fir-wood to keep it

burning—

Damesele, loke ther be
A fuyre in the chymené;
Fagattus of fyre-tre,
That fetchyd was yare (formerly).
—Thornton Romances, p. 234.

A board is placed on trestles to form a table, and a dainty supper is served, which the lady carves for her lover, and she further treats him with rich wines. In the romance of "Queen Berthe" (p. 102), three persons, holding a secret consultation in the chamber of one of their party, sit on carpets (*sur les tapis*); but these were no doubt embroidered cloths thrown over the seats. Floor-carpets were sometimes used in the chambers, but this was uncommon, and they seem to have been more usually, like the hall, strewed with rushes. It appears that sometimes, as a refinement in gaiety, flowers were mixed with the rushes. In a fabliau in Meon (i. 75), a lady who expects her lover, lights a fire in the chamber, and spreads rushes and flowers on the floor—

Vient à l'ostel, lo feu esclaire,
Jons et flors espandre par l'aire.

There was an *escrin*, or cabinet, which stood against the wall, which was often so large that a man might conceal himself behind it. The plot of several mediæval stories turns upon this circumstance. Chests and coffers were also kept in the chamber; and it contained generally a small table, or at least the board and trestles for making one, which the lord or lady of the house used when they would dine or

sup in private. The practice of thus dining or supping privately in the chamber is not unfrequently alluded to in the old stories and romances.

Supper, however, being the second meal in the day at which the whole household met together, was generally a more public one, and was held, like the dinner, in the hall, and with much the same forms and services. It was preceded and closed by the same washing of hands, and the table was almost as plentifully covered with viands. After having washed, the company drank round, and it seems to have been the usual custom, on leaving the supper-table, to go immediately to bed, for people in general kept early hours. Thus, in one of the pious stories printed by Meon, in describing a royal supper-party, we are told that, "when they had eaten and washed, they drunk, and then went to bed"—

Qant orent mengié, si laverent,
Puis burent, et couchier alerent.

And in another story in the same collection, the lady receives a stranger to supper in a very hospitable manner—"when they had eaten leisurely, then it was time to go to bed"—

Qant orent mengié par loisir,
Si su heure d'aler gesir.

Sometimes, however, there were dancing and other amusements between supper and bed-time. Thus, in the romance of "Sir Degrevant,"—

Bleve (quickly) *to soper they dyght,*

Both squiere and knyght;
They daunsed and revelide that nyght,
In hert were they blythe.

In a fabliau published by Barbazan, on the arrival in a nobleman's castle of a knight who is treated with especial courtesy, the knights and ladies dance after supper, and then, at bed-time, they conduct the visitor into his bed-chamber, and drink with him there before they leave him:—

Après mengier, chascuns comence
De faire caroles et dance,
Tant qu'il fu houre de couchier;
Puis anmainment le chevalier
En sa chambre où fait fu son lit,
Et là burent par grant delit;
Puis prinrent congié.

Fruit was usually eaten after supper. In a fabliau of the thirteenth century, a noble visitor having been received in the house of a knight, they go immediately to supper. "After they had done eating, they enjoyed themselves in conversation, and then they had fruit," and it was only after this that they washed—

Après mengier se sont deduit
De paroles, puis si ont fruit.

In the lay of the "Chevalier à l'Espée," Sir Gauwain takes, instead of supper, fruit and wine before he goes to bed.

The custom of keeping early hours still prevailed, and is very frequently alluded to. People are

generally described as rising with the sun. Such was the case with the king, in the romance of “Parise la Duchesse”—

Landemain par matin, quand solaus fu levez,
Se leva li rois Hugues.

—Parise, ed. P. Paris, p. 219.

It was the custom, after rising, to attend service either in the church or in the private chapel. In the history of Fulke Fitz-Warine, Jose de Dynan, in his castle of Ludlow, rose early in the morning, heard service in the chapel, after which he mounted to the top of the loftiest tower, to take a view of the country around, then descended and “caused the horn to be sounded for washing.” This was no doubt the signal for the household to assemble for breakfast. In Chaucer’s “Squyeres Tale,” the king’s guests, after great feasting and carousing at night, sleep till “prime large” in the morning, that is till six o’clock, which is spoken of in a manner which evidently intimates that they had considerably overslept themselves. The princess Canace had left her bed long before, and was walking with her maidens in the park. In the “Schipmannes Tale,” too, the lady rises very early in the morning, and takes her walk in the garden. In the curious “Book” of the Chevalier de la Tour Landry, we are told of a very pious dame whom he knew, whose daily life was as follows:—She rose early in the morning, had two friars and two or three chaplains in attendance to chant matins while she was rising; as soon as she left her chamber she went to her chapel, and remained in devotion in her oratory while they said matins and one mass, and then she went and dressed and arrayed herself, after which she went to recreate

herself in the garden or about the house; she then attended divine service again, and after it went to dinner; and during the afternoon she visited the sick, and in due time supped, and after supper she called her *maître d'hôtel*, and made her household arrangements for the following day.

The hour of breakfast is very uncertain, and appears not to have been fixed. The hour of dinner was, as already stated, nine o'clock in the morning, or sometimes ten. In the lay of the "Mantel Mautaillé," king Arthur is introduced on a grand festival day refusing, according to his custom, to begin the dinner till some "adventure" occurs, and the guests wait till near "nonne," when the grand seneschal, Sir Keux, takes upon himself to expostulate, and represents that dinner had been ready a long time (*pieçà*). *Nonne* is here probably meant for midday, or noon. The queen was in her chamber, greatly distressed at having to wait so long for dinner. The regular hour of supper appears to have been five o'clock in the afternoon, but when private it seems not to have been fixed to any particular hour. In summer, at least, people appear usually to have gone to bed when darkness approached; and this was the time at which guests ordinarily took their leave. Thus, at January's wedding-feast, in Chaucer, we are told that —

Night, with his mantel, that is dark and rude,
Gan oversprede themesperie aboute;
For which departed is the lusti route
Fro January, with thank on every side,
Hoom to her houses lustily thay ryde.

—Cant. Tales, l. 9672.

We must not forget that these remarks apply to the seasons of the year when days were long, for the scenes of most of these romances and tales are laid in the spring and summer months, and especially in May. We have much less information on the domestic relations during winter.



No. 176. A Supper.

One reason for keeping early hours was that candles and lamps were too expensive to be used in profusion by people in general. Various methods of giving artificial light at night are mentioned, most of which seem to have been considered more or less as luxuries. At grand festivals the light was often given by men holding torches. In general, candles were used at supper. The accompanying cut (No. 176), taken from the manuscript of the St. Graal already mentioned, represents a person supping by candlelight. In the fabliau of "La Borgoise d'Orliens," a lady, receiving her lover into her chamber, spreads a table for him, and lights a great wax candle (*grosse chandoile de cire*).

Lighting in the middle ages was, indeed, effected, in a manner more or less refined, by means of torches,

lamps, and candles. The candle, which was the most portable of them all, was employed in small and private evening parties; and, from an early period, it was used in the bed-chamber. For the table very handsome candlesticks were made, which were employed by people of rank, and wax-candles (*cierges*) were used on them. They were formed with an upright spike (*broche*), on which the candle was stuck, not, as now, placed in a socket. Thus, in a scene in one of the fabliaux printed by Barbazan, a good *bourgeois* has on his supper-table two candlesticks of silver, "very fair and handsome," with wax-candles—

Desor la table ot deus broissins,
Où il avoit cierges, d'argent,
Molt estoient bel et gent.

—Barbazan, vol. iv. p. 184.

So in the romance of "La Violette," when the count Lisiart arrives at the castle of duke Gerart, on the approach of bedtime, two men-servants make their appearance, each carrying a lighted *cierge*, or wax-candle, and thus they lead him to his chamber—

Atant lor vinrent doi sergant,
Chascuns tenoit j. cerge ardant;
Le conte menerent couchier.

—La Violette, p. 30.

This, however, appears to have been done as a mark of honour to the guest, for, even in ducal castles common candles appear to have been in ordinary use. In a bedroom scene in a fabliau printed by Meon (tom. i. p. 268), in which the younger ladies of the

duke's family and their female attendants slept all in beds in one room, they have but one candle (*chandoile*), and that is attached to the wood of the bed of the duke's daughter, so that it would appear to have had no candlestick. One of the damsels, who was a stranger, and less familiar than the others, was unwilling to take off her chemise until the light was extinguished, for it must be remembered that it was the general custom to sleep in bed quite naked, and the daughter of the duke, whose bedfellow she was to be, blew the candle out—

Roseite tantost la soufla,
Qu'à s'esponde estoit atachie.

Blowing out the candle was the ordinary manner of extinguishing it. In the "Ménagier de Paris," or instructions for the management of a gentleman's household, compiled in the latter half of the fourteenth century, the lady of the house is told, after having each night ascertained that the house is properly closed and all the fires covered, to see all the servants to bed, and to take care that each had a candle in a "flat-bottomed candlestick," at some distance from the bed, "and to teach them prudently to extinguish their candles before they go into their bed with the mouth, or with the hand, and not with their chemise," *i. e.*, they were to blow their candle out, or put it out with their fingers, not to extinguish it by throwing their shifts upon it—another allusion to the practice of sleeping naked.[28] Extinguishers had not yet come into general use. People went to bed with a candle placed in a candlestick of a different description from that used at table; and we learn from a story in the "Ménagier de Paris" that it was customary for the servant or servants who had

charge of the candles, to accompany them into their bedroom, remain with them till they were in bed, and then carry the candles away. Candles were, however, usually left in the chamber or bedroom all night; and there was frequently a spike, or candlestick, attached to the chimney; as in the fabliau just quoted there was, no doubt, a similar spike attached to the wood-work of the bed. The stick, whether fixed or movable, was made for convenience in placing the candle in the chamber, and not for the purpose of carrying it about; for the latter purpose, it appears to have been generally taken off the stick, and carried in the hand. Our cut No. 177, taken from one of the carved stalls of the chapel of Winchester school, represents an individual, perhaps the cellarer or steward, who has gone into the cellar with a candle, which he carries in this manner, and is there terrified by the appearance of hobgoblins. In the fabliau of the "Chevalier à la Corbeille," an old dueña, employed to watch over her young mistress, being disturbed in the night, is obliged to take her candle, and go into the kitchen to light it; from whence we may suppose that it was the custom to keep the kitchen fire in all night.



No. 177. The Cellarer in a Panic.



No. 178. Man with Lantern.

An old poem on the troubles of housekeeping, printed by M. Jubinal in his "Nouveau Recueil de Contes," enumerates candles and a lantern among

the necessaries of a household—

Or faut chandeles et lanterne.

A manuscript of the thirteenth century in the French National Library (No. 6956) contains an illumination, which has furnished us with the accompanying cut (No. 178), representing a man holding a lantern of the form then in use, and lanterns are not unfrequently mentioned in old writers.

It appears to have been a common custom, at least among the better classes of society, to keep a lamp in the chamber to give light during the night. In one of the fabliaux printed in Meon, a man entering the chamber of a knight's lady, finds it lit by a lamp which was usually left burning in it—

Une lampe avoit en la chambre,
Par costume ardoir i siaut.

In the English romance of "Sir Eglamour," several lamps are described as burning in a lady's chamber—

Aftur sopur, as y yow telle,
He wendyd to chaumbur with Crystyabelle,
There laumpus were brennyng bryght.

We may suppose, notwithstanding these words, that a lamp gave but a dim light; and accordingly we are told in another fabliau that there was little light, or, as it is expressed in the original, "none," in a chamber where nothing but a lamp was burning,—

En la chambre lumiere n'ot,
Hors d'un mortier qu'iluec ardoit,
Point de clarté ne lor rendoit.

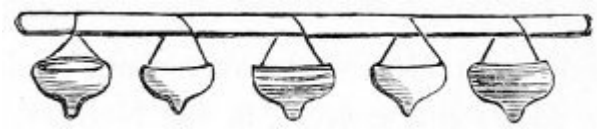
In the accompanying cut (No. 179), taken from an illumination in a manuscript of the fourteenth century, in the National Library in Paris (No. 6988), a nun, apparently, is arranging her lamp before going to bed. The lamp here consists of a little basin of oil, in which, no doubt, the wick floated; but the use of the stand under it is not easily explained.



No. 179. A Bedroom Chamber Scene.

Lamps were used where a light was wanted in a room for a long time, because they lasted longer without requiring snuffing. The lamps of the middle ages were made usually on the plan of those of the Romans, consisting, as in the foregoing example, of a small vessel of earthenware or metal, which was filled with oil, and a wick placed in it. This lamp was

placed on a stand, or was sometimes suspended on a beam, or perch, or against the wall. We have an example of this in the preceding cut (No. 179), which explains the term *mortier* (mortar) of the fabliau, it was a wick swinging in oil in a basin. Our cut No. 180, taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Harl., No. 1227), represents a row of lamps of rather curious form, made to be suspended. In our next cut (No. 181), from a manuscript of the same date (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.), we have lamps of a somewhat similar form, made to be carried in the hand.



No. 180. Mediæval Lamps.



No. 181. Men carrying Lamps.

Torches were used at greater festivals, and for occasions where it was necessary to give light to very large halls full of company. They were usually held in the hand by servants, but were sometimes placed against the wall in holds made to receive them. Torches were not unfrequently used to give light to the chamber also. In one of the stories of the "Seven Sages," a man, bringing a person in secret to the king's chamber, "blewe out the torche," in order to cause perfect darkness (Weber, iii. 63); and in the early English romance of "Sir Degrevant" (Weber, iii. 213), where light is wanted in a lady's chamber, it is

obtained by means of the torches.

There were other means of giving light, on a still greater scale, which I shall describe in a subsequent chapter, when treating of the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BED AND ITS FURNITURE.—THE TOILETTE; BATHING.—CHESTS AND COFFERS IN THE CHAMBER.—THE HUTCH.—USES OF RINGS.—COMPOSITION OF THE FAMILY.—FREEDOM OF MANNERS.—SOCIAL SENTIMENTS, AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS.

It was now a matter of pride to have the bed furnished with handsome curtains and coverings. Curtains to beds were so common, that being “under the curtain” was used as an ordinary periphrasis for being in bed; but these curtains appear to have been suspended to the ceiling of the chamber, with the bedhead behind them. With regard to the bed itself, there was now much more refinement than when it was simply stuffed with straw. Beds among the rich

were made with down (*duvet*); in the "Roman de la Violette" we are told of a bed made of *bofu*—perhaps of flocks. From the vocabulary composed by Alexander Neckam early in the thirteenth century, we learn that the bed was covered much in the same way as at present. First, a "quilte" was spread over the bed; on this the bolster was placed; over this was laid a "quilte poynté" or "rayé" (*courtepointe*, or counterpane); and on this, at the head of the bed, was placed the pillow. The sheets were then thrown over it, and the whole was covered with a coverlet, the common material of which, according to Neckam, was green say, though richer materials, and even valuable furs, were used for this purpose. In the "Lai del Désiré," we are told of a quilt (*coilte*), made in checker-wise, of pieces of two different sorts of rich stuff, which seems to have been considered as something extremely magnificent—

Sur on bon lit s'ert apuiée;
La coilte fu à eschekers
De deus pailles ben faiz e chers.

Among all classes the appearance of the bed seems to have been a subject of considerable pride, no doubt from the circumstance of the bedroom being a place for receiving visitors. There were sometimes two or more beds in the same room, and visitors slept in the same chamber with the host and hostess. Beds were also made for the occasion, without bedsteads, sometimes in the hall, at others in the chamber beside the ordinary bed, or in some other room. The plots of many mediæval stories turn on these circumstances. People therefore kept extra materials for making the beds. In the "Roman du Meunier d'Arleux," when a maiden comes as an unexpected

visitor, a place is chosen for her by the side of the fire, and a soft bed is laid down, with very expensive sheets, and a coverlet “warm and furred”—

Kieute mole, linchex molt chier,
Et covertoir chaut et forré.

One custom continued to prevail during the whole of this period,—that of sleeping in bed entirely naked. So many allusions to this practice occur in the old writers, that it is hardly necessary to say more than state the fact. Not unfrequently this custom is still more strongly expressed by stating that people went to bed as naked as they were born; as in some moral lines in the “Reliquiæ Antiquæ” (ii. 15), against the pride of the ladies, who are told that, however gay may be their clothing during the day, they will lie in bed at night as naked as they were born. It is true that in some instances in the illuminations persons are seen in bed with some kind of clothing on, but this was certainly an exception to the rule, and there is generally some particular reason for it. Thus, in the “Roman de la Violette” (p. 31), the lady Oriant excites the surprise of her dueña by going to bed in a *chemise*, and is obliged to explain her reason for so singular a practice, namely, her desire to conceal a mark on her body. Our cut No. 182, taken from the romance of the St. Graal, in the British Museum (MS. Addit. No. 10,292, fol. 21, vo), represents a king and queen in bed, both naked. The crowns on their heads are a mere conventional method of stating their rank: kings and queens were not in the habit of sleeping in bed with their crowns on their heads. In the next cut (No. 183), taken from a manuscript of the romance of the “Quatre Fils d’Aymon,” of the latter part of the fourteenth century, in the National Library in Paris

(No. 6970), there is still less room left for doubt on the subject. The people seem to be sleeping in a public hostelry, where the beds are made in recesses, not unlike the berths in a modern steamer; the man on horseback is supposed to be outside, and his arrival has given alarm to a man who was in bed, and who is escaping without any kind of clothing. In the English romance of "Sir Isumbras," the castle of Isumbras is burnt to the ground in the night, and his lady and three children escaped from their beds; when he hurried to the spot, he found them without clothing or shelter—

A dolefulle syghte the knyghte gane see
Of his wyfe and his childir three,
That fro the fyre were flede;
Alle als nakede als thay were borne
Stode togedir undir a thorne,
Braydede owte of thaire bedd.

Curiously enough, while so little care was taken to cover the body, the head was carefully covered at night, not with a nightcap, but with a kerchief (*couvrechief*), which was wrapped round it.



No. 182. King and Queen in Bed.



No. 183. Night Scene in a Hostelry.



No. 184. A Lady Bathing.

The practice of warm-bathing prevailed very generally in all classes of society, and is frequently alluded to in the mediæval romances and stories. For this purpose a large bathing-tub was used, the ordinary form of which is represented in the annexed cut (No. 184), taken from the manuscript of the St. Graal, of the thirteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Addit. No. 10,292, fol. 266). People sometimes bathed immediately after rising in the morning; and we find the bath used after dinner, and before going to bed. A bath was also often prepared for a visitor on his arrival from a journey; and, what seems still more singular, in the numerous stories of amorous intrigues, the two lovers usually begin their interviews by bathing together.



No. 185. Lady at her Toilette.

Our cut No. 185, from another volume of the manuscript last quoted (MS. Addit. No. 10,293, fol. 266), represents a lady at her toilette. It is a subject on which our information at this period is not very abundant. The round mirror of metal which she is employing was the common form during the middle ages, and was no doubt derived from the ancients. The details of the ladies' toilette are not often described, but the contemporary moralists and satirists condemn, in rather general terms, and evidently with more bitterness than was called for, the pains taken by the ladies to adorn their persons. They are accused of turning their bodies from their natural form by artificial means, alluding to the use of stays, which appear to have been first employed by the Anglo-Norman ladies in the twelfth century. They are further accused of plucking out superfluous hairs from their faces and eyebrows, of dyeing their hair, and of painting their faces. The chevalier de la Tour-Landry (chap. 76) tells his daughters that the whole intrigue between king David and the wife of Uriah arose out of the circumstance of the lady combing her hair at an open window where she could be seen from without, and says that it was a

punishment for the too great attention she gave to the adornment of her head. The toilette of the day seems to have been completed at the first rising from bed in the morning. There are some picturesque lines in the English metrical romance of “Alisaunder,” which describe the morning thus:—

In a moretyde (morrow-tide) *hit was;*
Theo dropes hongyn on the gras;
Theo maydenes lokyn in the glas,
For to tyffen (adorn) *heare fas.*

—Weber, i. 169.

The chamber, as it has been already intimated, was properly speaking the women's apartment, though it was very accessible to the other sex. It was usually the place for private conversation, and we often hear of persons entering the chamber for this purpose, and in this case the bed seems to have served usually for a seat. Thus, in the romance of "Eglamour," when, after supper, Christabelle led the knight into her chamber—

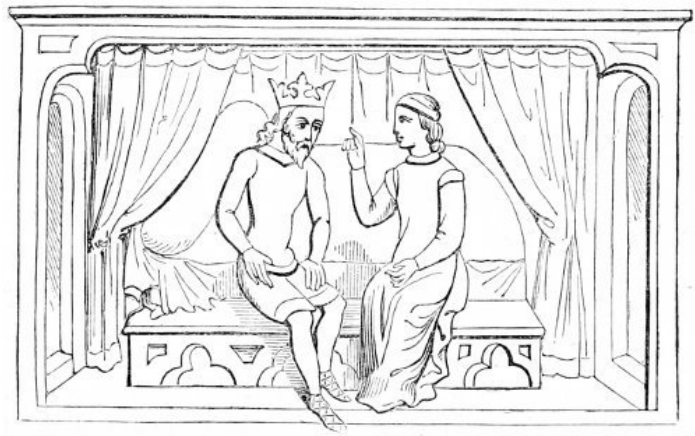
That lady was not for to hyde,
Sche sett hym on hur beddys syde,
And welcomyd home thet knyght.

Again, in a fabliau printed by Meon, a woman of a lower grade, wishing to make a private communication to a man, invites him into her chamber, and they sit on the bed to converse—

En une chanbre andui en vont,
Desor un lit asis se sont.

And in the fabliau of "Guillaume au Faucon," printed by Barbazan, Guillaume, visiting the lady of a knight in her chamber, finds her seated on the bed, and he immediately takes a seat by her side to converse with her. In the illuminated manuscripts, scenes of this kind occur frequently; but in the fourteenth century,

instead of being seated on the bed, the persons thus conversing sit on a bench which runs along the side of the bed, and seems to belong to the bedstead. A scene of this kind is represented in our cut No. 186 (taken from a manuscript of the romance of "Meliadus," in the British Museum, MS. Addit. No. 12,228, fol. 312), which is a good representation of a bed of the fourteenth century. A lady has introduced a king into her chamber, and they are conversing privately, seated on the bench of the bed. In some of these illuminations, the persons conversing are seated on the bed, with their feet on the bench.



No. 186. Conversation in the Chamber.



No. 187. Taking Clothes from the Chest.

The illuminators had not yet learned the art of representing things in detail, and they still too often give us mere conventional representations of beds, yet we see enough to convince us that the bedsteads were already made much more elaborately than formerly. Besides the bench at the side, we find them now with a hutch (*huche*) or locker at the foot, in which the possessor was accustomed to lock up his money and other valuables. This hutch at the foot of the bed is often mentioned in the fabliaux and romances. Thus, in the fabliau "Du chevalier à la Robe Vermeille," a man, when he goes to bed, places his robe on a hutch at the foot of the bed—

Sur une huche aus piez du lit
A cil toute sa robe mise.

Another, having extorted some money from a priest, immediately puts it in the hutch—

Les deniers a mis en la huche.

The hutch was indeed one of the most important articles of furniture in the mediæval chamber. All portable objects of intrinsic value or utility were kept in boxes, because they were thus ready for moving and taking away in case of danger, and because in travelling people carried much of their movables of this description about with them. Hence the uses of the hutch or chest were very numerous and diversified. It was usual to keep clothes of every description in a chest, and illustrations of this practice are met with not uncommonly in the illuminated manuscripts. One of them is given in our cut No. 187, taken from an illumination in a manuscript of the fourteenth century, given by Willemin. Jewels, plate, personal ornaments of all kinds, and all descriptions of "treasure," were similarly locked up in chests. In our cut No. 188, taken also from a manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii., of the beginning of the fourteenth century), a man appears in the act of depositing in a chest fibulæ or brooches, rings, buttons, and other objects, and a large vessel probably of silver. Our cut No. 189, from a manuscript in the National Library in Paris (No. 6956), represents a miser examining the money in his hutch, which is here detached from a bed; but in some other illuminations, a hutch of much the same form appears attached to the bed foot. In Anglo-Saxon the coffer was called a *loc*, whence our word *locker* is derived; or a *cyste*, our *chest*; or an *arc*: from the Anglo-Normans we derive the words *hutch* (*huche*) and *coffer* (*coffre*). The

Anglo-Saxons, as we have shown in a former chapter (p. 79), like our forefathers of a later period, kept their treasures in lockers or hutches. In the "Legend of St. Juliana," an Anglo-Saxon poem in the Exeter Book, it is remarked in proof of the richness of a chieftain:—

þeah þe feoh-gestreon	*Although he riches*
under hord-locan,	*in his treasure-lockers,*
hyrsta únrím,	*jewels innumerable,*
æhte ofer eorþan.	*possessed upon earth.*

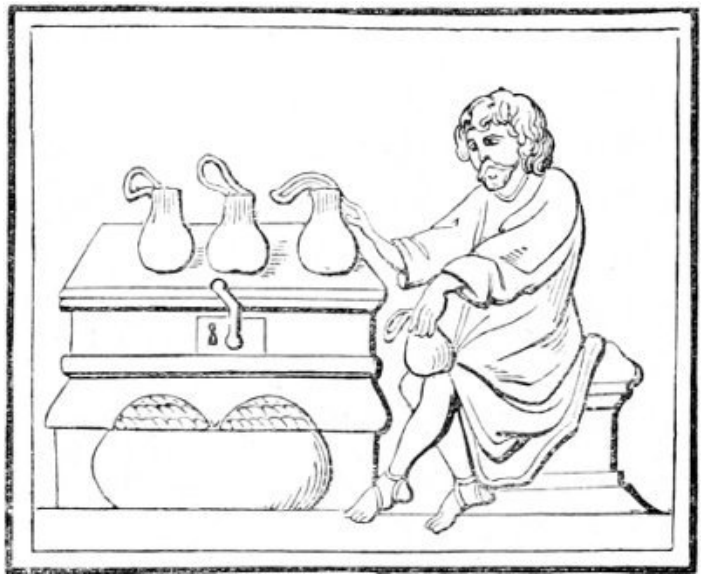
—Exeter Book, p. 245.



No. 188. The Treasure Chest.

Among the Anglo-Saxons the lady of the household had the charge of the coffers. In one of the laws of Cnut relating to robberies, it is declared that "if any man bring a stolen thing home to his cot, and he be detected, it is just that the owner have what he went

for; and unless it has been brought under his wife's key-lockers (*cæg-locan*), let her be clear; for it is her duty to keep the keys of them, namely, her storehouse (*hord-ern*), and her chest (*cyste*), and her box (*tege*)." (Cnut's Laws, No. 180.)



No. 189. A Miser and his Hoard.



No. 190. Joseph buying up the Corn.

In the old metrical romances, when a town is taken and sacked, the plunderers are described as hurrying to the chambers, to rifle the chests and coffers, which were kept there. Thus, in the romance of the "Mort de Garin," when Fromont's town is taken by the followers of the hero of the romance, "the Lorrains," we are told, "hastened to destroy the town; there you might see many a chamber broken open, and many a hutch burst and torn, where they found robes, and silver, and glittering gold"—

Loheren poignent por le borc desrochier.
Là véissiez mainte chambre brisier,
Et mainte huche effondrer et percier,
Et trovent robes, et argent, et or mier.

—Mort de Garin, p. 168.

So in the romance of "Garin," of which that just quoted is the sequel, on a similar occasion, "there you might see them rob the great halls, and break open the chambers, and force the coffers (*escrins*),"—

Là véissiez les grans salles rober;
Chambres brisier, et les escrins forcier.
—Garin le Loherain, tom. i. p. 197.

Further on, in the same romance, the fair Beatrix, addressing her husband, the duke Begues, tells him that he has gold and silver in his coffers,—

Or et argent avez en vos escrins.
—Ib., tom. ii. p. 218.

Money was, indeed, commonly kept in the huche or coffer. In the fabliau of "Constant Duhamel," when Constant is threatened by the forester, who had detained his oxen on the pretence that they had been found trespassing, he tells him that he was ready to redeem them, as he had a hundred sols of money in his hutch by his bed—

J'ai en ma huche lez mon lit,
Cent sols de deniers à vostre oes.
—Barbazan, iii. 307.

In the accompanying cut (No. 190), from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), Joseph is represented counting out the money from his *huche*, to buy up the corn of Egypt, during the years of plenty.



No. 191. Sitting on the Huche.

The chests were kept in the chambers, as being the most retired and secure part of the house, and, from the terms in which the breaking open of the chambers is spoken of in the foregoing extracts, we are led to suppose that the chambers themselves were usually locked. The ordinary place for the chests or hutches, or, at least, of the principal chest, was by the side, or more usually at the foot, of the bed. We have just seen that this was the place in which Constant Duhamel kept his *huche*. Under these circumstances it was very commonly used for a seat, and is often introduced as such, both in the literature of the middle ages, and in the illuminations of the manuscripts. In the romance of "Garin" (tom. i. p. 214), the king's messenger finds the count of Flanders, Fromont, in a tent, according to one manuscript, seated on a coffer (*sor un coffre où se sist*). So, also, in the "Roman de la Violette," p. 25, the heroine and her treacherous guest are represented as seated upon "a coffer banded with copper" (*sor j. coffre bendé de coivre*). Our cut No. 191, taken from one of the engravings in the great work of Willemin, represents a scribe thus seated on a coffer or *huche*, and engaged apparently in writing

a letter. Our next cut (No. 192), taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 15 E. vi.), represents a lady and gentleman, seated on apparently a coffer, the former of whom is presenting a ring to the other.

This latter object, the ring, acts also a very frequent and very important part in the social history of the middle ages. A ring was often given as a token of affection between lovers, as may perhaps be intended by the subject of our last cut, or between relatives or friends. In the romance of "Widukind," tom. ii. p. 20, the queen gives her ring to her lover in a secret interview in her tent. So, in the romance of "Horn," the lady Rigmel gave her lover, Horn, a ring as a token. It was often, moreover, given not merely as a token of remembrance, but as a means of recognition. In the well-known early English romance of "Sir Tristram," the mother of the hero, dying in childbirth of him after his father had been slain, gives a ring to the knight to whose care she entrusted the infant, as a token by which his parentage should be known when he grew up:—

A ring of riche hewe
Than hadde that levedi (lady) *fre;*
Sche toke (gave) *it Rouhand trewe,*
Hir sone schie bad it be;
Mi brother wele it knewe,
Mi fader yaf it me.

This ring leads subsequently to the recognition of Tristram by his uncle, king Mark. In the romance of "Ipomydon" (Weber's "Metrical Romances," vol. ii. p. 355), the hero similarly receives from his mother a ring, which was to be a token of recognition to his

illegitimate brother. So, in the romance, Horn makes himself known in the sequel to Rigmel, by dropping the ring she had given him into the drinking-horn which she was serving round at a feast. Rings were often given to messengers as credentials, or were used for the same purpose as letters of introduction. In the romance of “Floire and Blanceflor” (p. 55), the young hero, on his way to Babylon, arrives at a bridge, the keeper of which has a brother in the great city, to whose hospitality he wishes to recommend Floire, and for that purpose he gives him his ring. “Take this ring to him,” he says, “and tell him from me to receive you in his best manner.” The message was attended with complete success. In our cut No. 193, taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), the messenger arrives with the letter of which he is the bearer, and at the same time exhibits a ring in the place of credentials.



No. 192. The Token of the Ring.



No. 193. The Delivery of the Ring.

There was another circumstance which gave value and importance to rings in the middle ages. Not only might rings be charmed by the power of the magician, but it was an article of general belief that the engraved stones of the ancients, which were found commonly enough on old sites, and even the precious stones in general, without any engraving, possessed extraordinary virtues, the benefit of which was imparted to those who carried them on their persons. In the romance of “Melusine” (p. 357), the heroine, when about to leave the house of her husband, gives him two rings, and says, “My sweet love, you see here two rings of gold, which have both the same virtue; and know well for truth, that so long as you possess them, or one of them, you shall never be overcome in pleading nor in battle, if your cause be rightful: and neither you nor others who may possess them, shall ever die by any weapons.” In a story among the collection of the

"Gesta Romanorum," edited by sir Frederic Madden for the Roxburghe Club (p. 150), a father is made, on his deathbed, to give to his son a ring, "the virtue of which was, that whosoever should bear it upon him, should have the love of all men." The ring given by the princess Rigmel to Horn possessed virtues of an equally remarkable description—"Whoever bore it upon him could not perish; he need not fear to die either in fire or water, or in field of battle, or in the contention of the tournament." So, in the romance of "Floire and Blanceflor" (p. 42), the queen gives her son a ring which would protect him against all danger, and assure to him the eventual attainment of every object of his wishes. Nor was the ring of sir Perceval of Galles (Thornton Romances, p. 71) at all less remarkable in its properties, of which the rhymer says—

Siche a vertue es in the stane,
In alle this werlde wote I nane
Siche stone in a rynge;
A mane that had it in were (war)
One his body for to bere,
There scholde no dyntys (blows) *hym dere* (injure),
Ne to dethe brynge.

The consideration of the house and its parts and furniture, and of the outward forms of domestic life, leads us naturally to that of the constitution of the family. It was the chief pride of the aristocratic class to live very extravagantly, and to support a great household, with an immense number of personal attendants of different classes. In the first place the old system of fostering, which was kept up to a comparatively late period, added to the number of the lord's or knight's family. As might was literally

right in the middle ages, each man of worth sought to strengthen himself by the alliances which were formed by finding powerful foster-fathers for his sons, and the personal attachment and fidelity between the chief of the family and his foster-child was often greater even than that between the father and his own son. In addition to the foster children, gentlemen sent their sons to take an honourable kind of service in the families of men of higher rank or greater wealth, where the manners and accomplishments of gentlemen were to be learnt in greater perfection than at home; and the younger sons of great families sought similar service with a view to their advancement in the world. These two classes were the young squires, who served at table, and performed a great number of what we should now call menial offices to the lord and ladies of the household, in all the amusements and recreations of which they took part, and at the same time were instructed in gentlemanly manners and exercises—it was a sort of apprenticeship introductory to knighthood. In the same manner the knightly families sent their daughters to serve under the ladies of the greater or lesser feudal chieftains, and they formed that class who, in the French romances and fabliaux, are called the *chambrières*, or chamber attendants, and in the English texts, simply the *maidens*, of the establishment. The ladies of rank prided themselves upon having a very great number of these *chambrières*, or maidens, for they were not only a means of ostentation, but they were profitable, inasmuch as besides attending on the personal wants of their mistresses, they were constantly employed in spinning, weaving, and the various processes of producing cloth, in millinery and dress-making, in embroidery, and in a great

number of similar labours, which were not only required for furnishing the large number of persons who depended upon their lord for their liveries, &c., but which were sometimes sold to obtain money, which was always a scarce thing in the country. The beauty of the *pucelles*, as they are often termed in the French text, or maidens, is also spoken of as a subject of pride. In a metrical story printed by Meon (ii. 38), a great lady receiving a female stranger into her household, became so much attached to her, "that she made more of her than of all her maidens, of whom," it is added, "there were handsome ones in her chambers"—

De li la dame fet grant feste,
Plus que de totes ses puceles,
Dont en ses chambres a de beles.

And so, in the romance of "Blonde of Oxford" (p. 30), when the countess went with her maidens to visit John, the remark is made that among them there were plenty of beauties:—

Et la contesse et ses puceles,
Dont ele avoit assés de beles.

The usual age for sending a boy to foster appears to have been seven years. That was the age at which Fulke Fitz-Warine was sent to Joce de Dynan in Ludlow Castle. "The lady," the narrative tells us, "became with child; when she was delivered, at the time ordained by God, they called the child Fulke. And when the child was seven years old, they sent it to Joce de Dynan to teach and nourish; for Joce was a knight of good accomplishment. Joce received him

with great honour and great affection, and educated him in his chambers with his own children." Fulke the younger, in the next generation, was taken as his foster-child by the king (Henry II.), and was nourished and educated with the young princes, of whom John, in the sequel, proved a bad foster-brother. The great barons sought to form alliances of this kind with the king, as well as with his great ministers and other men of power. In the romance of "Garin le Loherain" (vol. i. p. 62), king Pepin gives the two orphan sons of Hervis of Metz, Garin and Begon, as foster-children to the count Hardrés, and they thus become severally the foster-brothers, or, as they are termed in the old French, *compains* (companions), of his two sons, Begon being the foster-brother of Guillaume of Montclin, and Garin of Fromont. Although they belong to rival families, and are each other's enemies through the turbulent scenes which form the subject of the story, the sentiment of the relationship by fostering often shows itself. This yearning after something beyond mere ordinary friendship seems to have been often felt in the middle ages, and led to various characteristic practices, among which one of the most remarkable was that of sworn brotherhood. Two men—they are generally knights—who felt a sufficiently strong sentiment towards each other, engaged, under the most solemn oaths, in a bond of fraternity for life, implying a constant and faithful friendship to each other. This practice enters largely into the plot of several of the mediæval romances, as in that of "Amis and Amiloun," and in the curious English metrical romance of "King Athelston," printed in the "Reliquiæ Antiquæ." The desire for this true friendship was not unnaturally increased by the general prevalence of treacherous falsehood and

hateful feuds. There is a beautiful passage in the romance of "Garin," just quoted, which illustrates this sentiment, while it furnishes an interesting picture of domestic life. "One day," we are told, "Begues was in his castle of Belin, and beside him sat the beautiful Beatris. The duke kissed her both on the mouth and on the cheeks, and very sweetly the duchess smiled. In the middle of the hall she saw her two sons, the eldest of whom was Garin, and the youngest was named Hernaudin; their ages were respectively twelve years, and ten. Along with them were six *damoisels* (gentlemen's sons) of worth, and they were running and leaping together, and playing, and laughing, and making game. The duke looked at them, and began to sigh; which was observed by the lady, who questioned him—'Ah! rich duke! why have you sorrowful thoughts? You have gold and silver in your coffers, falcons in plenty on your perches, and rich cloths, buildings, and mules, and palfreys, and baggage-horses; and you have crushed all your enemies. You have no neighbour within six days' journey powerful enough to refuse to come to your service if you send for him.' 'Lady,' said the duke, 'what you say is true; but in one thing you have made a great oversight. Wealth consists neither in rich cloths, nor in money, nor in buildings, nor in horses but it is made of kinsmen and friends: the heart of one man is worth all the gold in a country.'"—

Dist li dus, "Dame, verités avez dit;
Mais d'une chose i avez moult mespris.
N'est pas richoise ne de vair ne de gris,
Ne de deniers, de murs, ne de roncins,
Mais est richoise de parens et d'amins;
Li cuers d'un homme vaut tout l'or d'un pais."

—Garin le Loherain, ii. 218.

The incident of the younger, or even at times the elder, sons of feudal lords or landholders going to seek service is the groundwork of the romance of "Blonde of Oxford," and of the story of "Courtois d'Arras," printed by Meon in his collection of fabliaux and stories. The latter tale is a mediæval version of the scriptural story of the Prodigal Son. Youths of good family easily found service in this manner, and the service itself was not considered dishonourable, because lords and gentlemen admitted nobody to immediate attendance on their persons but sons of gentlemen—persons of as good blood as themselves. To be a good servant was a gentlemanly accomplishment, and the payment these gentlemanly servants received consisted ordinarily in their clothing and gifts of various kinds, rarely in money. I have already hinted that the intercourse between the male and female portions of the household was on a footing of familiarity and freedom, and at the same time on a tone of gallantry which could hardly produce a high degree of morality, but the details on this subject, though very abundant, are in great part of a description which cannot here be entered upon. This intercourse extended to what we should now call the privacy of the bed-chamber. It was usual, indeed, for the ladies to receive visits from the gentlemen, *tête-à-tête*, in their chamber. In the fabliau of "Guillaume au Faucon," printed in Barbazan, the young "damoisel," as the noble youth was usually termed, having fallen in love with the beautiful wife of the lord in whose service he was, took an opportunity of visiting her in her chamber, when he knew that all her maidens were employed in another part of the building.

Without knocking, he opened the door gently, and found the lady sitting alone on her bed. The lady saluted him with “a sweet smile,” and told him to come in and sit on the bed by her side, and there “he laughed, and talked, and plaid with her, and the lady did the same”—

Rit et parole et joe à li,
Et la dame tot autresi.

In the midst of these familiarities, Guillaume made his declaration of love, and was rejected, but his pursuit was ultimately successful. In another fabliau of the thirteenth century, that of “Gautier d’Aupais,” it is the daughter of his lord and lady with whom the young “damoisel” falls in love, and he takes the opportunity one morning, while the two latter are at church, to pay a visit to the young lady in her chamber. Although in bed on account of illness—and it has been already stated how people went to bed without any clothing—the lady is not surprised by Gautier’s visit, but invites him to sit on her bed, and tell her something to amuse her, and he finds the opportunity of making his love with more success than the hero of the other tale. In the same manner, the ladies are continually described as visiting the gentlemen in their chambers, both by day and by night. In “Blonde of Oxford,” a fashionable romance composed for the entertainment of the best society, Blonde thus leaves her bed, throwing only a mantle over her person, to pass whole nights with Jean of Dammartin, and their interviews are described in language which would not be allowed in any respectable book at the present day. The chevalier de la Tour-Landry, in his moral instructions to his daughters, tells them a story to illustrate the ill

results of a quarrelsome temper. There was a young lady, he says, the daughter of "a very gentle knight," who quarrelled at the game of tables with a gentleman who had no better temper than herself, and who, provoked by the irritating language she used towards him, told her that she was known to be in the habit of going by night into the men's chambers, and kissing and embracing them in their beds without candle; and this is told, not in reproof of conduct which was unusually bad, but to show that people who speak ill of others run the risk of having their own failings exposed. Examples of this intercourse of persons of different sexes in their chambers, and of the results which frequently followed, from the mediæval romances and stories, might be multiplied to almost any extent.

In these stories, the ladies in general show no great degree of delicacy, but, on the contrary, they are commonly very forward. It is usual with them to fall in love with the other sex, and, so far from attempting to conceal their passion, they often become suitors, and make their advances with more warmth and less delicacy than is shown by the gentlemen in a similar position. Not only are their manners dissolute, but their language and conversation are loose beyond anything that those who have not read these interesting records of mediæval life can easily conceive, which was a common failing with both sexes. The author of the "Ménagier de Paris" (ii. 60), in recommending to his daughters some degree of modesty on this point, makes use of words which his modern editor, although printing a text in obsolete language, thought it advisable to suppress. It might be argued that the use of such language is evidence rather of

the coarseness than of the immorality of the age, but, unfortunately, the latter interpretation is supported by the whole tenor of contemporary literature and anecdote, which leave no doubt that mediæval society was profoundly immoral and licentious.

On the other hand, the gallantry and refinement of feeling which the gentleman is made to show towards the other sex, is but a conventional politeness; for the ladies are too often treated with great brutality. Men beating their wives, and even women with whom they quarrel who are not their wives, is a common incident in the tales and romances. The chevalier de la Tour-Landry tells his daughters the story of a woman who was in the habit of contradicting her husband in public, and replying to him ungraciously, for which, after the husband had expostulated in vain, he one day raised his fist and knocked her down, and kicked her in the face while she was down, and broke her nose. “And so,” says the knightly instructor, “she was disfigured for life, and thus, through her ill behaviour and bad temper, she had her nose spoiled, which was a great misfortune to her. It would have been better for her to be silent and submissive, for it is only right that words of authority should belong to her lord, and the wife’s honour requires that she should listen in peace and obedience.” The good “chevalier” makes no remark on the husband’s brutality, as though it were by no means an unusual occurrence.

A trouvère of the thirteenth century, named Robert de Blois, compiled a code of instructions in good manners for young ladies in French verse, under the title of the “Chastisement des Dames,” which is printed by Barbazan, and forms a curious illustration of feudal domestic manners. It was unbecoming in a

lady, according to Robert de Blois, to talk too much; she ought especially to refrain from boasting of the attentions paid to her by the other sex; and she was recommended not to show too much freedom in her games and amusements, lest the men should be encouraged to libertinism. In going to church, she was not to "trot or run," but to walk seriously, not going in advance of her company, and looking straight before her, and not to this side or the other, but to salute "debonairely" all persons she met. She is recommended not to let men put their hands into her breasts, or kiss her on the mouth, as it might lead to greater familiarities. She was not to look at a man too much, unless he were her acknowledged lover; and when she had a lover, she was not to boast or talk too much of him. She was not to expose her body uncovered out of vanity, as her breast, or her legs, or her sides, nor to undress in the presence of men. She was not to be too ready in accepting presents from the other sex. The ladies are particularly warned against scolding and disputing, against swearing, against eating and drinking too freely at table, and against getting drunk, the latter being a practice from which much mischief might arise. A lady was not to cover her face when the went in public, as a handsome face was made to be seen, and it was not good manners to remain with the face covered before a gentleman of rank. An exception, however, is made in the case of ugly or deformed faces, which might be covered. There was another exception to the counsel just mentioned. "A lady who is pale-faced, or who has not a good smell, ought to breakfast early in the morning; for good wine gives a very good colour; and she who eats and drinks well must heighten her colour." One who has bad breath is recommended to eat aniseed, fennel,

and cumin to her breakfast, and to avoid breathing in people's faces. A lady is to be very attentive to her behaviour in church, rules for which are given. If she could sing, she was to do so when asked, and not require too much pressing. Ladies are further recommended to keep their hands clean, to cut their nails often, and not to suffer them to grow beyond the finger, or to harbour dirt. In passing other people's houses, ladies were not to look into them; "for a person often does things privately in his house, which he would not wish to be seen, if any one should come before his door." For this reason, too, when a lady went into another person's house, she is recommended to cough at the entrance, or to speak out loud, so that the inmates might not be taken by surprise. The directions for a lady's behaviour at table are very particular. "In eating, you must avoid much laughing or talking. If you eat with another (*i. e.*, in the same plate, or of the same mess), turn the nicest bits to him, and do not go picking out the finest and largest for yourself, which is not courteous. Moreover, no one should eat greedily a choice bit which is too large or too hot, for fear of choking or burning herself.... Each time you drink, wipe your mouth well, that no grease may go into the wine, which is very unpleasant to the person who drinks after you. But when you wipe your mouth for drinking, do not wipe your eyes or nose with the table-cloth, and avoid spilling from your mouth, or greasing your hands too much." The lady is further, and particularly, recommended not to utter falsehoods. The remainder of the poem consist of directions in making love and receiving the addresses of suitors. The "Book" of the chevalier de la Tour-Landry contains instructions for young ladies, in substance very much like these, but illustrated by

stories and examples.

The chamber-maidens also went abroad, like the young sons of gentlemen; but female servants who came as strangers appear not in general to have been well regarded, and they probably were, or were considered as, a lower class. The circumstance of their having left the country where they were known, was looked upon as *prima facie* evidence that their conduct had brought them into discredit there. The author of the "Ménagier de Paris" advises his daughter never to take any such *chambrières*, without having first sent to make strict inquiries about them in the parts from whence they came. This same early writer on domestic economy divides the servants, who, in a large household, were very numerous, into three classes: those who were employed on a sudden, and only for a certain work, with regard to whom the principal caution given is to bargain with them for the price of their labour before they begin; those who were employed for a certain time in a particular description of work, as tailors, shoemakers, butchers, and others, who always came to work in the house on materials belonging to the master of the house, or harvest-men, &c., in the country; and domestic servants who were hired by the year. These latter were expected to pay an absolute passive obedience to the lord and lady of the household, and to those set in authority by them. The lady of the house had the especial charge of the female servants, and the "Ménagier" contains rather minute directions as to her housekeeping duties. She was to require of the maid-servants, "that early in the morning the entrance to your hostel, that is, the hall, and the other places by which people enter and stop in the hostel to converse, be swept and made clean, and

that the footstools and covers of the benches and forms be dusted and shaken, and after this that the other chambers be in like manner cleaned and arranged for the day." They were next to attend to and feed all the "chamber animals," such as pet dogs, cage birds, &c. The next thing to be done was to portion out to each servant her or his work for the day. At midday the servants were to have their first meal, when they were to be fed plentifully, but "only of one meat, and not of several or of any delicacies; and give them one only kind of drink, nourishing but not heady, whether wine or other; and admonish them to eat heartily, and to drink well and plentifully, for it is right that they should eat all at once, without sitting too long, and at one breath, without reposing on their meal, or halting, or leaning with their elbows on the table; and as soon as they begin to talk, or to rest on their elbows, make them rise, and remove the table." After their "second labour," and on feast-days, the servants were to have another, apparently a lighter, repast, and lastly, in the evening (*au vespre*), they were to have another abundant meal, like their dinner, and then, "if the season required it," they were to be "warmed and made comfortable." The lady of the house was then, by herself or a deputy on whom she could depend, to see that the house was closed, and to take charge of the keys, that nobody could go out or come in; and then to have all the fires carefully "covered," and send all the servants to bed, taking care that they put out their candles properly, to prevent the risk of fire. In the English poem of the "Seven Sages," printed by Weber, the emperor is described as going to his chamber, after the time of locking windows and gates—

Whan men leke windowe and gate,
Themparour com to chambre late.

—Weber, iii. 60.

And it appears from a tale in the same collection, that the doors and windows were unlocked at daybreak—

Tho (when) *the day dawen gan,*
Awai stal the yonge man;
Men unlek dore and windowe.

—Ib., p. 87.

There was another duty performed by the ladies in the mediæval household, which was a very important one in an age of turbulence, and must not be overlooked—they were both nurses and doctors. Medical men were not then at hand to be consulted, and the sick or wounded man was handed over to the care of the mistress of the house and her maidens. The reader of Chaucer will remember the medicinal knowledge displayed by dame Pertelot in the "Nonne-Prestes Tale." Medicinal herbs were grown in every garden, and were dried or made into decoctions, and kept for use. In the early romances we often meet with ladies who possessed plants and other objects which possessed the power of miraculous cures, and which they had obtained in some mysterious manner. Thus, in the Carlovingian romance of "Gaufrey," when Robastre was so dangerously wounded that there remained no hope of his life, the good wife of the traitor Grifon undertook to cure him. "And she went to a coffer and opened it, and took out of it a herb which has so great virtue that whoever takes it will be relieved from all harm. She pounded and mixed it in a

mortar, and then came to Robastre and gave it him. It had no sooner passed his throat than he was as sound as an apple" ("Gaufrey," p. 119). So in "Fierabras" (p. 67), the Saracen princess Floripas had in her chamber the powerful "mandeglore" (mandrake), which she applied to the wounds of Oliver, and they were instantly healed. In the "Roman de la Violette" (p. 104), when Gerart, desperately wounded, is carried into the castle, the maiden who was lady of it took him into a chamber, and there took off his armour, undressed him, and put him to bed. They examined all his wounds, and applied to them ointments of great efficacy, and under this treatment he soon recovered. In the English romance of "Amis and Amiloun," when sir Amiloun is discovered struck with leprosy, the wife of his friend Amis takes him into her chamber, strips him of all his clothing, bathes him herself, and then puts him to bed—

Into hir chaumber she can him lede,
And kest of al his pover wede (poor clothes),
And bathed his bodi al bare;
And to a bedde swithe (quickly) *him brought,*
With clothes riche and wele ywrought;
Ful blithe of him thai ware.

—Weber, ii. 459.

To the knowledge of medicines was too often added another knowledge, that of poisons—a science which was carried to a great degree of perfection in the middle ages, and of which there were regular professors. The practice of poisoning was, indeed, carried on to a frightful extent, and it appears, from a variety of evidence, that women were commonly agents in it.

A great part of the foregoing remarks apply exclusively to the aristocratic portion of society, which included all those who had the right to become knights. Through the whole extent of this portion of society one blood was believed to run, which was distinguished from that of all other classes by the title of "gentle blood." The pride of gentle blood, which was one of the distinguishing characteristics of feudalism, was very great in the middle ages. It was believed that the mark of this blood could never disappear; and many of the mediæval stories turn upon the circumstance of a child of gentle blood having been stolen or abandoned in its earlier infancy, and bred up, without any knowledge of its origin, as a peasant among peasants, or as a burgher among burghers, but displaying, as it grew towards manhood, by its conduct, the unmistakable proofs of its gentle origin, in spite of education and example. The burgher class —the merchant or tradesman, or the manufacturer— appear always as money-getting and money-saving people, and individuals often became very rich. This circumstance became a temptation, on the one hand, to the aristocrat, whose tendency was usually, through his prodigality, to become poor, and, on the other, to the rich man of no blood, who sought to buy aristocratic alliances by his wealth, and intermarriages between the two classes were not very unfrequent. In most cases, at least in the romances and stories, it was an aristocratic young lady who became united with a wealthy merchant, and it was usually a stroke of selfish policy on the part of the lady's father. In the fabliau of the "Vilain Mire" (Barbazan, ii. 1)—the origin of Molière's "Médecin malgré lui,"—and in one or two other old stories, the aristocratic young lady is married to an

agriculturist. Marriages of this description are represented as being never happy; the husband has no sympathy for his wife's gentility, and, according to the code of "chivalry," the lady was perfectly justified in being unfaithful to her husband as often as the liked, especially if she sinned with men who were superior to him in blood.

It was common for the burgher class to ape gentility, even among people of a lower order; for the great merchant was often superior in education and in intelligence, as he was in wealth, to the great majority of the aristocratic class. In Chaucer, even the wife of the miller aspired to the aristocratic title of madame—

Ther durste no wight clepe (call) *hir but madame*.
—Cant. Tales, l. 3954.

And in speaking of the wives of various burghers who joined in the pilgrimage, the poet remarks—

It is right fair for to be clept (called) *madame*.
—Ibid., l. 378.

The burghers also cherished a number of servants and followers in their household, or *mesnie*. In the fabliau of "La Borgoise d'Orliens," the mesnie of the burgher, who is not represented as a person of wealth or distinction, consists of two nephews, a lad who carried water, three chamber-maidens, a niece, two pautoniers, and a ribald, and these were all harboured in the hall. The pautonier was only another name for the ribald, or perhaps it was a sub-class or division of the infamous class who lived

parasitically upon the society of the middle ages. Even the ordinary agriculturist had his *mesnie*.

What I have said of the great dissoluteness and immorality of the aristocratic class applies more especially to the households of the greater barons, though the same spirit must have spread itself far through the whole class. The aristocratic class was itself divided into two classes, or rather two ranks,—the great barons, and the knights and lesser landholders, and the division between these two classes became wider, and the latter more absolutely independent, as the power of feudalism declined. These latter were the origin of that class which in more modern times has been known by the title of the old country gentleman. As far as we can judge from what we know of them, I am led to think that this class was the most truly dignified, and in general the most moral, portion of mediæval society. There is abundant evidence that the tone of morality in the burgher and agricultural classes was not high; and the whole tenor of mediæval popular and historical literature can leave no doubt on our minds that in the middle ages the clergy were the great corruptors of domestic virtue among both these classes. The character of the women, as described in the old satirists and story-tellers, as well as in records of a still more strictly truthful character, was very low, and, in the towns especially, they are described as spending much of their time in the taverns, drinking and gossiping. Of course there were everywhere—and, it is to be trusted, not a few—bright exceptions to this general character.

CHAPTER XIII.

OCCUPATIONS OUT OF DOORS.—THE PLEASURE-GARDEN.—THE LOVE OF FLOWERS, AND THE FASHION OF MAKING GARLANDS.—FORMALITIES OF THE PROMENADE.—GARDENING IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Humboldt, in his “Cosmos,” has dwelt on the taste for the beauties of nature which has prevailed among various peoples, and at different periods of the world’s history, but he appears to me to have by no means appreciated or done justice to the force of this sentiment among our forefathers in the middle ages, and, perhaps I may say, especially in England. In our ancient popular poetry, the mention of the season of the year at which an event happens generally draws from the poet some allusion to the charms of nature peculiar to it, to the sweetness of the flowers, the richness of the fruit, or the harmony of the song of birds. In some of the early romances, each new division of the poem is introduced by an allusion of this kind. Thus, at the opening of what the editor calls the first chapter of the second part of the romance of “Richard Cœur de Lion,” the poet tells us how it—

Merye is in the tyme of May,

Whenne foulis synge in her lay;
Floures on appyl-trees and perye (pear-tree);
Smale foules synge merye.
Ladyes strowe here boures (chambers)
With rede roses and lylye flowres;
Gret joye is in frith (grove) *and lake.*

—Weber, ii. 149.

Such interruptions of the narrative are frequent in the long romance of "Alexander" (Alexander the Great), and are always expressive. Thus, on one occasion the poet tells us, abruptly enough, how—

Whan corn ripeth in every steode (place),
Mury (pleasant) *it is in feld and hyde* (meadow).

—Ibid., i. 24.

And again, introduced equally abruptly, we are informed—

In tyme of hervest mery it is ynough;
Peres and apples hongeth on bough.
The hayward bloweth mery his horne;
In everyche (every) *felde ripe is corne;*
The grapes hongen on the vyne;
Swete is trewe love and fyne.

—Weber, p. 238.

When, indeed, we consider the confined and dark character of most of the apartments of the feudal dwelling, we cannot be surprised if our mediæval forefathers loved the recreations which brought them into the open air. Castles and country mansions had always their gardens and pleasure-grounds, which were much frequented by all the different branches

of the household. The readers of Chaucer will remember the description of the "noble" knight January—

Amonges other of his honest thinges,
He had a gardyn walled al with stoon,
So fair a gardyn wot I no wher noon.

It is implied, at least, that this garden was extensive, and—

This noble knight, this January the olde,
Such deynté hath in it to walk and playe,
That he wold no wight suffre bere the keye,
Save he himself.

—CHAUCER, The Marchaundes Tale.

So, in the curious popular collection of mediæval stories, entitled the "Seven Sages," we are told of a rich burgess who

Hadde, bihinden his paleys,
A fair gardin of nobleys,
Ful of appel-tres, and als (also) *of pirie* (pear-trees);
Foules songe therinne murie.
Amideward that gardyn fre,
So wax (grew) *a pinnote-tre,*
That hadde fair bowes and frut;
Ther under was al his dedut (pleasure).
He made ther-under a grene bench,
And drank ther under many a sschench (cupful).

—Weber, iii. 23.

And again, in the same collection of stories, a prudent mother, counselling her daughter, tells her—

Daughter, thi loverd (lord) *hath a gardin,*
A wel fair ympe (young tree) *is tharin;*
A fair harbeth (arbour) *hit overspredeth,*
Alle his solas therinne he ledeth.

—Weber, iii. 69.

In Chaucer's "Frankeleynes Tale," when the lady Dorigen was in want of amusement to make her forget the absence of her husband, her friends, finding that the sea-shore was not sufficiently gay,—

Schope hem for to pleien somwhere elles,
They leden hire by rivers and by welles,
And eke in other places delitables;
They dauncen, and they pley at ches and tables.
So on a day, right in the morwe tide,
Unto a gardeyn that was ther beside,
In which that they had made her ordinance
Of vitaile, and of other purveance,
They gon and plaie hem al the longe day:
And this was on the sixte morwe of May,
Which May had painted with his softe schoures
This gardeyn ful of leves and of floures:
And craft of mannes hond so curiously
Arrayed had this gardeyn of suche pris
As if it were the verray paradis.
* * * * *
And after dinner gan thay to daunce
And singe also; sauf Dorigen alone.

An important incident in the story here occurs, after which—

Tho (then) *come hir other frendes many on,*
And in the alleyes romed up and down,

And nothing wist of this conclusioun,
But sodeynly began to revel newe,
Til that the brighte sonne had lost his hewe.

It would be easy to multiply such descriptions as the foregoing, but we will only refer to the well-known one at the commencement of the "Romance of the Rose," where the carolling is described with more minuteness than usual. There were employed minstrels, and "jogelours," and apparently even tumblers, which are thus described in Chaucer's English version:—

Tho (then) *myghtist thou karoles sene,*
And folk daunce and mery bene,
And made many a faire tournyng
Upon the grene gras springyng.
There myghtist thou se these flowtours,
Mynstrales and eke jogelours,
That wel to synge dide her peyne,
Somme songe songes of Loreyne;
For in Loreyn her notes bee
Fulle swetter than in this contré.
There was many a tymbester,
And saillouris (jumpers, *or* tumblers), *that I dar wel swere*
Couthe (knew) *her craft ful parfitly,*
The tymbris up ful sotilly
They caste and hente fulle ofte
Upon a fynger faire and softe,
That they ne failide never mo.
Ful fetys damyseles two,
Ryght yonge, and fulle of semelyhede,
In kirtles and noon other wede,
And faire tressed every tresse,
Hadde Myrthe doon for his noblesse

Amydde the karole for to daunce.
But herof lieth no remembraunce
How that they daunced queyntly,
That oon wolde come alle pryvyly
Agayn that other, and whan they were
Togidre almost, they threwe yfere (in company)
Her mouthis so, that thorough her play
It semed as they kiste alway.
To dauncen welle koude they the gise,
What shulde I more to you devyse?

These lines show us that our forefathers in the middle ages had their dancing girls, just as they had and still have them in the East; it was one trait of the mixture of Oriental manners with those of Europe which had taken place since the crusades.

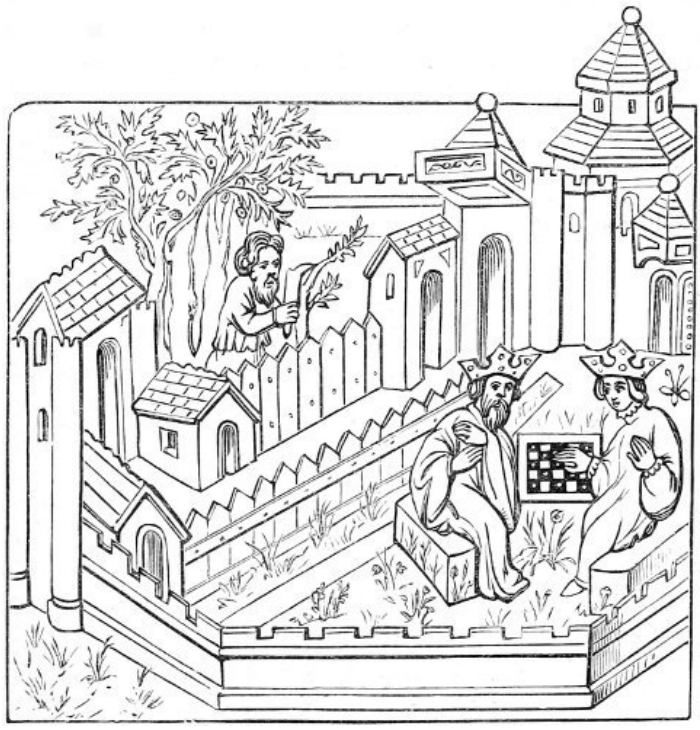
In these extracts, indeed, we have allusions to the practices of dancing and singing, of playing at chess and tables, of drinking, and even of dining, in the gardens. Our engraving No. 194, taken from the romance of "Alexander," in the Bodleian Library, represents a garden scene, in which two royal personages are playing at chess. Dancing in the open air was a very common recreation, and is not unfrequently alluded to. In the Roman de Geste, known by the title of "La Mort de Garin," a large dinner party is given in a garden—

Les napes metent pardeanz un jardin.

—Mort de Garin, p. 28.

And, in the "Roman de Berte" (p. 4), Charles Martel is represented as dining similarly in the garden, at the midsummer season, when the rose was in blossom—

Entour le saint Jehan, que la rose est fleurie.



No. 194. A. Mediæval Garden Scene.

There is an early Latin story of a man who had a cross-grained wife. One day he invited some friends to dinner, and set out his table in his garden, by the side of a river (*fecit poni mensam in hortu suo prope aquam*). The lady seated herself by the water-side, at a little distance from the table, and cast a very forbidding look upon her husband's guests; upon which he said to her, "Show a pleasant countenance to our guests, and come nearer the table;" but she only moved further off, and nearer the brink of the river, with her back turned to the water. He repeated

his invitation in a more angry tone, in reply to which, to show her ill-humour, she drew further back, with a quick movement of ill-temper, through which, forgetting the nearness of the river, she fell into it, and was drowned. The husband, pretending great grief, sent for a boat, and proceeded up the stream in search of her body. This excited some surprise among his neighbours, who suggested to him that he should go down the stream, and not up. "Ah!" said he, "you did not know my wife—she did everything in contradiction, and I firmly believe that her body has floated against the current, and not with it."

Even among the aristocratic class the garden was often the place for giving audience and receiving friends. In the romance of "Garin le Loherain," a messenger sent to the count Fromont, one of the great barons, finds him sitting in a garden surrounded by his friends—

Trouva Fromont seant en un jardin;
Environ lui avoit de ses amins.

—Roman de Garin, i. 282.

A favourite occupation of the ladies in the middle ages was making garlands and chaplets of flowers. In the "Lai d'Aristote" (Barbazan, iii. 105, 107), king Alexander's beautiful mistress is described as descending early in the morning, walking in the garden alone, and making herself a chaplet of flowers. In another fabliau, published in Germany by Adelbert Keller, a Saracenic maiden descends from her chamber into the garden, performs her toilette at the fountain there, and then makes herself a chaplet of flowers and leaves, which she puts on her head. So

Emelie, in Chaucer's "Knights Tale,"—

Iclothed was sche fressh for to devyse.
Hire yolwe (yellow) *heer was browdid in a tresse*
Byhynde hire bak, a yerde long, I gesse.
And in the gardyn at the sonne uprise (sun-rise)
Sche walketh up and doun wheer as hire liste;
Sche gadereth floures, partye whyte and reede,
To make a certeyn gerland for hire heede,
And as an aungel hevenly sche song.

A little further on, Arcyte goes at daybreak into the fields to make him a chaplet, of the leaves of woodbine or hawthorn, for it must be remembered that this takes place in the month of May, which was especially the season for wearing garlands. In "Blonde of Oxford," Jean of Dammartin, seeking his mistress, finds her in a meadow making herself a chaplet of flowers—

A dont de la chambre s'avance,
De là le vit en i. prael
U ele faisoit un capiel.

—Blonde of Oxford, p. 30.

Our cut No. 195, taken from a well-known manuscript in the British Museum, of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.), represents a party of ladies in the garden, gathering flowers, and making garlands. The love of flowers, as I have stated in a former chapter, seems to have prevailed generally among our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, and affectionate allusions to them occur, not unfrequently, in the literary remains of that early period. Many of our old favourite garden-flowers are,

I believe, derived from the Anglo-Saxon gardens. Proofs of a similar attachment to flowers might be quoted in abundance from the writings of the periods subsequent to the entrance of the Normans. The wearing of garlands or chaplets of flowers was a common practice with both sexes. In the romantic history of the Fitz-Warines, written in the thirteenth century, the hero, in travelling, meets a young knight who, in token of his joyous humour, carries a chaplet of flowers on his head. In the later English romance of the "Squyer of Lowe Degree," when the "squyer" was preparing to do his office of carver in the hall—

There he araied him in scarlet red,
And set a chaplet upon his hed;
A belte about his sydes two,
White brod barres to and fro.

Walter de Biblesworth talks of ladies dancing the carole, their heads crowned with garlands of the blue-bottle flower—

Mener karole
Desouz chapeau de blaverole.

—Vocabularies, p. 161.

Garlands of flowers were also the common rewards for success in the popular games.



No. 195. Ladies making Garlands.

All these enjoyments naturally rendered the garden a favourite and important part of every man's domestic establishment; during the warmer months of the year it was a chosen place of resort, especially after dinner. In the romance of "Garin le Loherain," Begues is represented as descending from his palace, after dinner, to walk with his fair wife Beatrice in his garden—

En son palais fu Begues de Belin;
Après mangier entra en un jardin,
Aveuc lui fu la belle Biatris.

—Roman de Garin, vol. ii. p. 97.

In another part of the same romance, Begues de Belin and his barons, on rising from the table, went to seek recreation in the fields—

Quant mangié ont et beu à loisir,
Les napes ostent, et en prés sunt sailli.

—Ibid., vol. i. p. 203.

The manuscript in the British Museum, from which

we took our last illustration, furnishes the accompanying representation of a group of ladies walking in the garden, and gathering flowers (No. 196).



No. 196. Ladies walking in the Garden.

In the "Ménagier de Paris," compiled about the year 1393, its author, addressing his young wife, treats briefly of the behaviour of a woman when she is walking out, and especially when passing along the streets of a town, or going to church. "As you go," he says, "look straight before you, with your eye-lids low and fixed, looking forward to the ground, at five toises (thirty feet) before you, and not looking at, or turning your eyes, to man or woman who may be to your right or left, nor looking upwards, nor changing your look from one place to another, nor laughing, nor stopping to speak to anybody in the street" (vol. i. p. 15). It must be confessed that this is, in some points, rather hard counsel for a lady to follow; but it is consistent with the general system of formalities of behaviour in the middle ages, upon which the ladies gladly took their revenge when removed from constraint. When two or more persons walked together, it was the custom to hold each other by the hands, not to walk arm-in-arm, which appears to be

a very modern practice. In the romance of "Ogier le Danois," the emperor and Ogier, when reconciled, are thus represented, walking in a friendly manner hand in hand. The ladies in our last engraving are walking in this manner; and in our next (No. 197),—taken from a copy, given in M. du Sommerard's "Album," from a manuscript in the library of the arsenal at Paris, written and illuminated for a prince of the house of Burgundy, in the fifteenth century,—the lords and ladies of a noble or princely household are represented as walking out in the same manner. It is well known that the court of Burgundy, in the fifteenth century, offered the model of strict etiquette. This illustration gives us also a very good picture of a street scene of the period to which it belongs. The height of gentility, however, at least, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, seems to have been to hold the lady by the finger only. It is in this manner that, in the romance of "Ogier le Danois," the hero holds the princess Gloriande—

Donques enmainne le bon Danois Ogier,
E Gloriande, qui par le doit le tient.
—Roman d'Ogier, p. 110.

So, in the romance of "La Violette," at the festivities given by the king, the guests "distributed themselves in couples in the hall (*i. e.* a gentleman with a lady), *one taking the other by the finger*, and so they arranged themselves two and two"—

Quant il orent assés deduit,
Par la sale s'acoinsent tuit;
Li uns prent l'autre par le doi,
Si s'arangierent doi et doi.

—Roman de la Violette, p. 10.



No. 197. A Promenade Scene in the Fifteenth Century.

In the curious poem entitled “La Court de Paradis,” the sainted ladies in heaven are represented as thus walking and holding each other by the finger,—

L’une tint l’autre par les dois.

—Barbazan, iii. 139.

As a mark of great familiarity, two princes, Pepin’s son, Charles, and the duke Namles, are represented in the romance of “Ogier” as one, Charles, holding his hand on the duke’s shoulder, while the duke held

him by his mantle, as they walked along; they were going to church together:—

Kalles sa main li tint desus l'espaule;
Namles tint lui par le mantel de paile.
—Roman d'Ogier, p. 143.



No. 198. A Bishop Preaching.

It may be remarked that sitting was equally a matter of etiquette with walking, though we sometimes meet with ladies and gentlemen seated in a manner which is anything but ceremonious. In the annexed cut (No. 198), taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century, the reference to which I have unfortunately lost, a number of ladies, seated on the ground, and apparently in the open air, are listening

to the admonitions of an episcopal preacher.

As I have introduced the subject of the love of our forefathers for trees and flowers, some account of gardening in the middle ages will not be out of place, especially as what has hitherto been written on the history of gardening in England during this early period, has been very imperfect and incorrect. We have no direct information relating to the gardens of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers—in fact, our knowledge is limited to a few words gathered from the old vocabularies. The ordinary names for a garden, *wyrt-tun* and *wyrt-geard*, a plant-inclosure and a plant-yard, are entirely indefinite, for the word *wyrt* was applied to all plants whatever, and perhaps they indicate what we should call the kitchen-garden. The latter word, which was sometimes spelt *ort-geard*, *orc-geard*, and *orcyrd*, was the origin of our modern *orchard*, which is now limited to an inclosure of fruit-trees. Flowers were probably cultivated in the inclosed space round the houses. It would appear that the Saxons, before they became acquainted with the Romans, cultivated very few plants, if we may judge from the circumstance that throughout the Anglo-Saxon period the names by which these were known were nearly all derived from the Latin. The leek appears to have been the principal table vegetable among the Anglo-Saxons, as it was among the Welsh its name, *leac*, or *leah*, is pure Anglo-Saxon, and its importance was considered so much above that of any other vegetable, that *leac-tun*, the leek-garden, became the common name for the kitchen-garden, and *leac-weard*, a leek-keeper, was used to designate the gardener. The other alliaceous plants were considered as so many varieties of the leek, and were known by such names as *enne-leac*, or

ynne-leac, supposed to be the onion, and *gar-leac*, or garlic. *Bean* is also an Anglo-Saxon word; but, singularly enough, the Anglo-Saxons seem not to have been originally acquainted with peas, for the only name they had for them was the Latin *pisa*, and *pyse*. Even for the cabbage tribe, the only Anglo-Saxon name we know is simply the Latin *brassica*; and the colewort, which was named *cawl*, and *cawl-wyrt*, was derived from the Latin *caulis*. So the turnip was called *næpe*, from the Latin *napus*; and *rædic*, or radish, is perhaps from *raphanus*.[29] Garden cresses, parsley, mint, sage, rue, and other herbs,[30] were in use, but mostly, except the cresses, with Latin names.

We have long lists of flowering plants in the Anglo-Saxon vocabularies, but as they are often difficult to identify, and, being chiefly enumerated for their medicinal qualities, are mostly wild plants, they throw little light on the character of the flower-garden. For the garden rose and the lily they used the Roman names *rose* and *lilie*; the latter appears to have been an especially favourite flower among the Anglo-Saxons. Among other plants, evidently belonging to the garden, are suthernwood, *sutherne-wude*, the turnsole or sunflower, called *sigel-hwerfe* (the gem-turned) or *solsæce* (which is merely the Latin *solsequium*), the violet (*clæfre*), the marigold, called *read-clæfre*, the gilliflower, *hwit-clæfre*, the periwinkle, *pervincæ*, the honeysuckle, *hunig-sucle*, the piony, for which the Anglo-Saxons had only the Latin word *pionia*, the daisy, *dæges-eage*, and the *laur-beam*, which was perhaps the bay-tree rather than the laurel.

The chief fruit of the Anglo-Saxons was undoubtedly the apple, the name of which, *æppel*, belongs to their language. The tree was called an *apulder*, and the

only varieties mentioned are the *surmelst apulder*, or souring apple-tree, and the *swite apulder*, or sweeting apple-tree. The Anglo-Saxons had orchards containing only apple-trees, to which they gave the name of an *apulder-tun*, or apple-tree garden; of the fruit of which they made what they called, and we still call, cider, and which they also called *æppel-win*, or apple-wine. They appear to have received the pear from the Romans, as its name *pera*, a pear, and *piriga*, a pear-tree, was evidently taken from *pirus*. They had also derived from the Roman gardens, no doubt, the cherry-tree (*cyrs-treow*, or *ciris-beam*, from the Latin *cerasus*), the peach (*persoc-treow*, from *persicarius*), the mulberry (*mor-beam*, from *morus*), the chestnut (*cysten*, *cyst*, or *cystel-beam*, from *castaneus*),[31] perhaps the almond (*mægdala-treow*, from *amigdalus*), the fig (*fic-beam*, from *ficus*), and the pine (*pin-treow*, from *pinus*). The small kernels of the pine were used very extensively in the middle ages, in the same way as olives. We must add to these the plum (*plum-treow*), the name of which is Anglo-Saxon; the medlar, which was known in Anglo-Saxon by a very unexplainable name, but one which was preferred to a comparatively recent period; the quince, which was called a *cod-æple*, or bag-apple; the nut (*hnutu*), and the hazel-nut (*hæsel-hnutu*). They called the olive an oil-tree (*ale-beam*), which would seem to prove that they considered its principal utility to be for making oil. The vine was well-known to the Anglo-Saxons; they called it the *win-treow*, or wine-tree, its fruit, *winberige*, or wine berries, and a bunch of grapes, *geclystre*, a cluster. We find no Anglo-Saxon words for gooseberries or currants; but our forefathers were well acquainted with the strawberry (*strea-berige*) and the raspberry, which they called *hynd-berige*. Perhaps these last-mentioned fruits, which are

known to be natives of Britain, were known only in their wild state.[32]

The earliest account of an English garden is given by Alexander Neckam, who flourished in the latter half of the twelfth century, in the sixty-sixth chapter of the second book of his treatise, *De naturis rerum*, which exists only in manuscripts (I quote from one in the British Museum, MS. Reg. 12 G. xi.). He introduces at least one plant, the mandrake, which was fabulous, and gives several names which I shall be obliged to leave in his original Latin, as, perhaps through corruption of the text, I cannot interpret them, but there can be little doubt that it is in general a correct enumeration of the plants and trees cultivated in a complete English garden of the period. "A garden," he says, "should be adorned on this part with roses, lilies, the marigold, *molis*, and mandrakes, and on that part with parsley, cost, fennel, southernwood, coriander, sage, savery, hyssop, mint, rue, dittany, smallage, pellitory, lettuce, cresses, *ortulano*, and the piony. Let there also be beds (*areæ*) enriched with onions, leeks, garlic, melons, and scallions (*hinnuilis*). The garden is also ennobled by the cucumber which creeps on its belly, and by the soporiferous poppy, as well as by the daffodil and the acanthus. Nor let pot-herbs be wanting, if you can help it, such as beets, herb mercury, orache, the *acedula*, (sorrel?) and the mallow. It is useful also to the gardener to have anise, mustard, white pepper, and wormwood." Neckam then goes on to the fruit-trees. "A noble garden," he says, "will give you medlars, quinces, the pearmain (*volema*), peaches, pears of St. Regle, pomegranates, citrons (or lemons), oranges, almonds, dates, and figs." When Neckam speaks of a "noble

garden," he of course speaks of that of a great baron or prince, and enumerates fruits of choice, and mostly above the common range. Medlars and quinces were formerly held in great esteem, and much used. I have ventured to interpret *volema* as meaning the pearmain, which was considered one of the choicest apples, as the apple is not mentioned in the list, and as in one of the early glossaries that meaning is attached to the word. Peaches were, as we have seen, known to the Anglo-Saxons; and in 1276 we find slips of peach-trees mentioned in an official record as planted in the king's garden at Westminster. The pear of St. Regle was one of the choice kinds of pears brought from France, and it and several other kinds of pears are enumerated in the accounts of the earl of Lincoln's garden in Holborn (London) in 1296. It is rather surprising that Mr. Hudson Turner, in his very valuable volume on domestic architecture, where he supposes that *mala aurea* in Neckam's list were intended for the golden apples of the Hesperides, should not have known that the *malum aureum* of the middle ages was the orange. Pomegranates, citrons, oranges, almonds, dates, and figs, are known to have been cultivated in England at different periods, but it is not probable that the fruit came often to perfection. It may be remarked that Neckam gives a separate chapter to the cultivation of the vine, which belonged to the vineyard, and not to the garden. After an enumeration of plants which were not grown in Western Europe, Neckam gives a list of others, known for their medicinal qualities, some of which can hardly have been planted in a garden, unless it belonged to a physician; although it appears to have been the custom to devote a corner of the garden to the medicinal plants most in use, in order that they

might be ready at hand when wanted. The gardener's tools in the twelfth century, as enumerated by Neckam in his treatise *De Utensilibus*, were few and simple; he had an axe, or twibill, a knife for grafting, a spade, and a pruning-hook.

John de Garlande lived during the first half of the thirteenth century. He was an Englishman, but had established himself as a scholar in the university of Paris, so that the description of his garden which he gives in his "Dictionarius" may be considered as that of a garden in the neighbourhood of Paris, which, however, probably hardly differed from a garden in England. It may be considered as the garden of a respectable burgher. "In master John's garden are these plants, sage, parsley, dittany, hyssop, celandine, fennel, pellitory, the rose, the lily, and the violet; and at the side (*i. e.* in the hedge), the nettle, the thistle, and foxgloves. His garden also contains medicinal herbs, namely, mercury and the mallow, agrimony, with nightshade, and the marigold." Master John's gardener had also a garden for his potherbs, in which grew borage, leeks, garlic, mustard, onions, cibols, and scallions; and in his shrubbery grew pimpernel, mouseare, selfheal, buglos, adderstongue, and "other herbs good for men's bodies."[33] Master John had in his fruit-garden, cherry-trees, pear-trees, apple-trees, plum-trees, quinces, medlars, peaches, chestnuts, nuts, wallnuts, figs, and grapes. Walter de Bibblesworth, writing in England towards the close of the thirteenth century, enumerates as the principal fruit-trees in a common garden, apples, pears, and cherries—

Pomere, perere, e cerecer;

and adds the plum-tree (*pruner*), and the quince-tree (*coingner*).

The cherry, indeed, appears to have been one of the most popular of fruits in England, during the mediæval period. The records of the time contain purchases of cherry-trees for the king's garden in Westminster in 1238 and 1277, and cherries and cherry-trees are enumerated in all the glossaries from the times of the Anglo-Saxons to the sixteenth century. The earl of Lincoln had cherry-trees in his garden in Holborn towards the close of the thirteenth century, and during the same century we have allusions to the cultivation of the cherry in other parts of the kingdom. The allusions to cherries in the early poetry are not at all unfrequent, and they were closely mixed up with popular manners and feelings. It appears to have been the custom, from a rather early period, to have fairs or feasts, probably in the cherry orchards, during the period that the fruit was ripe, which were called cherry-fairs, and sometimes cherry-feasts; and these are remembered, if they do not still exist, in our great cherry districts, such as Worcestershire and Kent. They were brief moments of great gaiety and enjoyment, and the poets loved to quote them as emblems of the transitory character of all worldly things. In the latter part of the fourteenth century, the poet Gower, speaking of the teachers of religion and morality, says:—

They prechen us in audience
That no man schalle his soule empeyre (impair),
For alle is but a cherye-fayre.

And the same writer again:—

Sumtyme I drawe into memoyre,
How sorow may not ever laste,
And so cometh hope in at laste,
Whan I non other foode knowe;
And that endureth but a throwe,
Ryght as it were a chery-feste.

So again, under the reign of Henry IV., about the year 1411, Occleve, in his poem "De regimine principum," recently printed for the Roxburgh Club, says (p. 47),—

Thy lyfe, my sone, is but a chery-feire.

During the rest of the fifteenth century, the allusions to the cherry-fairs are very frequent.[34] Yet in face of all this, and still more, abundant evidence, Loudon ("Encyclopædia of Gardening," edition of 1850) says, "Some suppose that the cherries introduced by the Romans into Britain were lost, and that they were re-introduced in the time of Henry VIII. by Richard Haines (it should be Harris), the fruiterer to that monarch. But though we have no proof that cherries were in England at the time of the Norman conquest, or for some centuries after it, yet Warton has proved, by a quotation from Lidgate, a poet who wrote about or before 1415, that the hawkers in London were wont to expose cherries for sale, in the same manner as is now done early in the season."

To turn from the fruit-garden to the flower-garden, modern writers have fallen into many similar mistakes as to the supposed recent date of the introduction of various plants into this country. Loudon, for instance, says that we owe the introduction of the gilliflower, or clove-pink

(*dianthus caryophyllus*), to the Flemings, who took refuge on our shores from the savage persecutions of the duke of Alva, in the latter half of the sixteenth century; whereas this flower was certainly well known, under the name of gillofres, ages before. Roses, lilies, violets, and periwinkles, seem to have continued to be the favourite garden-flowers. A manuscript of the fifteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Sloane, No. 1201) furnishes us with a list of plants then considered necessary for a garden, arranged first alphabetically, and then in classes, of which I will here give verbatim the latter part, as the best illustration of the mediæval notion of a garden, and as being, at the same time, a very complete list. After the alphabetical list, the manuscript goes on:—

Of the same herbes for potage.

Borage, langdebefe[35], vyolettes, malowes, marcury, daundelyoun, avence, myntes, sauge, parcely, goldes[36], mageroum[37], ffenelle, carawey, red nettylle, oculus Christi[38], daysys, chervelle, lekez, colewortes, rapez, tyme, cyves, betes, alysaundre, letyse, betayne, columbyne, allia, astralogya rotunda, astralogia longa, basillicam[39], dylle, deteyne, hertestong, radiche, white pyper, cabagez, sedewale, spynache, coliaundre, ffoothistylle[40], orage, cartabus, lympens, nepte, clarey, pacience.

Of the same herbes for sauce.

Hertestonge, sorelle, pelytory, pelytory of spayne, deteyne, vyolettes, parcely, myntes.

Also of the same herbez for the coppe.

Cost, costmary, sauge, isope, rose mary, gyllofre, goldez, clarey, mageroum, rue.

Also of the same herbes for a salade.

Buddus of stanmarche[41], vyolette flourez, parcely, red myntes, syves[42], cresse of Boleyne, purselane, ramsons, calamyntes, primerose buddus, dayses, rapounses, daundelyoun, rokette, red nettelle, borage flourez, croppus of red ffenelle, selbestryve, chykynwede.

Also herbez to stylle (distill).

Endyve, rede rose, rose mary, dragans[43], skabiose, ewfrace[44], wermode, mogwede, beteyne, wylde tansey, sauge, isope, ersesmart.

Also herbes for savour and beauté.

Gyllofre gentyle, mageroum gentyle, brasyle, palma Christi, stycadose, meloncez, arcachaffe, scalacely[45], philyppendula[46], popy royalle, germaundre, cowsloppus of Jerusalem, verveyne, dylle, seynt Mare, garlek.

Also rotys (roots) *for a gardyne*.

Parsenepez, turnepez, radyche, karettes, galyngale, eryngez[47], saffrone.

Also for an herbere.

Vynes, rosers, lylés, thewberies[48], almondez, bay-trees, gourdes, date-trese, peche-trese, pyneappulle, pyany romain, rose campy, cartabus, seliane, columbyne gentyle, elabre.

The processes of gardening were simple and easy, and the gardener's skill consisted chiefly in the knowledge of the seasons for sowing and planting different herbs and trees, and of the astrological circumstances under which these processes could be performed most advantageously. The great ambition of the mediæval horticulturist was to excel in the various mysteries of grafting, and he entertained theories on this subject of the most visionary character, many of which were founded on the writings of the ancients; for the mediæval theories were accustomed to select from the doctrines of antiquity that which was most visionary, and it usually became still more visionary in their hands. Two English treatises on gardening were current in the fifteenth century, one founded upon the Latin treatise of Palladius, and entitled "Godfrey upon Palladie de Agricultura," the other by Nicholas Bollarde, a monk of Westminster—the monks were great gardeners. These treatises occur not unfrequently in manuscripts, and both are found in the British Museum, in the Sloane MS., No. 7. An abridgment of them was edited by Mr. Halliwell, from the Porkington manuscript, in a collection of "Early English Miscellanies," printed for the Warton Club. In these treatises, cherry-trees appear to have been more than any others the subjects of experiment, and to have been favourite stocks for grafting. Among the receipts given in these treatises we may mention those for making cherries grow

without stones, and other fruit without cores; for making the fruit of trees bear any colour you like; for making old trees young; for making sour fruit sweet; and "to have grapes ripe as soon as pears or cherries." This was to be brought about by grafting the vine on a cherry-tree, according to the following directions, the spelling of which I modernise:—"Set a vine by a cherry till it grow, and at the beginning of February when time is, make a hole through the cherry-tree at what height thou wilt, and draw through the vine branch so that it fill the hole, and shave away the old bark of the vine as much as shall be in the hole, and put it in so that the part shaven fill the hole full, and let it stand a year till they be 'souded' together, then cut away the root end of the vine, and lap it with clay round about, and keep it so after other graftings aforesaid." This is from Nicholas Bollarde. Godfrey upon Palladius tells us how "to have many roses. Take the hard pepins that be right ripe, and sow them in February or March, and when they spring, water them well, and after a year complete thou mayst transplant them; and if thou wilt have timely (early) roses, delve about the roots one or two handbreadths, and water their scions with warm water; and for to keep them long, put them in honeycombs." According to the receipts edited by Mr. Halliwell, "If thou wilt that in the stone of a peach-apple (this was the ordinary name for a peach) be found a nut-kernel, graft a spring (sprout) of a peach-tree on the stock of a nut-tree. Also a peach-tree shall bring forth pomegranates, if it be sprong (sprinkled) oft times with goat's milk three days when it beginneth to flower. Also the apples of a peach-tree shall wax red, if its scion be grafted on a playne tree." Such were the intellectual vagaries of "superstitious eld."

Peaches are frequently mentioned among the fruit of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; but nectarines or apricots are not met with before the fifteenth century. The latter were called in old English by their French name of *abricots*, and subsequently, and still more frequently, apricocks.

CHAPTER XIV.

AMUSEMENTS.—PERFORMING BEARS.—HAWKING AND HUNTING.—RIDING.—CARRIAGES.—TRAVELLING.—INNS AND TAVERNS.—HOSPITALITY.

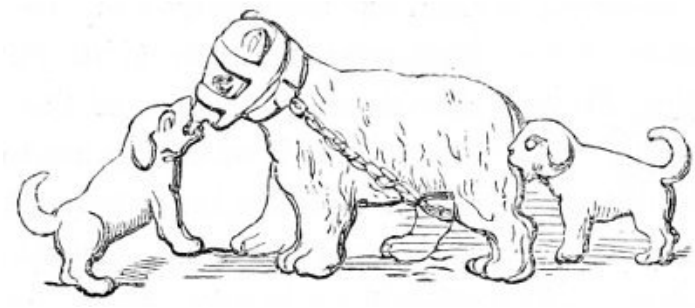
During the period of which we are treating, the same rough sports were in vogue among the uneducated classes that had existed for ages before, and which continued for ages after. Many of these were trials of strength, such as wrestling and throwing weights, with archery, and other exercises of that description; others were of a less civilised character, such as cockfighting and bear and bull-baiting. These latter were favourite amusements, and there was scarcely a town or village of any magnitude which had not its bull-ring. It was a municipal enactment in all towns and cities that no butcher should be allowed to kill a bull until it had been baited. The bear was an animal

in great favour in the middle ages, and was not only used for baiting, but was tamed and taught various performances. I have already, in a former chapter, given an example of a dancing bear under the Anglo-Saxons; the accompanying cut (No. 199) is another, taken from a manuscript of the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Arundel. No. 91).

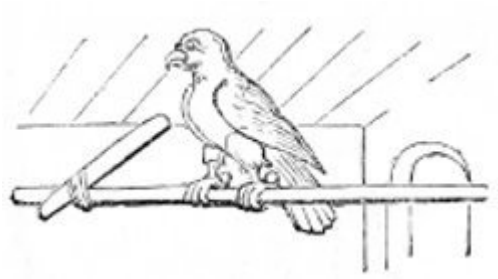


No. 199. A Dancing-Bear.

I fear the fact cannot be concealed that the ladies of former days assisted not unfrequently at these rough and unfeminine pastimes. There can be no doubt that they were customary spectators of the baiting of bulls and bears. Henry VIII.'s two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, witnessed this coarse amusement, as we are assured by contemporary writers, with great satisfaction. The scene represented in our cut No. 200, which is copied from one of the carved seats, of the fourteenth century, in Gloucester cathedral, is chiefly remarkable for the small degree of energy—the quiet dignity, in fact—displayed by the actors in it.



No. 200. Baiting the Bear.



No. 201. A Hawk on its Perch.

Hawking and hunting, especially the former, were the favourite recreations of the upper classes. Hawking was considered so honourable an occupation, that people were in the custom of carrying the hawk on their fists when they walked or rode out, when they visited or went to public assemblies, and even in church, as a mark of their gentility. In the illuminations we not unfrequently see ladies and gentlemen seated in conversation, bearing their hawks on their hands. There was generally a *perche* in the chamber expressly set aside for the favourite bird, on which he was placed at night, or by day when the other occupations of its possessor rendered it inconvenient to carry it on the hand. Such a *perche*, with the hawk upon it, is

represented in our cut No. 201, taken from a manuscript of the romance of “Meliadus,” of the fourteenth century (MS. Addit. in the British Museum, No. 12,224). Hawking was in some respects a complicated science; numerous treatises were written to explain and elucidate it, and it was submitted to strict laws. Much knowledge and skill were shown in choosing the hawks, and in breeding and training them, and the value of a well-chosen and well-trained bird was considerable. When carried about by its master or mistress, the hawk was held to the hand by a strap of leather or silk, called a *jesse*, which was fitted to the legs of the bird, and passed between the fingers of the hand. Small bells were also attached to their legs, one on each. The accompanying cut (No. 202), from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (No. 6956), represents the falconer or keeper of the hawks holding in one hand what appears to be the jesse; he has a bird in his right hand, while another is perched on a short post, which is often alluded to in the directions for breeding hawks. The falconer wears hawks’ gloves, which were made expressly to protect the hands against the bird’s talons.

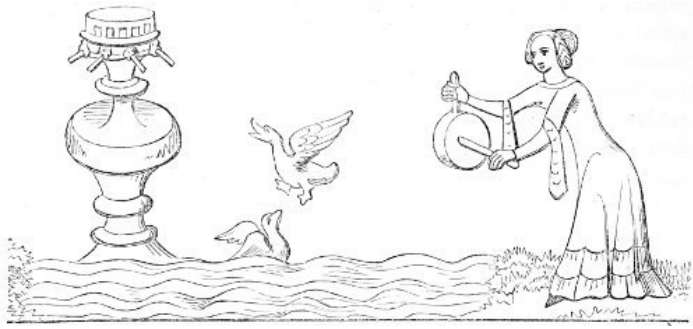


No. 202. Hawks and their Keeper.

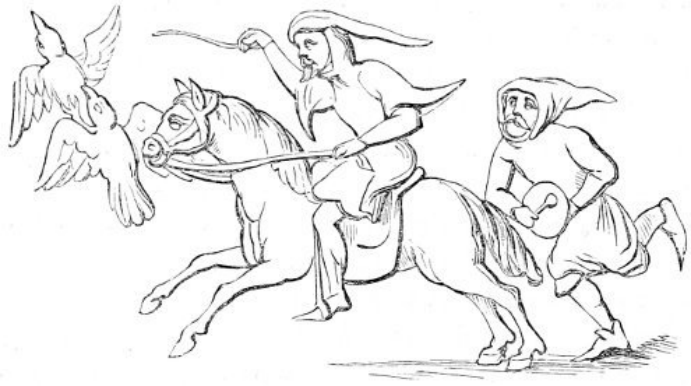


No. 203. Ladies Hawking.

Hawking was a favourite recreation with the ladies, and in the illuminated manuscripts they often figure in scenes of this kind. Sometimes they are on foot, as in the group represented in our cut No. 203, taken from a manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.). One lady has let go her hawk, which is in the act of striking a heron; the other retains her hawk on her hand. The latter, as will be seen, is hooded. Each of the ladies who possess hawks has one glove only—the hawk's glove; the other hand is without gloves. They took with them, as shown here, dogs in couples to start the game. The dogs used for this purpose were spaniels, and the old treatise on domestic affairs entitled "Le Ménagier de Paris," gives particular directions for choosing them. In the illuminations, hawking parties are more frequently represented on horseback than on foot; and often there is a mixture of riders and pedestrians. The treatise just referred to directs that the horse for hawking should be a low one, easy to mount and dismount, and very quiet, that he may go slowly, and show no restiveness. Hawking appears to have commenced at the beginning of August; and until the middle of that month it was confined almost entirely to partridges. Quails, we are told, came in in the middle of August, and from that time forward everything seems to have been considered game that came to hand, for when other birds fail, the ladies are told that they may hunt fieldfares, and even jays and magpies. September and October were the busiest hawking months.



No. 204. Rousing Game.



No. 205. Following the Hawk.

Hawking was, indeed, a favourite diversion with the ladies, and they not only accompanied the gentlemen to this sport, but frequently engaged in it alone. The hawking of the ladies, however, appears to have been especially that of herons and water-fowl; and this was called going to the river (*aller en rivière*), and was very commonly pursued on foot. It may be mentioned that the fondness of the ladies for the diversion of hawking is alluded to in the twelfth century by John of Salisbury. The hawking on the river, indeed, seems to have been that particular

branch of the sport which gave most pleasure to all classes, and it is that which is especially represented in the drawings in the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. Dogs were commonly used in hawking to rouse the game in the same manner as at the present day, but in hawking on the river, where dogs were of course less effective, other means were adopted. In a manuscript already quoted in the present chapter (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.), of the beginning of the fourteenth century, a group of ladies hawking on the banks of a river are accompanied by a man, perhaps the falconer, who makes a noise to rouse the water-fowl. Our cut No. 204 is taken from a very interesting manuscript of the fourteenth century, made for the monastery of St. Bartholomew, in Smithfield, and now preserved in the library of the British Museum (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.); it is part of a scene in which ladies are hawking on a river, and a female is rousing the water-fowl with a tabor. The fountain is one of those conventional objects by which the mediæval artist indicated a spring, or running stream. This seems to have been a very common method of rousing the game; and it is represented in one of the carved seats, or misereres (as they have been termed technically), in Gloucester cathedral, which is copied in our cut No. 205. This scene is rather curiously illustrated by an anecdote told by an old chronicler, Ralph de Diceto, of a man who went to the river to hunt teal with his hawk, and roused them with "what is called by the river-hawkers a tabor."[49] The tending of the hawks used in these diversions was no slight occupation in the mediæval household, and was the subject of no little study; they were cherished with the utmost care, and carried about familiarly on the wrist in all places and under all sorts of circumstances. It was a common

practice, indeed, to go to church with the hawk on the wrist. One of the early French poets, Gaces de la Buigne, who wrote a metrical treatise on hunting in the middle of the fourteenth century, advises his readers to carry their hawks with them wherever there were assemblies of people, whether in churches or elsewhere—

Là où les gens sont amassés,
Soit en l'église, ou autre part.

This is explained more fully by the author of the "Ménagier de Paris" (vol. ii. p. 296), who wrote especially for the instruction of the female members of his family. "At this point of falconry," he says, "it is advisable more than ever to hold the hawk on the wrist, and to carry it to the pleadings (courts of justice), and among people to the churches, and in other assemblies, and in the streets, and to hold it day and night as continually as possible, and sometimes to perch it in the streets, that it may see people, horses, carts, dogs, and become acquainted with all things.... And sometimes, in the house, let it be perched on the dogs, that the dogs may see it, and it them." It was thus that the practice of carrying a hawk on the wrist became a distinction of people of gentle blood. The annexed engraving (No. 206), taken from the same manuscript last quoted (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), represents a lady tending her hawks, which are seated on their "perche."



No. 206. A Lady and her Hawks.

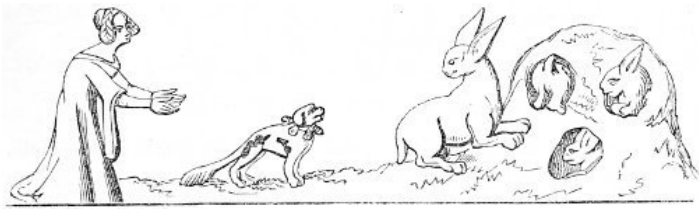


No. 207. Ladies Shooting Rabbits.

The author of the "Ménagier de Paris," a little farther on than the place last quoted (p. 311), goes on to say, "At the end of the month of September, and after, when hawking of quails and partridges is over,

and even in winter, you may hawk at magpies, at jackdaws, at teal, which are in river, or others, ... at blackbirds, thrushes, jays, and woodcocks; and for this purpose you may carry a bow and a bolt, in order that, when the blackbird takes shelter in a bush, and dare not quit it for the hawk which hovers over and watches it, the lady or damsel who knows how to shoot may kill it with the bolt." The manuscript which has furnished us with the preceding illustrations gives us the accompanying sketch (No. 207) of a lady shooting with her bolt, or *boujon* (as it was termed in French),—an arrow with a large head, for striking birds; but in this instance she is aiming not at birds, but at rabbits. Archery was also a favourite recreation with the ladies in the middle ages, and it no doubt is in itself an extremely good exercise, in a gymnastic point of view. The fair shooters seem to have employed bolts more frequently than the sharp-headed arrows; but there is no want of examples in the illuminated manuscripts in which females are represented as using the sharp-headed arrow, and sometimes they are seen shooting at deer. This custom prevailed during a long period, and is alluded to not unfrequently at so late a date as the sixteenth century. We learn from Leland's "Collectanea" (vol. iv. p. 278), that when the princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., was on her way to Scotland, a hunting-party was got up for her in the park at Alnwick, and that she killed a buck with an arrow. Similar feats were at times performed by queen Elizabeth; but she seems to have preferred the cross-bow to the long-bow. The scene represented in our cut No. 208 is from the same manuscript; the relative proportions of the dog and the rabbit seem to imply a satirical aim. Our next cut (No. 209), taken from MS. Reg. 2 B. vii., represents

ladies hunting the stag. One, on horseback, is winding the horn and starting the game, in which the other plants her arrow most skilfully and scientifically. The dog used on this occasion is intended to be a greyhound.



No. 208. The Lady at the Rabbit-Warren.



No. 209. Ladies Hunting the Stag.

It must be remarked that, in all the illuminations of the period we are describing, which represent ladies engaged in hunting or hawking, when on horseback they are invariably and unmistakeably represented riding astride. This is evidently the case in this group (No. 209). It has been already shown, in former chapters, that from a very early period it was a usual custom with the ladies to ride sideways, or with side-saddles. Most of the mediæval artists were so entirely ignorant of perspective, and they were so much tied

to conventional modes of representing things, that when, no doubt, they intended to represent ladies riding sideways, the latter seem often as if they were riding astride. But in many instances, and especially in the scenes of hunting and hawking, there can be no doubt that they were riding in the latter fashion; and it is probable that they were taught to ride both ways, the side-saddle being considered the most courtly, while it was considered safer to sit astride in the chase. A passage has been often quoted from Gower's "Confessio Amantis," in which a troop of ladies is described, all mounted on fair white ambling horses, with splendid saddles, and it is added that "everichone (*every one*) ride on side," which probably means that this was the most fashionable style of riding. But, as shown in a former chapter (p. 72), it has been rather hastily assumed that this is a proof that it was altogether a new fashion. Our next cut (No. 210), taken from a manuscript in the French National Library (No. 7178), of the fourteenth century, represents two ladies riding in the modern fashion, except that the left leg appears to be raised very awkwardly; but this appearance we must perhaps ascribe only to the bad drawing. It must be observed also that these ladies are seated on the wrong side of the horse, which is probably an error of the draughtsman. Perhaps there was a different arrangement of the dress for the two modes of riding, although there was so little of what we now call delicacy in the mediæval manners, that this would be by no means necessary. Chaucer describes the Wife of Bath as wearing spurs, and as enveloped in a "foot-mantle:"—

Uppon an amblere esely sche sat,
Wymplid ful wel, and on hire heed an hat

As brood as is a bocler, or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hire hupes (hips) *large,*
And on hire feet a paire of spores scharpe.
—Cant. Tales, l. 471.



No. 210. Ladies Riding.

Travelling on horseback was now more common than at an earlier period, and this was not unfrequently a subject of popular complaint. In fact, men who rode on horseback considered themselves much above the pedestrians; they often went in companies, and were generally accompanied with grooms, and other riotous followers, who committed all sorts of depredations and violence on the peasantry in their way. A satirical song of the latter end of the reign of Edward I., represents our Saviour as discouraging the practice of riding. “While God was on earth,” says the writer, “and wandered wide, what was the reason he would not ride? Because he

would not have a groom to go by his side, nor the grudging (or discontent) of any gadling to jaw or to chide:"—

Whil God was on erthe
And wondrede wyde,
Whet wes the resoun
Why he nolde ryde?

For he nolde no groom
To go by hys syde,
Ne grucchyng of no gedelyng
To chaule ne to chyde.



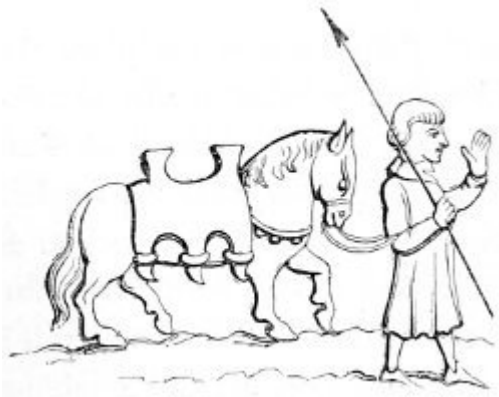
No. 211. An Abbot travelling.

"Listen to me, horsemen," continues this satirist, "and I will tell you news—that ye shall hang, and be

lodged in hell:"—

Herkneth hideward, horsmen,
A tidyng ich ou telle,
That ye shulen hongen,
Ant herbarewen in helle!

The clergy were great riders, and abbots and monks are not unfrequently figured on horseback. Our cut No. 211 (from MS. Cotton, Nero, D. vii.) represents an abbot riding, with a hat over his hood; he is giving his benediction in return to the salute of some passing traveller.



No. 212. A Knight and his Steed.

The knight still carried his spear with him in travelling, as the footman carried his staff. In our cut No. 212, from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (No. 6963), the rider, though not armed, carries his spear with him. The saddle in this instance is singularly and rather rudely formed. It was a great point of vanity in the middle ages in England to hang the caparisons

of the horse with small bells, which made a jingling noise. In the romance of "Richard Cœur de Lion" (Weber ii. 60), a messenger coming to king Richard has no less than five hundred such bells suspended to his horse—

His trappys wer off tuely sylke,
With five hundred belles rygande.

And again, in the same romance (vol. ii. p. 223), we are told, in speaking of the sultan of "Damas," that his horse was well furnished in this respect—

Hys crouper heeng al fulle off belles,
And hys peytrel, and hys arsoun;
Three myle myghte men here the soun.

The bridle, however, was the part of the harness usually loaded with bells, and, according to Chaucer, it was a vanity especially affected by the monks; for the poet tells us of his monk, that—

Whan he rood, men might his bridel heere
Gyngle in a whistlyng wynd so cleere,
And eek as lowde as doth the chapel belle.
—Cant. Tales, l. 169.

The rider is seldom furnished with a whip, because he urged his steed forward with his spurs; but female riders and persons of lower degree have often whips, which generally consist of several lashes, each having usually a knob at the end. Such a whip is seen in our cut No. 213, taken from a manuscript of the thirteenth century in the British Museum (MS. Arundel. No. 91), which represents a countryman

driving a horse of burthen; and he not only uses the whip, but he tries further to urge him on by twisting his tail. A whip with one lash—rather an unusual example—is in the hand of the woman driving the cart in our cut No. 214, which is taken from a manuscript of the romance of "Meliadus," in the French National Library (No. 6961), belonging to the fourteenth century. The lady here is also evidently riding astride. The cart in which she is carrying home the wounded knight is of a simple and rude construction. As yet, indeed, carriages for travelling were very little in use; and to judge by the illuminations, they were only employed for kings and very powerful nobles in ceremonial processions.



No. 213. A Horsewhip.

The horse was, after a man's own limbs, his primary agent of locomotion. Perhaps no animal is so

intimately mixed up with the history of mankind as the horse—certainly none more so. Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers travelled much on foot, and, as far as we know, the great importance in which the horse was held in the middle ages in this part of the world, began with feudalism, and the best and most celebrated breed of horses in Europe, from the earliest ages of chivalry, was brought from the East. The heroes of early romance and poetry are generally mounted on *Arab* steeds, and these have often the additional merit of having been won by conquest from the Saracens. In the thirteenth century they were obtained from Turkey and Greece; and at a later period from Barbary. France, also, had its native breed, which enjoyed a high reputation for many valuable qualities, and especially for its fierceness in war; Gascony, and, on the other side of the Spanish frontier, Castile and Aquitaine, were much celebrated for their horses. The Gascons prided themselves much on their horses, and they displayed this pride sometimes in a very singular manner. In 1172, Raymond de Venous, count of Toulouse, held a grand *cour plénière*, and, as a display of ostentation, caused thirty of his horses to be burnt in presence of the assembly. It was a fine example of the barbarity of feudalism. At the provincial synod of Auch, held in 1303, it was ordered that archdeacons, when they made their diocesan circuits, should not go with more than five horses, which shows that the Gascon clergy were in the habit of making a great display of cavalry. It appears that at this early period the best horses were imported into England from Bordeaux. It may be mentioned, in passing, that the male horse only was ridden by knights or people of any distinction, and that to ride a mare was always looked upon as a degradation. This seems to have

been an old Teutonic prejudice, perhaps a religious superstition.



No. 214. Lady and Cart.

The kinds of horses most commonly mentioned in the feudal ages are named in French (which was the language of feudalism), the *palefroi*, or palfrey, the *dextrier*, the *roncin*, and the *sommier*. The *dextrier*, or *destrier*, was the ordinary war-horse; the *roncin* belonged especially to the servants and attendants; and the *sommier* carried the luggage. Ladies especially rode the palfrey. The Orkney islands appear to have been celebrated for their *dextriers*. The Isle of Man seems also to have produced a celebrated breed of horses. Brittany was celebrated for its palfreys. The *haquenée*, or hackney, of the middle ages, appears to have been especially reserved for females. England seems not to have been celebrated for its horses in the middle ages, and the horses of value possessed by the English kings and great nobles were, in almost all cases, imported from the Continent. The ordinary prices of horses in

England in the reign of Edward I., was from one to ten pounds, but choice animals were valued much higher. When St. Louis returned to France from his captivity, the abbot of Cluny presented to the king and the queen each a horse, the value of which Joinville estimates at five hundred livres, equivalent to about four hundred pounds of our present English money. These must have been horses which possessed some very extraordinary qualities, as the price is quite out of proportion to that of other horses at the same period. In the charters published by M. Guérard, horses are valued at forty sols, and at three pounds at various periods during the eleventh century. In 1202, two *roncins* are valued at thirty sols each, another at forty, two at fifty each, and two at sixty; the *roncin* of an arbalester at sixty sols; a *sommier*, or baggage-horse, at forty sols; and three horses, of which the kind is not specified, at six pounds each. These appear to have been the ordinary prices at that period; for, though prices of horses are mentioned as high as thirty-four, thirty-five, and forty pounds, these were only possessed or given as presents by kings. The value of horses went on rising through the thirteenth century, until Philippe le Hardi found it necessary to fix it by an *ordonnance*, which limited the price which any man, whether lay or clergy, however rich, might give for a palfrey, to sixty pounds *tournois*, and that to be given by a squire for a *roncin* to twenty pounds. The prices of horses appear not to have varied much from this during the fourteenth century. In the middle of the century following the prices rose much higher.

Of the colours of horses, in the middle ages, white seems to have been prized most highly, and after that dapple-gray and bay or chestnut. The same

colours were in favour among the Arabs. One of the poets of the thirteenth century, Jean Bodel, describes a choice Gascon horse as follows:—"His hair," he says, "was more shining than the plumage of a peacock; his head was lean, his eye gray like a falcon, his breast large and square, his crupper broad, his thigh round, and his rump tight. They who saw it said that they had never seen a handsomer animal." The food given to horses in the middle ages seems to have been much the same as at the present day. In 1435 the queen of Navarre gave carrots to her horses. Although the mediæval knight resembled the Arab in his love for his horse, yet the latter was often treated hardly and even cruelly, and the practice of horsemanship was painful to the rider and to the horse. To be a skilful rider was a first-rate accomplishment. One of the feats of horsemanship practised ordinarily was to jump into the saddle, in full armour:—

No foot Fitzjames in stirrup staid,
No grasp upon the saddle laid;
But wreath'd his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain.

Though horse-races are mentioned in two of the earliest of the French metrical romances, those of "Renaud de Montauban," and of "Aiol," they seem never to have been practised in France until very recently, when they were introduced in imitation of the English fashion. Post-horses were first introduced in France during the reign of Henry II., that is, in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Great importance was placed in the breeding of horses in the middle ages. Charlemagne, in the

regulations for the administration of his private domains, gives particular directions for the care of his brood-mares and stallions. Normandy appears to have been famous for its studs of horses in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and documents show that the monks took good care rigorously to exact the tithes of their produce to stock the monastic stables. Traces of the existence of similar studs are found also in other parts of France. At this time a horse was considered the handsomest present that could be made by a king or a great lord, and horses were often given as bribes. Thus, in 1227, the monks of the abbey of Troarn obtained from Guillaume de Tilli the ratification of a grant made to them by his father in consideration of a gift to him of a mark of silver and a palfrey; and the monks of St. Evroul, in 1165, purchased a favour of the English earl of Gloucester by presenting to him two palfreys estimated to be worth twenty pounds of money of Anjou. Kings frequently received horses as presents from their subjects. The widow of Herbert du Mesnil gave king John of England a palfrey to obtain the wardship of her children; and one Geoffrey Fitz-Richard gave the same monarch a palfrey for a concession in the forest of Beaulieu. In 1172, Raimond, count of St. Gilles, having become the vassal of the king of England, engaged to pay him an annual tribute of a hundred marks of silver, or ten *dextriers*, worth at least ten marks each. The English studs appear already in the thirteenth century to have become remarkable for their excellence.

Travelling, in the middle ages, was assisted by few, it any, conveniences, and was dangerous as well as difficult. The insecurity of the roads made it necessary for travellers to associate together for

protection, as well as for company, for their journeys were slow and dull; and as they were often obliged to halt for the night where there was little or no accommodation, they had to carry a good deal of luggage. An inn was often the place of rendezvous for travellers starting upon the same journey. It is thus that Chaucer represents himself as having taken up his quarters at the Tabard, in Southwark, preparatory to undertaking the journey to Canterbury; and at night there arrived a company of travellers bent to the same destination, who had gathered together as they came along the road:—

At night was come into that hostelrie
Wel nyne and twenty in a companye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure ifalle
In felaschipe.

—Cant. Tales, l. 23.

Chaucer obtains the consent of the rest to his joining their fellowship, which, as he describes it, consisted of persons most dissimilar in class and character. The host of the Tabard joins the party also, and it is agreed that, to enliven the journey, each, in his turn, shall tell a story on the way. They then sup at a common table, drink wine, and go to bed; and at daybreak they start on their journey. They travelled evidently at a slow pace; and at Boughton-under-Blee —a village a few miles from Canterbury—a canon and his yeoman, after some hard riding, overtake them, and obtain permission to join the company. It would seem that the company had passed a night somewhere on the road, probably at Rochester,—and we should, perhaps, have had an account of their reception and departure, had the collection of the “Canterbury Tales” been completed by their author,

—and that the canon sent his yeoman to watch for any company of travellers who should halt at the hostelry, that he might join them, but he had been too late to start with them, and had, therefore, ridden hard to overtake them:—

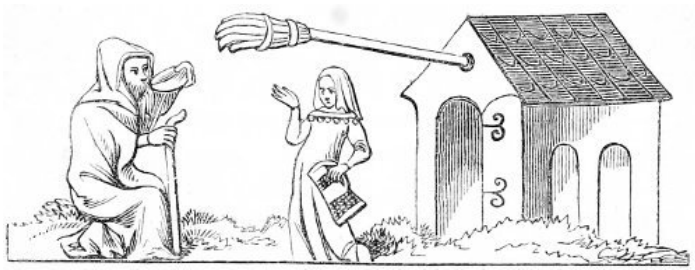
His yeman eek was ful of curtesye,
And seid, "Sires, now in the morwe tyde
Out of your ostelry I saugh you ryde,
And warned heer my lord and soverayn,
Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn,
For his disport; he loveth daliaunce."

—Cant. Tales, l. 12,515.

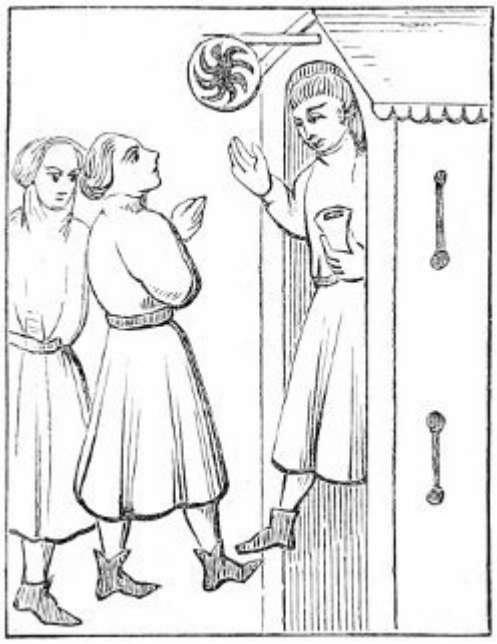
A little further on, on the road, the Pardoner is called upon to tell his tale. He replies—

"It schal be doon," quod he, "and that anoon.
But first," quod he, "here, at this ale-stake,
I will both drynke and byten on a cake."

—Ibid., l. 13,735.



No. 215. A Pilgrim at the Ale-Stake.



No. 216. The Road-side Inn.

The road-side ale-house, where drink was sold to travellers, and to the country-people of the neighbourhood, was scattered over the more populous and frequented parts of the country from an early period, and is not unfrequently alluded to in popular writers. It was indicated by a stake projecting from the house, on which some object was hung for a sign, and is sometimes represented in the illuminations of manuscripts. Our cut No. 215, taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), represents one of those ale-houses, at which a pilgrim is halting to take refreshment. The keeper of the ale-house, in this instance, is a woman, the ale-wife, and the stake appears to be a besom. In another (No. 216), taken from a manuscript copy of the "Moralization of

Chess," by Jacques de Cessoles, of the earlier part of the fifteenth century (MS. Reg. 19 C. xi.), a round sign is suspended on the stake, with a figure in the middle, which may possibly be intended to represent a bush. A garland was not unfrequently hung upon the stake; on this Chaucer, describing his "sompnour," says:—

A garland had he set upon his heed,
As gret as it were for an ale-stake.

—Cant. Tales, l. 688.

A bush was still more common, and gave rise to the proverb that "good wine needs no bush," that is, it will be easily found out without any sign to direct people to it. A bush suspended to the sign of a tavern will be seen in our cut (No. 224) to the present chapter.



No. 217. The Canterbury Pilgrims.

Lydgate composed his poem of the "Storie of Thebes," as a continuation of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," and in the prologue he describes himself as arriving in Canterbury, while the pilgrims were there, and accidentally taking up his lodging at the same inn. He thus seeks and obtains permission to be one of the fellowship, and returns from Canterbury in their company. Our cut No. 217, taken from a fine manuscript of Lydgate's poem (MS. Reg. 18 D. ii.), represents the pilgrims leaving Canterbury, and is not only a good illustration of the practice of travelling in companies, but it furnishes us with a characteristic picture of a mediæval town.

This readiness of travellers to join company with each other was not confined to any class of society,

but was general among them all, and not unfrequently led to the formation of friendships and alliances between those who had previously been strangers to one another. In the interesting romance of "Blonde of Oxford," composed in the thirteenth century, when Jean of Dammartin came to seek his fortune in England, and was riding from Dover to London, attended by a faithful servant, he overtook the earl of Oxford, who was on his way to London, with a numerous retinue of armed followers. Jean, having learnt from the earl's followers who he was, introduced himself to him, and was finally taken into his service. Subsequently, in the same romance, Jean of Dammartin, returning to England, takes up his lodging in a handsome hotel in London, and while his man Robin puts the horses in the stable, he walks out into the street, and sees a large company who had just arrived, consisting of squires, servants, knights, clerks, priests, serving-lads (*garçons*), and men who attended the baggage horses (*sommiers*). Jean asked one of the esquires who they all were, what was their business, and where they were going; and was informed that it was the earl of Gloucester, who had come to London about some business, and was going on the morrow to Oxford, to be married to the lady Blonde, the object of Jean's affections. Next morning the earl began his journey at daybreak, and Jean and his servant, who were mounted ready, joined the company. There was so little unusual in this, that the intruders seem, for a while, not to have been noticed, until, at length, the earl observed Jean, and began to interrogate him: "Friend," said he, "you are welcome; what is your name?"—

Amis, bien fustes vené,
Coment fu vostre non pelé?

—Romance of Blonde, l. 2,627.

Jean gave him an assumed name, said he was a merchant, and offered to sell the earl his horse, but they could not agree upon the terms. They continued conversing together during the rest of the journey. As they proceeded they encountered a shower of rain, which wetted the earl, who was fashionably and thinly clothed. Jean smiled at the impatience with which he seemed to bear this mishap, and when asked to tell the cause of his mirth, said, “If I were a rich man, like you, I should always carry a house with me, so that I could go into it when the rain came, and not get my clothes dirtied and wet.” The earl and his followers set Jean down for a fool, and looked forward to be made merry by him. Soon afterwards they came to the banks of a river, into which the earl rode, without first ascertaining if it were fordable, and he was carried away by the stream, and only saved from drowning by a fisherman in a boat. The rest of the company found a ford, where they passed the river without danger. The earl’s clothes had now been completely soaked in the water, and, as his baggage-horses were too far in the rear, he made one of his knights strip, and give him his dry clothes, and left him to make the best of his wet ones. “If I were as rich, and had so many men, as you,” said Jean, laughing again, “I would not be exposed to misfortunes of this kind, for I would carry a bridge with me.” The earl and his retinue were merry again, at what they supposed to be the folly of their travelling companion. They were now near Oxford, and Jean took his leave of the earl of Gloucester. We learn, in the course of the story, that all that Jean meant by the house, was that the earl ought to have had at hand a good cloak and cape to

cover his fine clothes in case of rain; and that, by the bridge, he intended to intimate that he ought to have sent some of his men to ascertain the depth of the river before he went into it!

These illustrations of the manner and inconveniences of travelling apply more especially to those who could travel on horseback; but the difficulties were still greater for the numerous class of people who were obliged to travel on foot, and who could rarely make sure of reaching, at the end of each day's journey, a place where they could obtain a lodging. They, moreover, had also to take with them a certain quantity of baggage. Foot-travellers seem to have had sometimes a mule or a donkey, to carry luggage, or for the weak women and children. Every one will remember the mediæval fable of the old man and his ass, in which a father and his son have the one ass between them. In mediæval illuminations representing the flight into Egypt, Joseph is often represented as walking, while the Virgin and Child ride upon an ass which he is leading. The party of foot-travellers in our cut No. 218, taken from a manuscript of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B. vii.), forms part of a group representing the relatives of Thomas Beckett driven into exile by king Henry II.; they are making their way to the sea-shore on foot, perhaps to show that they were not of very high condition in life.



No. 218. Travellers on Foot.

In Chaucer, it is a matter of surprise that the "chanoun" had so little luggage that he carried only a male, or portmanteau, on his horse's crupper, and even that was doubled up (*tweyfold*) on account of its emptiness:—

A male tweyfold on his croper lay,
It seemed that he caried litel array,
Al light for somer rood this worthy man.
—Cant. Tales, l. 12,494.

On the contrary, in the romance of "Berte," when the heroine is left to wander in the solitary forest, the writer laments that she had "neither pack-horse laden with coffers, nor clothes folded up in males,"

which were the ordinary accompaniments of travellers of any consequence:—

N'i ot sommier à coffres ne dras troussés en male.
—Roman de Berte, p. 42.

A traveller, indeed, had many things to carry with him. He took provisions with him, or was obliged, at times, to reckon on what he could kill, or obtain undressed, and hence he was obliged to carry cooking apparatus with him. He carried flint and steel to strike a light, and be able to make a fire, as he might have to bivouac in a solitary place, or in the midst of a forest. In the romance of "Garin le Loherain," when the count Begues of Belin finds himself benighted in the forest, he prepares for passing the night comfortably, and, as a matter of course, draws out his flint (*fusil*), and lights a fire:—

Et li quens est desous l'arbre ramé;
Prent son fusil, s'a le fu alumé,
Grant et plenier, merveilleus embrasé.
—Garin le Loherain, ii., p. 231.

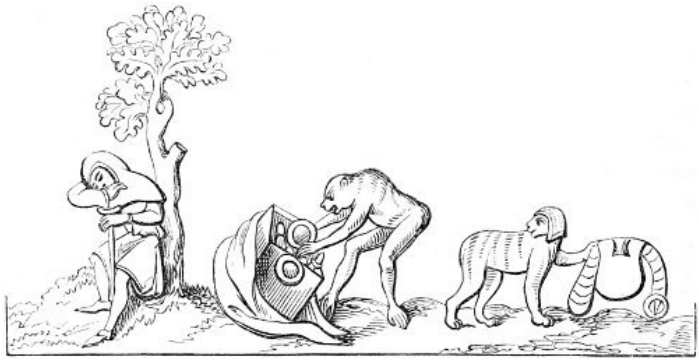
The traveller also often carried materials for laying a bed, if benighted on the road; and he had, above all, to take sufficient money with him in specie. He sometimes also carried a portable tent with him, or materials for making one. In the English romance of "Ipomydon" (Weber, ii. 343), the maiden messenger of the heiress of Calabria carries her tent with her, and usually lodges at night under it—

As they rode by the way,
The mayde to the dwarfe gan saye,

"Undo my tente, and sette it faste,
For here a whyle I wille me ryste."
Mete and drynke bothe they had,
That was fro home with them lad.

It may be remarked that in this story the first thought of every gallant knight who passes is to treat the lady with violence. All these incumbrances, combined with the badness of the roads, rendered travelling slow—of which we might quote abundant examples. At the end of the twelfth century, it took Giraldus Cambrensis four days to travel from Powisland to Haughmond Abbey, near Shrewsbury. The roads, too, were infested with robbers and banditti, and travellers were only safe in their numbers, and in being sufficiently well armed to repel attacks. In the accompanying cut (No. 219), from a manuscript of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), a traveller is taking his repose under a tree,—it is, perhaps, intended to be understood that he is passing the night in a wood,—while he is plundered by robbers, who are here jokingly represented in the forms of monkeys. While one is emptying his "male" or box, the other is carrying off his girdle, with the large pouch attached to it, in which, no doubt, the traveller carried his money, and perhaps his eatables. The insecurity of the roads in the middle ages was, indeed, very great, for not only were the forests filled with bands of outlaws, who stripped all who fell into their hands, but the knights and landed gentry, and even noblemen, took to the highways not unfrequently, and robbed unscrupulously. Moreover, they built their castles near difficult passes, or by a river where there was a bridge or ford, and where, therefore, they commanded it, and there they levied arbitrary taxes

on all who passed, and, on the slightest attempt at resistance, plundered the traveller of his property, and put him to death or threw him into their dungeons. Incidents of this kind are common in the mediæval romances and stories. Piers de Bruville, in the history of Fulke Fitz-Warine, may be mentioned as an example of this class of marauders. “At that time,” says the story, “there was a knight in the country who was called Piers de Bruville. This Piers used to collect all the sons of gentlemen of the country who were wild, and other ribald people, and used to go about the country, and slew and robbed loyal people, merchants, and others.” In the fabliau of the “Chevalier au Barizel,” we are told of a great baron who issued continually from his strong castle to plunder the country around. “He watched so closely the roads, that he slew all the pilgrims, and plundered the merchants; many of them he brought to mishap. He spared neither clergy nor monk, recluse, hermit, or canon; and the nuns and lay-sisters he caused to live in open shame, when he had them in his power; and he spared neither dames nor maids, of whatever rank or class, whether poor or rich, or well educated or simple, but he put them all to open shame” (Barbazan, i. 209).



No. 219. Plundering a Traveller.

The roads, in the middle ages, appear also to have been infested with beggars of all descriptions, many of whom were cripples, and persons mutilated in the most revolting manner, the result of feudal wantonness, and of feudal vengeance. Our cut No. 220, also furnished by a manuscript of the fourteenth century, represents a very deformed cripple, whose means of locomotion are rather curious. The beggar and the cripple, too, were often only robbers in disguise, who waited their opportunity to attack single passengers, or who watched to give notice to comrades of the approach of richer convoys. The mediæval popular stories give abundant instances of robbers and others disguising themselves as beggars and cripples. Blindness, also, was common among these objects of commiseration in the middle ages; often, as in the case of mutilation of other kinds, the result of deliberate violence. The same manuscript I have so often quoted (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), has furnished our cut No. 221, representing a blind man and his dog.



No. 220. A Cripple.



No. 221. A Blind Man and Dog.

It will be easily understood, that when travelling was beset with so many inconveniences, private hospitality would be looked upon as one of the first of virtues, for people were often obliged to have recourse to it, and it was seldom refused. In the country every man's door was open to the stranger who came from a distance, unless his appearance

were suspicious or threatening. In this there was a mutual advantage; for the guest generally brought with him news and information which was highly valued at a time when communication between one place and another was so slow and uncertain. Hence the first questions put to a stranger were, whence he had come, and what news he had brought with him. The old romances and tales furnish us with an abundance of examples of the widespread feeling of hospitality that prevailed during the middle ages. Even in the middle and lower classes, people were always ready to share their meals with the stranger who asked for a lodging. The denial of such hospitality was looked upon as exceptional and disgraceful, and was only met with from misers and others who were regarded as almost without the pale of society. The early metrical story of "The Hermit," the foundation of Parnell's poem, gives us examples of the different sorts of hospitality with which travellers met. The hermit and his companion began their travels in a wild country, and at the end of their first day's journey, they were obliged to take up their lodgings with another hermit, who gave them the best welcome he could, and shared his provisions with them. The next evening they came to a city, where everybody shut his door against them, because they were poor, till at length, weary and wet with rain, they sat down on the stone steps of a great mansion; but the host was an usurer, and refused to receive into his house men who promised him so little profit. Yet at length, to escape their importunities, he allowed them to enter the yard, and sleep under a staircase, where his maid threw them some straw to lie upon, but neither offered them refreshment, except some of the refuse of the table, nor allowed them to go to a fire to dry their

clothes. The next evening they sought their lodging in a large abbey, where the monks received them with great hospitality, and gave them plenty to eat and drink. On the fourth day they came to another town, where they went to the house of a rich and honest burgher, who also received them with all the marks of hospitality. Their host washed their feet, and gave them plenty to eat and drink, and they were comfortably lodged for the night.

It would not be difficult to illustrate all the incidents of this story by anecdotes of mediæval life. The traveller who sought a lodging, without money to pay for it, even in private houses, was not always well received. In the fabliau of the "Butcher of Abbeville" (Barbazan, iv. 1), the butcher, returning from the market of Oisemont, is overtaken by night at the small town of Bailleuil. He determined to stop for the night there, and, seeing a poor woman at her door, at the entrance of the town, he inquired where he could ask for a night's lodging, and she recommended him to the priest, as the only person in the town who had wine in his cellar. The butcher accordingly repaired to the priest's house, where he found that ecclesiastic sitting on the sill of his door, and asked him to give him a lodging for the sake of charity. The priest, who thought that there was nothing to be gained from him, refused, telling him he would find plenty of people in the town who could give him a bed. As the butcher was leaving the town, irritated by his inhospitable reception, he encountered a flock of sheep, which he learnt were the property of the priest; whereupon, selecting the fattest of them, he dextrously stole it away unperceived, and, returning with it into the town, he went to the priest's door, found him just closing his

house, for it was nightfall, and again asked him for lodging. The priest asked him who he was, and whence he came. He replied that he had been to the market at Oisemont, and bought a sheep; that he was overtaken by night, and sought a lodging; and that, as it was no great consideration to him, he intended to kill his sheep, and share it with his host. The temptation was too great for the greedy priest, and he now received the butcher into his house, treated him with great respect, and had a bed made for him in his hall. Now the priest had—as was common with the Catholic priesthood—a concubine and a maid-servant, and they all regaled themselves on the butcher's sheep. Before the guest left next morning, he contrived to sell the sheep's skin and wool for certain considerations severally to the concubine and to the maid, and, after his departure, their rival claims led to a quarrel, and even to a battle. While the priest, on his return from the service of matins, was labouring to appease the combatants, his shepherd entered, with the information that his best sheep had been stolen from his flock, and an examination of the skin led to the discovery of the trick which had been played upon him—a punishment, as we are told, which he well merited by his inhospitable conduct. A Latin story of the thirteenth century may be coupled with the foregoing anecdote. There was an abbot who was very miserly and inhospitable, and he took care to give all the offices in the abbey to men of his own character. This was especially the case with the monk who had the direction of the *hospitium*, or guest-house. One day came a minstrel to ask for a lodging, but he met with an unfriendly reception, was treated only with black bread and water to drink, and was shown to a hard bed of straw.

Minstrels were not usually treated in this inhospitable manner, and our guest resolved to be revenged. He left the abbey next morning, and a little way on his journey he met the abbot, who was returning home from a short absence. “God bless you, good abbot!” he said, “for the noble hospitality which has been shown to me this night by your monks. The master of your guest-house treated me with the choicest wines, and placed rich dishes on the table for me in such numbers, that I would not attempt to count them; and when I came away this morning, he gave me a pair of shoes, a girdle, and a knife.” The abbot hurried home in a furious rage, summoned the offending brother before a chapter, accused him of squandering away the property of the monastery, caused him to be flogged and dismissed from his office, and appointed in his place another, in whose inhospitable temper he could place entire confidence.

These cases of want of hospitality were, however, exceptions to the general rule. A stranger was usually received with great kindness, each class of society, of course, more or less by its own class, though, under such circumstances, much less distinction of class was made than we might suppose. The aristocratic class, which included what we should now call the gentry, sought hospitality in the nearest castle; for a castle, as a matter of pride and ostentation, was, more or less, like an abbey, a place of hospitality for everybody. Among the richer and more refined classes, great care was taken to show proper courtesy to strangers, according to their rank. In the case of a knight, the lord of the house and his lady, with their damsels, led him into a private room, took off his armour, and often his clothes, and gave him a

change of apparel, after careful ablution. A scene of this kind is represented in the accompanying cut (No. 222), taken from a manuscript of the romance of "Lancelot," of the fourteenth century, in the National Library in Paris (No. 6956). The host or his lady sometimes washed the stranger's feet themselves. Thus, in the fabliau quoted above, when the hermit and his companion sought a lodging at the house of a *bourgeois*, they were received without question, and their hosts washed their feet, and then gave them plenty to eat and drink, and a bed:—

Li hoste orent leur piez lavez,
Bien sont peu et abreviez;
Jusqu' au jor à ese se jurent.

We might easily multiply extracts illustrative of this hospitable feeling, as it existed and was practised from the twelfth century to the fifteenth. Our cut No. 223, taken from a manuscript of the earlier part of the fourteenth century (MS. Harl. No. 1527), is another representation of the reception of a stranger in this hospitable manner. In the "Roman de la Violette" (p. 233), when its hero, Gerard, sought a lodging at a castle, he was received with the greatest hospitality; the lord of the castle led him into the great hall, and there disarmed him, furnished him with a rich mantle, and caused him to be bathed and washed. In the same romance (p. 237), when Gerard arrives at the little town of Mouzon, he goes to the house of a widow to ask for a night's lodging, and is received with the same welcome. His horse is taken into a stable, and carefully attended to, while the lady labours to keep him in conversation until supper is ready, after which a good bed is made for him, and they all retire to rest. The comforts, however, which

could be offered to the visitor, consisted often chiefly in eating and drinking. People had few spare chambers, especially furnished ones, and, in the simplicity of mediæval manners, the guests were obliged to sleep either in the same room as the family, or, more usually, in the hall, where beds were made for them on the floor or on the benches. “Making a bed” was a phrase true in its literal sense, and the bed made consisted still of a heap of straw, with a sheet or two thrown over it. The host, indeed, could often furnish no more than a room of bare walls and floor as a protection from the weather, and the guest had to rely as much upon his own resources for his personal comforts, as if he had had to pass the night in the midst of a wild wood. Moreover the guests, however numerous and though strangers to each other, were commonly obliged to sleep together indiscriminately in the same room.



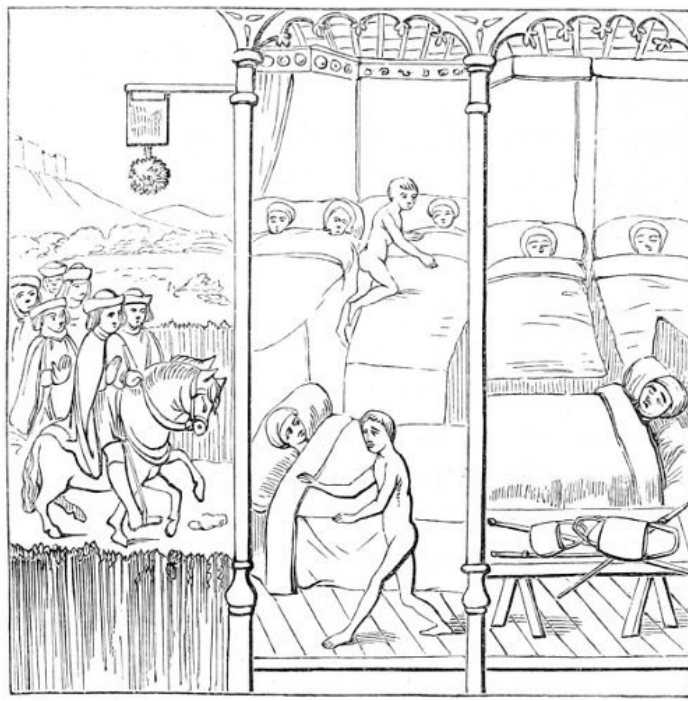
No. 222. Receiving a Stranger. *No*

The old Anglo-Saxon feeling, that the duration of the chance visit of a stranger should be limited to the third day, seems still to have prevailed. A Latin rhyme, printed in the "Reliquiæ Antiquæ" (i. 91), tells us,—

Verum dixit anus, quod piscis olet triduanus;
Ejus de more simili fætet hospes odore.

In towns the hospitality of the burghers was not always given gratis, for it was a common custom, even among the richer merchants, to make a profit by receiving guests. These letters of lodgings were distinguished from the inn-keepers, or *hostelers*, by the title of *herbergeors*, or people who gave harbour to strangers, and in the larger towns they were submitted to municipal regulations. The great barons and knights were in the custom of taking up their lodgings with these herbergeors, rather than going to the public hostels; and thus a sort of relationship was formed between particular nobles or kings and particular burghers, on the strength of which the latter adopted the arms of their habitual lodgers as their signs. These herbergeors practised great extortions upon their accidental guests, and they appear to have adopted various artifices to allure them to their houses. These extortions are the subject of a very curious Latin poem of the thirteenth century, entitled "Peregrinus" (the Traveller), the author of which describes the arts employed to allure the traveller, and the extortions to which he was subjected. It appears that persons were employed to look out for the arrival of strangers, and that they entered into conversation with them, pretended to discover that they came from the same part of the country, and then, as taking especial interest in their

fellow-countrymen, recommended them to lodgings. These tricks of the burghers who let their lodgings for hire are alluded to in other mediæval writers. It appears, also, that both in these lodging-houses and in the public inns, it was not an unusual practice to draw people into contracting heavy bills, which they had not the money to pay, and then to seize their baggage and even their clothes, to several times the amount of the debt.



No. 224. A Hostelry at night.

Our cut No. 224, taken from an illumination in the unique manuscript of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles (fifteenth century), in the Hunterian Library at

Glasgow, represents the exterior and the interior of a public hostel or inn. Without, we see the sign, and the bush suspended to it, and a company of travellers arriving; within, the bed-chambers are represented, and they illustrate not only the practice of lodging a number of persons in the same bedroom, but also that of sleeping in a state of perfect nudity. Our next cut (No. 225) is a picture of a mediæval tapster; it is taken from one of the carved seats, or misereres, in the fine parish church of Ludlow, in Shropshire. It will, probably, be remarked that the size of the tapster's jug is rather disproportionate to that of his barrel; but mediæval artists often set perspective and relative proportions at defiance.



No. 225. A Mediæval Tapster.

The tavern in the middle ages seems to have been the usual scene of a large portion of the ordinary life

of the lower class of society, and even partially of the middle class, and its influence was certainly very injurious on the manners and character of the people. Even the women, as we learn from a number of contemporary songs and stories, spent much of their time drinking and gossiping in taverns, where great latitude was afforded for carrying on low intrigues. The tavern was, in fact, the general rendezvous of those who sought amusement, of whatever kind. In the "Milleres Tale," in Chaucer, Absolon, "that joly was and gay," and who excelled as a musician, frequented the taverns and "brewhouses," meaning apparently the lesser public-houses where they only sold ale, to exhibit his skill—

In al the toun nas brewhous ne taverne
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther as that any gaylard tapster was.

—Cant. Tales, l. 3,334.

And Chaucer's friar was well acquainted with all the taverns in the towns he visited—

He knew wel the tavernes in every toun,
And every osteller or gay tapstere.

—Ibid., l. 240.

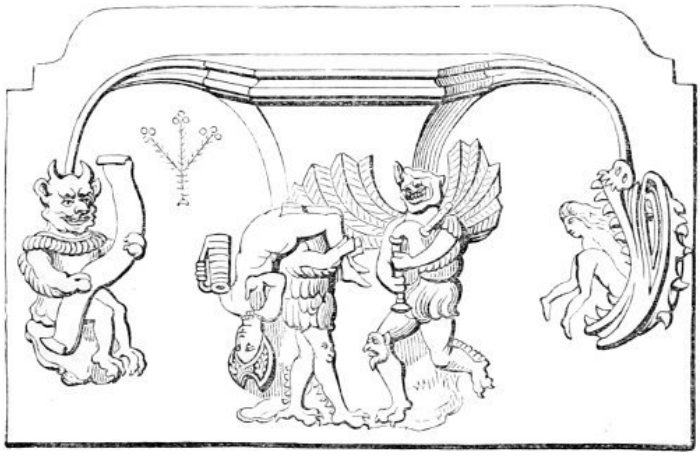
The tavern was especially the haunt of gamblers, who were encouraged by the "tapster," because they brought him his most profitable customers. As I have said before, when his customers had no money, the taverner took their articles of dress for payment, and in doing this he added the profits of the money-lender to those of the taverner. In the fabliau of "Gautier d'Aupais," the young prodigal Gautier,

hungry and penniless, arrives towards evening at a tavern, where he finds a number of guests enjoying themselves. His horse is taken to the stable, and he joins the guests, but when the moment comes for paying, and the taverner demands three sols, he is induced in his desperation to try his luck at the dice. Instead, however, of retrieving his fortunes, he loses his horse and his robe, and is obliged to return to his father's house on foot, and in his shirt—

Si a perdu sa robe et son corant destrier;
En pure sa chemise l'en convint reperier.

The story of Cortois d'Arras, in the fabliau in "Barbazan" (i. 355), is somewhat similar. Young Cortois, also a prodigal, obtains from his father a large sum of money as a compensation for all his claims on the paternal property, and with this throws himself upon the world. As he proceeded, he heard the tavern-boy calling out from the door, "Here is good wine of Soissons, acceptable to everybody! here credit is given to everybody, and no pledges taken!" with much more in the same style. Cortois determined to stop at the tavern. "Host," said he, "how much do you sell your wine the septier (a measure of two gallons)? and when was it tapped?" He was told that it had been fresh tapped that morning, and that the price was six deniers. The host then goes on to display his accommodations. "Within are all sorts of comforts; painted chambers, and soft beds, raised high with white straw, and made soft with feathers; here within is hostel for love affairs, and when bed-time comes you will have pillows of violets to hold your head more softly; and, finally, you will have electuaries and rose-water, to wash your mouth and your face." Cortois orders a gallon

of wine, and immediately afterwards a *belle demoiselle* makes her appearance, for such were in these times reckoned among the attractions of the tavern. It is soon arranged between the lady and the landlord that she is to be Cortois' chamber-companion, and they all begin drinking together, the taverner persuading his guest that he owes this choice wine to the lady's love. They then go to carouse in the garden, and they finish by plundering him of his money, and he is obliged to leave his clothes in pledge for the payment of his tavern expenses. The ale-wife was especially looked upon as a model of extortion and deceit, for she cheated unblushingly, both in money and measure, and she is pointed out in popular literature as an object of hatred and of satire. Our cut No. 226, also furnished by one of the carved misereres in Ludlow Church, represents a scene from Doomsday: a demon is bearing away the deceitful ale-wife, who carries nothing with her but her gay head-dress and her false measure; he is going to throw her into "hell-mouth," while another demon is reading her offences as entered in his roll, and a third is playing on the bagpipes, by way of welcome.



No. 226. The Ale-Wife's End.

CHAPTER XV.

EDUCATION.—LITERARY MEN AND SCRIBES.—PUNISHMENTS; THE STOCKS; THE GALLOWS.

I put together in a short chapter two parts of my subject which may at the first glance seem somewhat discordant, but which, I think, on further consideration, will be found to be rather closely related—they are, education and punishment for offences against the law. It can hardly be doubted, indeed, that, as education becomes more general and better regulated, if the necessity of punishment is not entirely taken away, its cruelty is greatly diminished.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, there was certainly a general feeling of the necessity of extending and improving education. It was during this period that our great universities rose into existence, and flourished, and these schools, which provided for the higher development of the mind, had their thousands of students, instead of the hundreds who frequent them at the present day. But the need of some provision for education was felt most in regard to that less elevated degree of instruction which was required for the more youthful mind,—in fact, it was long before the people of the middle ages could be persuaded that literary education was of any use at all, except for those who were to be made great scholars; the clergy itself, unfortunately, did not see the necessity of popular education, and although the schools in parish churches were long continued, they appear to have been conducted more and more with negligence. It was the mercantile class in the towns which made the first step in advance, by the establishment of those foundations which have continued to the present time under the name of grammar schools. These schools are traced back to the thirteenth century, when the merchant guilds, by whom they were founded, began to assume a greater degree of importance, and they were usually intended for the general benefit of the town, but were combined with an ecclesiastical establishment for performing services for the souls of the members of the guilds, in consequence of which, at the Reformation, they became involved in the superstitious uses, and were dissolved and refounded in the reign of Edward VI., so that they are now generally known as king Edward's foundations. The great object of these schools was to give the instruction necessary for

admission into the universities; and they were in some degree the answer to an appeal which came deeply from the mass of the people,—for there was at this time a great spontaneous eagerness for learning, both for the sake of the learning itself, and because it was a road to high distinction, which was not open to the masses in any other direction. It was a very common practice for poor youths to go about the country during vacation time, to beg money to keep them at school during term. In Piers Ploughman, among the objects of legitimate charity, the writer enumerates money given to—

Sette scolers to scole,
Or to som othere craftes.
—Piers Ploughman, Vis., l. 4,525.

And in the popular complaints of the burden of taxation, involuntary and voluntary, the alms given to poor scholars are often enumerated.



No. 227. A Monk at his Studies.

Independent, however, of what may be considered more especially as scholarship, a considerable amount of instruction began now to be spread abroad. Reading and writing were becoming much more general accomplishments, especially among ladies. Among the amusements of leisure hours, indeed, reading began now to occupy a much larger place than had been given to it in former ages. Even still, popular literature—in the shape of tales, and ballads and songs—was, in a great measure, communicated orally. But much had been done during the fourteenth century towards spreading a

taste for literature and knowledge; books were multiplied, and were extensively read; and wants were already arising which soon led the way to that most important of modern discoveries, the art of printing. Most gentlemen had now a few books, and men of wealth had considerable libraries. The wills of this period, still preserved, often enumerate the books possessed by the testator, and show the high value which was set upon them. Many of the illuminations of the fourteenth century present us with ingenious, and sometimes fantastic, forms of book-cases and book-stands. In our cut No. 227, from a manuscript of metrical relations of miracles of the Virgin Mary, now preserved in the library of the city of Soissons in France, we have a monk reading, seated before a book-stand, the table of which moves up and down on a screw. Upon this table is the inkstand, and below it apparently the inkbottle; and the table has in itself receptacles for books and paper or parchment. In the wall of the room are cupboards, also for the reception of books, as we see by one lying loose in them. The man is here seated on a stool; but in our cut No. 228, taken from a manuscript in the National Library in Paris (No. 6985), he is seated in a chair, with a writing-desk attached to it. The scribe holds in his hand a pen, with which he is writing, and a knife to scratch the parchment where anything may need erasion. The table here is also of a curious construction, and it is covered with books. Other examples are found, which show that considerable ingenuity was employed in varying the forms of such library tables.



No. 228. A Mediæval Writer.

The next cut (No. 229) is taken from one of the illuminations to a manuscript of the "Moralization of Chess," by Jacques de Cessoles (MS. Reg. 19 C. xi.), and is intended as a sort of figurative representation of the industrial class of society. It is curious because the figure is made to carry some of the principal implements of the chief trades or manufactures, and thus gives us their ordinary forms. We need only repeat the enumeration of these from the text. It is, we are told, a man who holds in his right hand a pair of shears (*unes forces*); in his left hand he has a great knife (*un grant coustel*); "and he must have at his girdle an inkstand (*une escriptoire*), and on his ear a pen for writing (*et sur l'oreille une penne à escripre*)."

Accordingly we see the ink-pot and the case for writing implements suspended at the girdle, but by accident the pen does not appear on the ear in our engraving. It is curious through how great a length of time the practice of placing the pen behind the ear has continued in use.



No. 229. Industry.

The punishments of the middle ages are remarkable, still more so in other countries than in England, for a mixture of a small amount of feeling of strict justice

with a very large proportion of the mere feeling of vengeance. Savage ferocity in the commission of crime led to no less savage cruelty in retaliation. We have seen, in a former chapter, that this was not the sentiment of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, but that their criminal laws were extremely mild; but after the Norman conquest, more barbarous feelings on this subject were brought over from the Continent. Imprisonment itself, even before trial, was made frightfully cruel; the dungeons into which the accused were thrown were often filthy holes, sometimes with water running through them, and, as a refinement in cruelty, loathsome reptiles were bred in them, and the prisoners were not only allowed insufficient food, but they were sometimes stripped naked, and thrown into prison in that condition. In the early English romance of the "Seven Sages" (the text printed by Weber), when the emperor was persuaded by his wife to order her step-son for execution, he commanded that he should be taken, stripped naked of his clothes, and then hanged aloft —

Quik he het (commanded) *his sone take,*
And spoili him of clothes nake,
And beten him with scourges stronge,
And afterward him hegge (high) *anhonge*.
—Weber, iii. 21.

At the intercession of one of the wise men, the youth is respited and thrown into prison, but without his clothing; and when, on a subsequent occasion, he was brought out of prison for judgment, he remained still naked.

Our three cuts which follow illustrate the subject of

mediæval punishments for crimes and offences. The first (No. 230) is taken from a well-known manuscript, in the British Museum, of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 10 E. iv.), and represents a monk and a lady, whose career has brought them into the stocks, an instrument of punishment which has figured in some of our former chapters. It is a very old mode of punishing offenders, and appears, under the Latin name of *cippus*, in early records of the middle ages. An old English poem, quoted by Mr. Halliwell in his Dictionary, from a manuscript at least as old as the fifteenth century, recounting the punishments to which some misdoers were condemned, says:—

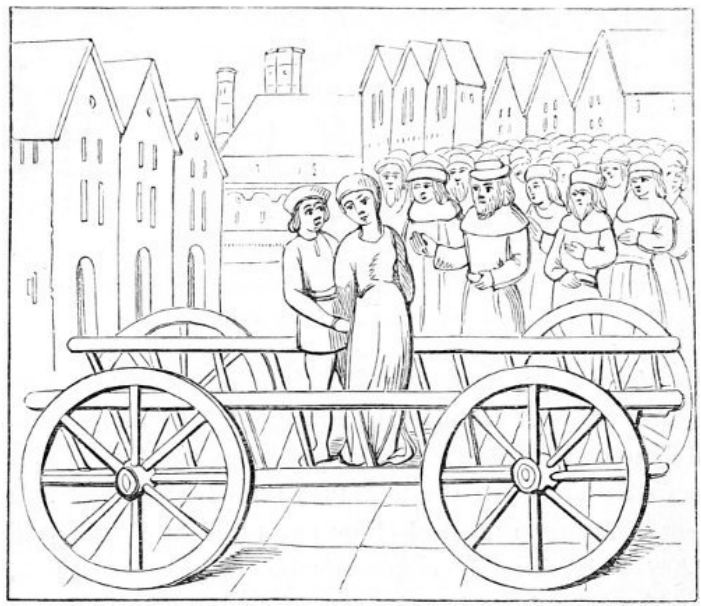
And twenty of thes oder ay in a pytt,
In stokkes and feturs for to sytt.

The stocks are frequently referred to in writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and they have not yet become entirely obsolete. The *Leeds Mercury* for April 14, 1860, informs us that, "A notorious character, named John Gambles, of Stanningley (Pudsey), having been convicted some months ago for Sunday gambling, and sentenced to sit in the stocks for six hours, left the locality, returned lately, and suffered his punishment by sitting in the stocks from two till eight o'clock on Thursday last." They were formerly employed also, in place of fetters, in the inside of prisons—no doubt in order to cause suffering by irksome restraint; and this was so common that the Latin term *cippus*, and the French *ceps*, were commonly used to designate the prison itself. It may be remarked of these stocks, that they present a peculiarity which we may perhaps call a primitive character. They are not supported on posts,

or fixed in any way to the spot, but evidently hold the people who are placed in them in confinement merely by their weight, and by the impossibility of walking with them on the legs, especially when more persons than one are confined in them. This is probably the way in which they were used in prisons.



No. 230. A Party in the Stocks.

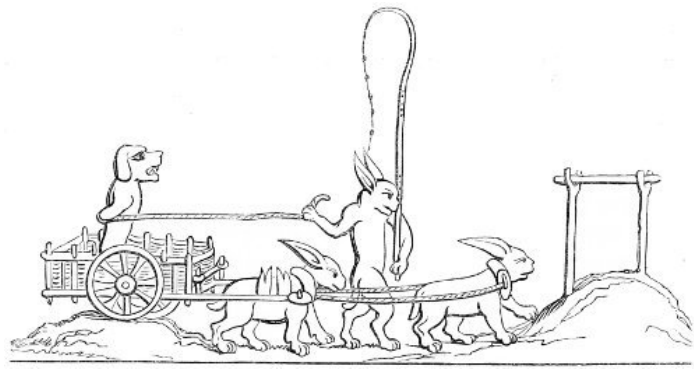


No. 231. An Offender Exposed to Public Shame.

A material part of the punishment of the stocks, when employed in the open air, consisted, of course, in the public disgrace to which the victim was exposed. We might suppose that the shame of such exposure was keenly felt in the middle ages, from the frequency with which it was employed. This exposure before the public was, we know, originally, the chief characteristic of the cucking-stool, for the process of ducking the victim in the water seems to have been only added to it at a later period. Our cut No. 231, taken from an illumination in the unique manuscript of the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles," in the Hunterian Library, at Glasgow, represents a person thus exposed to the scorn and derision of the populace in the executioner's cart, which is drawn through the streets of a town. To be carried about in a cart was always considered as especially disgraceful, probably because it was thus that malefactors were usually conducted to the gallows. In the early romances of the cycle of king Arthur we have an incident which forms an apt illustration of the prevalence of this feeling. Sir Lancelot, when hastening to rescue his lady, queen Guenever, has the misfortune to lose his horse, and, meeting with a carter, he seizes his cart as the only means of conveyance, for the weight of his armour prevented him from walking. Queen Guenever and her ladies, from a bay window of the castle of sir Meliagraunce, saw him approach, and one of the latter exclaimed, "See, madam, where as rideth in a cart a goodly armed knight! I suppose that he rideth to hanging." Guenever, however, saw by his shield that it was sir Lancelot. "'Ah, most noble knight,' she said, when she saw him in this condition, 'I see well that thou hast been hard bested, when thou ridest in a cart.'

Then she rebuked that lady that compared him to one riding in a cart to hanging. ‘It was foul mouthed,’ said the queen, ‘and evil compared, so to compare the most noble knight of the world in such a shameful death. Oh Jhesu! defend him and keep him,’ said the queen, ‘from all mischievous end.’”

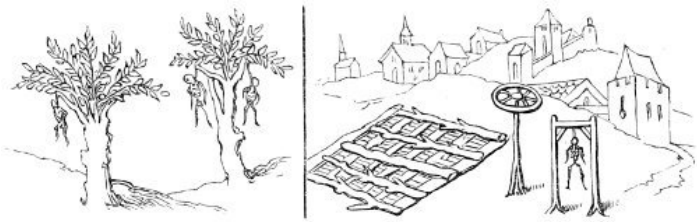
Our next cut (No. 232) is taken from the same manuscript in the British Museum which furnished us with No. 230. The playful draughtsman has represented a scene from the world “upso-down,” in which the rabbits (or perhaps hares) are leading to execution their old enemy the dog.



No. 232. A Criminal drawn to the Gallows.

The gallows and the wheel were instruments of execution of such common use in the middle ages that they were continually before people’s eyes. Every town, every abbey, and almost every large manorial lord, had the right of hanging, and a gallows or tree with a man hanging upon it was so frequent an object in the country that it seems to have been almost a natural ornament of a landscape, and it is thus introduced by no means uncommonly

in mediæval manuscripts. The two examples given in our cut No. 233 are taken from the illuminations in the manuscript of the romance of the "Chevalereux comte d'Artois," in the manuscript from which this romance was printed by M. Barrois.



No. 233. Mediæval Ornaments of the Landscape.

No. 233. Mediæval Ornaments of the Landscape.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD ENGLISH COOKERY.—HISTORY OF "GOURMANDISE."—ENGLISH COOKERY OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.—BILLS OF FARE.—GREAT FEASTS.

I have spoken of the ceremonious forms of the service of the mediæval table, but we are just now arrived at the period when we begin to have full information

on the composition of the culinary dishes in which our ancestors indulged, and it will perhaps be well to give a brief summary of that information as illustrative both of the period we have now been considering, and of that which follows.

There is a part of the human frame, not very noble in itself, which, nevertheless, many people are said to worship, and which has even exercised at times a considerable influence over man's destinies. Gastrolatry, indeed, is a worship which, at one time or other, has prevailed in different forms over all parts of the world—its history takes an extensive range, and is not altogether without interest. One of the first objects of search in a man who has just risen from savage life to civilization is rather naturally refinement in his food, and this desire more than keeps pace with the advance of general refinement, until cookery becomes one of the most important of social institutions. During all periods of which we read in history, great public acts, of whatever kind, even to the consecration of a church, have been accompanied with feasting; and the same rule holds good throughout all the different phases of our social relations. The materials for the history of eating are, indeed, abundant, and the field is extensive.

William of Malmesbury, as we have seen before, tells us that the Anglo-Saxons indulged in great feasting, and lived in very mean houses; whereas the Normans eat with moderation, but built for themselves magnificent mansions. Various allusions in old writers leave little room for doubt that our Anglo-Saxon forefathers indulged in much eating; but, as far as we can gather, for our information is very imperfect, this indulgence consisted more in the quantity than in the quality of the food, for their

cookery seems to have been in general what we call "plain." Refinement in cookery appears to have come in with the Normans; and from the twelfth century to the sixteenth we can trace the love of the table continually increasing. The monks, whose institution had, to a certain degree, separated them from the rest of the world, and who usually, and from the circumstances perhaps naturally, sought sensual gratifications, fell soon into the sin of gluttony, and they seem to have led the way in refinement in the variety and elaborate character of their dishes. Giraldus Cambrensis, an ecclesiastic himself, complains in very indignant terms of the luxurious table kept by the monks of Canterbury in the latter half of the twelfth century; and he relates an anecdote which shows how far at that time the clergy were, in this respect, in advance of the laity. One day, when Henry II. paid a visit to Winchester, the prior and monks of St. Swithin met him, and fell on their knees before him to complain of the tyranny of their bishop. When the king asked what was their grievance, they said that their table had been curtailed of three dishes. The king, somewhat surprised at this complaint, and imagining, no doubt, that the bishop had not left them enough to eat, inquired how many dishes he had left them. They replied, ten; at which the king, in a fit of indignation, told them that he himself had no more than three dishes to his table, and uttered an imprecation against the bishop, unless he reduced them to the same number.

But although we have abundant evidence of the general fact that our Norman and English forefathers loved the table, we have but imperfect information on the character of their cookery until the latter half

of the fourteenth century, when the rules and receipts for cooking appear to have been very generally committed to writing, and a certain number of cookery-books belonging to this period and to the following century remain in manuscript, forming very curious records of the domestic life of our forefathers. From these I will give a few illustrations of this subject. These cookery-books sometimes contain plans for dinners of different descriptions, or, as we should now say, bills of fare, which enable us, by comparing the names of the dishes with the receipts for making them, to form a tolerably distinct notion of the manner in which our forefathers fared at table from four to five hundred years ago. The first example we shall give is furnished by a manuscript of the beginning of the fifteenth century, and belongs to the latter part of the century preceding; that is, to the reign of Richard II., a period remarkable for the fashion for luxurious living: it gives us the following bill of fare for the ordinary table of a gentleman, which I will arrange in the form of a bill of fare of the present day, modernizing the language, except in the case of obsolete words.

First Course.

Boar's head enarmed (*larded*), and "bruce," for pottage.
Beef. Mutton. Pestles (*legs*) of Pork.
Swan. Roasted Rabbit. Tart.

Second Course.

Drope and Rose, for pottage.
Mallard. Pheasant. Chickens, "farsed" and roasted.

"Malachis," baked.

Third Course.

Conings (*rabbits*), in gravy, and hare, in "brasé," for pottage.
Teals, roasted. Woodcocks. Snipes.
"Raffyolys," baked. "Flampoyntes."

It may be well to make the general remark, that the ordinary number of courses at dinner was three. To begin, then, with the first dish, boar's-head was a favourite article at table, and needs no explanation. The pottage which follows, under the name of *bruce*, was made as follows, according to a receipt in the same cookery-book which has furnished the bill of fare:—

> Take the umbles of a swine, and parboil them (*boil them slowly*), and cut them small, and put them in a pot, with some good broth; then take the whites of leeks, and slit them, and cut them small, and put them in, with minced onions, and let it all boil; next take bread steeped in broth, and "draw it up" with blood and vinegar, and put it into a pot, with pepper and cloves, and let it boil; and serve all this together.

In the second course, *drope* is probably an error for *drore*, a pottage, which, according to the same cookery-book, was made as follows:—

> Take almonds, and blanch and grind

> them, and mix them with good meat broth, and seethe this in a pot; then mince onions, and fry them in fresh "grease," and put them to the almonds; take small birds, and parboil them, and throw them into the pottage, with cinnamon and cloves and a little "fair grease," and boil the whole.

Rose was made as follows:—

> Take powdered rice, and boil it in almond-milk till it be thick, and take the brawn of capons and hens, beat it in a mortar, and mix it with the preceding, and put the whole into a pot, with powdered cinnamon and cloves, and whole mace, and colour it with saunders (*sandal-wood*).

It may be necessary to explain that almond-milk consisted simply of almonds ground and mixed with milk or broth. The *farsure*, or stuffing, for chickens was made thus:—

> Take fresh pork, seethe it, chop it small, and grind it well; put to it hard yolks of eggs, well mixed together, with dried currants, powder of cinnamon and maces, cubebs, and cloves whole, and roast it.

I am unable to explain the meaning of *malachis*, the dish which concludes this course.

The first dish in the third course, coneys, or rabbits, in gravy, was made as follows:—

> Take rabbits, and parboil them, and chop them in "gobbets," and seethe them in a pot with good broth; then grind almonds, "dress them up" with beef broth, and boil this in a pot; and, after passing it through a strainer, put it to the rabbits, adding to the whole cloves, maces, pines (*the kernels of the pine cone*), and sugar; colour it with sandal-wood, saffron, bastard or other wine, and cinnamon powder mixed together, and add a little vinegar.

Not less complicated was the boar in *brasé*, or *brasey*:—

> Take the ribs of a boar, while they are fresh, and parboil them till they are half boiled; then roast them, and, when they are roasted, chop them, and put them in a pot with good fresh beef broth and wine, and add cloves, maces, pines, currants, and powdered pepper; then put chopped onions in a pan, with fresh grease, fry them first and then boil them; next, take bread, steeped in broth, "draw it up" and put it to the onions, and colour it with sandal-wood and saffron, and as it settles, put a little vinegar mixed with powdered cinnamon to it; then take brawn, and cut it into slices two

> inches long, and throw it into the pot with the foregoing, and serve it all up together.

Raffyolys were a sort of patties, made as follows:—

> Take swine's flesh, seethe it, chop it small, add to it yolks of eggs, and mix them well together; put to this a little minced lard, grated cheese, powdered ginger, and cinnamon; make of this balls of the size of an apple, and wrap them up in the cawl of the swine, each ball by itself; make a raised crust of dough, and put the ball in it, and bake it; when they are baked, take yolks of eggs well beaten, with sugar and pepper, coloured with saffron, and pour this mixture over them.

Flampoyntes were made thus:—

> Take good "interlarded" pork, seethe it, and chop it, and grind it small; put to it good fat cheese grated, and sugar and pepper; put this in raised paste like the preceding; then make a thin leaf of dough, out of which cut small "points," fry these in grease, and then stick them in the foregoing mixture after it has been put in the crust, and bake it.

Such was a tolerably respectable dinner at the end of the fourteenth century; but the same treatise gives us the following bill of fare, for a larger dinner, though

still arranged in three courses:—

First Course.

Browet farsed, and charlet, for pottage.
Baked mallard. Teals. Small birds. Almond milk served with them.
Capon roasted with the syrup.
Roasted veal. Pig roasted "'endored,' and served with the yolk on his neck over gilt." Herons.
A "leche." A tart of flesh.

Second Course.

Browet of Almayne and Viaunde rial for pottage.
Mallard. Roasted rabbits. Pheasant. Venison.
Jelly. A leche. Urchynnes (*hedgehogs*).
Pome de orynge.

Third Course.

Boar in egurdouce, and Mawmené, for pottage.
Cranes. Kid. Curlew. Partridge. (All roasted.)
A leche. A crustade.
A peacock endored and roasted, and served with the skin.
Cockagris. Flaumpoyntes.
Daryoles.

Pears in syrup.

The receipt for making *farsed browet*, or *browet farsyn*, is literally as follows:—

> Take almonds and pound them, and mix with beef broth, so as to make it thick, and put it in a pot with cloves, maces, and figs, currants, and minced ginger, and let all this seethe; take bread, and steep it in sweet wine, and "draw it up," and put it to the almonds with sugar; then take *conyngs* (rabbits), or rabbettes (*young rabbits*), or squirrels, and first parboil and then fry them, and partridges parboiled; fry them whole for a lord, but otherwise chop them into gobbets; and when they are almost fried, cast them in a pot, and let them boil altogether, and colour with sandal-wood and saffron; then add vinegar and powdered cinnamon strained with wine, and give it a boil; then take it from the fire, and see that the pottage is thin, and throw in a good quantity of powdered ginger.

It is repeated, at the end of this receipt, that, for a lord, a coney, rabbit, squirrel, or partridge, should be served whole in this manner. The other pottage in this course, *charlet*, was less complex, and was made thus:—

> Take sweet cow's milk, put it in a

> pan, throw into it the yolks and white of eggs, and boiled pork, pounded, and sage; let it boil till it curds, and colour it with saffron.

The following was the syrup for a capon:—

> Take almonds, and pound them, and mix them with wine, till they make a thick "milk," and colour it with saffron, and put it in a saucepan, and put into it a good quantity of figs and currants, and add ground ginger, cloves, galingale (*a spice much used in the middle ages*), and cinnamon; let all this boil; add sugar, and pour it over your capon or pheasant.

The *leche* in this first course was, perhaps, the dish which is called in the receipts a *leche lumbarde*, which was made thus:—

> Take raw pork, and pull off the skin, and pick out the skin sinews, and pound the pork in a mortar with raw eggs; add to it sugar, salt, raisins, currants, minced dates, powdered pepper, and cloves; put it in a bladder, and let it seethe till it be done enough, and then cut it into slips of the form of peas-cods: grind raisins in a mortar, mix them with red wine, and put to them almond-milk, coloured with sandal-wood and saffron, and add pepper and cloves, and then boil the whole;

> when it is boiled, mix cinnamon and ginger with wine and pour on it, and so serve it.

Browet of Almayne, which comes in with the second course of this dinner, was a rather celebrated pottage. It was made in the following manner:—

> Take coneys, and parboil them, and chop them in gobbets, and put them with ribs of pork or kid into a pot, and seethe it; then take ground almonds, and mix them with beef broth, and put this in a pot with cloves, maces, pines, minced ginger, and currants, and with onions, and boil it, and colour it with saffron, and when this is boiled, take the flesh out from the broth, and put it in it; and take "alkanet" (*alkanet is explained in the dictionaries as the name of a plant, wild buglos; it appears to have been used in cookery to give colour*), and fry it, and press it into the pot through a strainer, and finally add a little vinegar and ground ginger mixed together.

The composition of *viande royale* was as follows:—

> Take Greek wine, or Rhenish wine, and clarified honey, and mix them well with ground rice, ginger, pepper, cinnamon, and cloves, saffron, sugar, mulberries, and sandal-wood; boil the mixture, and salt it, and take care that it be thick.

Pome de oringe was quite a different thing to what we should expect from the name. It was made as follows:—

> Take pork liver, pound it well raw, and put to it ground pepper, cloves, cinnamon, saffron, and currants; make of this balls like apples, and wet them well in the white of eggs, and then put them in boiling water, and let them seethe, and when they have seethed a while, take them out, and put them on a spit, and roast them well; then take parsley, and grind it, and wring it up with eggs through a strainer, and put a little flour to it, and with this "endore" the balls while roasting, and, if you will, you may take saffron, sandal-wood, or indigo, to colour them.

Endore was the technical term of the kitchen for washing over an article of cookery with yolks of eggs, or any other liquid, to give a shiny appearance to its exterior when cooked.

Both the pottages in the third course are rather elaborate ones. The following was the process of making boar in *egurdouce*, or *egredouce*, a word which of course means "sour-sweet:"—

> Take dates, washed clean, and currants, and boil them, and pound them together, and in pounding put cloves to them, and mix them up with vinegar, or clarey, or other sweet wine, and put it in a fair pot,

> and boil it well; and then put to it half a quartern of sugar, or else honey, and half an ounce of cinnamon in powder, and in the "setting down" take a little vinegar and mix with it, and half an ounce of ground ginger, and a little sandal-wood and saffron; and in the boiling put minced ginger to it; next, take fresh brawn, and seethe it, and then cut it in thin slices, and lay three in a dish, and then take half a pound of pines, and fry them in fresh grease, and throw the pines into it; and when they are thoroughly hot take them out with a skimmer, and let them dry, and cast them into the same pot; and then put the syrup above the brawn in the dishes, and serve it.

Mawmené was made according to the following receipt:—

> Take almonds and blanch them and pound them, and mix them with water or wine, and take the brawn of capons or pheasants, and pound it small, and mix it with the other, and add ground rice, and put it in a pot and let it boil; and add powder of ginger and cloves, and cinnamon and sugar; and take rice, and parboil it and grind it, and add it to them, and colour it with sandal-wood, and pour it out in dishes; and take the grains of pomegranates and stick in

> it, or almonds or pines fried in grease, and strew sugar over it.

The following was the manner of making the *crustade*, mentioned in the third course of this bill of fare:—

> Take chickens, and pigeons, and small birds, and make them clean, and chop them to pieces, and stew them altogether in a good broth made of fair grease and ground pepper and cloves, and add verjus to it, and colour it with saffron; then make raised crusts, and pinch them and lay the flesh therein, and put to it currants, and ground ginger, and cinnamon; and take raw eggs, and break them, and strain them through a strainer into the pottage of the stew, and stir it well together, and pour it into the raised crusts, above the flesh, and then place the covers on them and serve them.

The process of serving a peacock "with the skin" also requires some explanation. The skin was first stripped off, with the feathers, tail, and neck and head, and it was spread on a table and strewed with ground cummin; then the peacock was taken and roasted, and "endored" with raw yolks of eggs; and when roasted, and after it had been allowed to cool a little, it was sewn into the skin, and thus served on the table, always with the last course, when it looked as though the bird were alive. To make *cokagrys*, you must

> Take an old cock and pull him, and wash him, and skin him all but the legs, and fill him full of the stuffing made for the pome de oringe; and also take a pig and skin him from the middle downwards, and fill him full of the same stuffing, and sew them fast together, and seethe them; and when they have seethed a good while, take them up and put them on a spit, and roast them well, and endore them with yolks of eggs mixed with saffron; and when they are roasted, before placing them on the table, lay gold and silver foil on them.

Flampoyntes have been already explained. Pears in syrup were merely boiled in wine, and seasoned with sugar and spices.

In these bills of fare, our readers who believe in the prevalence of "old English roast beef," will find that belief singularly dissipated, for our ancestors seem to have indulged in all sorts of elaborately made dishes, in which immense quantities of spices were employed. The number of receipts in these early cookery-books is wonderfully great, and it is evident that people sought variety almost above all other things. Among the Sloane manuscripts in the library of the British Museum, there is a very complete cookery-book (MS. No. 1201) belonging to the latter part of the fifteenth century, which gives seven bills of fare of seven dinners, each to differ entirely in the dishes composing it from the other, with the object, of course, of giving a different dinner every day during seven consecutive days. In the foregoing bills

of fare, we have seen that on flesh-days no fish was introduced on the table, but fish is introduced along with flesh in the seven dinners just alluded to, which are, moreover, curious for the number of articles, chiefly birds, introduced in them, which we are not now accustomed to eat. The first of these bills of fare, which are all limited to two courses, runs as follows:—

First Course, of Eleven Dishes.

Nowmbles (*umbles*) of an harte. Vyand ryalle. The syde of an hert rostede.
Swanne with chauderoun. Fesaunt rostede. Bytore (*bittern*) rostede.
Pyke, and grete gurnarde.
Haggesse of Almayne. Blaunche custade.
A sotelté, a blake bore enarmede with golde.

Second Course, of Eleven Dishes.

Gelé. Cream of almonds.
Kynd kydde. Fillets of an herte endored.
Squyrelle rost.
Chykons (*chickens*) ylarded. Partriche and lark rost.
Perche and porpoys rost.
Frytours Lumbard. Payne puffe (*puff-bread*).
A sotelté, a castelle of sylver with fanes (*vanes*

or flags) of gold.

It appears that at this time it was considered more absolutely necessary than at an earlier period, that each course at table should be accompanied with a subtilty, or ornamental device in pastry, representing groups of various descriptions, as here a black boar and a castle. We have here the porpoise eaten among fishes, and the squirrel among animals; we have before seen hedgehogs served at table. In the "Ménagier de Paris," a French compilation, made in the year 1393, a hedgehog is directed to have its throat cut, and to be skinned and emptied, and then to be arranged as a chicken, and pressed and well dried in a towel; after this it was to be roasted and eaten with "cameline," a word the exact meaning of which seems not to be known; or in pastry, with duckling sauce. Squirrels were to be treated as rabbits. The same book gives directions for cooking magpies, rooks, and jackdaws. The second of the seven bills of fare given in the Sloane Manuscript contains turtles (the bird) and throstles, roasted; in the third we have roasted egrets (a species of heron), starlings, and linnets; in the fourth, "martinettes;" in the fifth, barnacles, "molette," sparrows, and, among fishes, minnows; and in the sixth, roasted cormorants, heathcocks, sheldrakes, dotterels, and thrushes. The seventh bill of fare runs thus:—

First Course, of Nine Dishes.

Long wortes (*vegetables*). An hen in dubate.
Shuldres of motoun.
Wylde goos. Wode doves.
Fresh laumprey. Grete codlynge.
Bonsomers. Tortons, in paste.

Second Course, of Ten Dishes.

Pynnonade (*a confection of almonds and pines*).
Malardes of the rivere.
Cotes, rost, and dampettes.
Quayles, and goldefynche.
Ele reversed. Breme de mere.
Frypours ryalle. Viande en feast.
Quarters of lambe.

The bills of fare I have thus given are intended for dinners of moderate size, but I might easily have given much larger ones, though we should have learnt nothing more by them than by the smaller ones, from which the reader will be able to form a very good judgment of the general style of eating among our forefathers, when they lived well. The fifteenth century, especially, was celebrated for its great feasts, at which the consumption of provisions was enormous. The bills of expenses of some of them have been preserved. In the sixth year of the reign of Edward IV. (A.D. 1466), George Nevile was made archbishop of York, and the account of the expenditure for the feast on that occasion contains the following articles:—Three hundred quarters of wheat, three hundred tuns of ale, one hundred tuns of wine, one pint of hypocras, a hundred and four oxen, six wild bulls, a thousand sheep, three hundred and four calves, the same number of swine, four hundred swans, two thousand geese, a thousand capons, two thousand pigs, four hundred plovers, a hundred dozen of quails, two hundred dozen of the birds called “rees,” a hundred and four peacocks, four thousand mallards and teals, two hundred and four cranes, two hundred and four kids, two thousand chickens, four thousand pigeons, four thousand crays, two hundred and four bitterns, four

hundred herons, two hundred pheasants, five hundred partridges, four hundred woodcocks, one hundred curlews, a thousand egrettes, more than five hundred stags, bucks, and roes, four thousand cold venison pasties, a thousand “parted” dishes of jelly, three thousand plain dishes of jelly, four thousand cold baked tarts, fifteen hundred hot venison pasties, two thousand hot custards, six hundred and eight pikes and breams, twelve porpoises and seals, with a proportionate quantity of spices, sugared delicacies, and wafers or cakes.

On the inthronation of William Warham as archbishop of Canterbury in 1504, the twentieth year of the reign of Henry VII., a feast was given for which the following provisions were purchased:—Fifty-four quarters of wheat, twenty shillings’ worth of fine flour for making wafers, six tuns or pipes of red wine, four of claret wine, one of choice white wine, and one of white wine for the kitchen, one butt of malmsey, one pipe of wine of Osey, two tierces of Rhenish wine, four tuns of London ale, six of Kentish ale, and twenty of English beer, thirty-three pounds’ worth of spices, three hundred lings, six hundred codfish, seven barrels of salted salmon, forty fresh salmon, fourteen barrels of white herrings, twenty cades of red herrings (each cade containing six hundred herrings, which would make a total of twelve thousand), five barrels of salted sturgeons, two barrels of salted eels, six hundred fresh eels, eight thousand whelks, five hundred pikes, four hundred tenches, a hundred carps, eight hundred breams, two barrels of salted lampreys, eighty fresh lampreys, fourteen hundred fresh lamperns, a hundred and twenty-four salted congers, two hundred great roaches, a quantity of seals and

porpoises, with a considerable quantity of other fish. It will be understood at once that this feast took place on a fish day.

This habit of profuse and luxurious living seems to have gradually declined during the sixteenth and first part of the seventeenth century, until it was extinguished in the great convulsion which produced the interregnum. After the Restoration, we find that the table, among all classes, was furnished more soberly, and with plainer and more substantial dishes.

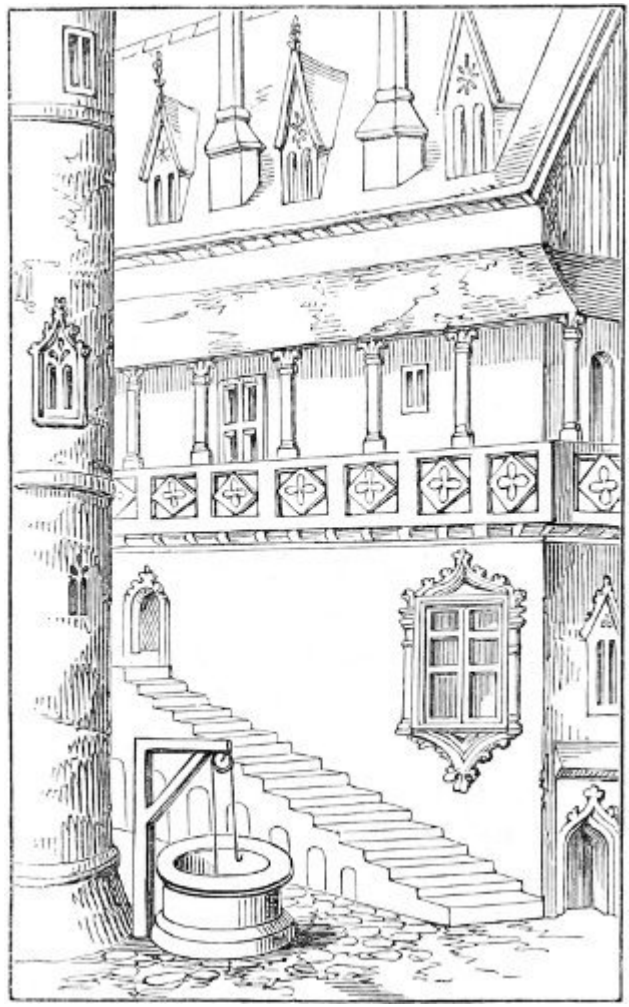
CHAPTER XVII.

SLOW PROGRESS OF SOCIETY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.—ENLARGEMENT OF THE HOUSES.—THE HALL AND ITS FURNITURE.—ARRANGEMENT OF THE TABLE FOR MEALS.—ABSENCE OF CLEANLINESS.—MANNERS AT TABLE.—THE PARLOUR.

The progress of society in the two countries which were most closely allied in this respect, England and

France, was slow during the fifteenth century. Both countries were engaged either in mutual hostility or in desolating civil wars, which so utterly checked all spirit of improvement, that the aspect of society differed little between the beginning and the end of the century in anything but dress. At the close of the fourteenth century, the middle classes in England had made great advance in wealth and in independence, and the wars of the roses, which were so destructive to the nobility, as well as the tendency of the crown to set the gentry up as a balance to the power of the feudal barons, helped to make that advance more certain and rapid. This increase of wealth appears in the multiplication of furniture and of other household implements, especially those of a more valuable description. We are surprised, in running our eye through the wills and inventories during this period, at the quantity of plate which was usually possessed by country gentlemen and respectable burghers. There was also a great increase both in the number and magnitude of the houses which intervened between the castle and the cottage. Instead of having one or two bedrooms, and turning people into the hall to sleep at night, we now find whole suits of chambers; while, where before, the family lived chiefly in the hall, privacy was sought by the addition of parlours, of which there were often more than one in an ordinary sized house. The hall was in fact already beginning to diminish in importance in comparison with the rest of the house. Whether in town or country, houses of any magnitude were now generally built round an interior court, into which the rooms almost invariably looked, only small and unimportant windows looking towards the street or country. This arrangement of course originated in the necessity of

studying security, a necessity which was never felt more than in the fifteenth century. We have less need to seek our illustrations from manuscripts during this period, on account of the numerous examples of buildings which still remain in a greater or less state of perfection, but still an illumination now and then presents us with an interesting picture of the architectural arrangements of a dwelling-house in the fifteenth century, which may be advantageously compared with the buildings that still exist. One of these is represented in our cut No. 234, taken from an illuminated copy of the French translation of Valerius Maximus (MS. No. 6984, in the National Library at Paris). The building to the left is probably the staircase turret of the gateway; that before us is the mass of the household apartments. We are supposed to be standing within the court. At the foot of the turret is the well, a very important object within the court, where it was always placed in houses of this description, as in the troubles of those days the household might be obliged to shut themselves up for a day or two and depend for their supply of water entirely on what they could get within their walls.



No. 234. Court of a House of the Fifteenth Century.

The cut here given (No. 234) is a remarkably good and perfect representation of the exterior, looking towards the court, of the domestic buildings. The door on the ground floor to the right is probably, to judge by the position of the windows, the entrance to

the hall. The steps leading to the first floor are outside the wall, an arrangement which is not uncommon in the existing examples of houses of this period in England. We have also here the open gallery round the chambers on the first floor, which is so frequently met with in our houses of the fifteenth century. It is probable that within the door at the top of the external flight of steps, as here represented, a short staircase led up to the floor on which the chambers were situated. Perhaps it may have been a staircase into the gallery, as the opening round the corner to the right seems to be a door from the gallery into the chambers.



No. 235. A Knight at the Door.

In another illumination in the same manuscript (cut

No. 235), a knight is represented knocking at the door of a house into which he seeks admittance. The plain knocker and the ring will be recognised at once by all who have been accustomed to examine the original doors still remaining in so many of our old buildings, but why the person who thus signifies his wish to enter should hold the ring with his right hand, and the knocker with his left, is not very clear. The knocker, instead of being plain, as in this cut, was often very ornamental. This is, of course, the outer door of the house, and our readers will not overlook the loophole and the small window through which the person who knocked might be examined, and, if necessary, interrogated, before the door was opened to him.

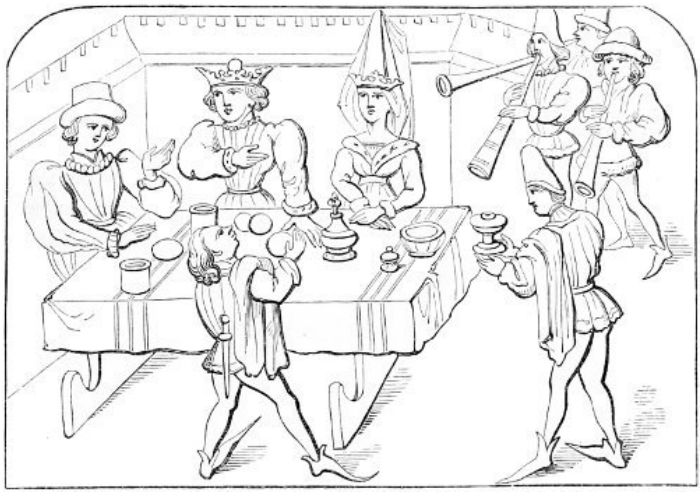
Let us now pass through the door on the ground floor, always open by day, into the hall. This was still the most spacious apartment in the house, and it was still also the public room, open to all who were admitted within the precincts. The hall continued to be scantily furnished. The permanent furniture consisted chiefly in benches, and in a seat with a back to it for the superior members of the family. The head table at least was now generally a permanent one, and there were in general more permanent tables, or tables dormant, than formerly, but still the greater part of the tables in the hall were made for each meal by placing boards upon trestles. Cushions, with ornamental cloths, called *bankers* and *dorsers*, for placing over the benches and backs of the seats of the better persons at the table, were now also in general use. Tapestry was suspended on the walls of the hall on special occasions, but it does not appear to have been of common use. Another article of furniture had now become common—the buffet,

or stand on which the plate and other vessels were arranged. These articles appear to have been generally in the keeping of the butler, and only to have been brought into the hall and arranged on the buffet at meal times, for show as much as for use. The dinner party in our cut No. 236, taken from an illumination of a manuscript of the romance of the "Comte d'Artois," formerly in the possession of M. Barrois, a distinguished and well-known collector in Paris, represents a royal party dining at a table with much simplicity. The ornamental vessel on the table is probably the salt-cellar, which was a very important article at the feast. Besides the general utility of salt, it was regarded with profoundly superstitious feelings, and it was considered desirable that it should be the first article placed on the table. We have still a feeling of superstition with regard to the spilling of salt. A metrical code for the behaviour of servants, written in the fifteenth century, directs that in preparing the table for meals, the table-cloth was first to be spread, and then, invariably and in all places, the salt was to be placed upon it; next were to be arranged successively, the knives, the bread, the wine, and then the meat, after which the waiter was to bring other things, when each was called for:—

Tu dois mettre premierement
En tous lieux et en tout hostel
La nappe, et apres le sel;
Cousteaulx, pain, vin, et puis viande,
Puis apporter ce qu'on demande.

In our last cut (No. 236) it will be seen that the "nappe" is duly laid, and upon it are seen the salt-cellar, the bread (round cakes), and the cups for

wine. Knives are wanting, and the plates seldom appear on the table in these dinner scenes of the fifteenth century, any more than in the previous period. This, no doubt, arose from the common practice at that time, of people carrying their own knives with them in a sheath attached to the girdle. We find, moreover, few knives enumerated in our inventories of household goods and chattels. In the English metrical “Stans Puer ad Mensam,” or rules for behaviour at table, written by Lydgate, the guest is told to “bring no knyves unskoured to the table,” which can only mean that he is to keep his own knife that he carries with him clean. The two servants are here duly equipped for duty, with the towel thrown over the shoulder. The table appears to be placed on two board-shaped trestles, but the artist has forgotten to indicate the seats. But in our next cut (No. 237), a very private party, taken from a manuscript of the early French translation of the Decameron (in the National Library at Paris, No. 6887), are placed in a seat with a back to it, although the table is still evidently a board placed upon trestles. It may be remarked that in dinner scenes of this century, the gentlemen at table are almost always represented with their hats on their heads.



No. 236. A Dinner Scene at Court.



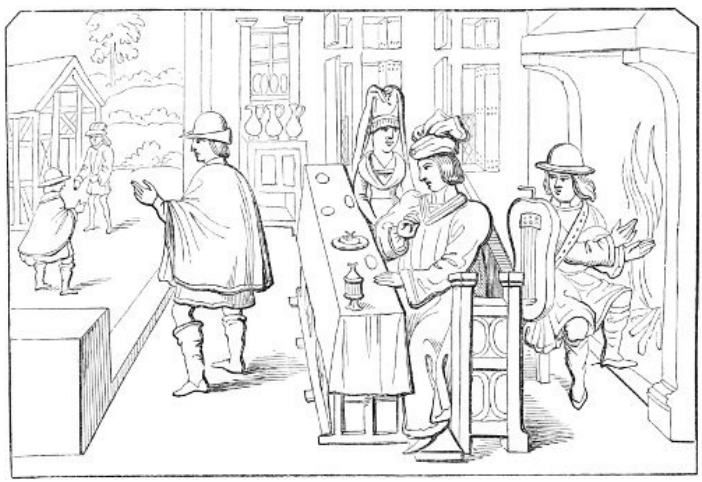
No. 237. A Private Dinner.

As we have already hinted, the inventories of this period give us curious information on the furniture of houses of different descriptions. We learn from one of these, made in 1446, that there were at that time belonging to the hall of the priory of Durham,

one dorsal or dorser, embroidered with the birds of St. Cuthbert and the arms of the church, five pieces of red cloth (three embroidered and two plain), no doubt for the same purpose of throwing over the seats; six cushions; three basins of brass; and three washing-basins. A gentleman at Northallerton, in Yorkshire, who made his will in 1444, had in his hall, thirteen jugs or pots of brass, four basins, and two ewers (of course, for washing the hands), three candlesticks, five (metal) dishes, three kettles, nine vessels of lead and pewter, "utensils of iron belonging to the hall," valued at two shillings—probably the fire-irons, one dorser and one banker. An inventory of a gentleman's goods in the year 1463, apparently in the southern part of England (printed in the "New Retrospective Review"), gives, as the contents of the hall,—a standing spear, a hanging of stained work, a mappa-mundi (a map of the world) of parchment—a curious article for the hall, a side-table, one "dormond" table (a permanent table), a beam with six candlesticks.

A vocabulary of the fifteenth century ("Volume of Vocabularies," p. 197) enumerates, as the ordinary furniture of the hall, a board, a trestle, a banker, a dorser, a natte (table-cloth), a table dormant, a basin, a laver, fire on a hearth, a brand or torch, a yule-block, an andiron, tongs, a pair of bellows, wood for the fire, a long settle, a chair, a bench, a stool, a cushion, and a screen. The permanent or dormant table, is shown in the scene given in our cut No. 238, taken from the beautifully illuminated manuscript of the "Roman de la Violette," at Paris, some facsimiles from which were privately distributed by the comte de Bastard, from whom I had the honour of receiving a copy. We have here

also the seat with its back, and the buffet with its jugs and dishes. In our cut No. 236, we had the waits or trumpeters, who were always attached to the halls of great people to announce the commencement of the dinner. Only persons of a certain rank were allowed this piece of ostentation; but everybody had minstrelsy to dinner who could obtain it, and when it was at hand. The wandering minstrel was welcome in every hall, and for this very reason the class of ambulatory musicians was very numerous. In the scene given in this cut (No. 238), the wandering minstrel, or, according to the story, a nobleman in that disguise, has just arrived, and he is allowed, without ceremony or suspicion, to seat himself at the fire, apparently on a stool, beside the two individuals at dinner.



No. 238. Reception of the Minstrel.

The floor of the hall was usually paved with tiles, or with flag stones, and very little care appears to have been shown to cleanliness, as far as it was concerned,

except that it was usual to strew it with rushes. Among the various French metrical "Contenances de Table," or directions for behaviour at table, of the fifteenth century, the person instructed is told that he must not *spit upon the table* at dinner time—

Ne craiche par dessus la table,
Car c'est chose desconvenable,

which is necessarily an intimation that he must spit upon the floor. In another of these pieces he is told that when he washes his mouth at table, he must not reject the water into the basin—

Quant ta bouche tu laveras,
Ou bacin point ne cracheras.

The reason for this rule was evidently the circumstance that one basin might serve for all the company; but the alternative again was of course to spit the water out upon the floor. Again, in one of these codes, the learner is told that when he makes sops in his wine, he must either drink all the wine in the glass, or throw what remains on the floor:—

Enfant, se tu faiz en ton verre
Souppes de vin aucunement,
Boy tout le vin entierement,
Ou autrement le gecte à terre.

Or, as it is expressed in another similar code more briefly—

Se tu fais souppes en ton verre,

Boy le vin ou le gette à terre.

There can be no doubt that all this must have made an extremely dirty floor. Another rather *naïve* direction shows that no more attention was paid to the cleanliness of the benches and seats; it is considered necessary to tell the scholar always to look at his seat before he sits down at table, to a assure himself that there is nothing dirty upon it!—

Enfant, prens de regarder peine
Sur le siege où tu te sierras,
Se aucune chose y verras
Qui soit deshonneste ou vilaine.

The fireplace at the side of the hall, with hearth and chimney, were now in general use. An example is given in our last cut; another will be seen in our cut No. 239, and here, though evidently in the hall, and a monastic hall too, the process of cooking is pursued at it. The monks appear to be taking a joyous repast, not quite in keeping with the strict rule of their order, and the way in which they are conducting themselves towards the women who have been introduced into the monastery does not speak in favour of monastic continence. This picture is from a manuscript bible, of the fifteenth century, in the National Library at Paris (No. 6829).

Manners at table appear to have been losing some of the strictness and stiffness of their ceremonial, while they retained their rudeness. The bowl of water was carried round to the guests, and each washed his hands before dinner, but the washing after dinner appears now to have been commonly omitted. In one of the directions for table already quoted, the scholar

is told that he must wash himself when he rises from bed in the morning, once at dinner, and once at supper, in all thrice a day:—

Enfant, d'honneur lave tes mains
A ton lever, à ton disner,
Et puis au soupper, sans finer;
Ce sont trois foys à tout le moins.

And again, in another similar code,—

Lave tes mains devant disner,
Et aussi quant vouldras soupper.



No. 239. A Monastic Feast.

Still people put their victuals to their mouth with their fingers, for, though forks were certainly known in the previous century, they were not used for conveying the food to the mouth. It was considered, nevertheless, bad manners to carry the victuals to the mouth with the knife—

Ne faiz pas ton morsel conduire
A ton coustel qui te peult nuire.

Another practice strictly forbidden in these rules was picking your teeth with your knife while at table. From the use thus made of the hand, in the absence of forks, it may be supposed that we should have directions for keeping it clean during the process of eating. One of these appears droll enough to us at the present day. It is directed that a person sitting at table in company is not to blow his nose with the hand with which he takes his meat. Handkerchiefs were not yet in use, and the alternative of course was that, if any one felt the need of performing the operation in question, he was to lay down his knife, and to do it with the hand which held it. In one of the French codes this direction is given rather covertly, as follows:—

Ne touche ton nez à main nue
Dont ta viande est tenue.

But in another it is enunciated more crudely, thus:—

Enfant, se ton nez est morveux,
Ne le torche de la main nue
De quoy ta viande est tenue;
Le fait est vilain et honteux.

All these circumstances show a state of manners which was very far from refined.

Among other directions for table, you are told not to leave your spoon in your platter; not to return back to your plate the food you have put in your mouth; not to dip your meat in the salt-cellar to salt it, but to take a little salt on your knife and put it on the meat; not to drink from a cup with a dirty mouth;

not to offer to another person the remains of your pottage; not to eat much cheese; to take only two or three nuts, when they are placed before you; not to play with your knife; not to roll your napkin into a cord, or tie it in knots; and not to get intoxicated during dinner-time!

Our next cut (No. 240) represents one of the backed seats, after a pattern of this century. It is taken from a manuscript of the romance of Launcelot du Lac, in the National Library at Paris (No. 594). It is probable that this seat belonged to the parlour, or, as the name signifies, conversation room. The custom still continued of making seats with divisions, so that each person sat in a separate compartment. A triple seat of this kind is represented in our cut No. 241, taken from a manuscript of the French Boccaccio in the National Library at Paris.



No. 240. A Domestic Scene.



No. 241. A Triple Seat.

The parlour seems to have been ornamented with more care, and to have been better furnished than the hall. This apartment appears to have been placed sometimes on the ground floor, and sometimes on the floor above, and large houses had usually two or three parlours. It had often windows in recesses, with fixed seats on each side; and the fireplace was smaller and more comfortable than that of the hall. As carpets came into more general use, the parlour was one of the first rooms to receive this luxury. In the inventory I have already quoted from the "New Retrospective Review," the following articles of furniture are described as being in the parlour—

A hanging of worsted, red and green.
A cupboard of ash-boards.
A table, and a pair of trestles.
A branch of latten, with four lights.
A pair of andirons.
A pair of tongs.
A form to sit upon.
And a chair.

This will give us a very good idea of what was the usual furniture of the parlour in the fifteenth century. The only movable seats are a single bench, and one chair—perhaps a seat with a back like that shown above. The table was even here formed by laying a board upon trestles. The cupboard was peculiar to this part of the house; many of my readers will probably remember the parlour cupboards in our old country houses, the branched candlestick of metal, suspended from the ceiling, and the tongs and andirons for the fire.

The principal articles of furniture in the parlour are all exhibited in illuminations in manuscripts of the same period. The "hanging of worsted" was, of course, a piece of tapestry for the wall, or for some part of the wall, for the room was in many, perhaps in most, cases, only partially covered. Sometimes, indeed, it appears only to have been hung up on occasions, perhaps for company, when it seems to have been placed behind the chief seat.[50] The wall itself was frequently adorned with paintings, in common houses rude and merely ornamental, while in others of a better class they represented histories, scenes from romances, and religious subjects, much like those exhibited on the tapestries themselves. In the cut annexed (No. 242), taken from a beautifully illuminated manuscript of the romance of "Lancelot,"

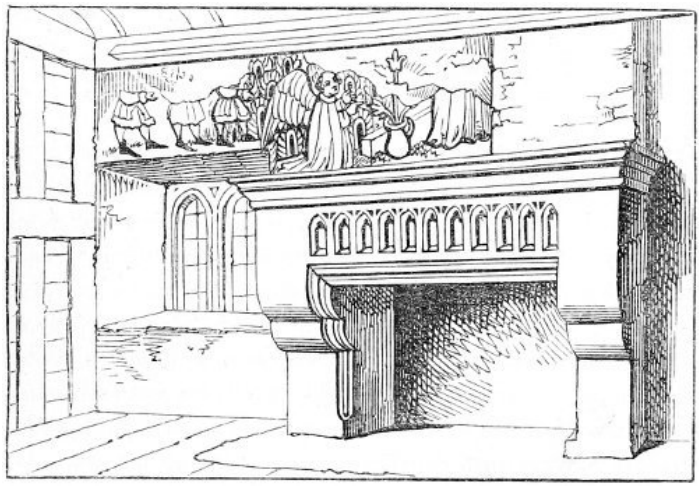
in the National Library at Paris, No. 6784, we have a representation of a parlour with wall paintings of this kind. Morgan le Fay is showing king Arthur the adventures of Lancelot, which she had caused to be painted in a room in her palace. Paintings of this kind are very often alluded to in the old writers, especially in the poets, as every one knows who has read the "Romance of the Rose," the works of Chaucer, or that singular and curious poem, the "Pastyme of Pleasure," by Stephen Hawes. Chaucer, in his "Dream," speaks of—

A chamber paint
Full of stories old and divers,
More than I can as now reherse.



No. 242. Morgan le Fay showing king Arthur the Paintings of the Adventures of Lancelot.

There was in the castle of Dover an apartment called Arthur's Hall, and another named Guenevra's Chamber, which have been supposed to be so called from the subjects of the paintings with which they were decorated; and a still more curious illustration of the foregoing drawing is furnished by an old house of this period still existing in New Street, Salisbury, a room in which preserves its painting in distemper, occupying the upper part of the wall, like the story of Lancelot in the pictures of the room of Morgan le Fay. We give a sketch of the side of this room occupied by the painting in the accompanying cut (No. 243). It occupies the space above the fireplace, and the windows looking into the street, but it has been much damaged by modern alterations in the house. The subject, as will at once be seen, was of a sacred character—the offering of the three kings.



No. 243. Wall-Paintings still remaining in a House at Salisbury.

The window to the left of the fireplace, which is one of the original windows of this house, has a deep sill, or seat, which was intended as one of the accommodations for sitting down. This was not unfrequently made with a recess in the middle, so as to form a seat on each side, on which two persons might sit face to face, and which was thus more convenient both for conversation, and for looking through the window at what was going on without. This appears to have been a favourite seat with the female part of the household when employed in needlework and other sedentary occupations. There is an allusion to this use of the window sill in the curious old poem of the "Lady Bessy," which is probably somewhat obscured by the alterations of the modern copyist; when the young princess kneels before her father, he takes her up and seats her in the window:—

I came before my father the king,
And kneeled down upon my knee;
I desired him lowly of his blessing,
And full soon he gave it unto me.
And in his arms he could me thring,
And set me in a window so high.

The words of our inventory, "a form to sit upon, and a chair," describe well the scanty furnishing of the rooms of a house at this period. The cause of this poverty in movables, which arose more from the general insecurity of property than the inability to procure it, is curiously illustrated by a passage from a letter of Margaret Paston to her husband, written early in the reign of Edward IV. "Also," says the lady

to her spouse, “if ye be at home this Christmas, it were well done ye should do purvey a garnish or twain of pewter vessel, two basins and two ewers, and twelve candlesticks, for ye have too few of any of these to serve this place; I am afraid to purvey much stuff in this place, till we be surer thereof.” As yet, a form or bench continued to be the usual seat, which could be occupied by several persons at once. One chair, as in the inventory just mentioned, was considered enough for a room, and was no doubt preserved for the person of most dignity, perhaps for the lady of the household. Towards the latter end of this period, however, chairs, made in a simpler form, and stools, the latter very commonly three-legged, became more abundant. Yet in a will dated so late as 1522 (printed in the “Bury Wills” of the Camden Society), an inhabitant of Bury in Suffolk, who seems to have possessed a large house and a considerable quantity of household furniture for the time, had, of tables and chairs, only “a tabyll of waynskott with to (*two*) joynyd trestelles, ij. joynyd stolys of the best, a gret joynyd cheyre at the deyse in the halle—the grettest close cheyre, ij. fote stoles—a rounde tabyll of waynskott with lok and key, the secunde joynyd cheyer, ij. joynyd stolys.” The ordinary forms of chairs and stools at the latter end of the fifteenth century are shown in our cut No. 244, taken from a very curious sculpture in alto-relievo on one of the columns of the Hôtel-de-Ville at Brussels. At this time we begin to find examples of chairs ingeniously constructed, for folding up or taking to pieces, so as to be easily laid aside or carried away. Some of these resemble exactly our modern camp-stools. A curious bedroom chair of this construction is represented in our cut No. 245, taken from a fine illuminated manuscript of the romance of the “Comte d’Artois,”

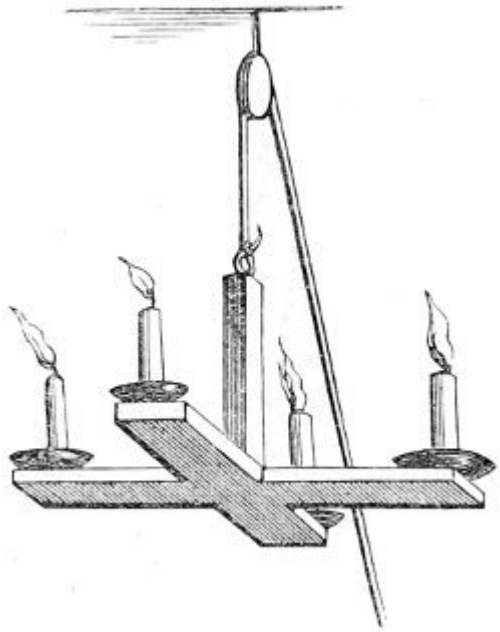
of the fifteenth century, in the collection of M. Barrois of Paris, but now, I believe, in the library of lord Ashburnham. The construction of this chair is too evident to need explanation. It explains the phrase, used in some of our old writers, of unfolding a chair.



No. 244. Sculpture from the Hôtel-de-Ville, Brussels.



No. 245. A Bedroom Chair.

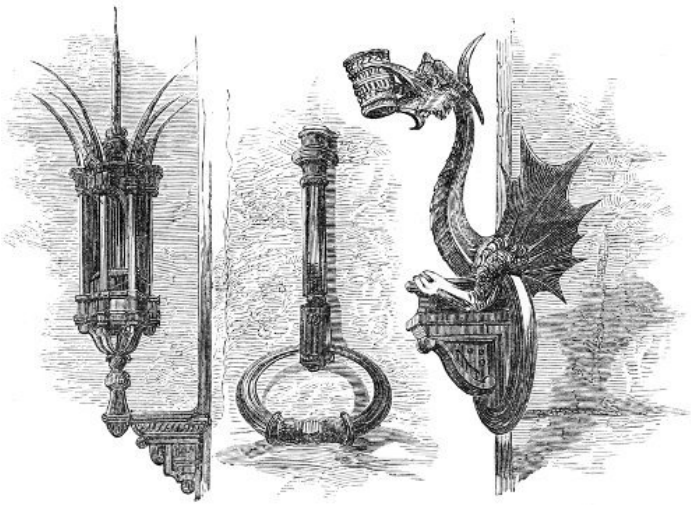


No. 246. A Chandelier.

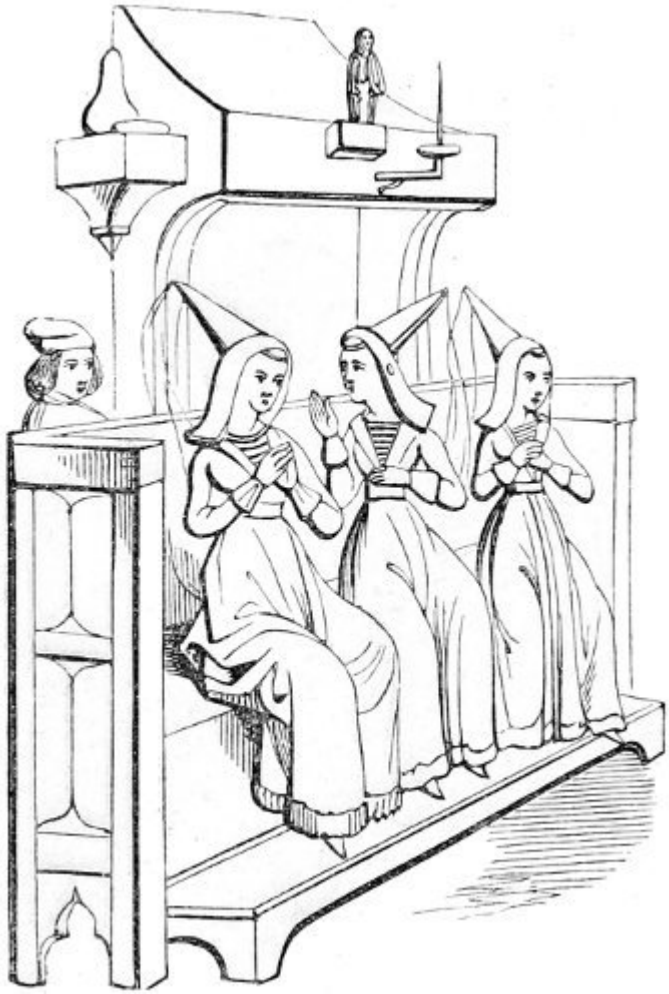
At this time much greater use appears to have been made of candles than formerly, and they seem to have been constructed of different substances and qualities. Candlesticks, made usually of the mixed metal called laton or latten (an alloy of brass), were found in all houses; they appear to have been still mostly made with a spike on which the candle was stuck, and sometimes they were ornamented, and furnished with mottoes. John Baret, who made his will at Bury, in 1463, possessed a "candylstykke of laten with a pyke," two "lowe candylstikkez of a sorth," (*i.e.* to match), and three "candylstykkes of laton whereupon is wretyn *grace me governe*." A testament dated in 1493 enumerates "a lowe candilstyke of laton, oon of my candelstykes, and ij. high candilstykes of laton." In the will of Agas Herte

of Bury, in 1522, “ij. belle canstykes and a lesser canstyke,” occurs twice, so that they seem to have formed two sets, and there is a third mention of “ij. bell canstykes.” We also find mention at this time of double candlesticks, which were probably intended to be placed in an elevated position to give light to the whole apartment. Our inventory of the contents of the parlour contains “a branch of latten, with four lights,” which was no doubt intended for this purpose of lighting the whole room (a sort of chandelier), and appears to have been identical with the candlebeam, not unfrequently mentioned in the old inventories. A widow of Bury, named Agnes Ridges, who made her will in 1492, mentions “my candylbeme that hangyth in my hall with vj. bellys of laton standyng thereon,” *i.e.* six cups in which the candles were placed. Our cut No. 246 represents a candlebeam with four lights. It is slung round a simple pulley in the ceiling, by a string which was fixed to the ground. It is taken from a manuscript of the “Traité des Tournois” (treatise of tournaments), by king René, in the National Library at Paris, No. 8352; and as the scene is represented as taking place in a princely hall, which is fitted up for a festive entertainment, we may take it as a curious proof of the rudeness which was still mixed up with the magnificence of the fifteenth century. In a fine illumination in a manuscript of Froissart in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 18 E. 2), representing the fatal masque at the court of Charles VI. of France, in 1393, in which several of the courtiers were burnt to death, we have, in the king’s palace, a chandelier exactly like that in our last cut, except that each candlestick on the beam contains two candles—a “double candlestick.” This manuscript is of the latter part of the fifteenth century. It had been the custom,

on festive occasions, or in ceremonies where large apartments required to be lighted, to do this by means of torches which servants held in their hands. This custom was very common, and is frequently spoken of or alluded to in the mediæval writers. Nevertheless, the inconvenience and even danger attending it, led to various plans for superseding it. One of these was, to fix up against the walls of the room frames for holding the torches, of which an example is given in the accompanying cut (No. 247), representing a torch-frame, still preserved in the Palazzo Strozzi at Florence. One of the group, it will be observed, has a long spike, intended to hold a large candle. Candlesticks fixed to the wall in various manners are seen in manuscripts of the fifteenth century; and an example is given in our cut No. 248, taken from a part of the same illumination of Froissart mentioned before. The candle is here placed before a little image, on the upper part of the fireplace, but whether this was for a religious purpose or not, is not clear. In this cut, the three princesses are seated on the large chair or settle, which is turned with its back to the fire. This important article of furniture is now found in the parlour as well as in the hall.



No. 247. Candle and Torch-holders.



No. 248.—Ladies Seated.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN-DOOR LIFE AND CONVERSATION.—PET ANIMALS.—THE DANCE.—RERE-SUPPERS.—ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE "NANCY" TAPESTRY.

As people began to have less taste for the publicity of the old hall, they gradually withdrew from it into the parlours for many of the purposes to which the hall was originally devoted, and thus the latter lost much of its former character. The parlour was now the place commonly used for the family meals. In a curious little treatise on the "most vyle and detestable use of dyce play," composed near the beginning of the sixteenth century, one of the interlocutors is made to say, "So down we came again," *i.e.* from the chambers above, "into the parlour, and found there divers gentlemen, all strangers to me; and what should I say more, but to dinner we went." The dinner hour, we learn from this same tract, was then at the hour of noon; "the table," we are told, "was fair spread with diaper cloths, the cupboard garnished with much goodly plate." The cupboard seems now to have been considered a necessary article of furniture in the parlour; it had originally belonged to the hall, and was of simple construction. One of the great objects of ostentation in a rich man's house was his plate; which, at dinner time, he brought forth, and caused to be spread on a table in sight of his guests; afterwards, to exhibit the plate to more advantage, the table was made with shelves, or steps, on which the different articles could be arranged in rows one

above another. It was called in French and Anglo-Norman a *buffet*, or a *dressoir* (dresser), the latter name, it is said, being given to it because on it the different articles were *dressés*, or arranged. The English had, in their own language, no special name for this article of furniture, so that they called it literally a cup-board, or board for the cups. In course of time, and especially when it was removed from the hall into the parlour, this article was made more elaborately, and doors were added to it, for shutting up the plate when not in use. It thus became equivalent to our modern sideboard. We have seen a figure of a cupboard of this more complicated structure in a cut in our last chapter; and we shall have others of different forms in our next.



No. 249. A Sick Room.

Our cut No. 249 is a good representation of the interior of a parlour furnished with the large seat, or settle, and with rather an elaborate and elegant cupboard. The latter, however, does not belong to the picture itself, having been introduced from another in the same manuscript by Mr. Shaw, in his beautiful work the "Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages," from which it is here taken. It is found in a fine manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 15 D. 1), containing the French translation of the "Historia Scholastica" of Peter Comestor, and written in the year 1470. The subject of this illumination is taken from the Scriptural story of Tobit, who here

lies sick and blind on the settle, having just despatched his son Tobias on his journey to the city of Rages. The lady cooking is no doubt intended for his wife Anna; it will be observed that she is following the directions of a book. Cookery books and books of medicinal receipts were now common. The kettle is suspended over the fire by a jack of a construction that occurs not unfrequently in the manuscripts of this period. The settle is placed with its back to the window, which is covered with a large curtain.

As the parlours saved the domestic arrangements of the household from the too great publicity of the hall, so on the other hand they relieved the bedchambers from much of what had previously been transacted in them, and thus rendered them more private. In the poem of the "Lady Bessie," when the earl of Derby and Humphrey Brereton visit the young princess, they are introduced to her in her bower, or chamber, but she immediately conducts the latter into the parlour, in order to converse with him:—

She took him in her arms, and kissed him times three;
"Welcome," she said, "Humphrey Brereton;
How hast thou spedd in the west countrey?
I pray thee tell me quickly and anon."
Into a parlour they went from thence,
There were no more but hee and shee.

The female part of the family now passed in the parlour much of the time which had been formerly passed in their chambers. It was often their place of work. Young ladies, even of great families, were brought up not only strictly, but even tyrannically,

by their mothers, who kept them constantly at work, exacted from them almost slavish deference and respect, and even counted upon their earnings. The parental authority was indeed carried to an almost extravagant extent. There are some curious instances of this in the correspondence of the Paston family. Agnes Paston, the wife of sir William Paston, the judge, appears to have been a very harsh mother. At the end of June 1454, Elizabeth Clere, a kinswoman who appears to have lived in great intimacy with the family, sent to John Paston, the lady's eldest son, the following account of the treatment of his sister Elizabeth, who was of marriageable age, and for whom a man of the name of Scroope had been proposed as a husband. "Therefore, cousin," writes Jane Clere, "meseemeth he were go for my cousin your sister, without that ye might get her a better; and if ye can get a better, I would advise you to labour it in as short time as ye may goodly, for she was never in so great a sorrow as she is now-a-days, for she may not speak with no man, whosoever come, nor even may see nor speak with my man, nor with servants of her mother's, but that she beareth her on hand otherwise than she meaneth; and she hath since Easter the most part been beaten once in the week, or twice, and sometimes twice in a day, and her head broken in two or three places. Wherefore, cousin, she hath sent to me by friar Newton in great counsel, and prayeth me that I would send to you a letter of her heaviness, and pray you to be her good brother, as her trust is in you." In spite of her anxiety to be married, Elizabeth Paston did not succeed at this time, but she was soon afterwards transferred from her paternal roof to the household of the lady Pole. It was still the custom to send young ladies of family to the houses of the great

to learn manners, and it was not only a matter of pride and ostentation to be thus surrounded by a numerous train, but the noble lady whom they served did not disdain to receive payment for their board as well as employing them in profitable work. In a memorandum of errands to London, written by Agnes Paston on the 28th of January, 1457, one is a message to "Elizabeth Paston that she must use herself to work readily, as other gentlewomen do, and somewhat to help herself therewith. Item, to pay the lady Pole twenty-six shillings and eightpence for her board." Margaret Paston, the wife of John Paston, just mentioned, and daughter-in-law of Agnes, seems to have been equally strict with her daughters. At the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., she wrote to her son John concerning his sister Anne, who had been placed in the house of a kinsman of the name of Calthorpe. "Since ye departed," she says, "my cousin Calthorpe sent me a letter complaining in his writing that forasmuch as he cannot be paid of his tenants as he hath been before this time, he proposeth to lessen his household, and to live the straitlier, wherefore he desireth me to purvey for your sister Anne; he saith she waxeth high (*grows tall*), and it were time to purvey her a marriage. I marvel what causeth him to write so now, either she hath displeased him, or else he hath taken her with default; therefore I pray you commune with my cousin Clare at London, and weet (*learn*) how he is disposed to her-ward, and send me word, for I shall be fain to send for her, and with me she shall but lose her time, and without she will be the better occupied she shall oftentimes move (*vex*) me and put me in great inquietness; remember what labour I had with your sister, therefore do your part to help her forth, that may be to your worship and

mine." There certainly appears here no great affection between mother and daughter.

Among other lessons, the ladies appear to have been taught to be very demure and formal in their behaviour in company. Our cut No. 250 represents a party of ladies and gentlemen in the parlour engaged in conversation. It is taken from an illumination in the manuscript of the romance of the "Comte d'Artois," formerly in the possession of M. Barrois. They are all apparently seated on benches, which seem in this instance to be made like long chests, and placed along the sides of the wall as if they served also for lockers. These appear to be the only articles of furniture in the room. There is a certain conventional position in most of the ladies of the party which has evidently been taught, even to the holding of the hands crossed. The four ladies with the gentleman between them are no doubt intended to be the attendants on the lady of the house, holding towards her the position of Elizabeth and Anne Paston. We have precisely the same conventional forms in the next cut (No. 251), which is taken from an illumination in a manuscript of the "Legenda Aurea," in the National Library in Paris (No. 6889). We see here the same demureness and formal crossing of the hands among the young ladies, in presence of their dame. It may be observed that, in almost all the contemporary pictures of domestic scenes, the men, represented as visitors, keep their hats on their heads.



No. 250. A Conversation Scene.



No. 251. A Social Group of the Fifteenth Century.

One of the most curious features in the first of these scenes is that of the cages, especially that of the squirrel, which is evidently made to turn round with

the animal's motion, like squirrel-cages of the present day. We have now frequent allusions to the keeping of birds in cages, and parrots, magpies, jays, and various singing birds, are often mentioned among domestic pets. During the earlier half of the century of which we are now more especially speaking, the poems of Lydgate furnish us with several examples. Thus, in that entitled "The Chorle and the Bird," we are told—

The chorle (countryman) *was gladde that he this birdde hadde take,.*
Mery of chere, of looke, and of visage,.
And in al haste he cast for to make.
Within his house a pratie litelle cage,.
And with hir songe to rejoise his corage.

And in another of Lydgate's minor poems, it is said of Spring,—

Whiche sesoun prykethe (stirs up) *fresshe corages,*
Rejoissethe beastys walkyng in ther pasture,
Causith briddys to syngen in ther cages,
Whan blood renewyth in every creature.

Among these, we find birds mentioned which are not now usually kept in cages. Thus, in a manuscript of the time of Edward IV., we find a receipt for food for that favourite bird of the mediæval poets, the nightingale.[51] Small animals of various kinds were also tamed and kept in the house, either loose or in cages. The plot of some of the earlier fabliaux turns upon the practice of taming squirrels as pets, and keeping them in cages; and this animal continued long to be an especial favourite, for its liveliness and

activity. In one of the compartments of the curious tapestry of Nancy, of the fifteenth century, which has been engraved by M. Achille Jubinal, we see a lady with a tame squirrel in her hand, which she holds by a string, as represented in our cut No. 252.



No. 252. Lady and Squirrel.

The parlour was now the room where the domestic amusements were introduced. The guest in the early tract on “Dyce Play,” quoted in a former page, tells us, “and, after the table was removed, in came one of the waiters with a fair silver bowl, full of dice and

cards. Now, masters, quoth the goodman, who is so disposed, fall too." Gambling was carried to a great height during the fifteenth century, and was severely condemned by the moralists, but without much success. Dice were the older implements of play, and tables (or backgammon). A religious poem on saints' days, in a manuscript written about the year 1460, warning against idle amusements, says—

Also use not to pley at the dice ne at the tablis,
Ne none maner gamys, uppon the holidais;
Use no tavernys where be jestis and fablis,
Syngyng of lewde balettes, rondelettes, or virolais.

After the middle of the fifteenth century, cards came into very general use; and at the beginning of the following century, there was such a rage for card-playing, that an attempt was made early in the reign of Henry VIII. to restrict their use by law to the period of Christmas. When, however, people sat down to dinner at noon, and had no other occupation for the rest of the day, they needed amusement of some sort to pass the time; and a poet of the fifteenth century observes truly,—

A man may dryfe forthe the day that long tyme dwellis
With harpyng and pipyng, and other mery spellis,
With gle, and wyth game.

Such amusements as these mentioned, with games of different kinds in which the ladies took part, and dancing, generally occupied the afternoon, from dinner to supper, the hour of which latter meal seems usually to have been six o'clock. The favourite amusement was dancing. A family party at the dance

is represented in our cut No. 253, from M. Barrois' manuscript of the "Comte d'Artois." The numerous dances which were now in vogue seem to have completely eclipsed the old carole, or round dance, and the latter word, which was a more general one, had displaced the former. The couple here on their legs are supposed to be performing one of the new and tasteful fashionable dances, which were much more lively than those of the earlier period; some of them were so much so as to scandalise greatly the sage moralists of the time. The after-dinner amusements were resumed after supper; and a practice had now established itself of prolonging the day's enjoyment to a late hour, and taking a second, or, as it was called, a rere-supper (*arrière souper*), which was called the banquet in France, where the three great meals were now the dinner, the supper, and the banquet, and dinner appears to have been considered as the least meal of the three. It was thus, probably, that, in course of time, dinner took the place of supper, and supper that of banquet.



No. 253. A Dance.

We have a very curious illustration of the

extravagant living at table of the latter half of the fifteenth century, in the curious allegorical tapestry long preserved at Nancy, in Lorrain, and said by tradition, probably with truth, to have been the ornament of the tent of Charles le Téméraire, duke of Burgundy, when he laid siege to Nancy in 1477, and was defeated and slain. It is of Flemish workmanship, and no doubt pictures the manners of the Burgundian nobles and gentry, but at that time the court of Burgundy was the model of the fashionable life of western Europe. It happens, curiously enough, that a few years later a rather obscure French writer, named Nicole de La Chesnaye, compiling one of those allegorical dramas then so popular under the title of "Moralities," took the story of this tapestry as his subject, and has thus left us the full explanation of what might otherwise have been not easily understood. The title of this morality is "La Nef de Santé" (the ship of health), and a second title is "La condamnacion des bancquetz" (the condemnation of banquets); and its object is to show the unhappy consequences of the extravagance in eating and drinking, which then prevailed. It opens with a conversation between three allegorical personages named Dinner, Supper, and Banquet, who declare their intention to lead joyous life evening and morning, and they resolve on imitating Passe-Temps (pastime) and Bonne-Compagnie (good company). At this moment Bonne-Compagnie herself, who is described as a dashing damsel (*gorrière damoiselle*), enters with all her people, namely, Gourmandize (greediness), Friandize (daintiness), Passe-Temps, already mentioned, Je-Boy-à-Vous (I drink to you), Je-Pleige-d'Autant (I pledge the same), and Acoustumance (custom). Each names what he prefers in good cheer, and Bonne-

Compagnie, to begin the day, orders a collation, at which, among other things, are served damsons (*prunes de Damas*), which appear at this time to have been considered as delicacies. There is here a marginal direction to the purport that, if the morality should be performed in the season when real damsons could not be had, the performers must have some made of wax to look like real ones. They now take their places at table, and, while they are eating, Je-Boy-à-Vous calls the attention of the company to the circumstance that Gourmandize, in his haste to eat the damsons, had swallowed a snail. Passe-Temps next proposes a dance, and chooses for his partner the lady Friandize, comparing her to Helen, and telling her that he was Paris. She, in reply, compares herself to Medea, and her partner to Jason. Then the musicians, "placed on a stage or some higher place," are to play a measure "pretty short." Dinner, Supper, and Banquet next make their appearance, and, addressing Bonne-Compagnie, make their apology for entering without being invited; but the lady receives them well, asks their names, and, in return, tells them those of her people. Dinner, to show his gratitude for this friendly reception, invites the whole party to go to his feast, which is just ready; and Supper invites them to a second repast, and Banquet to a third. They accept the invitation of Dinner, and are served with *friture*, *brouet*, *potage*, *gros pâtés*, &c. Meanwhile Supper and Banquet look upon the party from "some high window," and converse on the consequences likely to follow their excesses. This scene is represented in the first compartment of the tapestry, as it now exists (for it has undergone considerable mutilation), and is represented in our cut No. 254. It is a good picture of a seignorial repast of the fifteenth century. There are

people at table, besides those enumerated in the morality, who are here indicated by their names: Passe-Temps at one end of the table, a lady to his left, and after her Je-Boy-à-Vous, who has Bonne-Compagnie by his side, and to her left Dinner, the host. To the right of Passe-Temps sits the lady Gourmandize, and to her right Je-Vous-Pleige (I pledge you), and next to him Friandize. The cups in which they are drinking are flat-shaped, and appear, by the colours in the original, to be of glass, with the brims, and other parts in some, gilt. The minstrels, in the gallery, are playing with trumpets. Among the attendants, we see the court fool, with his bauble, who had now become an ordinary, and almost a necessary, personage in the household of the rich; it was the result of an increasing taste for the coarse buffoonery which characterised an unrefined state of society. The court fool was licensed to utter with impunity whatever came to his thought, however mordant or however indecent. Beside him are two valets with dogs, which appear to have been usually admitted to the hall, and to have eaten the refuse on the spot. A window above gives us a view of the country, with buildings in the distance, and Supper and Banquet looking in upon the company. An inscription in the upper corner to the right tells us how these two personages came slyly to look at the assembly, and how through envy they conspired to take vengeance upon the feasters—

Soupper et Bancquet
Vindrent l'assemblée adviser,
Dont par envie prestement
Compindrent de viengence user.



No. 254. A Dinner Party in grand ceremony.

The morality next introduces the Diseases who are to be the executors of the vengeance of Supper and Banquet, and who, according to the stage directions, are to be dressed “very strangely, so that you would hardly know whether they are women or men.” These are Apoplexy, Paralysis, Pleurisy, Cholic, Quinsy, Dropsy, Jaundice, Gravel, and Gout. At the end of this scene, Supper and Banquet address themselves to these people, and ask them to undertake an assault on Bonne-Compagnie and the other guests of Dinner; and they consent at once, and Supper places them in an ambuscade in his dwelling. Meanwhile the feast ends, and Bonne-Compagnie says grace, and orders the player on the lute to perform his duty, whereupon “the instrument sounds, and the three men shall lead out the three

women, and shall dance whatever dance they please, while Bonne-Compagnie remains seated." Supper and Banquet then present themselves in turn to invite Bonne-Compagnie and her people, and they go first to Supper, who receives them with extraordinary hospitality. But Supper was a wicked traitor; and the stage directions inform us that, while the guests were enjoying themselves, his agents, the Diseases, were to be introduced watching them through a window. As soon as the substantial viands are eaten, Supper goes to order what was called the *issue*, or dessert; and in his absence Bonne-Compagnie orders the minstrels to play an air, and they obey. While the dessert is preparing, Supper goes to the Diseases, to ask if they are ready, and they arm and attack the guests, overthrowing tables and benches, and treating everybody with great cruelty. After some other scenes, Banquet comes to announce that his feast is ready, condoles with the sufferers on the treatment they had received from Supper, though he is meditating still greater treachery himself, and they go and feast with him. The Diseases, ready at his command, make a much more fatal attack upon the guests.

Banquet's feast forms the second compartment of the tapestry of Nancy in its present state, and is represented in our cut No. 255. When compared with the morality, it presents some variations. In front, Banquet is standing before the table, opposite to Je-Boy-à-Vous and Je-Pleige-d'Autant, and appears to be replying to Bonne-Compagnie, who is seated between Passe-Temps and Acoustumance. Further to the left Banquet appears again, with his hand on his sword, addressing the Diseases, who are at the entrance of the hall, waiting for his signal for the attack. At the

lower corner on the left we see Supper, talking with another important personage, probably intended to represent Dinner. Above, to the right, through a window, we see Banquet again, with one of his attendants fastening on his armour, while another holds his casque, which he has not yet placed on his head. The first of the inscriptions in this compartment of the tapestry, which is on the left, tells how, while the guests are feasting in all jollity, Banquet and his rout arm and come to slaughter the whole assembly—

Chiere ilz tyrent joyeulsement,
Y estant Bancquet et la route
Qui s'armerent et là proprement
Occirent l'assemblée toute.

The second inscription consists of eight lines moralizing on the final ruin which often falls on those who make enjoyment the business of their lives:—

Les trois folz ont grant volonté
De cherche[r] leur malle meschance;
Quant on a bien ris et chanté,
A la fin fault tourner la chance.
Ha! vous vellez avoir plaisance!
Bien l'auré vous ung tandis;
Mès gens quy prenent leur aisence,
En fin se treuvent plus mauldiz.

It is remarkable that these eight lines, taken from the tapestry, are introduced into the morality, and placed in the mouth of the fool at the end of the first scene.



No. 255. A Banquet in the Fifteenth Century.

It will be remarked at once that there is a much greater display of luxury in the banquet scene than in the dinner scene. Upon the table are two peacocks, each with a shield hung to its neck, no doubt to show the armorial bearings of the host; a boar's head, dressed in the most fashionable manner; a subtelty, representing a ship filled with birds, surrounded by a sea full of fishes, and having a tall mast, with a sail made of silk and ermine, and surmounted by a figure of a naked female, intended probably to represent the goddess Venus. There are also on the table four candles, of coloured wax. A noble dresser stands against the wall, covered with vessels of gold and of glass, but the metal far predominates. The minstrels are standing apparently on the floor on a level with the guests, and consist of a man playing on the cittern, or lute, a harper, and one who plays on the pipe and drum, the latter instrument a substitute for the tabor. The valets with the dogs are again

introduced, but we miss the court fool.

The remaining portions of the tapestry represent the attack of the Diseases, and the great havoc they made among the guests.

The banquet was known in England by that name, as well as by the name of rere-supper. In the curious English morality play, entitled “The Interlude of the Four Elements,” printed early in the sixteenth century, the same distinction is made between the three meals as in the French morality described above. Sensual-appetite, one of the characters in the piece, leads Humanity to the tavern to dine, and orders a dinner of three courses, with a choice variety of wines. As they are leaving after dinner, the taverner reminds them that they were to return to supper; and then Humanity proposes a cup of “new” wine, as though wine was then valued for being new. Food and liquor were formerly adulterated in more dishonest manner even than in modern times, and the taverner answers the demand jokingly—

Ye shall have wyne as newe as can be,
For I may tell you in pryvyté
Hit was brued but yester nyght.

But he immediately adds—

But than I have for your apetyte
A cup of wyne of olde claret;
There is no better, by this lyght.

After supper they go to dance, and meanwhile Sensual-appetite goes to prepare the banquet:—

I shall at the towne agayne
Prepare for you a banket,
Of metys that be most delycate,
And most pleasaunt drynkes and wynes therate,
That is possyble to get.
Which shall be in a chamber feyre
Preparyd poynt devyse (in perfection),
With damaske water made so well
That all the howse thereof shall smell
As it were Paradyse.

In "Acolastus," a work by the grammarian Palsgrave, published in 1540, the banquet is still identified with the rere-supper, when he speaks of "the rere-supper, or banket, where men syt downe to drynke and eate agayne after their meate." And again, still later, Higins, in his "Nomenclator," published in 1585, explains the Latin word *pocœnium* by "a reare-supper, or a banket after supper." The term rere-supper was in use throughout the fifteenth century. An English vocabulary of that century speaks of a meal between dinner and supper, under the name of "a myd-dyner under-mete," the same which, no doubt, was called by a French word, a *bever*, as consisting especially in taking a drink, and which, removed to the time between breakfast and dinner, is now called a luncheon.

In the introduction to Lydgate's "Story of Thebes," which is introduced as a continuation of the "Canterbury Tales," the poet pretends to have arrived at the inn in Canterbury when it was occupied by the pilgrims, who invite him to sup with them, and he joins their company. "Our host," who is the leader of the pilgrims, offers him his place at their supper heartily:

Praying you (he says) *to suppe with us this night,*
And ye shall have made, at your devis,
A great pudding, or a round hagis,
A French moile, a tansie, or a froise.

These appear to have been the usual favourite dishes at an ordinary supper of this date (the first half of the fifteenth century). The *hagis* appears to have been much the same dish as the Scottish haggis of the present day. The *moile* was a dish made of marrow and grated bread. The *tansie* was a kind of omelet, resembling apparently what the French now call an *omelette aux fines herbes*; while the *froise* had small strips of bacon in it—an *omelette au lard*. This latter was a very favourite dish among the monks. After supper, the guests, or at least some of them, are represented as taking "strong nottie ale" before going to bed. They rise early, "anon as it is day," and start on their return towards London; and they take no meal before dinner, having it

Fully in purpose to come to dinere
Unto Ospring, and breake there our fast.

There is a longer preface to the supplementary tale of "Beryn," written about the same date as the "Story of Thebes," and printed in the edition of Chaucer's works by Urry, in which the divisions of the day are tolerably well described. The pilgrims there arrived at their destination in Canterbury "at mydmorowe," which is interpreted in the glossaries as meaning nine o'clock in the forenoon, and then took their lodgings, "ordeyned" their dinner, and, while it was preparing, went to make their offerings to the shrine of St. Thomas in the cathedral church. Meanwhile the Pardoner had separated from the company, and

engaged in a low intrigue with the "tapster," or barmaid, who offers him a drink, but he tells her he had not yet broken his fast—we are to conclude that this was the case with the rest of the company—and

She start into the town, and set a py al hote.

Meat pies appear to have been very common articles of food in the middle ages, and to have been kept always ready at the cooks' shops. The offering seems to have taken but a small space of time, and then—

They set their signys upon their hedes, and som oppon their capp,
And sith to the dyner-ward they gan for to stapp (step);
Every man in his degré wissh (washed) *and toke his sete,*
As they wer wont to doon at soper and at mete;
And wer in silence for a tyme, tyl good ale gan arise.

It appears, therefore, that people did not hold conversation while eating, but that the talk and mirth began with the liquor, whether ale or wine. It was then agreed that they should remain that day in Canterbury, and all sup together at night—

"*Then al this after-mete I hold it for the best*
To sport and pley us," quod the hoost, "ech man as hym lest (likes),
And go by tyme to soper, and to bed also,
So mowe we erly rysen, our jorney for to do".

Accordingly they all walk forth into the city, where the knight, who with his son had put on fresh gowns, took the latter to the town walls to explain to him

their strength, and the character of the defences; and as many of the rest as had changes of apparel with them imitated their example, and they separated in parties, according to their different tastes. The monk, the parson, and the friar, went to visit some clerical acquaintance, and indulged in spiced wine. The ladies remained at home:—

The wyfe of Bath was so wery, she had no wyl to walk;
She toke the priores by the honde, "Madam, wol ye stalk
Pryvely into the garden to se the herbis growe?
And after with our hostis wife in her parlour rowe (talk)?
I wol gyve yowe the wyne, and ye shul me also;
For tyl we go to soper we have naught ellis to do."

The prioress assents to this proposal—

—and forth gon they wend,
Passing forth sofftly into the herbery;
For many a herb grew for sewe (pottage) *and surgery;*
And all the aleys fair and parid, and raylid, and ymakid;
The sauge and the isope yfrethid and istakid;
And othir beddis by and by fresh ydight,
For comers to the hooste right a sportful sight.

When the guests reassembled, they agreed that the knight should be their "marshall" of the table, and he ordered them all to wash, and then appointed them to their seats, that they might be properly seated together, for this was part of his duty. They thus sat two and two, each couple, no doubt, at one dish—

They wissh (washed), *and sett right as he bad, eche man*

wyth his fere,
And begonne to talk of sportis and of chere
That they had the aftir-mete whiles they wer out;
For othir occupacioune, tyll they wer servid about,
They had not at that tyme, but eny man kitt (cut) *a loff.*

Thus it would appear that nothing eatable was as yet placed on the table but bread. Presently, the supper was served round to them, of which there was only one "service," out of courtesy on the part of the rich members of the company towards those who were poor, as there was to be an equal division of the expenses of the supper. In return, the highest places of the table were yielded to the persons of best estate, and these, as an acknowledgment, gave a cup of wine round at their own expense, and then left the table to retire to their beds. But the less genteel of the company, the miller and the cook, with the sompnour, the yeoman, the reeve, and the manciple, remained "drinking by the moon,"—that is, they had no candle. There was, however, one candle in the bedroom, which seems to have served to light the whole company,—for it is evident that they all slept in beds in one room,—and this candle was only put out when they were all gone to bed, which was the moment the Pardoner awaited to steal away and pursue his intrigue. Next morning they were out of their beds so early that they left the town on their homeward journey at sunrise.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHAMBER AND ITS FURNITURE AND USES.—BEDS.—HUTCHES AND COFFERS.—THE TOILETTE; MIRRORS.

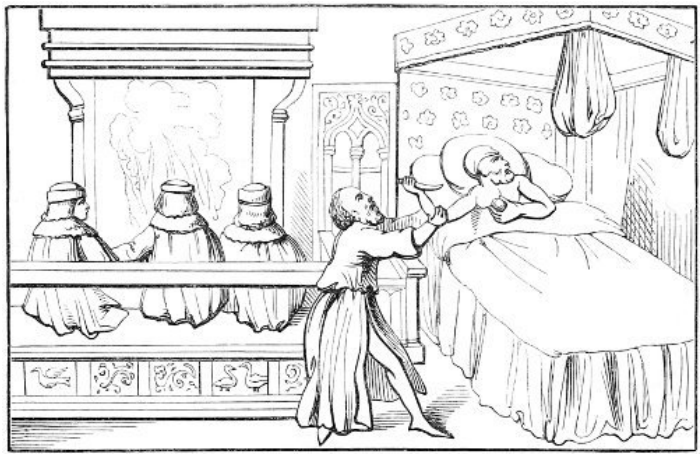
The chambers were now, except in smaller houses, mostly above the ground-floor; and, as I have already observed, the privacy of the chamber was much greater than formerly. In the poem of "Lady Bessy," quoted in a former chapter (the whole poem is given in Mr. Halliwell's privately printed "Palatine Anthology"), when the earl of Derby was plotting with the lady Bessy for calling in the earl of Richmond, he proposed to repair secretly to her in her chamber, in order to prepare the letters:—

"We must depart (separate), *lady," the earle said then;*
"Wherefore keep this matter secretly,
And this same night, betwix nine and ten,
In your chamber I think to be.
Look that you make all things ready,
Your maids shall not our councell hear,
For I will bring no man with me
But Humphrey Brereton, my true esquire."
He took his leave of that lady fair,
And to her chamber she went full light,
And for all things she did prepare,
Both pen and ink, and paper white.

The earl, on his part,—

—unto his study went,
Forecasting with all his might

To bring to pass all his intent;
He took no rest till it was night,
And when the stars shone fair and bright,
He him disguised in strange mannere;
He went unknown of any wight,
No more with him but his esquire.
And when he came her chamber near,
Full privily there can he stand;
To cause the lady to appeare
He made a sign with his right hand.
And when the lady there him wist,
She was as glad as she might be;
Charcoals in chimneys there were cast,
Candles on sticks standing full high.
She opened the wickett, and let him in,
And said, "Welcome, lord and knight soe free!"
A rich chair was set for him,
And another for that fair lady;
They ate the spice, and drank the wine,
He had all things at his intent.



No. 256. Interior of the Chamber.



No. 257. The Nursing Chamber.

The description given in these lines agrees perfectly with the representations of chambers in the illuminated manuscripts of the latter part of the fifteenth century, when the superior artistic skill of the illuminators enabled them to draw interiors with more of detail than in former periods. We have almost invariably the chimney, and one “rich chair,” if not more. In our cut No. 256, we have a settle in the chamber, which is turned to the fire. This picture is taken from a manuscript of the early French translation of Josephus, in the National Library in Paris (No. 7015), and represents the death of the emperor Nero, as described by that writer. All the furniture of this chamber is of a superior description. The large chair by the bed-side is of very elegant design; and the settle, which is open at the back, is

ornamented with carved panels. Our next cut (No. 257), taken from a manuscript of Lydgate's metrical Life of St. Edmund (MS. Harl. No. 2278), represents the birth of that saint. This room is more elaborately furnished than the former. The fittings of the bed are richer; the chimney is more ornamental in its character, and is curious as having three little recesses for holding candlesticks, cups, and other articles; and we have a well-supplied cupboard, though of simple form. From the colours in the manuscript, all the vessels appear to be of gold, or of silver-gilt. The seat before the fire in this cut (No. 257) seems to be the hutch, or chest, which in Nos. 261 and 262 we shall see placed at the foot of the bed, from which it is here moved to serve the occasion.

The lady seated on this chest appears to be wrapping up the new-born infant in swaddling-clothes; a custom which, as I have remarked on a former occasion, and as we shall see again further on, prevailed universally till a comparatively recent period. Infants thus wrapped up are frequently seen in the illuminated manuscripts; and their appearance is certainly anything but picturesque. We have an exception in one of the sculptures on the columns of the Hôtel de Ville at Brussels (represented in our cut No. 258), which also furnishes us with a curious example of a cradle of the latter part of the fifteenth century.



No. 258. A Cradle.

It will, no doubt, have been remarked that in these cuts we observe no traces of carpets on the floor. In our cut No. 256, the floor is evidently boarded; but more generally, as in our cuts Nos. 257, 260, and 261, it appears chequered, or laid out in small squares, which may be intended to represent tiles, or perhaps parquetry. There is more evidence of tapestried or painted walls; although this kind of ornamentation is only used partially, and chiefly in the dwellings of the richer classes. The walls in the chamber in cut No. 257 appear to be painted. In the same cut we have an example of an ornamental mat.

The most important article of furniture in the chamber was the bed, which began now to be made much more ornamental than in previous times. We have seen in the former period the introduction of the canopy and its curtains, under which the head of the bed was placed. The *celure*, or roof, of the

canopy, was now often enlarged, so as to extend over the whole bed; and it, as well as the *tester*, or back, was often adorned with the arms of the possessor, with religious emblems, with flowers, or with some other ornament. There were also sometimes *costers*, or ornamental cloths for the sides of the bed. The curtains, sometimes called by the French word *ridels*, were attached edgeways to the tester, and were suspended sometimes by rings, so as to draw backwards and forwards along a pole; but more frequently, to judge by the illuminations, they were fixed to the celure in the same manner as to the tester, and were drawn up with cords. At the two corners of the celure portions of curtain were left hanging down like bags. The curtains which draw up are represented in our cuts Nos. 259 and 260. Those in cuts Nos. 261 and 262, if not in Nos. 256 and 257, are evidently drawn along poles with rings. The latter method is thus alluded to in the old metrical romance of "Sir Degrevant:"—

That was a mervelle thynge,
To se the riddels hynge,
With many red golde rynge
That thame up bare.

The celure and tester were fixed to the wall and ceiling of the apartment, and were not in any way attached to the bed itself; for the large four-post bedsteads were introduced in the sixteenth century. In some illuminations the bed is seen placed within a square compartment separated from the room by curtains which seem to be suspended from the roof. This appears to have been the first step towards the more modern four-post bedsteads. In one of the plates to D'Agincourt's "Histoire de l'Art" (Peinture,

pl. 109), taken from a Greek fresco of the twelfth or thirteenth century in a church at Florence, we have the curtains arranged thus in a square tent in the room, where the cords are not suspended from the roof, but supported by four corner-posts. The bed is placed within, totally detached from the surrounding posts and curtains. The space thus left between the bed and the curtains was perhaps what was originally called in French the *ruelle* (literally, the "little street") of the bed, a term which was afterwards given to the space between the curtains of the bed and the wall, which held rather an important place in old French chamber life, and especially in the stories of chamber intrigue.



No. 259. A Bed of the Fifteenth Century.

The bedstead itself was still a very simple structure of wood, as shown in our cut No. 259, which

represents the bed of a countess. It is taken from the manuscript of the romance of the "Comte d'Artois," which has already furnished subjects for our previous chapters on the manners of the fifteenth century. The lady's footstool is no less rude than the bedstead. The bed here evidently consists of a hard mattress. It was still often made of straw, and the bed is spoken of in the glossaries as placed upon a *stramentum*, which is interpreted by the English word "litter;" but feather-beds were certainly in general use during the whole of the fifteenth century. In the latter part of the fourteenth century, Chaucer (Dreme, v. 250) thus described a very rich bed:—

Of downe of pure dovis white
I wol yeve him a fethir bed,
Rayid with gold, and right well cled
In fine blacke sattin d'outremere,
And many a pilowe, and every bere (pillow cover)
Of clothe of Raines to slepe on softe;
Him thare (need) *not to turnen ofte*.

Agnes Hubbard, a lady of Bury, in Suffolk, who made her will in 1418, left among other things, "one feather-bed" (*unum lectum de plumis*). A rich townsman of the same place bequeathed, in 1463, to his niece, "certeyne stuffe of ostilment," among which he enumerates "my grene hanggyd bedde steynyd with my armys therin, that hanggith in the chambyr ovir kechene, with the curtynez, the grene keveryng longgyng therto; another coverlyte, ij. blanketts, ij. peyre of good shetes, the trampsoun, the costerys of that chambyr and of the drawgth chambyr next, tho that be of the same soort, a grete pilve (*pillow*) and a smal pilve; the fethirbeed is hire owne that hire maistresse gaf hire at London." After

enumerating other articles of different kinds, the testator proceeds—"And I geve hire the selour and the steynyd clooth of the coronacion of Our Lady, with the clothes of myn that long to the bedde that she hath loyen (*lain*) in, and the beddyng in the draught chamber for hire servaunth to lyn in; and a banker of grene and red lying in hire chambyr with the longe chayer (*a settle, probably*); and a stondyng coffre and a long coffre in the drawth chambyr." William Honyboorn, also of Bury, bequeathed to his wife in 1493, "my best ffether bedde with the traunsome, a whyte selour and a testour theron, with iij. white curteyns therto, a coverlight white and blewe lyeng on the same bedde, with the blankettes." The same man leaves to his daughter, "a ffether bedde next the best, a materas lyeng under the same, iiij. peyr shetys, iij. pelowes, a peyr blankettes." John Coote, who made his will at Bury in 1502, left to his wife, for term of her life, "alle my plate, brasse, pewter, hanggynges, celers, testers, fetherbeddes, traunsoms, coverlytes, blankettes, shetes, pelows, and all other stuff of hussold (*household*);" and afterwards bequeaths these articles separately to his son and daughter, after their mother's death:—"I will that William Coote have my beste hanged bede, celer, testor, and curteyns longgyng to the same, the beste fetherbede, the beste coverlyght, the beste peyer of blankettes, the beste peyer shetes; and Alys Coote to have the next hanged bede, celer, and testour, wyth the ij*de* fetherbede, blankettes, and the ij*de* peyer shetes." In the will of Anne Barett, of Bury, dated in 1504, we read, "Item, I bequeth to Avyse *my servaunte* x. marc, a ffether bed, a traunsom, a payre shetes, a payre blankettes, a coverlyght." Lastly, the will of Agar Herte, a widow of the same town, made in 1522, contains the following items:—"Item, I

bequethe to Richard Jaxson, my son, a ffetherbed, ij. trawnsoms, a matras, ij. pelowes, iiij. payer of schetes, a payer of blankettes, and a coveryng of arasse, and a secunde coverlyght, a selour and a testour steynyd with fflowers, and iij. curteyns;" ... "Item, I bequethe to Jone Jaxson, my dowghter, a fetherbed, a matras, a bolster, ij. pelowes, iiij. payer of schetes, a payer of blankettes, a coverlyght with fflowre de lyce, a selour and a testour steynyd with Seynt Kateryn at the hed and the crusifix on the selour, ... a secunde coverlyght, ij. pelow-beris (*pillow-covers*), the steynyd clothes abowte the chamber where I ly;" ... "Item, I bequethe to Fraunces Wrethe a ffetherbed, a bolster, a payer of blankettes, my best carpet, a new coverlyght with fflowers, ij. payer of schetes, ij. pelows with the berys."

These extracts from only one set of wills are sufficient to show the great advance which our forefathers had made during the fourteenth century in the comfort and richness of their beds, and how cautious we ought to be in receiving general observations on the condition of previous ages by those who write at a subsequent period. I make this observation in allusion to the account so often quoted from Harrison, who, in the description of England written in Essex during the reign of Elizabeth, and inserted in Holinshed's "Chronicles," informs us that "our fathers (yea, and we our selves also) have lien full oft upon straw pallets, on rough mats, covered onelie with a sheet, under coverlets made of dagswain,[52] or hopharlots (I use their owne termes), and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster. If it were so that our fathers, or the good-man of the house, had, within seven years

after his mariage, purchased a matteres, or flocke bed, and thereto a sacke of chaffe to reste his heade upon, he thought himselfe to be as well lodged as the lord of the towne, so well were they contented. Pillowes, said they, were thought meete onelie for women in child-bed. As for servants, if they had anie sheet above them it was well, for seldom had they anie under their bodies to keepe them from the pricking straws that ran oft through the canvas of the pallet, and rased their hardened hides." A description like this could only apply to the lower classes in society, who had as yet participated but little in the march of social improvement.



No. 260. A. Truckle-bed.

As the privacy of the chamber had become greater, it seems now to have been much less common in private mansions for several people to sleep in the same room, which appears more rarely to have had more than one bed. But a bed of a new construction had now come into use, called a truckle or trundle bed. This was a smaller bed which rolled under the

larger bed, and was designed usually for a valet, or servant. The illuminations in the manuscript of the romance of the "Comte d'Artois," already quoted more than once, furnish us with the early example of a truckle-bed represented in our cut No. 260. The count d'Artois lies in the bed under the canopy, while the truckle-bed is occupied by his valet (in this case, his wife in disguise). The truckle-bed is more frequently mentioned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Every reader will remember the speech of mine host of the Garter, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" (act iv. sc. 5), who says of Falstaff's room, "There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing bed and truckle-bed." It was the place allotted to the squire, when accompanying the knight on "adventures." So in Hudibras (part ii. canto ii.)—

When Hudibras, whom thoughts and aking
'Twixt sleeping kept all night and waking,
Began to rub his drowsy eyes,
And from his couch prepared to rise,
Resolving to dispatch the deed
He vow'd to do, with trusty speed;
But first, with knocking loud and bawling,
He roused the squire, in truckle lolling.

In the English universities, the master-of-arts had his pupil to sleep in his truckle-bed.





No. 261. A Bedroom Scene.

The chamber, as the most private part of the house, was stored with chests and coffers, in which the person who occupied it kept his money, his deeds and private papers, and his other valuables. Margaret Paston, writing from Norwich to her husband about the year 1459, gives a curious account of the preparations for his reception at home. “I have,” she says, “taken the measure in the drawte chamber, there as ye would your coffers and your cowntewery

(*supposed to mean a desk for writing*) should be set for the while, and there is no space beside the bed, though the bed were removed to the door, for to set both your board (*table*) and your coffers there, and to have space to go and sit beside; wherefore I have purveyed that ye shall have the same drawte chamber (*withdrawing room—the origin of our name of drawing-room for the salon*) that ye had before, thereat ye shall lye to yourself; and when your gear is removed out of your little house, the door shall be locked, and your bags laid in one of the great coffers, so that they shall be safe, I trust." The hucches (*hutches*) or chests, and coffers, in the bed-chamber, are frequently mentioned in old writings. The large hutch seems to have been usually placed at the foot of the bed. In one of our preceding cuts (No. 257) we have seen it moved from its place to make a temporary seat before the fire. The cut annexed (No. 261), taken from a manuscript Latin Bible in the National Library in Paris (No. 6829), shows us the hutch in its usual place, and opened so as to expose its contents to our view. It is here evidently filled with money, and the persons who have entered the chamber seem to be plundering it. In a very popular old story, the same in substance as that of Macbeth and his daughters, an old man, on the marriage of his daughter, weakly gives up all his property to the young married pair, trusting to their filial love for his sustenance, and they go on treating him worse and worse, until he is saved from actual destitution by a deception he practises upon them. In one version of the story, given in English verse in a manuscript of the fifteenth century, the father goes to a friend and borrows a large sum of money in gold, which he places in his coffer, and, having invited them to his dwelling, and persuaded them to remain all night, he

contrives that early in the morning they shall, as by accident, espy him counting his gold. The unfilial children, who supposed that he had given them all he possessed, were astonished to find him still rich, and were induced, by their covetousness, to treat him better during the rest of his life. The poem describes the old man leaving his bed to count the gold in his chest:—

But on the morow, at brode daylight,
The fadir ros, and, for they shulden here
What that he dide in a boistous manere,
Unto his chest, which thre lokkes hadde,
He went, and therat wrethed he ful sadde,
And whan it was opened and unshit,
The bagged gold bi the merchaunt hym lent
He hath untied, and streight forth with it
Unto his beddis feete gone is and went,
What doth thanne this sel man and prudent
But out the gold on a tapit hath shot,
That in the bagges left ther no grot.

—MS. Harl. 372, fol. 88, vo.

Robbers, or plunderers in time of war, when breaking into a house, always made direct for the chamber. Among the letters of the Paston family, is a paper by a retainer of sir John Fastolf, who had a house in Southwark, giving an account of his sufferings during the attack upon London by Jack Cade and the commons of Kent in 1450, in which he tells how “the captain (Cade) sent certain of his meny to my chamber in your rents, and there broke up my chest, and took away one obligation of mine that was due unto me of 36*l.* by a priest of Paul’s and one other obligation of one Knight of 10*l.*, and my purse with five rings of gold, and 17*s.* 6*d.* of gold and

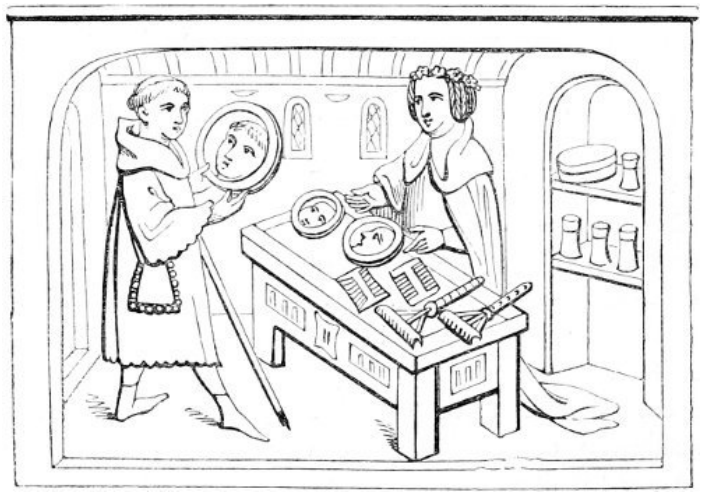
silver; and one harness (*suit of armour*) complete of the touch of Milan; and one gown of fine perse blue, furred with martens; and two gowns, one furred with bogey (*budge*), and one other lined with frieze." One of John Paston's correspondents, writing from London on the 28th of October, 1455, gives the following still more pertinent account of the robbing of a man's house:—"Also there is great variance between the earl of Devonshire and the lord Bonvile, as hath been many day, and much debate is like to grow thereby; for on Thursday at night last past, the earl of Devonshire's son and heir came, with sixty men of arms, to Radford's place in Devonshire, which (Radford) was of counsel with my lord Bonvile; and they set a house on fire at Radford's gate, and cried and made a noise as though they had been sorry for the fire; and by thet cause Radford's men set open the gates and yede (*went*) out to see the fire; and forthwith the earl's son aforesaid entered into the place, and entreated Radford to come down of his chamber to speak with them, promising him that he should no bodily harm have; upon which promise he came down, and spoke with the said earl's son. In the mean time his meny (*retinue*) rob his chamber, and rifled his hutches, and trussed such as they could get together, and carried it away on his own horses." As soon as this was done, Radford, who was an eminent lawyer residing at Poghill, near Kyrton, and now aged, was led forth and brutally murdered. In the stories and novels of the middle ages, the favoured lover who has been admitted secretly into the chamber of his mistress is often concealed in the hutch or chest.



No. 262. A Lady in Bed.

Our cut No. 262, taken from the same manuscript of the Bible which furnished our last illustration, represents the hutch also in its place at the foot of the bed. This sketch is interesting, both as showing more distinctly than the others the rings of the bed-curtains, and the rods attached to the celure, and as a particularly good illustration of the habit which still continued in all classes and ranks of society, of sleeping in bed entirely naked. The same practice is shown in several of our other cuts (see Nos. 256, 260, and 261), and, indeed, in all the illuminated manuscripts of the fifteenth century which contain bedroom scenes. Wherever this is not the case, there is some evident reason for the contrary, as in our cut No. 257. During this period we have not so many pictorial illustrations of the toilet as might be expected. The ladies' combs were generally coarse and large in the teeth, but often very elaborately and

beautifully ornamented. The mirror was, as at former periods, merely a circular piece of metal or glass, set in a case, which was carved with figures or ornaments externally. The vocabularies mention the mirror as one of the usual objects with which a chamber should be furnished.



No. 263. A Dealer in Mercery.

Our cut No. 263 is taken from a manuscript (MS. Cotton. Tiberius, A. vii. fol. 93, ro) of the English translation of the singular work of the French writer, Guillaume de Deguilleville, entitled "Le Pélerinage de la Vie Humaine," a poem which bears a striking resemblance in its general character to the "Pilgrim's Progress" of Bunyan. The English version, which is in verse, and entitled simply the "Pilgrim," has been ascribed to Lydgate. In the course of his adventures, the pilgrim comes to the lady Agyographe, who is represented as dealing in "mercerye," but the enumeration of articles embraced under that term is

rather singular:—

Quod sche, "Geve (if) *I schal the telle,*
Mercerye I have to selle;
In boystes (boxes) *soote* (sweet) *oynementis,*
Therewith to don allegementis (to give relief)
To ffolkes whiche be not glade,
But discorded and mallade,
And hurte with perturbacyouns
Off many trybulacyouns.
I have knyves, phylletys, callys,
At ffeestes to hang upon wallys;
Kombes mo than nyne or ten,
Bothe ffor horse and eke ffor men;
Merours also, large and brode,
And ffor the syght wonder gode;
Off hem I have fful greet plenté,
For ffolke that haven volunté
Byholde hemsilffe therynne."

Our cut represents the interior of the house of the lady mercer, with the various articles enumerated in the text; the boxes of ointment, the horse-combs, the men's combs, and the mirrors. She first offers the pilgrim a mirror, made so as to flatter people, by representing them handsomer than they really were, which the pilgrim refuses:—

"Madame," quod I, "yow not displeese,
This myroure schal do me noon eese;
Wherso that I leese or wynne,
I wole nevere looke thereinne."
But ryght anoon myne happe it was
To loken in another glasse,
In the whiche withouten wene (without doubt)

I sawe mysylff ffoule and uncleene,
And to byholde ryght hydous,
Abhomynabel, and vecyous.
That merour and that glas
Schewyd (showed) *to me what I was.*

In the celebrated "Romance of the Rose," one of the heroines, Belacueil, is introduced, adorning her head with a fillet, and with this head-dress contemplating herself in a mirror:—

Belacueil souvent se remire,
Dedans son miroer se mire,
Savoir s'il est si bien seans.

There is a representation of this scene in the beautiful illuminated manuscript of the "Romance of the Rose" in the British Museum (MS. Harl. No. 4425), in which, singularly enough, the mirror itself, which is evidently of glass, is represented as being convex, though perhaps we must attribute this appearance to the unskilfulness of the designer, who in his attempt to show that the mirror was round, failed in perspective. In our first cut, from Guillaume de Deguilleville, it will be observed that the artist, in order to show that the articles intended to be represented are mirrors, and not plates, or any other round implements, has drawn the reflections of faces, although nobody is looking into them. Another peculiarity in the illumination of the "Romance of the Rose," a portion of which is represented in our cut No. 264, is that the mirror is fixed against the wall, instead of being held in the hand when used, as appears to have been more generally the case. Standing-mirrors seem not to have been yet in use; but before the end of the fifteenth century, glass

mirrors, which appear to have been invented in Belgium or Germany, came into use.



No. 264. Lady and Mirror.

CHAPTER XX.

STATE OF SOCIETY.—THE FEMALE CHARACTER.—GREEDINESS IN EATING.—CHARACTER OF THE MEDIÆVAL SERVANTS.—DAILY OCCUPATIONS IN THE HOUSEHOLD: SPINNING AND

WEAVING; PAINTING.—THE GARDEN AND ITS USES.—GAMES OUT OF DOORS; HAWKING, ETC. —TRAVELLING, AND MORE FREQUENT USE OF CARRIAGES.—TAVERNS; FREQUENTED BY WOMEN.—EDUCATION AND LITERARY OCCUPATIONS; SPECTACLES.

During the fifteenth century, society in England was going through a transition which was less visible on the surface than it was great and effectual at the heart. France and England were both torn by revolutionary struggles, but with very different results; for while in France the political power of the middle classes was destroyed, and the country was delivered to the despotism of the crown and of the great lords, in our country it was the feudal nobility which was ruined, while the municipal bodies had obtained an increased importance in the state, and the landed gentry gained more independence and power from the decline of that of the great feudal barons. Yet in both countries feudalism itself, in its real character, was rapidly passing away—in France, before the power of the crown; in England, before the remodelling and reformation of society. While the substance of feudalism was thus perishing, its outward forms appeared to be more sought than ever, and the pride and ostentation of rank, and its arrogance too, prevailed during the fifteenth century

to a greater degree than at any previous period. The court of Burgundy, itself only in origin a feudal principality, had set itself up as the model of feudalism, and there the old romances of chivalry were remodelled and published anew, and were read eagerly as the mirror of feudal doctrines. The court of Burgundy was remarkable for its wonderful pomp and magnificence, and for its ostentatious display of wealth; it was considered the model of lordly courtesy and high breeding, and was the centre of literature and art; and circumstances had brought the court of England into intimate connection with it, so that the influence of Burgundian fashions was greater during this period in England than that of the fashions of the court of France. There can be no doubt, too, that the social character in England and in France were now beginning to diverge widely from each other. The condition of the lower class in France was becoming more and more miserable, and the upper classes were becoming more licentious and immoral; whereas, in England, though serfdom or villanage still existed in name, and in law, the peasantry had been largely enfranchised, and it was gradually disappearing as a fact; and their landlords, the country gentry, lived among them in more kindly and more intimate intercourse, instead of treating them with tyrannical cruelty, and dragging them off to be slaughtered in their private wars. Increased commerce had spread wealth among the middle classes, and had brought with it, no doubt, a considerable increase of social comfort. Social manners were still very coarse, but it is quite evident that the efforts of the religious reformers, the Lollards, were improving the moral tone of society in the middle and lower classes.

People had, moreover, begun now to discuss great social questions. The example of this had been given in England in the celebrated poem of "Piers Ploughman," in the middle of the fourteenth century, and such questions were mooted very extensively by the Lollards, who held as a principle the natural equality of man. This was a doctrine which was accepted very slowly, and was certainly discountenanced by the Roman Catholic preachers, who encouraged the belief that the division of society into distinct classes was a permanent judgment of God, and even invented legends to account for its origin. Long after feudalism had ceased, it was difficult to disabuse people of the opinion that the blood which flowed in the veins of a gentleman was of a different kind from that of a peasant, or even from that of a burgher. One of the legendary explanations of these divisions of blood is given by a poetical writer of the reign of Henry VII., named Alexander Barclay, who has left us seven "eclogues," as he calls them, on the social questions which agitated men's minds in his day. One day, according to this story, while Adam was absent occupied with his agricultural labours, Eve sat at home on their threshold, with all her children about her, when suddenly she became aware of the approach of the Creator, and, ashamed of the great number of them, and fearful that her productiveness might be misinterpreted, she hurriedly concealed those which were the least well-favoured. "Some of them she placed under hay, some under straw and chaff, some in the chimney, and some in a tub of draff; but such as were fair and well made she wisely and cunningly kept with her." God told her that he had come to see her children, that he might promote them in their different degrees; upon which she

presented them in their order of birth. God then ordained the eldest to be an emperor, the second to be a king, and the third a duke to guide an army; of the rest he made earls, lords, barons, squires, knights, and "hardy champions." Some he appointed to be "judges, mayors, and governors, merchants, sheriffs, and protectors, aldermen, and burgesses." While all this was going on, Eve began to think of her other children, and, unwilling that they should lose their share of honours, she now produced them from their hiding-places. They appeared with their hair rough, and powdered with chaff, some full of straws, and some covered with cobwebs and dust, "that anybody might be frightened at the sight of them." They were black with dirt, ill-favoured in countenance, and mishapen in stature, and God did not conceal his disgust. "None," he said, "can make a vessel of silver out of an earthen pitcher, or goodly silk out of a goat's fleece, or a bright sword of a cow's tail; neither will I, though I can, make a noble gentleman out of a vile villain. You shall all be ploughmen and tillers of the ground, to keep oxen and hogs, to dig and delve, and hedge and dike, and in this wise shall ye live in endless servitude. Even the townsmen shall laugh you to scorn; yet some of you shall be allowed to dwell in cities, and shall be admitted to such occupations as those of makers of puddings, butchers, cobblers, tinkers, costard-mongers, hostlers, or daubers." Such, the teller of the story informs us, was the beginning of servile labour.

A song of the fifteenth century, printed in the collection of songs and carols edited for the Percy Society, the burthen of which is the necessity of money in all conditions, describes the different ranks and their various aspirations in the following order:

the yeoman who desires to become a gentleman, the gentleman who seeks to be a squire, the squire who would be a knight, the lettered man who seeks distinction in the schools, the merchant who aspired to rise to wealth, and the lawyer who sought promotion at the bar. In the interesting "Recueil de Poésies Françoises des xve et xvie siècles," by M. de Montaiglon (vol. iii. pp. 138, 147), there are two poems, probably of the latter part of the fifteenth century, entitled *Les Souhaitz des Hommes* (the wishes of the men) and *Les Souhaitz des Femmes* (the wishes of the women), in which the various classes are made to declare that which they desire most. Thus dukes, counts, and knights desire to be skilful in warlike accomplishments; the president in parliament desires the gold chain and the seat of honour, with wisdom in giving judgment; the advocate wishes for eloquence in court, and for a fair bourgeoise or damoiselle at home to make his house joyful; the burgher wishes for a good fire in winter, and a good supply of fat capons; and the clergy are made to wish for good cheer and handsome women. The wishes of the women are on the whole, perhaps, more characteristic than those of the men. Thus, the queen wishes to be able to love God and the king, and to live in peace; the duchess, to have all the enjoyments and pleasures of wealth; the countess, to have a husband who was loyal and brave; the knight's lady, to hunt the stag in the green woods; the damoiselle, or lady of gentle blood, also loved hunting, and wished for a husband valiant in war; and the chamber-maiden took pleasure in walking in the fair fields by the river-side; while the bourgeoise loved above all things a soft bed at night, with a good pillow, and clean white sheets. That part of society which now comes chiefly under our notice had fallen

into two classes, that which boasted gentle blood, and the ungentle, or burgher class, and this was particularly shown among the ladies, for the bourgeoise sought continually to imitate the gentlewoman, or *damoiselle*, who, on her part, looked on these encroachments of the other with great jealousy. M. de Montaiglon has printed in the collection just quoted (vol. v. p. 5) a short poem entitled, "The Debate between the Damoiselle and the Bourgeoise," in which the exclusive rights of gentle blood are strongly claimed and disputed. We have seen the same ambition of the wives of burghers and yeomen to ape the gentlewoman as far back as the days of Chaucer, and it now often becomes a subject of popular satire. Yet we must not forget that this desire to imitate higher society assisted much in refining the manners of the middle classes. M. de Montaiglon (vol. ii. p. 18) has printed a short piece in verse of the latter part of the fifteenth century, entitled the "Doctrinal des Filles," containing the sentiments which teachers sought to implant in the minds of young ladies, and it will suit England at that time equally with France. The young ladies are here recommended to be bashful; not to be forward in falling in love; to pay proper attention to their dress, and to courteousness in behaviour; and not to be too eager in dancing. From all that we gather from the writers of the time, the love of dancing appears at this period to have been carried to a very great degree of extravagance, and to have often led to great dissoluteness in social manners, and the more zealous moralists preached against the dance with much earnestness. The author of our "Doctrinal" admonishes the young unmarried girl to dance with moderation when she is at the "carol" (the name of the ordinary dance), lest people who

see her dancing too eagerly should take her for a dissolute woman—

Fille, quant serez en karolle,
Dansez gentiment par mesure,
Car, quant fille se desmesure,
Tel la voit qui la tient pour folle.

The young lady is next cautioned against talking scandal, against believing in dreams, against drinking too much wine, and against being too talkative at table. She was to avoid idleness, to respect the aged, not to allow herself to be kissed in secret (kissing in public was the ordinary form of salutation), and not to be quarrelsome. She was especially to avoid being alone with a priest, except at confession, for it was dangerous to let priests haunt the house where there were young females—

Fille, hormis confession,
Seullette ne parlez à prebstre;
Laissez-les en leur eglise estre,
Sans ce qu'ilz hantent vos maisons.

These lines, written and published in a bigoted Roman Catholic country, by a man who was evidently a staunch Romanist, and addressed to young women as their rule of behaviour, present perhaps one of the strongest evidences we could have of the evil influence exercised by the Romish clergy on social morals, a fact, however, of which there are innumerable other proofs.

Whatever may have been the effect of such teaching on the better educated classes, the general character

of the women of the middle and lower classes appears to have been of a description little likely to be conducive to domestic happiness. All the popular materials for social history represent their morals as being very low, and their tempers as overbearing and quarrelsome, the consequence of which was a separation of domestic life among the two sexes after marriage, the husbands, when not engaged at their work or business, seeking their amusement away from the house, and the wives assembling with their "gossips," often at the public taverns, to drink and amuse themselves. In the old mysteries and morality plays, in which there was a good deal of quiet satire on the manners of the age in which they were composed and acted, Noah's wife appears often as the type of the married woman in the burgher class, and her temper seems to have become almost proverbial. In the "Towneley Mysteries," when Noah acquaints his wife with the approach of the threatened deluge, and of his orders to build the ark, she abuses him so grossly as a common carrier of ill news, that he is provoked to strike her; she returns the blow, and they have a regular battle, in which the husband has the advantage, but he is glad to escape from her tongue, and proceed to his work. In the "Chester Mysteries," Noah's wife will not go into the ark; and when all is ready, the flood beginning, and the necessity of taking her in apparent, she refuses to enter, unless she is allowed to take her gossips with her:—

Yea, sir, sette up youer saile,
And rowe fourth with evill haile,
For withouten fayle
I will not oute of this towne,
But I have my gossippes everyechone (every one)

One foote further I will not gone (go).
They shall not drowne, by Sante John,
And I maye save ther life!
They loven me full wel, by Christe!
But thout lett them into they cheiste,
Elles (otherwise) *rowe nowe wher the leiste* (where you like),
And gette thee a newe wiffe.

It is to be supposed that Noah, when he wanted her, had found her with her gossips in the tavern. At last, Noah's three sons are obliged to drag their mother into the "boat," when a scene occurs which appears thus briefly indicated in the text,—

Noye.

Welckome, wiffe, into this botte!

Noye's Wiffe.

Have thou that for thy note! [She beats him.]

Noye.

Ha, ha! marye, this is hotte!
It is good for to be still.

The conversation of these "gossips," when they met, was loose and coarse in the extreme, and, as described in contemporary writings, the practice even of profane swearing prevailed generally among both sexes to a degree which, to our ears, would sound perfectly frightful—it was one of the vices against which the moralists preached most bitterly. Life, indeed, in spite of its occasional refinement in the higher ranks of society, was essentially coarse at

this period, and we can hardly conceive much delicacy of people who dieted as, for instance, the family of the earl of Northumberland are reported to have done in the household book, compiled in 1512, which was published by bishop Percy. I only give the breakfast allowances, which, on flesh-days, were “for my lord and my lady,” a loaf of bread “in trenchers,” two manchets (loaves of fine meal), one quart of beer (or, as we should now call it, ale), a quart of wine, half a chine of mutton, or a chine of beef boiled; for “my lord Percy and Mr. Thomas Percy” (the two elder children), half a loaf of household bread, a manchet, one pottle of beer (two quarts—they were not yet allowed wine), a chicken, or else three mutton bones boiled; “breakfasts for the nurcery, for my lady Margaret and Mr. Ingram Percy” (who in fact were mere children), a manchet, one quart of beer, and three mutton bones boiled; for my lady’s gentlewomen, a loaf of household bread, a pottle of beer, and three mutton bones boiled, or else a piece of beef boiled. It will be seen here that the family dined two to a plate, or mess, as was the usual custom in the middle ages. On fish-days, the breakfast allowances were as follows: for my lord and my lady, a loaf of bread in trenchers, two manchets, a quart of beer, a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish, six baked herrings, or a dish of sprats; for the two elder sons, half a loaf of household bread, a manchet, a pottle of beer, a dish of butter, a piece of salt fish, a dish of sprats, or three white (fresh) herrings; for the two children in the nursery, a manchet, a quart of beer, a dish of butter, a piece of salt fish, a dish of sprats, or three white herrings; and for my lady’s gentlewomen, a loaf of bread, a pottle of beer, a piece of salt fish, or three white herrings. We shall be inclined, in comparing it

with our modern style of living, to consider this as a very substantial meal to begin the day with.

According to the old moral and satirical writers, excessive greediness in eating had become one of the prevailing vices of this age. Barclay, in his "Eclogues," gives a strange picture of the bad regulations of the tables at the courts of great people, in the time of Henry VII. He describes the tables as served in great confusion, and even as covered with dirty table-cloths. The food he represents as being bad in itself, and often ill-cooked. Everybody, he says, was obliged to eat in a hurry, unless he would lose his chance of eating at all, and they served the worst dishes first, so that when you had satiated yourself with food which was hardly palatable, the dainties made their appearance. This led people to eat more than they wanted. When an attractive dish did make its appearance, it led literally to a scramble among the guests:—

But if it fortune, as seldome doth befall,
That at beginning come dishes best of all,
Or (before) *thou hast tasted a morsell or twayne,*
Thy dish out of sight is taken soon agayne.
Slowe be the servers in serving in alway,
But swifte be they after taking thy meate away.
A speciall custome is used them among,
No good dish to suffer on borde to be longe.
If the dish be pleasaunt, eyther fleshe or fishe,
Ten handes at once swarme in the dishe;
And if it be fleshe, ten knives shalt thou see
Mangling the flesh and in the platter flee;
To put there thy handes is perill without fayle,
Without a gauntlet or els a glove of mayle.

It would thus seem that the servers left the guests, except those at the high table, to help themselves. It appears that in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, the English had gained the character of keeping the most profuse tables, and being the greatest eaters, in Europe. A scrap preserved in a manuscript of the reign of Henry VIII., and printed in the “Reliquiæ Antiquæ” (vol. i. p. 326), offers rather a curious excuse for this character. There was a merchant of England, we are told, who adventured into far countries, and when he had been there a month or more, a great lord invited this English merchant to dinner. And when they were at dinner, the lord wondered that he eat not more of his meat, for, said he, “Englishmen are called the greatest feeders in the world, and it is reported that one man will eat as much as six of another nation, and more victuals are consumed there than in any other region.” “It is true,” the merchant replied, “it is so, and for three reasonable causes so much victual is served on the table; one of which is, for love, another, for physic, and the third, for dread. Sir, as concerns the first, we are accustomed to have many divers meats for our friends and kinsfolk, because some love one manner of meat, and some another, and we wish every man to be satisfied. Secondly, in regard of physic, because for divers maladies which people have, some men will eat one meat, and some another, it is desirable that everybody should be suited. The third cause is for dread; for we have so great abundance and plenty in our realm, of beasts and fowls, that if we should not kill and destroy them, they would destroy and devour us.” It may be remarked that, during this period, the English merchants and burghers in general seem to have kept very good tables, and that the lower orders, and even

the peasantry, appear to have been by no means ill fed.

The confusion in serving at table described by Alexander Barclay was no doubt caused in a great measure by the numerous troops of riotous and unruly serving men and followers, who were kept by the noblemen and greater land-holders, and who formed everywhere one of the curses of society. Within the household, they had become so unmanageable that their masters made vain attempts to regulate them; while abroad they were continually engaged in quarrels, often sanguinary ones, with countrymen or townsmen, or with the retainers of other noblemen or gentlemen, in which their masters considered that it concerned their credit to support and protect them, so that the quarrels of the servants became sometimes feuds between their lords. The old writers, of all descriptions, bear witness to the bad conduct of serving men and servants in general, and to their riotousness, and especially of the *garçons*, or, as they were called in English, "lads." Cain's *garcio*, in the "Towneley Mysteries," was intended as a picture of this class, in all their coarseness and vulgarity; and the character of Jak Garcio, in the play of "The Shepherds," in the same collection, is another type of them.

We have seen that the breakfast in the household of the Percys was a very substantial meal, but it seems not to have been generally considered a regular meal, either as to what was eaten at it, or as to the hour at which it was taken. Perhaps this was left to the convenience, or caprice, of individuals.[53] We have a curious description of the division of the occupations of the day in a princely household, in an account which has been left us of the household

regulations of the duchess of York, mother of king Edward IV., which, however, were strongly influenced by the pious character of that princess, who spent much time in religious duties and observances. Her usual hour of rising was seven o'clock, when she heard matins; she then "made herself ready," or dressed herself, for the occupations of the day, and when this was done, she had a low mass in her chamber. After this mass, she took something "to recreate nature," which was, in fact, her breakfast, though it is afterwards stated that it was not a regular meal. She then went to chapel, and remained at religious service until dinner, which, as we are further told, took place, "upon eating days," at eleven o'clock, with a first dinner in the time of high mass for the various officers whose duty it was to attend at table; but, on fasting days, the dinner hour was twelve o'clock, with a later dinner for carvers and waiters. After dinner, the princess devoted an hour to give audience to all who had any business with her; she then slept for a quarter of an hour, and then spent her time in prayer until the first peal of even-song (vespers), when "she drank wine or ale at her pleasure." She went to chapel, and returned thence to supper, which, on eating days, was served at five o'clock, the carvers and servers at table having supped at four. The ordinary diet in the house of this princess appears to have been extremely simple. On Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, the household was served at dinner with beef and mutton, and one roast; at supper with "leyched" beef and roast mutton; on Monday and Wednesday, they had boiled beef and mutton at dinner, and at supper, the same as on the three other days; on Friday, salt fish and two dishes of fresh fish; and on Saturday, salt fish, one fresh fish, and butter,

for dinner, and salt fish and eggs for supper. After supper, the princess “disposed herself to be familiar with her gentlewomen,” with “honest mirth;” and one hour before going to bed she took a cup of wine, went to her privy closet to pray, and was in bed by eight o’clock.

The duchess of York is of course to be looked upon as a model of piety and sobriety, and her hours are not perhaps to be taken as exactly those of other people, and certainly not her occupations. In the French “Débat de la Damoiselle et de la Bourgeoise,” the latter accuses the gentlewoman of late rising. “Before you are awake,” she says, “I am dressed and have attended to my duties; do not therefore be surprised if we are more diligent than you, since you sleep till dinner-time.” “No,” replies the damoiselle, “we must spend our evening in dancing, and cannot do as you, who go to bed at the same time as your hens.”



No. 265. Lady at her Distaff.

It has been stated already that, even in the highest ranks of society, the ladies were usually employed at home on useful, and often on profitable work. This work embraced the various processes in the manufacture of linen and cloth, as well as the making it up into articles of dress, and embroidery, netting, and other similar occupations. The spinning-wheel was a necessary implement in every household, from the palace to the cottage. In 1437, John Notyngham, a rich grocer of Bury St. Edmunds, bequeathed to one of his legatees, “j spynnyng whel et j par carpsarum,” meaning probably “a pair of cards,” an implement which is stated in the “Promptorium Parvulorum” to be especially a “wommanys instrument.” A few years previously, in 1418, Agnes Stubbard, a resident in the same town, bequeathed to two of her maids, each, one pair of

wool-combs, one “kembyng-stok” (a combing-stock, or machine for holding the wool to be combed), one wheel, and one pair of cards; and to another woman a pair of wool-combs, a wheel, and a pair of cards. John Baret, of Bury, in 1463, evidently a rich man with a very large house and household, speaks in his will of a part of the house, or probably a room, which was distinguished as the “spinning house.” Our cut No. 265, from an illuminated Bible of the fifteenth century in the Imperial Library at Paris (No. 6829), represents a woman of apparently an ordinary class of society at work with her distaff under her arm. The next cut (No. 266) is taken from a fine illuminated manuscript of the well-known French “Boccace des Nobles Femmes,” and illustrates the story of “Cyrille,” the wife of king Tarquin. We have here a queen and her maidens employed in the same kind of domestic labours. The lady on the left is occupied with her combs, or cards, and her combing-stock; the other sits at her distaff, also supported by a stock, instead of holding it under her arm; and the queen, with her hand on the shuttle, is performing the final operation of weaving.



No. 266. A Queen and her Damsels at Work.

Some of the more elegant female accomplishments, which were unknown in the earlier ages, were now coming into vogue. Dancing was, as already stated, a more favourite amusement than ever, and it received a new *éclat* from the frequent introduction of new dances, of which some of the old popular writers give us long lists. Some of these, too, were of a far more active and exciting description than formerly. One of the personages in the early interlude of "The Four Elements," talks of persons—

That shall both daunce and spryng,

And torne clene above the grounde,
With fryscas and with gambawdes round,
That all the hall shall ryng.



No. 267. A Lady Artist.

Music, also, was more extensively cultivated as a domestic accomplishment; and it was a more common thing to meet with ladies who indulged in literary pursuits. Sometimes, too, the ladies of the fifteenth century practised drawing and painting,—arts which, instead of being, as formerly, restricted almost to the clergy, had now passed into the hands of the laity, and were undergoing rapid improvement. The illuminated manuscript of "Boccace des Nobles Femmes," which furnished the subject of our last cut, contains several pictures of

ladies occupied in painting, one of which (illustrating the chapter on “Marcie Vierge”) is represented in our cut No. 267. The lady has her palette, her colour-box, and her stone for grinding the colours, much as an artist of the present day would have, though she is seated before a somewhat singularly formed framework. She is evidently painting her own portrait, for which purpose she uses the mirror which hangs over the colour-box. It is rather curious that the tools which lie by the side of the grinding-stone are those of a sculptor, and not those of a painter, so that it was no doubt intended we should suppose that she combined the two branches of the art. In one of the illuminations of the manuscript of the “Romance of the Rose,” which has been quoted before, preserved in the British Museum, we have a picture of a male painter, copied in our cut No. 268, and intended to represent Apelles, who is working with a palette and easel, exactly as artists do at the present day: both he and our lady artist in the cut are evidently painting on board. We begin now also to trace the existence of a great number of domestic sports and pastimes, some of which still remain in usage, but which we have not here room to enumerate.



No. 268. A Painter at his Easel.

Out of doors, the garden continued to be the favourite resort of the ladies. It would be easy to pick out numerous descriptions of gardens from the writers of the fifteenth century. Lydgate thus describes the garden of the rich "churl:"—

Whilom ther was in a smal village,
As myn autor makethe rehersayle,
A chorle, whiche hadde lust and a grete corage
Within hymself, be diligent travayle,
To array his gardeyn with notable apparayle,

Of lengthe and brede yelicke (equally) *square and longe,*
Hegged and dyked to make it sure and stronge.

Alle the aleis were made playne with sond (sand),
The benches (banks) *turned with newe turvis grene,*
Sote herbers (sweet beds of plants), *with condite* (fountain) *at the honde,*
That wellid up agayne the sonne schene,
Lyke silver stremes as any cristalle clene,
The burbly wawes (bubbling waves) *in up boyling,*
Rounde as byralle ther beamys out shynynge.

Amyddis the gardeyn stode a fressh lawrer (laurel),
Theron a bird syngyng bothe day and nyghte.

And at a somewhat later period, Stephen Hawes, in his singular poem entitled "The Pastime of Pleasure," describes a larger and more magnificent garden. Amour arrives at the gate of the garden of La Bel Pucel, and requests the portress to conduct him to her mistress—

"Truly," quod she, "in the garden grene
Of many a swete and sundry flowre
She maketh a garlonde that is veray shene,
Wythe trueloves wrought in many a coloure,
Replete with swetenes and dulcet odoure;
And all alone, wythout company,
Amyddes an herber she sitteth plesauntly."

From the description of this "gloryous" garden that follows, we might imagine that the practice of cutting or training trees and flowers into fantastic shapes, as was done with box-trees in the last century, had prevailed among the gardeners of the fifteenth. The garden of La Bel Pucel is described as

being—

Wyth Flora paynted and wrought curyously,
In divers knottes of marvaylous gretenes;
Rampande lyons stode up wondersly,
Made all of herbes with dulcet swetenes,
Wyth many dragons of marvaylos likenes,
Of dyvers floures made ful craftely,
By Flora couloured wyth colours sundry.

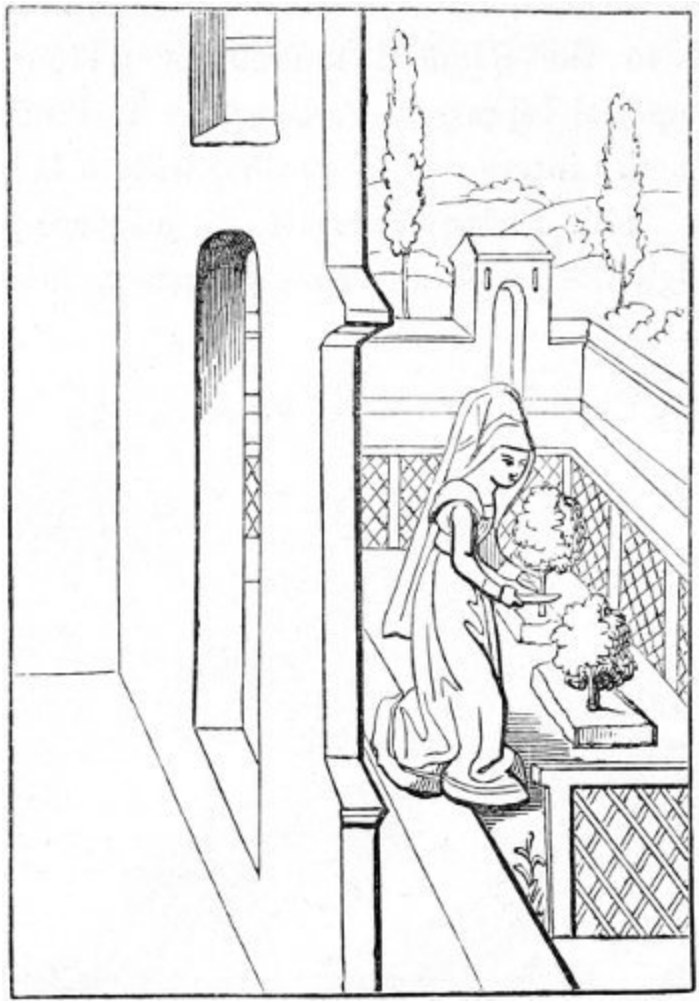
Amiddes the garden so moche delectable
There was an herber fayre and quadrante,
To paradyse right well comparable,
Set all about with floures fragraunt;
And in the myddle there was resplendyshaunte
A dulcet spring and marvaylous fountaine,
Of golde and asure made all certaine.
* * * * *
Besyde whiche fountayne, the moost fayre lady
La Bel Pucel was gayly syttyng;
Of many floures fayre and ryally
A goodly chaplet she was in makynge.



No. 269. A Lady and her Maidens weaving Garlands.

I have had occasion before to observe that garlands and chaplets of flowers were in great request in the middle ages, and the making of them was a favourite occupation. Our cut No. 269, taken from the illuminated calendar prefixed to the splendid manuscript “Heures” of Anne of Brittany in the Imperial Library in Paris, where it illustrates the month of May, represents the interior of a garden, with a lady thus employed with her maidens. This garden appears to be a square piece of ground, surrounded by a high wall, with a central compartment or lawn enclosed by a fence of trellis-work and a hedge of rose trees. Pictures of gardens will also be found in the MS. of the “Romance of the Rose” already referred to, and in other illuminated books, but the illuminators were unable to represent the elaborate descriptions of the poets. Besides flowers, every garden contained herbs for medicinal and other purposes, such as love-philtars, which were in great repute in the middle ages. In the romance of “Gerard de Nevers” (or La Violette), an

old woman goes into the garden attached to the castle where she lives, to gather herbs for making a deadly poison. This incident is represented in our cut No. 270, taken from a magnificent illuminated manuscript of the prose version of this romance in the Imperial Library in Paris. The garden is here again surrounded by a wall, with a postern gate leading to the country, and we have the same trellis fencings as before. It appears to have been the usual custom thus to enclose and protect the beds in a garden with a trellis fence.



No. 270. A Lady gathering Herbs.

The various games and exercises practised by people out of doors seem to have differed little at this time from those belonging to former periods, except that from time to time we meet with allusions to kinds of amusement which have not before been mentioned,

although they were probably well known. Among the drawings of the borders of illuminated manuscripts, from the thirteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth, we meet with groups of children and of adults, which represent, doubtless, games of which both the names and the explanations are lost; and sometimes we are surprised to find thus represented games which otherwise we should have supposed to be of modern invention. One very curious instance may be stated. In the now rather celebrated manuscript of the French romance of “Alexander,” in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, which was written and illuminated in the fourteenth century, we have representations of a puppet show, which appears to be identical with our modern Punch and Judy. We copy one of these curious early drawings in our cut No. 271.



No. 271. A Puppet Show.

Among the pastimes most popular at this time with the lower and middle classes were archery, the practice of which was enforced by authority, and

shooting with the crossbow, as well as most of the ordinary rough games known at a later period, such as football and the like. The English archers were celebrated throughout Europe. The poet Barclay, who wrote at the close of the century, makes the shepherd in one of his eclogues not only boast of his skill in archery, but he adds—

I can dance the ray; I can both pipe and sing,
If I were mery; I can both hurle and sling;
I runne, I wrestle, I can welle throwe the barre,
No shepherd throweth the axeltree so farre;
If I were mery, I could well leape and spring;
I were a man mete to serve a prince or king.



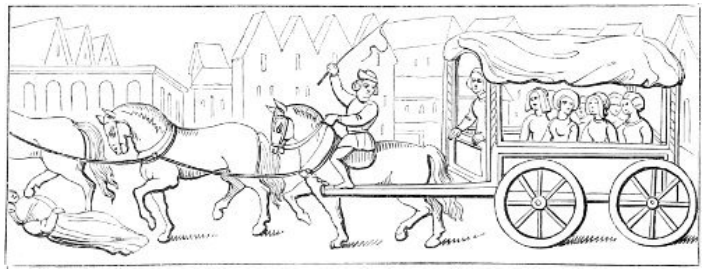
No. 272. A Party Hawking.



No. 273. A Royal Carriage and Escort.

Bull-baiting, bear-baiting, and such like sports, were also pursued with avidity; and even gentlemen and young noblemen took part in them. Any game, in fact, which produced violent exercise and violent excitement was in favour with all ranks. Among the higher classes, hunting and hawking were pursued with more eagerness than ever, and they become now the subjects of numerous written treatises, setting forth their laws and regulations. When gentlemen were riding out for pleasure, they were usually accompanied with hawks and hounds. In the annexed cut (No. 272), taken from an illuminated manuscript of the French Boccaccio at Paris (Imperial Library, MS. No. 6887), a party thus attended meets another party on horseback, and they are in the act of saluting each other. Horses were still almost the only conveyance from place to place, though we now more often meet with pictures of carriages; but, though evidently intended to be very gorgeous, they are of clumsy construction, and seem only to have been used by princes or great nobles. I give two examples from a superbly illuminated manuscript of the French translation of "Valerius Maximus," in the great national library in Paris (No. 6984), executed in the latter part of the fifteenth

century. The first (cut No. 273) is a royal car, in which a throne has been placed for the king, who sits in it in state. His guards lead the horses. The form of the carriage is very simple; it is a mere cart on wheels, without any springs, and has a covering supported on two large hoops, which are strengthened by cross-bars resembling the spokes of a wheel. In the second example (cut No. 274), the carriage bears some resemblance to a modern omnibus. It is intended to represent the incident in Roman history, where the unfilial Tullia caused her charioteer to drive over the body of her father, Servius Tullus, who had been slain by her husband Tarquin the Proud. The ladies appear to sit on benches inside the carriage, while the driver is mounted on the horse nearest to it. These carriages still retained the name of carts, although they appear to have been used chiefly on state occasions. Riding in them must have been very uneasy, and they were exposed to accidents. When Richard II. made his grand entry into London, a ceremony described by Richard de Maidstone in Latin verse, the ladies of the court rode in two cars, or carts, one of which fell over, and exposed its fair occupants in a not very decorous manner to the jeers of the multitude.



No. 274. Tullia Riding over her Father's Body.

As yet carriages seem not to have been used in travelling, which was performed on horseback or on foot. During the century of which we are speaking, especially after the accession of Henry VI. to the English throne, the roads were extremely insecure, the country being infested by such numerous bands of robbers that it was necessary to travel in considerable companies, and well armed. From this circumstance, and from the political condition of the age, the retinue of the nobility and gentry presented a very formidable appearance; and such as could only afford to travel with one or two servants generally attached themselves to some powerful neighbour, and contrived to make their occasions of locomotion coincide with his. We find several allusions to the dangers of travelling in the Paston Letters. In a letter dated in 1455 or 1460 (it is uncertain which), Margaret Paston desires her husband, then in London, to pay a debt for one of their friends, because, on account of the robbers who beset the road, money could not be sent safely from Norfolk to the capital. A year or two earlier, we hear of a knight of Suffolk riding with a hundred horsemen, armed defensively and offensively, besides the accompaniment of friends. As travelling, however, became frequent, it led to the multiplication of places of entertainment on the roads, and large hostelries and inns were now scattered pretty thickly over the country, not only in all the smaller towns, but often in villages, and sometimes even in comparatively lonely places. In the manuscript of the French Boccaccio in the Imperial Library (No. 6887), there is a picture (copied in our cut No. 275) representing a publican serving his liquor on a bench outside his door.



No. 275. A Publican.

The tavern was the general lounge of the idle, and even of the industrious, during their hours of relaxation; and in the towns a good part of the male population who had not domestic establishments of their own appear to have lived at the taverns and eating-houses, the allurements of which drew them into every sort of dissipation, which ended in the ruin of men's fortunes and health. The poet Occleve, in his reminiscences of his own conduct, describes the life of the riotous young men of his time. The sign which hung at the tavern door, he says, was always a temptation to him, which he could seldom resist. The tavern was the resort of women of light character, and was the scene of brawls and outrages; by the former of which he was frequently seduced into extravagant expenditure, but his want of courage, he confesses, kept him out of the latter. Westminster gate was then celebrated for its taverns and cooks' shops, at which the poet Occleve's

lavishness made him a welcome guest:—

Wher was a gretter maister eek than y,
Or bet acqweyntid at Westmynsler yate,
Among the taverneres namely (especially)
And cookes? Whan I cam, eerly or late,
I pynchid nat at hem in myne acate (purchase of provisions),
But paied hem as that they axe wolde;
Wherfore I was the welcomer algate (always),
And for a verray (true) *gentilman yholde.*

Here he spent his nights in such a manner that he went to bed later than any of his companions, except perhaps two, whose time of going to bed he says that he did not know, it was so late, but he asserts that they loved their beds so well that they never left them till near prime, or six o'clock in the morning, which thus appears, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, to have been considered an excessively late hour for rising.

The tavern was also the resort of women of the middle and lower orders, who assembled there to drink, and to gossip. It has been already stated that, in the mysteries, or religious plays, Noah was represented as finding his wife drinking with her gossips at the tavern when he wanted to take her into the ark. The meetings of gossips in taverns form the subjects of many of the popular songs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both in England and France. It appears that these meetings of gossips in taverns were the first examples of what we now call a pic-nic, for each woman took with her some provisions, and with these the whole party made a feast in common. A song of perhaps the middle of the

fifteenth century, printed in my collection of "Songs and Carols," edited for the Percy Society, gives us rather a picturesque description of one of these gossip-meetings. The women, having met accidentally, the question is put where the best wine was to be had, and one of them replies that she knows where could be procured the best drink in the town, but that she did not wish her husband to be acquainted with it:—

I know a drawght of mery-go-downe,
The best it is in all thys towne;
But yet wold I not, for my gowne,
My husbond it wyst, ye may me trust.

The place of meeting having thus been fixed, they are represented as proceeding thither two and two, not to attract observation, lest their husbands might hear of their meeting. "God might send me a stripe or two," said one, "if my husband should see me here." "Nay," said Alice, another, "she that is afraid had better go home; I dread no man." Each was to carry with her some goose, or pork, or the wing of a capon, or pigeon pie, or some similar article—

And ich (each) *off them wyll sumwhat bryng,*
Gosse, pygge, or capons wyng,
Pastés off pigeons, or sum other thyng.

Accordingly, on arriving at the tavern, they call for wine "of the best," and then

Ech off them brought forth ther dysch;
Sum brought flesh, and sume fysh.

Their conversation runs first on the goodness of the wines, and next on the behaviour of their husbands, with whom they are all dissatisfied. In one copy of the song, a harper makes his appearance, whom they hire, and dance to his music. When they pay their reckoning, they find, in one copy of the song, that it amounts to threepence each, and rejoice that it is so little, while in another they find that each has to pay sixpence, and are alarmed at the greatness of the amount. They agree to separate, and go home by different streets, and they are represented as telling their husbands that they had been to church. This is no doubt a picture of a common scene in the fifteenth century. Among the municipal records of Canterbury, there is preserved the deposition of a man who appears to have been suspected of a robbery, and who, to prove an alibi, describes all his actions during three days. On one of these, Monday, he went after eight o'clock in the evening to a tavern, and there he found "wyfes" drinking, "that is to say, Goddardes wyfe, Cornewelles wyfe, and another woman," and he had a halfpennyworth of beer with them. This was apparently at the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII.



No. 276. A Scribe, in Spectacles, from the tapestry of Nancy.

It has been intimated before, that literature and reading had now become more general accomplishments than formerly. We can trace among the records of social history a general spreading of education, which showed an increasing intellectual agitation; in fact, education, without becoming more perfect, had become more general. I have already given figures of the implements of writing at an earlier period. In one of the compartments of the tapestry of “Nancy” (of the latter part of this century), engravings of which have been published by M. Achille Jubinal, we have a figure of a scribe (cut No. 276) with all his apparatus of writing,—the

pen, the penknife, and the portable pen-case with ink-stand attached. But the most curious article which this scribe has in use is a pair of *spectacles*. Spectacles, however, we know had been in existence long before this period. A century earlier, Chaucer's "Wife of Bath" observed rather sententiously:—

Povert ful often, whan a man is lowe,
Maketh him his God and eek himself to knowe.
Povert a spectacle *is, as thinketh me,*
Thurgh which he may his verray frendes se.

Lydgate, addressing an old man who was on the point of marrying a young wife, tells him to

Loke sone after a potent (staff) *and* spectacle;
Be not ashamed to take hem to thyn ease.

John Baret, of Bury St. Edmunds, in 1463, left by will to one of the monks of Bury, his ivory tables (the *tabulæ* for writing on), and a pair of spectacles of silver-gilt:—"Item: To daun Johan Janyng, my tablees of ivory, with the combe, and a payre spectacles of sylvir and ovir-gilt." This shows that already in the middle of the fifteenth century, a pair of spectacles was not an uncommon article.

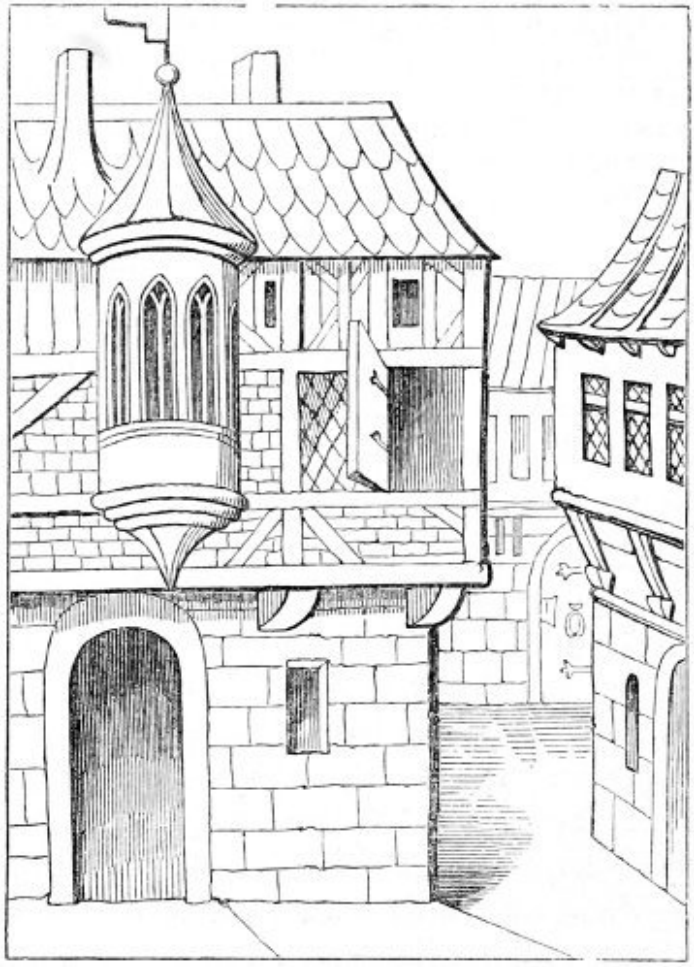
CHAPTER XXI.

CHANGES IN ENGLISH DOMESTIC

MANNERS DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE REFORMATION AND THE COMMONWEALTH.—THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN'S HOUSE.—ITS HALL.—THE FIREPLACE AND FIRE.—UTENSILS.—COOKERY.—USUAL HOURS FOR MEALS.—BREAKFAST.—DINNER, AND ITS FORMS AND CUSTOMS.—THE BANQUET.—CUSTOM OF DRINKING HEALTHS.

The Reformation brought with it, or at all events it was coeval with, a general revolution in society. Although the nobility still kept up much of their ancient state, feudalism was destroyed during the reigns of the first two Tudors, while the lower and middle classes of the population were rising in condition and in the consciousness of their own importance, and with this rise came an increase of domestic comforts and social development. It was on the ruins of the monastic property, confiscated by Henry VIII., that the English gentlemen gained their highest position, and, by their independence of the old aristocracy, they assisted in finally breaking its power, and thus gave a new character to English society, which at the same time was experiencing influences that came successively from without. Till the reign of Elizabeth, and after her accession to the

throne, there was a close connection with the Netherlands and Germany, and we imported most of our novelties and fashions from our Protestant neighbours on the continent; whilst, from Elizabeth's reign onwards, and with little intermission to the present time, France has been our principal model for imitation. This is a point which is the more necessary to be observed in treating of this subject, because during the period between the Reformation and the Commonwealth, the art of engraving in this country had been carried to little perfection, and was comparatively rarely practised, and we are obliged to look for our pictorial illustrations of manners to the works of foreign artists.



No. 277. Houses in the Streets of a Town, Fifteenth Century.

In towns, domestic architecture experienced no great change in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Small narrow streets, with buildings chiefly of the class we term half-timber houses—the best of which had their lower story of stone, while those above, each projecting beyond the one below

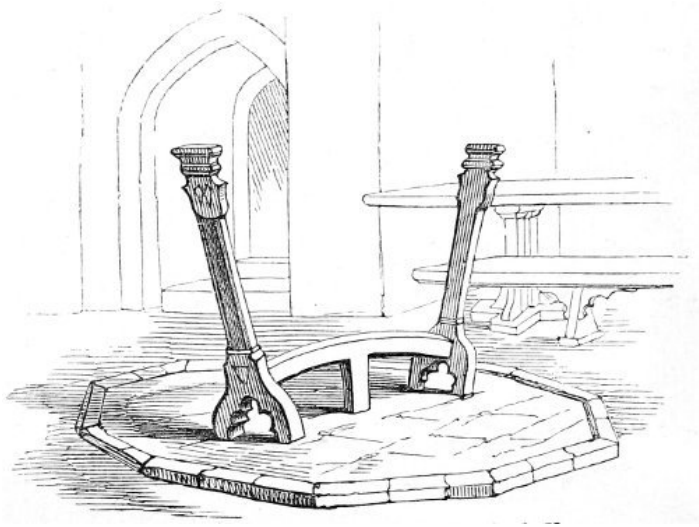
it, consisted of a timber framework filled up with bricks—occupied the greater part of the town, and gave it a compact appearance which was quite inconsistent with our modern notions of sanitary arrangement. In the interior the rooms were generally small and dark, but domestic comfort seems not to have been so much overlooked as we are in the habit of supposing. Our cut No. 277, taken from an engraving in the English edition of Barclay's "Ship of Fools," 1570, gives us a good representation of the general appearance of houses in a town at that period. In the country a greater change had taken place in all but the houses of the peasantry. The older castles had become obsolete, and, with the increasing power and efficiency of the laws, it was no longer necessary to consult strength before convenience. The houses of the gentry were, however, still built of considerable extent, and during the sixteenth century the older domestic arrangements were only slightly modified. Now, however, instead of seeking a strong position, people chose situations that were agreeable and healthful, where they might be protected from inclemency of weather, and where gardens and orchards might be planted advantageously. Thus, like the earlier monastic edifices, a gentleman's house was built more frequently on low ground than on a hill.



No. 278. The "Hundred Men's Hall," at St. Cross, near Winchester.

In the sixteenth century, the hall continued to hold its position as the great public apartment of the house, and in its arrangements it still differed little from those of an earlier date; it was indeed now the only part of the house which had not been affected by the increasing taste for domestic privacy. We have many examples of the old Gothic hall in this country, not only as it existed and was used in the sixteenth century, but, in some cases, especially in colleges, still used for its original purposes. One of the simplest, and at the same time best, examples is found in the Hospital of St. Cross, near Winchester, and a sketch of the interior, as represented in our cut No. 278, will serve to give a general notion of the arrangements of this part of the mansion in former days. As the hall was frequently the scene of festivities of every description, a gallery for the musicians was considered one of its necessary appendages. In some cases, as at Madresfield in

Worcestershire, a gallery ran round two or more sides of the hall; but generally the music gallery occupied one end of the hall, opposite the dais. Under it was a passage, separated from the hall by a wooden screen, usually of panel-work, and having on the opposite side the kitchen and buttery. In the large halls, the fireplace still frequently occupied the centre of the hall, where there was a small, low platform of stone. This is distinctly seen in the preceding view of the interior of the hall of St. Cross. In our cut No. 279 we give another example of this kind of fireplace, from the hall at Penshurst in Kent, where it is still occupied by the iron dogs, or andirons, that supported the fuel. It may be observed that these latter, in the north of England and in some other parts, were called cobirons.



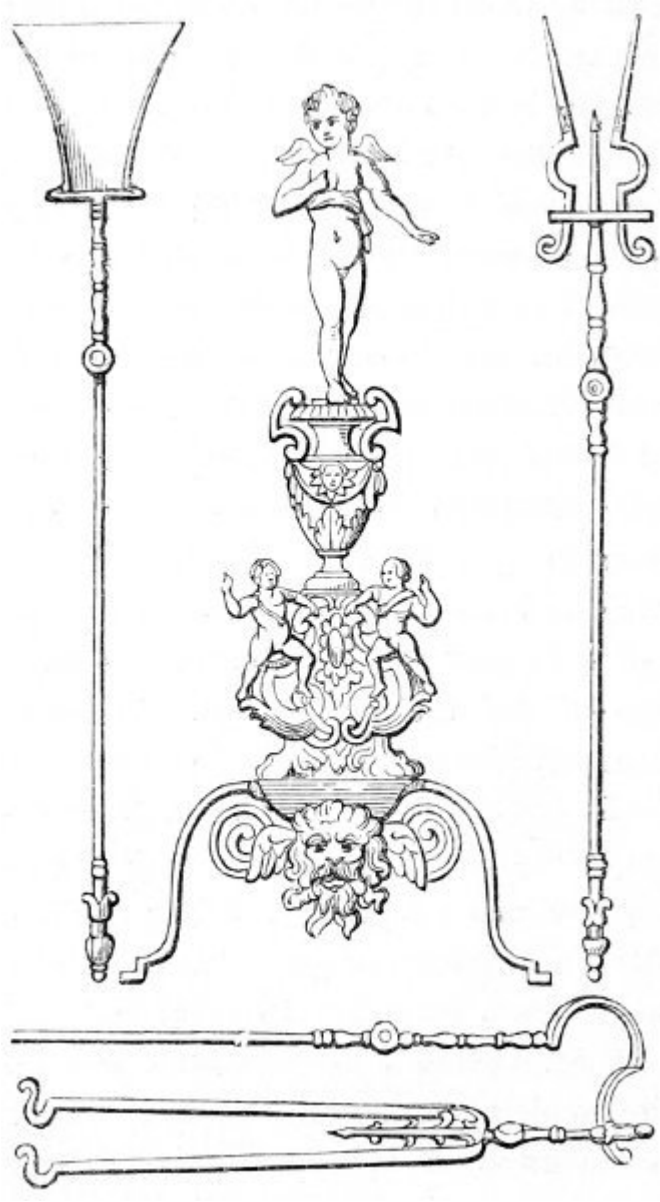
No. 279. Fireplace in the Great Hall at Penshurst, Kent.

The implements attached to the fireplace had

hitherto been few in number, and simple in character, but they now became more numerous. In the inventories previous to the sixteenth century they are seldom mentioned at all, and the glossaries speak only of tongs and bellows. In the will of John Baret of Bury, made in 1463, “a payre of tongys and a payre belwys” are mentioned. John Hedge, a large householder of the same town in 1504, speaks of “spytts, rakks, cobernys, aundernnys, trevettes, tongs, with all other iryn werkes moveabyll within my house longying.” This would seem to show that cobirons and andirons were not identical, and it has been supposed that the former denomination belonged more particularly to the rests for supporting the spit. The schoolmaster of Bury, in 1552, bequeathed to his hostess, “my cobbornes, the fire pany (? *pan*), and the tonges.” If we turn to the north, we find in the collection of wills published by the Surtees Society a more frequent enumeration of the fire implements. William Blakeson, prebendary of Durham, possessed in 1549 only “a payre of cobyrons and one payre of tongys.” In 1551, William Lawson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, had in his hall “one yryn chymney, and a poor, with one paire of tonges,” which are valued at the rather high sum of thirty shillings. This is the first mention of the iron chimney, or grate, but it occurs continually after the middle of the sixteenth century. In 1557, the “iron chymney” of the parish clerk of St. Andrew’s in Newcastle was valued at twenty shillings. The fire implements in the hall of the farm-house at West Runcton near Northallerton, in 1562, were “j. cryssett, ij. rachyncrokes, j. pair of tonges, one paire off cobyrons, j. speitt, one paire off potes.” We find the cresset frequently included among the implements attached to the fireplace. The racking-

crook was the pothook. In 1564, John Bynley, minor canon of Durham, had in his hall “one iron chimney, with a bake (*back*), porre (a *por*, or *poker*), tongs, fier shoel (*fire shovel*), spette (*spit*), and a littell rake pertening thereto.” The fire-irons in the hall of Margaret Cottam, widow, of Gateshead, in 1564, were “one iron chimney, one porr, one payre of toynges, gibcrokes, rakincroke, and racks.” The gibcrokes was probably a sort of pothook or jack. Nearly the same list of articles occurs frequently in subsequent inventories. In 1567, a housekeeper of Durham had among other such articles “a gallous (*gallows*) of iron with iiij. crocks.” The gallows was, of course, the cross-bar of iron, which projected across the chimney, and from which the crooks or chains with hooks at the end for sustaining pots were suspended; as the gallows turned upon hinges, the pot could be moved over the sire, or from it, at pleasure, without being taken from the hook, and as the crooks, of which there were usually more than one, were of different lengths, the pot might be placed lower to the fire or higher from it, at will. From the character of some of these adjuncts to the fireplace, it is evident that the hall fire was frequently used for cooking. The sixteenth century was the period at which ornamentation was carried to a very high degree in every description of household utensil, and to judge from the valuation of some of these articles in the inventories, they were no doubt of elegant or elaborate work. Numerous examples of ornamental ironwork, specially applied to fire-dogs or andirons, will be found in Mr. M. A. Lower’s interesting paper on the ironworks of Sussex; and many others, still more elaborate, are preserved in some of our old gentlemen’s houses in different parts of the country; but this ornamentation was

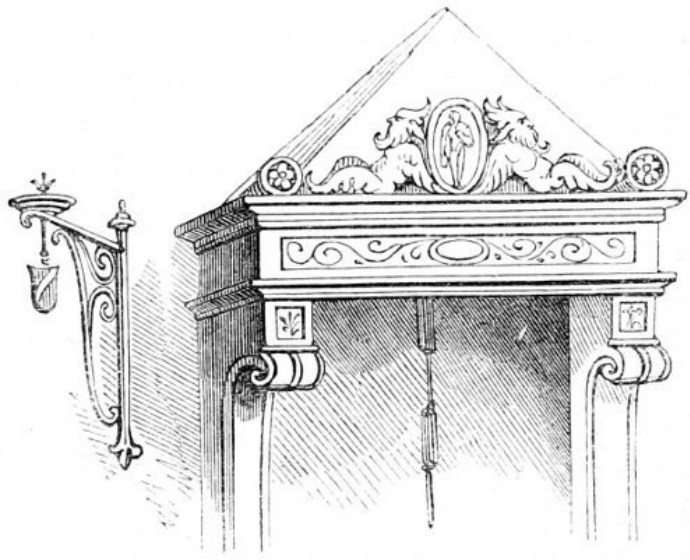
carried to a far higher degree in the great manufactories on the continent, from whence our countrymen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries obtained a large portion of their richer furniture. The figure in the middle of the group of fire-irons represented in our cut No. 280, is an example of a fire-dog of this elaborate description, preserved in the collection of count Brancaleoni, in Paris, whence also the other articles in the cut are taken. Most of them explain themselves; the implement to the right is a somewhat singularly formed pair of tongs; that immediately beneath the fire-dog is an instrument for moving the logs of wood which then served as fuel. As a further example of the remarkable manner in which almost every domestic article was at this period adorned, we may point out a box-iron, for ironing linen, &c. (cut No. 281), which is also preserved in one of the French collections; such an article was of course not made to be exposed to the action of the fire, and this circumstance gave rise to the contrivance of forming it into a box, with a separate iron which was to be heated and placed inside.



No. 280. Ornamental Fire-irons, Sixteenth Century.



No. 281. A Box-iron, Sixteenth Century.



No. 282. Fireplace and Pothook.

The fire-irons, as we find them enumerated in writings or pictured in engravings, appear to have formed the same list, or nearly so, though of course differing in form and ornament according to the varying fashions of the day, until at a considerably later period they were reduced to the modern trio of shovel, poker, and tongs. The single pothook, with a contrivance for lengthening it and shortening it, is shown in our cut No. 282, taken from one of the remarkable wood engravings in "Der Weiss Kunig,"—a series of prints illustrative of the youthful life of Maximilian I. of Germany, who ascended the imperial throne in 1493. The engravings are of the sixteenth century, and the form of the fireplace belongs altogether to the age of the Renaissance. The gallows, with its pothooks or crokes of different lengths, appears in our cut No. 283, taken from Barclay's "Ship of Fools," the edition of 1570, though the design is somewhat older. The method of attaching the crooks to one side of the fireplace, when not in use, is exhibited in this engraving, as also the mode in which other smaller utensils were attached to the walls. In this latter instance there are no dogs or andirons in the fireplace, but the pot or boiler is simply placed upon the fire, without other support. There were, however, other methods of placing the pot upon the fire; and in one of the curious wooden sculptures in the church of Kirby Thorpe, in Yorkshire, representing a cook cleaning his dishes, the boiler is placed over the fire in a sort of four-legged frame, as represented in the annexed cut No. 284.



No. 283. The Fireplace and its uses.

No. 284

Early in the seventeenth century the fireplace had taken nearly its present form, although the dogs or andirons had not yet been superseded by the grate, which, however, had already come into use. This

later form of the fireplace is shown in our cut No. 285, taken from one of an interesting series of prints, executed by the French artist, Abraham Bosse, in the year 1633. It represents a domestic party frying fritters in Lent. One of the dogs is seen at the foot of the opening of the fireplace.



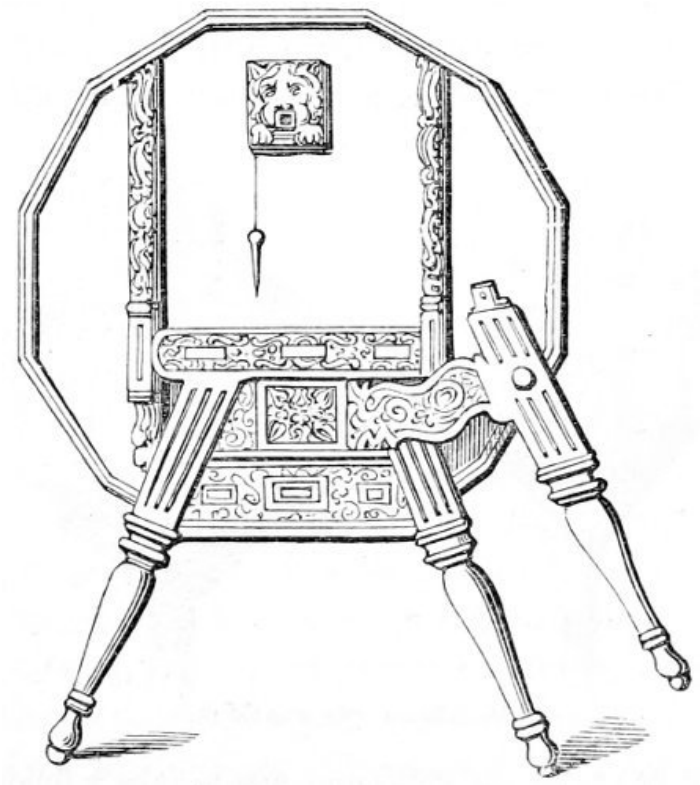
No. 285. Frying Fritters.

In the sixteenth century, the articles of furniture in the hall continued to be much the same as in the century preceding. It continued to be furnished with hangings of tapestry, but they seem not always to have been in use; and they were still placed not absolutely against the wall, but apparently at a little distance from it, so that people might conceal themselves behind them. If the hall was not a very large one, a table was placed in the middle, with a long bench on each side. There was generally a cupboard, or a "hutch," if not more, with side tables, one or more chairs, and perhaps a settle, according to the taste or means of the possessor. We hear now also of tables with leaves, and of folding tables, as well as of counters, or desks, for writing, and dressers, or small cupboards. The two latter articles were evidently, from their names, borrowed from the French. Cushions were also kept in the hall, for the seats of the principal persons of the household, or for the females. The furniture of the hall of William Lawson, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in 1551, consisted of one table of wainscot, valued at twenty shillings, two double counters, valued together at thirty shillings, a drawer and two forms, estimated at five shillings, two cushions and two chairs, also valued at five shillings, five other cushions, valued at twelve shillings, two carpet cloths and a cupboard cloth, valued together at ten shillings, and the hangings in the hall, estimated to be worth fifty shillings. This seems to have been a very well furnished hall; that of Robert Goodchild, parish clerk of St. Andrew's in Newcastle, in 1557, contained an almery (or large cupboard), estimated at ten shillings; a counter "of the myddell bynde," six shillings; a cupboard, three shillings and fourpence; five basins and six lavers, eight shillings; seventeen "powder (*pewter*) doblers,"

seventeen shillings; six pewter dishes and a hand-basin, five shillings; six pewter saucers, eighteen pence; four pottle pots, five shillings and fourpence, three pint pots and three quart pots, three shillings; ten candlesticks, six shillings; a little pestle and a mortar, two shillings; three old chairs, eighteen pence; six old cushions, two shillings; and two counter-cloths. Much of the furniture of English houses at this time was imported from Flanders. Jane Lawson, in the year last mentioned, had in her hall at Little Burdon in Northumberland, "Flanders counters with their carpets." She had also in the hall, a long side table, three long forms and another form, two chairs, three stools, six new cushions and three old cushions, and an almery. The whole furniture of the hall of the rectory house of Sedgefield in Durham, which appears to have been a large house and well entertained, consisted of a table of plane-tree with joined frame, two tables of fir with frames, two forms, a settle, and a pair of trestles. The hall of Bertram Anderson, a rich and distinguished merchant and alderman of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in 1570, was furnished with two tables with the carpets (*table-covers*), three forms, one dozen cushions, half-a-dozen green cushions, one counter with the carpet, two "basinges" (*basins*), and two covers, one chair, and one little chair. This is a striking proof of the rarity of chairs even at this late date. Buffet stools, which are supposed to be the stools with a flat top and a hole in the middle through which the hand might be passed to lift them, are also mentioned among the articles of furniture in the hall at this period. The furniture of the hall at the manor-house of Croxdale, in the county of Durham, in the year 1571, consisted of one cupboard, one table, two buffet stools, and one chair; yet Salvin of Croxdale

was looked upon as one of the principal gentry of the Palatinate. In enumerating the furniture of the ancient hall, we must not forget the arms which were usually displayed there, especially by such as had dependent upon them a certain number of men whom it was their duty or their pride to arm. The hall of a rich merchant of Newcastle, named John Wilkinson, contained in 1571, the following furniture: one almery, one table of wainscot, one counter, one little counter, one dresser of wainscot, one "pulk," three chairs, three forms, three buffet stools, six cushions of tapestry, six old cushions of tapestry, six green cushions, two long carpet cloths, two short carpet cloths, one say carpet cloth, the "hyngars" in the hall, on the almery head one basin and ewer, one great charger, three new "doblers," one little chest for sugar, and one pair of wainscot tables; and of arms, two jacks, three sallets of iron, one bow and two sheaves of arrows, three bills, and two halberts. Some of the entries in these inventories are amusing; and, while speaking of arms, it may be stated, that a widow lady of Bury, Mary Chapman, who would appear to have been a warlike dame, making her will in 1649, leaves to one of her sons, among other things, "also *my* muskett, rest, bandileers, sword, and headpiece, *my* jacke, a fine paire of sheets, and a hutche." In 1577, Thomas Liddell, merchant of Newcastle, had in his hall, "three tables of waynscoot, sex qwyshons of tapestery, a cowborde, three wainscoot formes, two chayrs, three green table clothes, fower footstoles, sixe quyshons, two candlesticks, a louckinge glasse, sexe danske pootts of powther (*pewter*), two basings, and two vewers (*ewers*), a laver and a basinge, fyve buffatt stules." It is curious thus to trace the furniture of the hall at different periods, and compare them

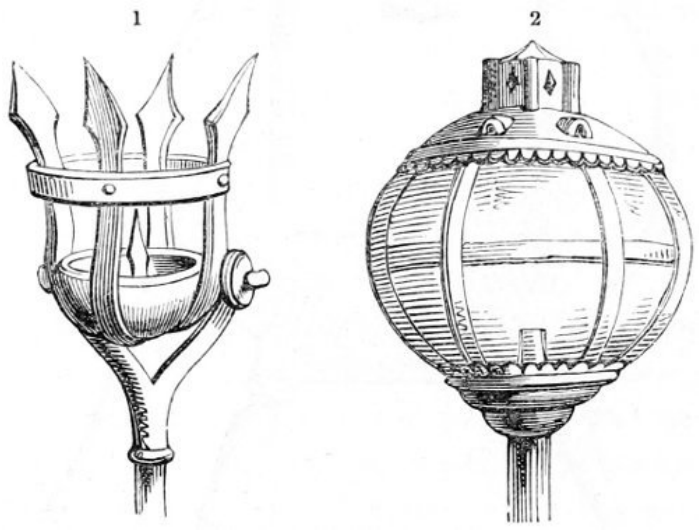
together; and we cannot but remark from the frequency with which the epithet *old* is applied to different articles, towards the end of the century that the hall was beginning rapidly to fall into disuse. The cause of this was no doubt the increasing taste for domestic retirement, and the wish to withdraw from the publicity which had always attended the hall, and it gradually became the mere entrance lobby of the house, the place where strangers or others were allowed to remain until their presence had been announced, which is the sense in which we commonly use the word hall, as part of the house, at the present day. In the enumeration of the parts of a house given in the English edition of Comenius's "Janua Linguarum," in the middle of the seventeenth century, there is no mention of a hall. "A house," we are told in this quaint book, "is divided into inner rooms, such as are the entry, the stove, the kitchen, the buttery, the dining-room, the gallery, the bed-chamber, with a privy made by it; baskets are of use for carrying things to and fro; and chests (which are made fast with a key) for keeping them. The floor is under the roof. In the yard is a well, a stable, and a bath. Under the house is the cellar."



No. 286. A Folding Table.

It has already been remarked that tables with leaves began to be mentioned frequently after the commencement of the sixteenth century. Andrew Cranewise, of Bury, in 1558, enumerates “one cupborde in the hall, one plaine table with one leafe.” He speaks further on, in the same will, of “my best folte (*fold or folding*) table in the hall, and two great hutches.” In 1556, Richard Claxton, of Old Park, in the county of Durham, speaks of a “folden table” in the parlours, which was valued at two shillings. These folding tables appear to have been made in a great variety of forms, some of which were

very ingenious. Our cut No. 286 represents a very curious folding table of the sixteenth century, which was long preserved at Flaxton Hall, in Suffolk, but perished in the fire when that mansion was burnt a few years ago. As represented in the cut, which shows the table folded up so as to be laid aside, the legs pull out, and the one to the right fits into the lion's mouth, and is secured by the pin which hangs beside it.



No. 287. Cresset and Moon.

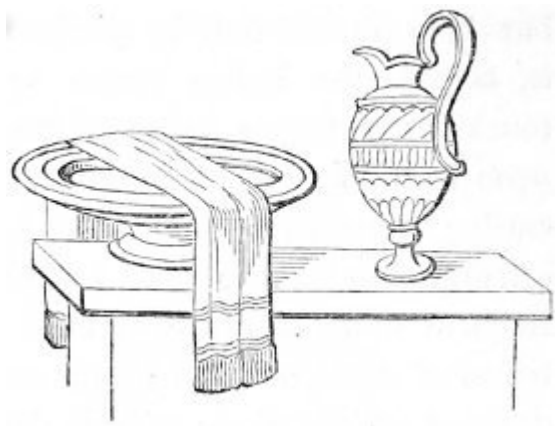
The methods of lighting the hall at night were still rather clumsy, and not very perfect. Of course, when the apartment was very large, a few candles would produce comparatively little effect, and it was therefore found necessary to use torches, and inflammable masses of larger size. One method of supplying the deficiency was to take a small pan, or portable fireplace, filled with combustibles, and

suspend it in the place where light was required. Such a receptacle was usually placed at the top of a pole, for facility of carrying about, and was called a cresset, from an old French word which meant a night-lamp. The cresset is mentioned by Shakespeare and other writers as though it were chiefly used in processions at night, and by watchmen and guides. The first figure in our cut No. 287, taken from Douce's "Illustrations of Shakespeare," represents one of the cressets carried by the marching watch of London in the sixteenth century. From the continual mention of the cresset along with the fire-irons of the hall, in the wills published by the Surtees Society, we can hardly doubt its being used, at least in the north of England, for lighting the hall itself. An improvement of the common cresset consisted in enclosing the flame, by whatever material it was fed, in a case made of some transparent substance, such as horn, and thus making it neither more nor less than a large lantern fixed on the end of a pole. The form of this implement was generally globular, and, no doubt from its appearance when carried in the night, it was denominated a *moon*. The "moon" was carried by servants before the carriages of their masters, to guide them along country lanes, and under other similar circumstances. The second figure in our cut No. 287 represents a "moon" which was formerly preserved at Ightham Moat House, in Kent; the frame was of brass, and the covering of horn. To assist in lighting the hall, sometimes candlesticks were fixed to the walls round the hall, and this perhaps will explain the rather large number of candlesticks sometimes enumerated among the articles in that part of the house. In our cut No. 282, we have an example of a candlestick placed on a frame, which, turning on a pivot or hinges, may be

turned back against the wall when not in use.

During the period of which we are now speaking, almost everything connected with the table underwent great change. This was least the case with regard to the hours of meals. The usual hour of breakfast was seven o'clock in the morning, and seems scarcely to have varied. During the sixteenth century, the hour of dinner was eleven o'clock, or just four hours after breakfast. "With us," says Harrison in his description of England, prefixed to Holinshed's Chronicle, "the nobilitie, gentrie, and students (he means the Universities), doo ordinarilie go to dinner at eleven before noone, and to supper at five, or between five and sixe, at afternoone." Before the end of the century, however, the dinner hour appears to have varied between eleven and twelve. In a book entitled the "Haven of Health," written by a physician named Cogan, and printed in 1584, we are told: "When foure houres be past after breakefast, a man may safely take his dinner, and the most convenient time for dinner is about eleven of the clocke before noone. The usual time for dinner in the universities is at eleven, or elsewhere about noon." In Beaumont and Fletcher, the hour of dinner was still eleven; "I never come into my dining-room," says Merrythought, in the "Knight of the Burning Pestle," "but at eleven and six o'clock." "What hour is't, Lollis?" asks a character in the "Changeling," by their contemporary Middleton. "Towards eating-hour, sir." "Dinnertime? thou mean'st twelve o'clock." And other writers at the beginning of the seventeenth century speak of twelve o'clock and seven as the hours of dinner and supper. This continued to be the usual hour of dinner at the close of the same century.

During the reign of Elizabeth, and afterwards, persons of both sexes appear to have broken their fast in the same substantial manner as was observed by the Percies at the beginning of the century, and as described in a previous chapter; yet, though generally but four hours interposed between this and the hour of dinner, people seem to have thought it necessary to take a small luncheon in the interval, which, no doubt from its consisting chiefly in drinking, was called a *bever*. “At ten,” says a character in one of Middleton’s plays, “we drink, that’s mouth-hour; at eleven, lay about us for victuals, that’s hand-hour; at twelve, go to dinner, that’s eating-hour.” “Your gallants,” says Appetitus, in the old play of “Lingua,” “never sup, breakfast, nor bever without me.”



No. 288. A Basin and Ewer, Sixteenth Century.

The dinner was the largest and most ceremonious meal of the day. The hearty character of this meal is remarked by a foreign traveller in England, who published his “Mémoires et Observations” in French in 1698. “Les Anglois,” he tells us, “mangent

beaucoup à diner; ils mangent à reprises, et remplissent le sac. Leur souper est leger. Gloutons à midi, fort sobres au soir." In the sixteenth century, dinner still began with the same ceremonious washing of hands as formerly; and there was considerable ostentation in the ewers and basins used for this purpose. Our cut No. 288 represents ornamental articles of this description, of the sixteenth century, taken from an engraving in Whitney's "Emblems," printed in 1586. This custom was rendered more necessary by the circumstance that at table people of all ranks used their fingers for the purposes to which we now apply a fork. This article was not used in England for the purpose to which it is now applied, until the reign of James I. It is true that we have instances of forks even so far back as the pagan Anglo-Saxon period, but they are often found coupled with spoons, and on considering all the circumstances, I am led to the conviction that they were in no instance used for feeding, but merely for serving, as we still serve salad and other articles, taking them out of basin or dish with a fork and spoon. In fact, to those who have not been taught the use of it, a fork must necessarily be a very awkward and inconvenient instrument. We know that the use of forks came from Italy, the country to which England owed many of the new fashions of the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is curious to read Coryat's account of the usage of forks at table as he first saw it in that country in the course of his travels. "I observed," says he, "a custome in all those Italian cities and townes through which I passed, that is not used in any other country that I saw in my travels, neither doe I thinke that any other nation of Christendome doth use it, but only Italy. The Italian, and also most strangers that are commorant in Italy,

doe alwaies at their meales use a little forke, when they cut their meate. For while with their knife which they hold in one hande they cut the meat out of the dish, they fasten their forke, which they hold in their other hande, upon the same dish, so that whatsoever he be that sitting in the company of any others at meale, should unadvisedly touch the dish of meate with his fingers, from which all at the table do cut, he will give occasion of offence unto the company, as having transgressed the lawes of good manners, insomuch that for his error he shall be at the least brow-beaten, if not reprehended in wordes. This forme of feeding I understand is generally used in all places of Italy, their forkes being for the most part made of yron or steele, and some of silver, but those are used only by gentlemen. The reason of this their curiosity is, because the Italian cannot by any means indure to have his dish touched with fingers, seeing all men's fingers are not alike cleane. Hereupon I myself thought good to imitate the Italian fashion by this forked cutting of meate, not only while I was in Italy, but also in Germany, and oftentimes in England since I came home; being once quipped for that frequent using of my forke by a certain learned gentleman, a familiar friend of mine, one Mr. Lawrence Whittaker, who in his merry humour doubted not to call me at table *furcifer*, only for using a forke at feeding, but for no other cause." *Furcifer*, in Latin, it need hardly be observed, meant literally one who carries a fork, but its proper signification was, a villain who deserves the gallows.

The usage of forks thus introduced into England, appears soon to have become common. It is alluded to more than once in Beaumont and Fletcher, and in Ben Jonson, but always as a foreign fashion. In

Jonson's comedy of "The Devil is an Ass," we have the following dialogue:—

Meerc. *Have I deserv'd this from you two, for all*
My pains at court to get you each a patent?
Gilt. *For what?*
Meerc. *Upon my project o' the forks.*
Sle. *Forks? what be they?*
Meerc. *The laudable use of forks,*
Brought into custom here, as they are in Italy,
To th' sparing o' napkins.

In fact the new invention rendered the washing of hands no longer so necessary as before, and though it was still continued as a polite form before sitting down to dinner, the practice of washing the hands after dinner appears to have been entirely discontinued.



No. 289. A Dinner Party in the Seventeenth Century.

Our cut No. 289, taken from the English edition of the Janua Linguarum of Comenius, represents the forms of dining in England under the Protectorate. It will be best described by the text which accompanies it in the book, and in which each particular object is mentioned. “When a feast is made ready,” we are told, “the table is covered with a carpet and a table-cloth by the waiters, who besides lay the trenchers, spoons, knives, with little forks, table napkins, bread, with a saltsellar. Messes are brought in platters, a pie in a plate. The guests being brought in by the host, wash their hands, out of a laver or ewer, over a hand-basin, or bowl, and wipe them with a hand-towel; then they sit at the table on chairs. The carver breaketh up the good cheer, and divideth it. Sauces are set amongst roste-meat in sawsers. The butler filleth strong wine out of a cruse, or wine-pot, or flagon, into cups, or glasses, which stand on a cup-board, and he reacheth them to the master of the feast, who drinketh to his guests.” It will be observed that one salt-cellar is here placed in the middle of the table. This was the usual custom; and, as one long table had been substituted for the several tables formerly standing in the hall, the salt-cellar was considered to divide the table into two distinct parts, guests of more distinction being placed above the salt, while the places below the salt were assigned to inferiors and dependants. This usage is often alluded to in the old dramatists. Thus, in Ben Jonson, it is said of a man who treats his inferiors with scorn, “he never drinks *below the salt*,” *i.e.*, he never exchanges civilities with those who sit at the lower end of the table. And in a contemporary writer, it is described as a mark of presumption in an inferior member of the household “to sit above the salt.” Our cut No.

290, taken from an engraving by the French artist, Abraham Bosse, published in 1633, represents one of the first steps in the laying out of the dinner-table. The plates, it will be seen, are laid, and the salt-cellar is duly placed in the middle of the table. The servant is now placing the napkins—

The pages spred a table out of hand,
And brought forth nap'ry rich, and plate more rich.
—Harrington's Ariosto, lxii. 71.



No. 290. Laying out the Dinner-table, 1633.

The earlier half of the sixteenth century was the period when the pageantry of feasting was carried to its greatest degree of splendour. In the houses of the noble and wealthy, the dinner itself was laid out with great pomp, was almost always accompanied with music, and was not unfrequently interrupted with dances, mummings, and masquerades. A picture of a grand feast carried on in this manner is given in one of the illustrations to the German work on the

exploits of the emperor Maximilian, published at the time under the title of “Der Weiss Kunig.” An abridged copy of this engraving is given in our cut No. 291. The table profusely furnished, the rich display of plate on the cupboards, the band in front, and the mummers entering the hall, are all strikingly characteristic of the age. The dresser, or cupboard, was now one of the great means of display among the higher orders of society, who invested vast wealth in its furniture, consisting of vessels made of the precious metals and of crystal, sometimes set with precious stones, and often adorned with the most beautiful sculpture, or moulded into singular or elaborate forms. So much attention was given to the arrangement of the plate on the dresser, and to the ceremonies attending it, that it was made a point of etiquette how many steps, or gradations, on which the rows of plate were raised one above another, members of each particular rank of society might have on their cupboards. Thus, a prince of royal blood only might have five steps to his cupboard; four were allowed to nobles of the highest rank, three to nobles under that of duke, two to knights-bannerets, and one to persons who were merely of gentle blood. These rules, however, were probably not universally obeyed. It was the duty of the butler to have charge of the plate in the hall, and his station there was usually at the side of the cupboard, as in the engraving taken from “Der Weiss Kunig” (No. 291). Comparatively few examples of the domestic plate of an early period have survived the revolutions of so many ages, during which they were often melted for the metal, and those which remain are chiefly in the possession of corporations or public bodies; but several fine collections of the ornamental plate of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have

been made, and among these one of the best and most interesting is that of the late lord Londesborough, now in the possession of lady Londesborough.[54]



No. 291. Mummers at a Feast.

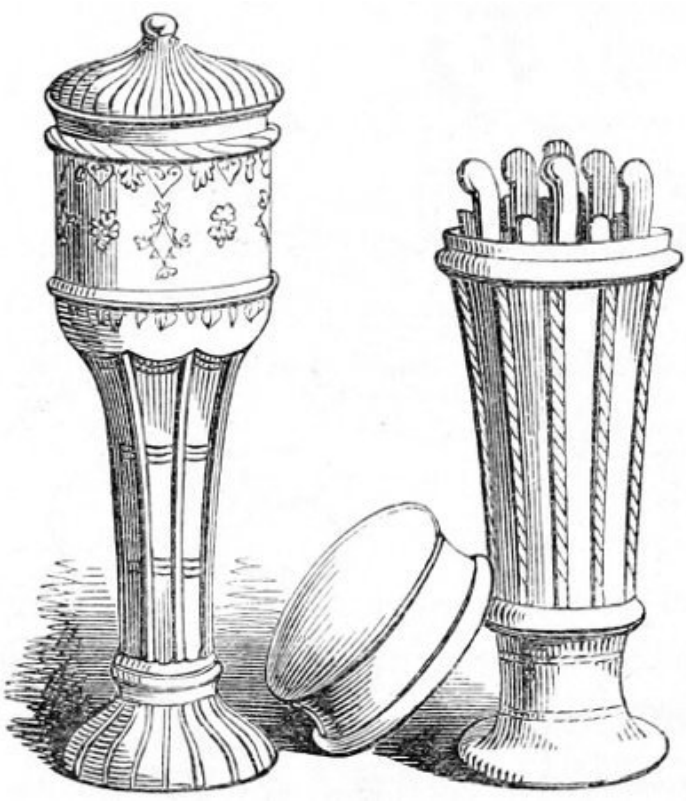
A dinner scene on a smaller scale is represented in our next cut (No. 292), copied from one in which Albert Durer represents Herodias dancing and performing before Herod at his solitary meal. This pageantry at dinner was succeeded, and apparently soon superseded, in the higher society by masques after dinner, which continued to be very fashionable until the breaking out of the civil commotions in the middle of the seventeenth century. During the period of the Protectorate and the Commonwealth, the

forms of eating and drinking were much simplified, and all that expensive ostentation, which had arisen in the high times of feudal power, and had become burthensome to the aristocracy after it had been weakened by the reigns of the Tudors, disappeared.



No. 292. Herodias dancing before Herod.

The regular order of service at dinner seems to have been still three courses, each consisting of a number and variety of dishes, according to the richness of the entertainment. To judge from the early cookery books, which have been described in a former chapter, our ancestors, previous to the sixteenth century, in the better classes of society, were not in the habit of placing substantial joints on the table, but instead of them had a great variety of made dishes, a considerable proportion of which were eaten with a spoon. At the tables of the great, there was a large attendance of servants, and the guests were counted off not, as before, in couples, but in fours, each four being considered as one party, under the title of a *mess*, and probably having a dish among them, and served by one attendant. This custom is often alluded to in the dramatists, and it is hardly necessary to observe that it was the origin of our modern term in the army. The plate, as well as the porcelain and earthenware, used at table during the greater part of this period, was so richly diversified, that it would require a volume to describe it, nor would it be easy to pick out a small number of examples that might illustrate the whole. Our cut No. 293 represents a peculiar article of this period, which is not undeserving of remark, two knife-cases, made of leather, stamped and gilt.



No. 293. Knife-cases.



No. 294. Drinking Vessels.

From what has been said, it will be seen that our popular saying of “the roast beef of old England,” is not so literally true as we are accustomed to suppose. While, however, the style of living we have been describing prevailed generally among the higher ranks and the richer portion of the middle classes, particularly in towns, that of the less affluent classes remained simple and even scanty, and a large portion of the population of the country probably indulged in flesh meat only at intervals, or on occasions when they received it in their lord’s kitchen or hall. A few plain jugs, such as those represented in our cut No. 294, taken from a wooden

sculpture in the church of Kirby Thorpe, in Yorkshire, with platters or trenchers in pewter or wood, formed the whole table service of the inferior classes. It was the revolution in the middle of the seventeenth century which first abolished this extravagant ostentation, and brought into fashion a plainer table and more substantial meats. A foreigner, who had been much in England in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and published his observations in French at the Hague in 1698, tells us that the English of that period were great eaters of meat—"I have heard," says he, "of many people in England who have never eaten bread, and ordinarily they eat very little; they nibble sometimes a little bit, while they eat flesh by great mouthfuls. Generally speaking, the tables are not served with delicacy in England. There are some great lords who have French and English cooks, and where you are served much in the French fashion; but among persons of the middle condition of which I am speaking, they have ten or twelve sorts of common meat, which infallibly come round again in their turns at different times, and of two dishes of which their dinner is composed, as for instance, a pudding, and a piece of roast beef. Sometimes they will have a piece boiled, and then it has always lain in salt some days, and is flanked all round with five or six mounds of cabbage, carrots, turnips, or some other herbs or roots, seasoned with salt and pepper, with melted butter poured over them. At other times they will have a leg of mutton, roasted or boiled, and accompanied with the same delicacies; poultry, sucking pigs, tripe, and beef tongues, rabbits, pigeons, all well soaked with butter, without bacon. Two of these dishes, always served one after the other, make the ordinary dinner of a good gentleman, or of a good burgher.

When they have boiled meat, there is sometimes somebody who takes a fancy to broth, which consists of the water in which the meat has been boiled, mixed with a little oatmeal, with some leaves of thyme, or sage, or other such small herbs. The pudding is a thing which it would be difficult to describe, on account of the diversity of sorts. Flour, milk, eggs, butter, sugar, fat, marrow, rasins, &c. &c., are the more common ingredients of a pudding. It is baked in an oven; or boiled with the meat; or cooked in fifty other fashions. And they are grateful for the invention of puddings, for it is a manna to everybody's taste, and a better manna than that of the dessert, inasmuch as they are never tired of it. Oh! what an excellent thing is an English pudding! *To come in pudding time*, is a proverbial phrase, meaning, to come at the happiest moment in the world. Make a pudding for an Englishman, and you will regale him be he where he will. Their dessert needs no mention, for it consists only of a bit of cheese. Fruit is only found at the houses of great people, and only among few of them." The phrase, "to come in pudding time," occurs as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The absence of the dessert at the English table, of which the writer just quoted complains, arose from the abandonment in the middle of the seventeenth century of an old custom. In the earlier part of that century, and in the century previous, when the company rose from the dinner-table, they proceeded to what was then called the *banquet*, which was held in another apartment, and often in an arbour in the garden, or, as it was called, the garden-house. The *banquet* of an earlier period, the fifteenth century, was, as we have already seen, a meal after supper. In

Massinger's play of the "City Madam," a sumptuous dinner is described as follows:—

The dishes were raised one upon another,
As woodmongers do billets, for the first,
The second, and third course; and most of the shops
Of the best confectioners in London ransack'd
To furnish out a banquet.

In another of Massinger's dramas, one of the characters says:—

We'll dine in the great room, but let the musick
And banquet be prepared here.

It appears, therefore, that the banquet was often accompanied with music. At the banquet the choice wines were brought forth, and the table was covered with pastry and sweetmeats, of which our forefathers at this period appear to have been extremely fond. A usual article at the banquet was marchpanes, or biscuits made of sugar and almonds, in different fanciful forms, such as men, animals, houses, &c. There was generally one at least in the form of a castle, which the ladies and gentlemen were to batter to pieces in frolic, by attacking it with sugar-plums. Taylor, the water-poet, calls them—

Castles for ladies, and for carpet knights,
Unmercifully spoil'd at feasting fights,
Where battering bullets are fine sugred plums.

On festive occasions, and among people who loved to pass their time at table, the regular banquet seems to have been followed by a second, or, as it was called,

a *rere-banquet*. These rere-banquets are mentioned by the later Elizabethan writers, generally as extravagances, and sometimes with the epithet of "late," so that perhaps they took the place of the soberer supper. People are spoken of as taking "somewhat plentifully of wine" at these rere-banquets. The rere-supper was still in use, and appears also to have been a meal distinguished by its profusion both in eating and drinking. It was from the rere-supper that the roaring-boys, and other wild gallants of the earlier part of the seventeenth century, sallied forth to create noise and riot in the streets.

One of the great characteristics of the dinner-table at this period was the formality of drinking, especially that of drinking healths, so much cried down by the Puritans. This formality was enforced with great strictness and ceremony. It was not exactly the modern practice of giving a toast, but each person in turn rose, named some one to whom he individually drank (not one of the persons present), and emptied his cup. "He that begins the health," we are told in a little book published in 1623, "first, uncovering his head, he takes a full cup in his hand, and setting his countenance with a grave aspect, he craves for audience; silence being once obtained, he begins to breathe out the name, per-adventure, of some honourable personage, whose health is drunk to, and he that pledges must likewise off with his cap, kiss his fingers, and bow himself in sign of a reverent acceptance. When the leader sees his follower thus prepared, he sups up his broth, turns the bottom of the cup upward, and, in ostentation of his dexterity, gives the cup a phillip to make it cry twango. And thus the first scene is acted. The cup being newly

replenished to the breadth of a hair, he that is the pledger must now begin his part, and thus it goes round throughout the whole company." In order to ascertain that each person had fairly drunk off his cup, in turning it up he was to pour all that remained in it on his nail, and if there were too much to remain as a drop on the nail without running off, he was made to drink his cup full again. This was termed drinking on the nail, for which convivialists invented a mock Latin phrase, and called it drinking *super nagulum*, or *super-naculum*.

This custom of pledging in drinking was as old as the times of the Anglo-Saxons, when it existed in the "wæs heil" and "drinc heil," commemorated in the story of the British Vortigern and the Saxon Rowena, and it is alluded to in several ballads of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as in that of "King Edward and the Shepherd," where the man who drinks pledges his companion with the word "passelodion," and the other replies by "berafrynde," and in that of "The Kyng and the Hermyt," where the words of pledging and reply are "fusty bandyas," and "stryke pautnere." Both these ballads are printed in Hartshorne's "Ancient Metrical Tales." The drinking of the healths of absent individuals appears to have been introduced at a later period, and was carried to its greatest degree of extravagance on the continent. The person whose health a man gave was usually expected to be his mistress; and in France he was expected, in doing this, to drink as many times his glass or cup full of wine as there were letters in her name. Thus, in Ronsard's "Bacchanales," the gallant drinks nine times to his mistress Cassandre, because there were nine letters in her name:—

Neuf fois, au nom de Cassandre,
Je vois prendre
Neuf fois du vin du flacon;
Affin de neuf fois le boire
En memoire
Des neuf lettres de son nom.

And a less celebrated poet, of a rather later date, Guillaume Colletet, in a piece entitled "Le Trebuchement de l'Ivrongne," printed at Paris in 1627, introduces one of his personages drinking six times to his mistress, because her name was Cloris:—

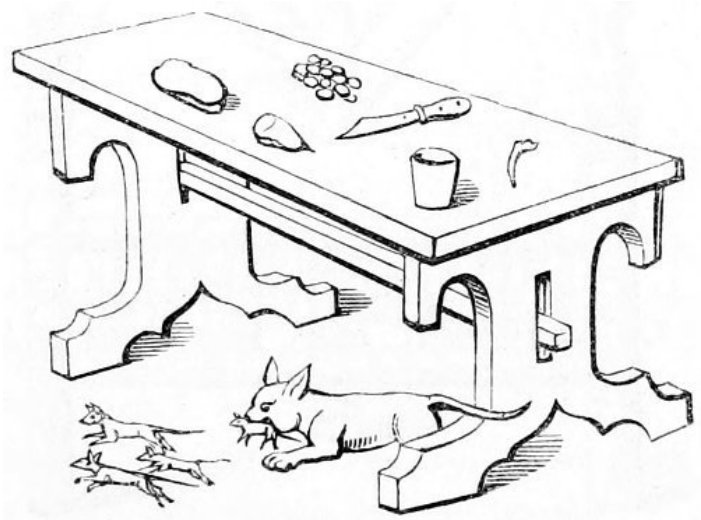
Six fois je m'en vas boire au beau nom de Cloris,
Cloris, le seul desir de ma chaste pensée.

The manner of pledging at table, as it still existed in England, is described rather ludicrously in the "Memoires d'Angleterre," of the year 1698, already quoted. "While in France," the author says, "the custom of drinking healths is almost abolished among people of any distinction, as being equally importunate and ridiculous, it exists here in all its ancient force. To drink at table, without drinking to the health of some one in especial, among ordinary people, would be considered as drinking on the sly, and as an act of incivility. There are in this proceeding two principal and singular grimaces, which are universally observed among people of all orders and all sorts. It is, that the person to whose health another drinks, if he be of inferior condition, or even equal, to that of him who drinks, must remain as inactive as a statue while the drinker drinks. If, for instance, he is in the act of taking something from a dish, he must suddenly stop, return his fork or spoon to its place, and wait, without

stirring more than a stone, until the other has drunk; after which, the second grimace is to make him an *inclinabo*, at the risk of dipping his perriwig in the gravy in his plate. I confess that, when a foreigner first sees these manners, he thinks them laughable. Nothing appears so droll as to see a man who is in the act of chewing a morsel which he has in his mouth, of cutting his bread, of wiping his mouth, or of doing anything else, who suddenly takes a serious air, when a person of some respectability drinks to his health, looks fixedly at this person, and becomes as motionless as if a universal paralysis had seized him, or he had been struck by a thunderbolt. It is true that, as good manners absolutely demand this respectful immobility in the *patient*, it requires also a little circumspection in the *agent*. When any one will drink to the health of another, he must fix his eye upon him for a moment, and give him the time, if it be possible, to swallow his morsel." It is hardly necessary to observe that this custom is the origin of our modern practice of "taking wine" with each other at table, which is now also becoming obsolete.

CHAPTER XXII.

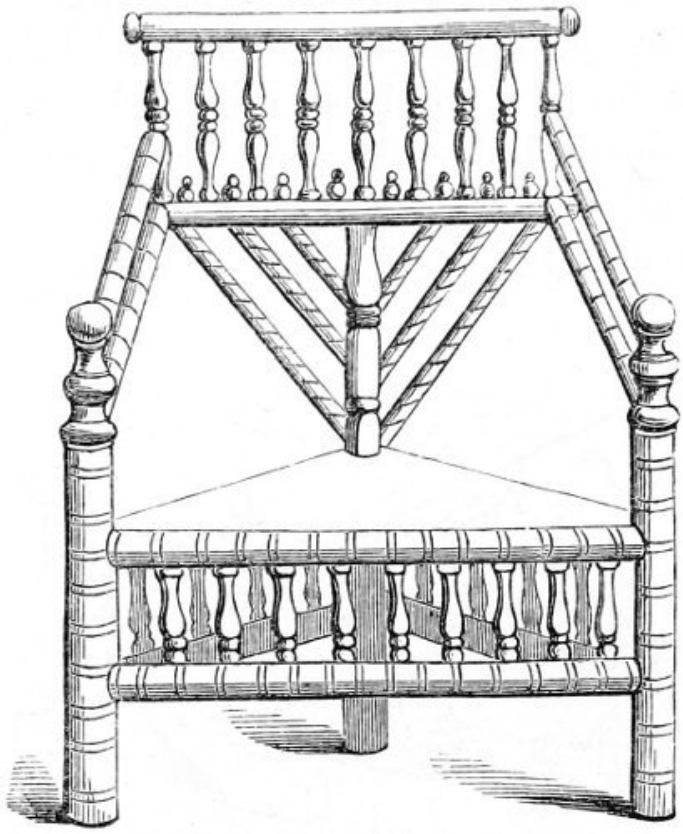
HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE.—THE PARLOUR.—THE CHAMBER.



No. 295. Table of Sixteenth Century.

As social peace and security became more established in the country, people began to be more lavish in all the articles of household furniture, which thus became much more numerous during the period of which we are now treating. It also went through its fashions and its changes, but in the progress of these changes it became less ponderous and more elegant. Until the middle of the sixteenth century, and perhaps later in some parts of the island, where social progress was slower, the old arrangements of a board laid upon trestles for a table still prevailed, though it was gradually disappearing; and, although the term of "laying" the board in a literal sense was no longer applicable, it has continued to be used figuratively, even to our own times. Richard Kanam, of Soham, in the county of Cambridge, whose will was proved so late as the 12th of April, 1570, left, among other household furniture, "one table with a payer of tressels, and a thicke forme." The first step

in the change from tables of this kind appears to have been to fix the trestles to the board, thus making it a permanent table. The whole was strengthened by a bar running from trestle to trestle, and ornamental wood-work was afterwards substituted in place of the trestles. A rather good example of a table of this description is given in the cut on the preceding page (No. 295), taken from that well-known publication, the “Stultifera Navis” of Sebastian Brandt. This, however, was a clumsy construction, and it soon gave way to the table with legs, the latter being usually turned on the lathe, and sometimes richly carved. This carving went out of use in the unostentatious days of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, to make way for plain table legs, and it never quite recovered its place.



No. 296. Henry VIII's Chair.

We have seen already that in the latter part of the previous century, in the chairs and stools, the joinery work of Flanders was taking the place of the older rude and clumsy seats. This taste still prevailed in the earlier half of the sixteenth century, and a large proportion of the furniture used in this country, as well as of the earthenware and other household implements, during the greater part of that century, were imported from Flanders and the Netherlands. Hence, in the absence of engravings at home, we are

led to look at the works of the Flemish and German artists for illustrations of domestic manners at this period. The seats of the description just mentioned were termed joint (or joined) stools or chairs. A rather fine example of a chair of this work, which is, as was often the case, three-cornered, is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, where it is reported to have been the chair of Henry VIII., on what authority I know not. It is represented in our cut No. 296. These "joined" chairs and stools were laid aside for furniture of a more elegant form, which was used during the reign of Elizabeth and her immediate successors, and of which examples are so common that it is hardly necessary to give one here. This fashion appears to have been brought from France. An example of rather peculiar style is given in our cut No. 297, taken from a picture executed in 1587, representing Louis de Gonzagues, duke of Nivernois.

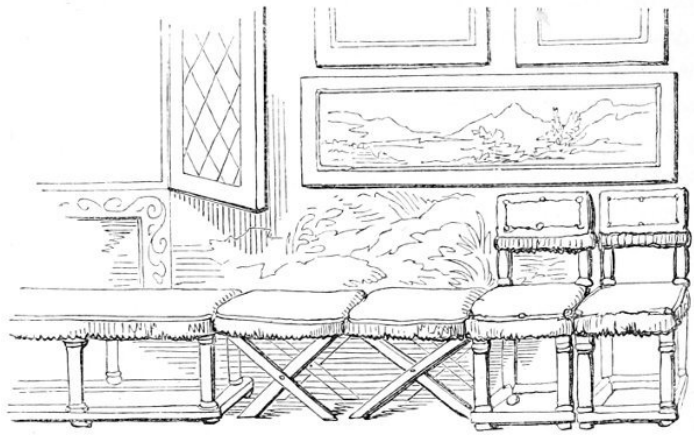


No. 297. Chair of duke de Nivernois.

Hitherto the cushions were merely adjuncts to the chairs, but by another advance in convenience the cushion was soon made as a part of the chair or stool, which at the same time became simpler in form again. Our cut No. 298, taken from one of the prints of Abraham Bosse, dated in 1633, represents the general character of the chairs and stools used in France at that date, as they are drawn in the works of this artist, and also the manner in which they were arranged round a room when not in use. On the left appears the end of a cushioned bench, which was generally of the length of two or three stools, and appears as a common article of furniture. Among other articles of furniture now introduced was the couch, or, as we should call it, the sofa. This was

called, in the age of Shakespeare, a day-bed, and appears to have been in some discredit, as an article indicating excess of luxury. Large cupboards, usually termed court-cupboards, and often very richly carved, were now in general use, for containing, under lock and key, the plate and other valuables. In allusion to the carvings on these cupboards, which usually consisted of faces more or less grotesque, and not very artistically executed, Corbet, in his "Iter Boreale," speaks of a person—

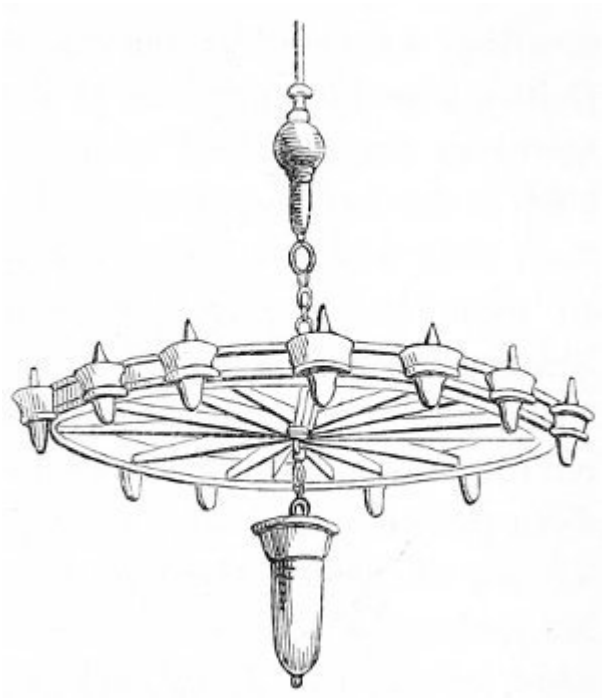
With a lean visage, like a carv'd face
On a court-cupboard.



No. 298. Stools and Chairs of the age of Charles I.

The sixteenth century was especially the age of tapestries, and no gentleman could consider his rooms furnished if they wanted these important adjuncts. They were now elaborately worked into great historical pictures, sacred or profane, or mythological or other subjects, to suit the varieties of

tastes. Sir John Elyot, in his “Governor,” reminds his readers that “semblable decking oughte to bee in the house of a noblemanne, or man of honoure; I meane concerning ornaments of hall and chambers in arras, painted tables, and images concernynge historyes, wherein is represented some monument of vertue most cunningly,” &c. At the commencement of the seventeenth century this practice was already beginning to go out of fashion, and it was not long afterwards that it was entirely laid aside: and the walls were again covered with panels, or painted or whitewashed, and adorned with pictures. In our last cut, of the date of 1633, we see the walls thus decorated with paintings.



No. 299. A Chandelier of the Sixteenth Century.

The rapid social revolution which was now going on, gradually produced changes in most of the articles of domestic economy. Thus, the old spiked candlestick was early in the century superseded by the modern socket candlestick. The chandelier represented in our cut No. 299, taken from one of Albert Durer's prints of the Life of the Virgin, published in 1509, in its spikes for the candles and its other characteristics, belongs to a ruder and earlier style of household furniture, and has nothing in common with the rich chandeliers which now began to be used.

The parlour appears in the sixteenth century to have been a room the particular use of which was in a state of transition. Subsequently, as domestic life assumed greater privacy than when people lived publicly in the hall, the parlour became the living room; but in the sixteenth century, though in London it was already used as the dining-room, in the country it appears to have been considered as a sort of amalgamation of a store-room and a bedroom. This is best understood from the different inventories of its furniture which have been preserved. In 1558, the parlour of Robert Hyndmer, rector of Sedgefield, in the county of Durham, contained—"a table with a joined frame, two forms, and a carpet; carved cupboards; a plain cupboard; nine joined stools; hangings of tapestry; and a turned chair." In the parlour at Hilton Castle, in the same county, in 1559, there were—"one iron chimney, two tables, one counter, two chairs, one cupboard, six forms, two old carpets, and three old hangings." In 1564, Margaret Cottom, a widow of Gateshead, had in her parlour —"one inner bed of wainscot, a stand, a bed, a presser of wainscot, three chests, a Dantzic coffer;" a considerable quantity of linen and cloth of different

kinds, and for different purposes; “tallow candles, and wooden dishes, a feather bed, a bolster, and a cod (*pillow*), two coverlets, two happgings (*coverlets of a coarser kind*), three blankets, three cods (*pillows*), with an old mattress; five cushions, a steel cap, and a covering; a tin bottle, a cap-case with a lock.” In the house of William Dalton, a wealthy merchant of Durham in 1556, the parlour must have been very roomy indeed to contain all the “household stuff” which it holds in the inventory, namely, “a chimney, with a pair of tongs; a bedstead close made; a feather bed, a pair of sheets, a covering of apparels, an ‘ovese’ bed, a covering wrought of silk; a cod (*pillow*), and a pillow-bere; a trundle-bed, a feather bed, a twilt (*quilt*), a happing (*coverlet*), and a bolster; a stand-bed, a feather-bed, a mattress, a pair of blankets, a red covering, a bolster, and curtains; eight cods, and eight pillow-beres; seven pair of linen sheets; eight pair of strakin (*a sort of kersey*) sheets; six pair of harden (*hempen*) sheets; thirteen yards of diaper tabling; ten yards and a half of table-cloth; twenty-one yards of towelling; four hand towels; two dozen napkins; five pillow-beres; two head sheets; a pair of blankets; two ‘overse’ beds, and three curtains; a cupboard; a table, with a carpet; a counter, with a carpet; a Dantzic chest; a bond chest; a bond coffer; an ambry; a long settle, and a chair; three buffet stools; a little stool; two forms; red hangings; a painted cloth; three chests; a stand-bed, a pair of blankets, two sheets, a covering, and two cods; an ‘ambre call.’” In 1567, the parlour at Beaumont Hill, a gentleman’s house in the north, contained the following furniture:—“One trundle bed, with a feather bed; two coverlets, a bolster, two blankets, two carpet table cloths, two coverlets, one presser, a little table, one chest, three chairs, and

three forms." In other inventories, down to the end of the century, we find the parlour continuing to be stored in this indiscriminate manner.



No. 300. A Dying Man and his Treasures.



No. 301. A Bed-chamber and its Furniture.



No. 302. A Time-piece, &c.

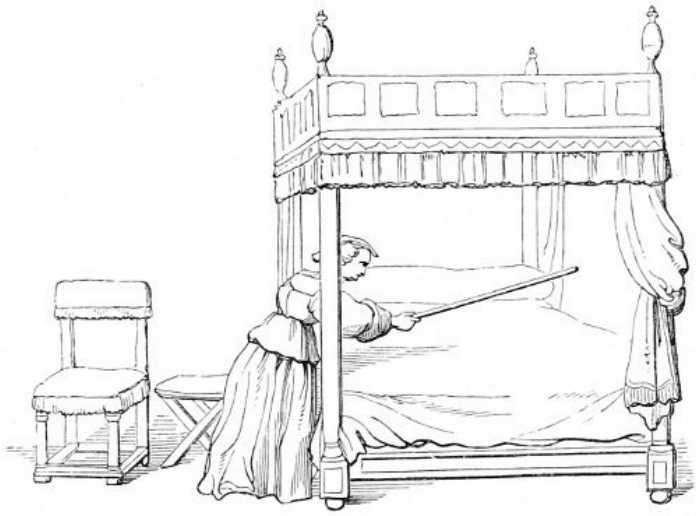
This period also differs from former periods in the much greater number of beds, and greater abundance of bed-furniture, we find in the houses. We have often several beds in one chamber. Few of the principal bedrooms had less than two beds. The form of the bedstead was now almost universally that with four posts. Still in the engravings of the sixteenth century, we find the old couch-bed represented. Such appears to be the bed in our cut No. 300, taken from Whitney's "Emblems," an English book printed at Leyden in 1586. We have here another, and rather a late example, of the manner in which money was hoarded up in chests in the chambers. The couch-bed is still more distinctly shown in our cut No. 301, taken from Albert Durer's print of St. Jerome, dated in 1511. This print is remarkable for its detail of the furniture of a bed-chamber, and especially for the manner in which the various smaller articles are arranged and suspended

to the walls. Not the least remarkable of these articles is the singular combination of a clock and an hour glass, which is placed against the wall as a time-piece. This seems, however, to have been not uncommon. A time-piece of the same kind is represented in our cut No. 302, which is taken from a print of St. Jerome at prayer, by Hans Springen Kelle, without date, but evidently belonging to the earlier half of the sixteenth century. The method of suspending or attaching to the walls the smaller articles in common use, such as scissors, brushes, pens, papers, &c., is here the same as in the former. Our next cut (No. 303), from a print by Aldegraver, dated in 1553, represents evidently a large four-post bedstead, which is remarkable for its full and flowing curtains. The plate appears here to be kept in the bed-chamber. Chests, cupboards, presses, &c., become now very numerous in the bedrooms, and we begin to meet with tables and chairs more frequently. In 1567, the principal chamber in the house of Mrs. Elizabeth Hutton, at Hunwick, contained the following articles:—"In napery, in linen sheets, sixteen pair; certain old harden (*hempen*) sheets, and sixteen pillowberes; two Dantzic chests, a little chest bound with iron, a candle chest, and another old chest; a press with two floors and five doors; a folding table, seven little cushions, and two long cushions of crool (*a sort of fine worsted*) wrought with the needle, and a carpet cloth that is in working with crools for the same; six feather beds, with six bolsters, and a coarse feather-bed tick; eight mattresses, and nine bolsters; twelve pillows, twelve pair of blankets, and six happings; twenty coverlets, three coverings for beds of tapestry, and two of dornix (*Tournay*); a carpet cloth of tapestry work, five yards long, and a quarter deep;

five standing beds, with cords; two testers with curtains of saye, and two testers with curtains of crool." In the principal chamber in the house of lady Catherine Hedworth, in 1568, the following furniture is enumerated:—"One trussing bed, one feather bed, one pair of blankets, one pair of sheets, one bolster, one pillow with a housewife's covering, four pillows, two Flanders chests, one almery, two cupboards, three coffers, two cupboard stools, three buffet forms, one little buffet stool, two little coffers, five mugs, three old cushions." The principal chamber of Thomas Sparke, suffragan bishop of Berwick, whose goods were appraised in 1572, was furnished with the following articles:—"A stand-bed, with a testron of red saye and fringe, and a truckle-bed; a Cypres chest, a Flanders chest, a desk, three buffet stools; the said chamber hung with red saye." At Crook Hall, in the suburbs of Durham, in 1577, the principal chamber contained three beds; another chamber contained four beds; and a third two beds. These lists furnish good illustrations of the various prints from which we have already given some sketches.



No. 303. A Bed of the Sixteenth Century.



No. 304. A Bed of the Seventeenth Century.

Our cut No. 304 represents the usual form of the bedstead in the seventeenth century, and the process of "making" the bed; it is taken from a print by the French artist, Abraham Boste, of the date 1631. Another of his prints, of the same date, has furnished us with a sketch of a bedroom party (cut No. 305), which is no unapt illustration of domestic manners in the seventeenth century. It represents a custom which prevailed especially in France. A woman, after childbirth, kept her room in state, and with great ceremony, and received there daily her female acquaintances, who passed the afternoon in gossip. This practice, and especially the conversation which took place at it, were frequent subjects of popular satire, and formed the groundwork of one of the most celebrated books of the reign of Louis XIII., entitled "Les Caquets de l'Accouchée," first published in 1622. An edition of this curious satire has been recently published by M. Ed. Fournier, in the

introduction to which, as well as in the text, the reader will find abundant information on this subject.



No. 305. A Bedroom Party.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE LADIES.—GAMES AND ENJOYMENTS.—

ROUGHNESS OF ENGLISH SPORTS AT THIS PERIOD.—THE HOT-HOUSES, OR BATHS.—THE ORDINARIES.—DOMESTIC PETS.—TREATMENT OF CHILDREN.—METHODS OF LOCOMOTION.—CONCLUSION.



No. 306. Ladies at Work.

During the period at which we are now arrived, almost all the relations of domestic life underwent a great change, and nothing hardly could produce a wider difference than that between the manners and sentiments of the reign of Henry VII., and those of Charles II. This was especially observable in the occupations of the female sex, which were becoming

more and more frivolous. At the earlier portion of the period referred to, women in general were confined closely to their domestic labours, in spinning, weaving, embroidering, and other work of a similar kind. A hand-loom was almost a necessary article of furniture in a well regulated household, and spinning was so universal an occupation, that we read sometimes of an apartment in the house set apart for it—a family spinning room. Even to this present day, in legal language, the only occupation acknowledged, as that of an unmarried woman, is that of a spinster. Our cut (No. 306) represents a party of ladies at their domestic labours; it is taken from Israel van Mechelin's print of "The Virgin Ascending the Steps of the Temple," where this domestic scene is introduced in a side compartment. Two are engaged at the distaff, the old poetical emblem of the sex. Another is cutting out the cloth for working, with a pair of shears of very antiquated form. The shape of the three-cornered joined chair in this group is worthy of remark. The female in our cut No. 307 is also seated in a chair of rather peculiar construction, though it has occurred before at an earlier period (cut No. 245, p. 375), and we meet with it again in our next cut (No. 308). It is what was sometimes called a folding chair. This cut is taken from one of the illustrations to the English edition of Erasmus's "Praise of Folly," printed in 1676, but it is a copy of the earlier originals. The great weaving establishments in England appear to have commenced in the sixteenth century, with the Protestant refugees from France and the Netherlands.



No. 307. A Lady at the Loom.

The old domestic games continued to be practised in the middle and upper classes of society, although they were rather extensively superseded by the pernicious rage for gambling which now prevailed throughout English society. This practice had been extending itself ever since the beginning of the fifteenth century, and had been accompanied with another evil practice among the ladies, that of drinking. It need hardly be observed that these two vices furnished constant themes to the dramatists and satirists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the example set by the court under James

I. caused them to increase greatly, and they rose to the highest pitch of extravagance under Charles II. Barclay's "Ship of Fools" (the early English edition) has furnished us with the group of female gamesters, represented in our cut No. 308. It will be seen that the ladies are playing with cards and dice, and that the ale jug is introduced as an accompaniment. In fact we must look upon it as a tavern party, and the round table, as far as we can judge, appears to be fixed in the ground. The same book furnishes us with an illustration (cut No. 309), in which two gamblers are quarrelling over a game at backgammon. A child is here the jug-bearer or guardian of the liquor. Our cut No. 310 represents a gambling scene of a rather later period, taken from Whitney's "Emblems," printed in 1586; dice are here the implements of play.



No. 308. A Party of Ladies.



No. 309. A Gamblers' Dispute.



No. 310. A Party at Dice.

A very curious piece of painted glass, now in the possession of Mr. Fairholt, of German manufacture, and forming part, apparently, of a series illustrative of the history of the Prodigal Son, represents a party of gamblers, of the earlier part of the sixteenth century, in which they are playing with two dice. It is copied in our cut No. 311. The original bears the inscription, "*Jan Van Hassell Tryngen sin hausfrau*," with a merchant's mark, and the date, 1532. Three dice, however, continued to be used long after this, and are, from time to time, alluded to during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I have, in a former chapter, traced the history of playing-cards down to the latter half of the fifteenth century. After that time, they are frequently mentioned. They formed the common amusement in the courts of Scotland and England under the reigns

of Henry VII. and James IV.; and it is recorded that when the latter monarch paid his first visit to his affianced bride, the young princess Margaret of England, “he founde the quene playing at the cardes.”



No. 311. A Gambling Party of the Sixteenth Century.

In Germany at this time card-playing was carried to an extravagant degree, and it became an object of attack and satire to the reformers among the clergy. Our cut No. 312 represents a German card-party in a tavern, taken from an early painted coffer in the Museum of Old German Art at Nuremberg. The design of the cards is that of packs of fancifully ornamented cards made in Germany at the close of

the fifteenth century. The German satirists of that age complain that the rage for gambling had taken possession of all classes of society, and levelled all ranks, ages, and sexes; that the noble gambled with the commoner, and the clergy with the laity. Some of the clerical reformers declared that card-playing as well as dice was a deadly sin, and others complained that this love of gambling had caused people to forget all honourable pursuits.



No. 312. Cards early in the Sixteenth Century.

A similar outcry was raised in our own country; and a few years later it arose equally loud. A short anonymous poem on the ruin of the realm, belonging apparently to the earlier part of the reign of Henry VIII. (MS. Harl. No. 2252, fol. 25, vo), complains of the nobles and gentry:—

Before thys tyme they lovyd for to juste,

And in shotynge chefely they sett ther mynde,
And ther landys and possessyons now sett they moste,
And at cardes and dyce ye may them ffynde.

"Cardes and dyce" are from this time forward spoken of as the great blot on contemporary manners; and they seem for a long time to have driven most other games out of use. Roy, in his remarkable satire against cardinal Wolsey, complains that the bishops themselves were addicted to gambling:—

To play at the cardes and dyce
Some of theym are no thynge nyce,
Both at hasard and mom-chaunce.

The rage for cards and dice prevailed equally in Scotland. Sir David Lindsay's popish parson, in 1535, boasts of his skill in these games:—

Thoch I preich nocht, I can play at the caiche;
I wot there is nocht ane amang yow all
Mair ferylie can play at the fute-ball;
And for the cartis, the tabels, and the dyse,
Above all parsouns I may beir the pryse.

The same celebrated writer, in a poem against cardinal Beaton, represents that prelate as a great gambler:—

In banketting, playing at cartis and dyce,
Into sic wysedome I was haldin wyse,
And spairit nocht to play with king nor knicht
Thre thousand crownes of golde upon ane night.

Though gardening and horticulture in general, as

arts, were undergoing considerable improvement during this period, the garden itself appears to have been much more neglected, except as far as it was the scene of other pastimes. A bowling-green was the most important part of the pleasure garden in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and bowls, and exercises of a similar character, were the favourite amusements of all classes. The gardens themselves, which were apart from the house, and made more retired by lofty walls enclosing them, were usually adorned with alcoves and summer-houses, or, as they were then more usually termed, garden-houses, but these were chiefly celebrated, especially in the seventeenth century, as places of intrigue. There are continual allusions to this usage in the popular writers of the time. Thus, one of the personages in Beaumont and Fletcher's "Woman Hater" exclaims, "This is no garden-house: in my conscience she went forth with no dishonest intent." And, in the play of the "Mayor of Quinsborough,"—

Poor soul, she's entic'd forth by her own sex
To be betray'd to man, who in some garden-house,
Or remote walk, taking his lustful time,
Binds darkness on her eyes, surprises her.

A character in another old play, "The London Prodigal," seeking employment of a rather equivocal character, says, "Now God thank you, sweet lady, if you have any friend, or garden-house, where you may employ a poor gentleman as your friend, I am yours to command in all secret service."

Amid the gaiety which was so especially characteristic of this age, a spirit of vulgar barbarity had arisen and spread itself very widely, and the

popular games most practised were in general coarse and cruel. A foreign writer already quoted, but one who was evidently a very unprejudiced observer, has left us some rather amusing remarks on this subject which are worthy of being repeated. “The English,” he says, “have games which are peculiar to them, or at least, which they affect and practise more than people do elsewhere. To see cocks fight is a royal pleasure in England. Their combats of bulls and dogs, of bears and dogs, and sometimes of bulls and bears, are not combats to the last gasp, like those of cocks. Everything that is called fighting is a delicious thing to an Englishman. If two little boys quarrel in a street, the passers stop, make in a moment a ring round them, and encourage them to settle it by blows of the fist. If it comes to fighting, each takes off his cravat and his jacket, and gives them in charge to one of the company; then begin the blows of the fist, in the face if possible, the blows of the foot on their shins, the pulling of one another by the hair, &c. The one who has knocked the other down, may give him one blow or two when he is down, but no more, and every time the one who is down will rise, the other must return to the combat as long as he pleases. During the combat, the circle of spectators encourage the combatants to the great joy of their hearts, and never separate them, so long as things are done according to rule. And these spectators are not only other children, and street porters, but all sorts of respectable people, some of whom make their way through the crowd to see nearer, others mount upon the shops, and all would pay for places, if stages could be built up in a moment. The fathers and mothers of the little boys who are fighting look on like the others, and encourage the one who gives way, or is wanting in

strength. These kind of combats are less frequent among grown-up men than among children, but they are not uncommon. If the driver of a hackney-coach has a dispute about his fare, with a gentleman whom he has carried, and the gentleman offers to settle the dispute by fighting, the coachman agrees to it willingly. The gentleman takes off his sword, disposes of it in some shop with his walking-stick, his gloves, and his cravat, and fights in the manner I have described. If the coachman is well beaten, which is almost always the case, he is considered as paid; but if he beats, he who is beaten must pay the sum that was in question, and that which caused the quarrel. I once saw the late duke of Grafton fighting in the open street in the middle of the Strand with a coachman, whom he thrashed in a terrible manner. In France, we treat such kind of people with blows of a stick or, sometimes, of the flat of the sword; but in England that is never done; they never use a sword or stick against those who are not similarly armed; and if any unlucky foreigner (for it would never come into the mind of an Englishman) should strike with the sword any one who had not got one, it is certain that in an instant a hundred persons would fall upon him, and perhaps beat him so that he would never recover. Wrestling is also one of the diversions of the English, especially in the northern provinces. Ringing the bells is one of their great pleasures, especially in the country; there is a way of doing it, but their peal is quite different from those of Holland and the Low Countries. In winter football is a useful and charming exercise; it is a ball of leather, as large as a man’s head, and filled with wind; it is tossed with the feet in the streets. To expose a cock in a place, and kill it at a distance of forty or fifty paces with a stick, is also a very

diverting thing; but this pleasure only belongs to a certain season. This also is the case with the dances of the milkwomen, with the throwing at one another of tennis-balls by girls, and with divers other little exercises." Such was the rude character of the amusement of all classes of our population during the seventeenth century.

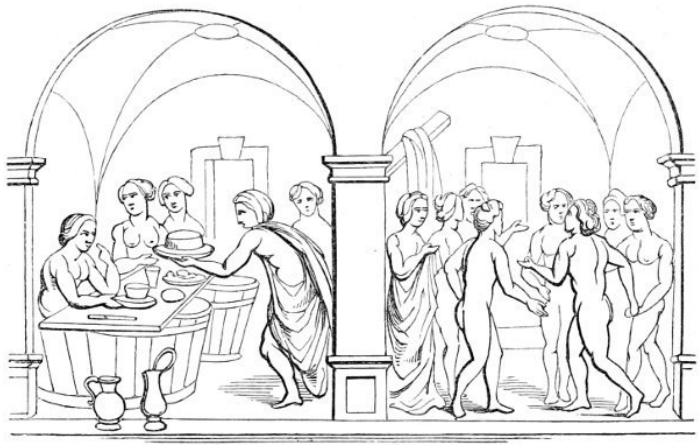
The ladies still had their household pets, though they varied sometimes in their character, which perhaps arose in some measure from the circumstance that the discovery of or increased communication with distant countries, brought the knowledge of animals and birds which were not so well known before. Thus, in the sixteenth century, monkeys appear to have been much in fashion as domestic favourites, and we not unfrequently find them in prints in attendance upon ladies. Since the discovery of the West Indies, and the voyages of the Portuguese to the coast of Africa, parrots had become much more common than formerly. In pictures of the period of which we are speaking, we often find these, as well as smaller domestic birds, in cages of various forms. In our cut No. 313, taken from Whitney's "Emblems" (printed in 1585), we have a parrot in its cage, and a small bird (perhaps meant for a canary), the latter of which is drawing up its water to drink in a manner which has been practised in modern times, and supposed to be a novelty. It is very unsafe indeed to assume that any ingenious contrivances of this kind are modern, for we often meet with them unexpectedly at a comparatively early date.



No. 313. Birds and Birdcage.

With the multiplicity of new fashions in dress now introduced, the work of the toilette became much greater and more varied, and many customs were introduced from France, from Italy, and from the East. Among customs derived from the latter quarter, was the introduction of the eastern hot and sweating baths, which became for a considerable period common in England. They were usually known by the plain English name of *hothouses*, but their eastern origin was also sometimes indicated by the preservation of their Persian name of *hummums*. This name is still retained by the two modern hotels which occupy the sites of establishments of this description in Covent Garden. Sweating in hothouses is spoken of by Ben Jonson; and a character in the old play of "The Puritan," speaking of a laborious undertaking, says, "Marry, it will take me much sweat; I were better go to sixteen *hothouses*." They seem to have been mostly frequented by women, and became, as in the East, favourite places of

rendezvous for gossip and company. They were soon used to such an extent for illicit intrigues, that the name of a hothouse or bagnio became equivalent to that of a brothel; and this circumstance probably led eventually to their disuse. A very rare and curious broadside woodcut of the reign of James I., entitled "Tittle-tattle, or the several branches of gossipping," which in different compartments represents pictorially the way in which the women of that age idled away their time, gives in one part a sketch of the interior of a hothouse, which is copied in our cut No. 314. In one division of the hothouse the ladies are bathing in tubs, while they are indulging themselves with an abundance of very substantial dainties; in the other, they appear to be still more busily engaged in gossip. The whole broadside is a singularly interesting illustration of contemporary manners. A copy of it will be found in the print-room of the British Museum; and it may be remarked (which I think has not been observed before), that it is copied from a large French etching of about the same period, a copy of which is in the print department of the Imperial Library in Paris.



No. 314. A Hothouse.

This is sufficient to show the close resemblance at this time between manners in France and in England. In the former country, the resort of women in company to the hot-baths is not unfrequently alluded to, and their behaviour and conversation there are described in terms of satire which cannot always be transferred to our modern pages. In these popular satires, the bathers are sometimes *chambrières*, and at others good *bourgeoises*. The pic-nics, which had formerly taken place at the tavern, were now transferred to the hot-bath, each of a party of bathers carrying some contribution to the feast, which they shared in common. Thus, in the popular piece entitled "Le Banquet des Chambrières fait aux Estuves," printed in 1541, it is the chamber-maidens who go to the bath, and they begin immediately to produce their contributions, one exclaiming—

—j'ay du porc frais,
Une andouille et quatre saulcices.

To which a second adds,—

—j'aye une cottelette,
Qui le ventre quasi m'eschaulde.

And a third,—

Moy, un pasté à sauce chaulde.

The women are seen eating their pic-nic feast in one compartment of our cut. This practice soon passed from the servant maids of the bourgeoisie to their mistresses, and from the burghers' wives to ladies of higher condition. Our word pic-nic, representing the French *piquenique*, the origin or derivation of which word seems not to be clearly known, appears to have come into use at the latter end of the last century, when people of rank formed evening parties at which they joined in such pic-nic suppers, to which each brought his or her contribution. The term is now applied almost solely to such collations in the fields, or in the open air.

We have already seen how, at an earlier period, men of a superior rank in London, and probably in at least the larger country towns, lived much in the taverns and cooks' shops or eating-houses. This practice continued, and underwent various modifications, the principal of which was the establishment of houses where a public table was served at fixed hours, at which a gentleman could take his place on payment of a certain sum, much in the same style as our modern *tables d'hôte*. Gradually these establishments became gambling-houses, and men settled down after dinner to cards, dice, and other games. They

were called ordinaries, and in the reign of Elizabeth they had become an important part of the social system. It was here that people went to hear the news of the day, or the talk of the town, and to frequent the ordinary became gradually considered as a necessary part of the education of a gentleman of fashion. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the usual price of an ordinary appears to have been two shillings; but there were ordinaries at eighteen-pence, and at some fashionable ordinaries the price was much higher.



No. 315. Swaddling a Child.

The general treatment of children, their costume, and their amusements, remained much as formerly, and closely resembled those of France and Germany as they were then, and as they have existed in some parts even to our own days. The pernicious practice of swathing or swaddling the child as soon as it was born prevailed everywhere, and the infant was kept in this condition until it became necessary to teach it

the use of its limbs. The process of swaddling is shown in our cut No. 315, taken from one of the prints by Bosse, published in 1633, which furnish such abundant illustration of contemporary manners. The period during which boys were kept in petticoats was very short, for at a very early age they were dressed in the same dress as up-grown people, like little miniature men. Our only representatives of the appearance of little boys in the sixteenth century, is found in one or two educational establishments, such as the Blue-Coat School in London. The costume of a child during the short transition period between his swathes and his breeches is represented in our cut No. 316, of a boy riding upon his wooden horse. It is taken from a German woodcut of the date of 1549.



No. 316. A Boy a-cock-horse.

In the sixteenth century little improvement had taken place in the means of locomotion, which was still performed generally on horseback. Coaches, by that name, are said to have been introduced into

England only towards the middle of the sixteenth century. They were made in various forms and sizes, according to fashion or caprice, and towards the end of the century they were divided into two classes, known by the foreign names of *coaches* and *caroches*. The latter appear to have been larger and clumsier than the former, but to have been considered more stately; and from the old play of "Tu Quoque," by Green (a drama of Elizabeth's reign), we learn that it was considered more appropriate to the town (and probably to the court), while the *coach* was left to the country:—

Nay, for a need, out of his easy nature,
May'st draw him to the keeping of a coach
For country, and carroch for London.

Ben Jonson, in his comedy of "The Devil is an Ass," gives us a great notion of the bustle attending a *caroch*:—

Have with them for the great caroch, six horses,
And the two coachmen, with my ambler bare,
And my three women.

Coaches of any kind, however, were evidently not in very common use until after the beginning of the seventeenth century. Women in general, at least those who were not skilful horsewomen, when the distance or any other circumstance precluded their going on foot, rode on a pillion or side-saddle behind a man, one of her relatives or friends, or sometimes a servant. The accompanying cut (No. 317) represents a couple thus mounted, the lady holding in her hand the kind of fan which was used at the period. From a

comparison of the figure of the Anglo-Saxon ladies on horseback, who were evidently seated in the saddle as in a chair, sideways to the horse, we are led to suppose that the Anglo-Saxon lady's saddle, and probably the saddle for females in general during the middle ages, was the same as that which was known in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, by the name of a pillion. The rider placed her feet usually on a narrow board, which was called in French the *planchette*. It is evident that a woman could not be very solidly seated in this manner, and not only did she want the command over the horse which would enable her to take part in any very active exercises, but it was considered almost necessary to place a man on a saddle before her. We have, accordingly, seen that, from a very early period, when engaged in hunting and in any sort of active riding, the lady used a saddle, as at present, in which she raised one leg over a part of the saddle-bow, made for that purpose, and placed the other foot in the stirrup, by which she obtained a firm seat, and a command over the horse. Different writers have ascribed, without any reason, the introduction of this mode of riding for ladies to various individuals, and Brantôme seems to have thought that this practice was first brought into fashion by Catherine de Medicis. The last cut is taken from a drawing in the curious Album of Charles de Bousy, containing dates from 1608 to 1638, and now preserved among the Sloane manuscripts (No. 3415) in the British Museum; and the same manuscript has also furnished us with the annexed cut (No. 318) of a lady of rank carried in her chair, with her chair-bearers and attendants. Ladies, and especially persons suffering from illness, were often carried in horse-litters, and there are instances of chairs

mounted somewhat like the one here represented, and carried by horses. The first attempt towards the modern gig or cabriolet appears to have been a chair fixed in a cart, something in the style of that represented in our cut No. 319, which in its ornamentation has a very mediæval character, although it is given as from a manuscript in the Imperial Library in Paris (No. 6808), of the beginning of the sixteenth century.

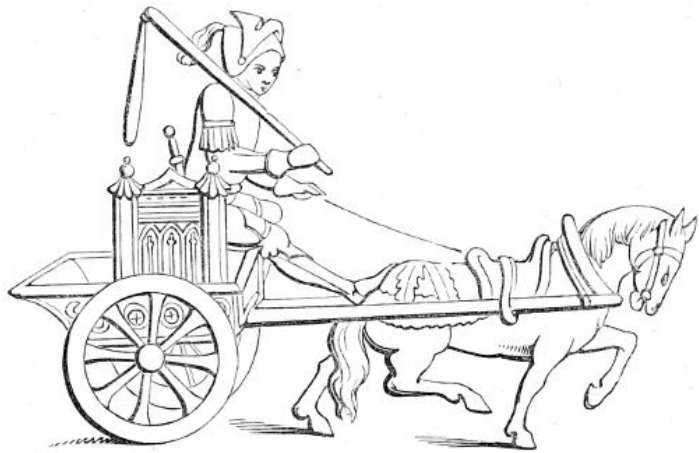


No. 317. Riding on a Pillion.



No. 318. A Lady carried in her Chair.

The close of the period of which we are here speaking introduces us to one in which the manners and customs of our forefathers were less widely different from those of our own days; and the history of domestic manners since that time, characterised less by broad outline of the general features in its revolutions than by a gradual succession of minute changes, and fashions which must be traced from day to day, is less capable of being treated in the comprehensive style of these pages. Having now, therefore, brought down our sketch of the History of the Domestic Manners of our forefathers to the middle of the seventeenth century, we shall here, for the reason just stated, conclude it, and leave to some worthier labourer, or to some future occasion, the task of tracing more minutely the history of domestic manners and sentiments during the period which followed the middle ages.



No. 319. A Mediæval Cabriolet.

INDEX.

A.

Adulteration of food, 394.
Ale, 32.
Alehouse, road-side, 320, 321.
Ale-stake, 321.
Almsgiving, 61, 158.
Amphitheatres, Roman, continued in use among the Anglo-Saxons, 64;
and Anglo-Normans, 111.
Amusements after dinner, 33, 38, 106,

194-225, 226-236.
Amusements out of doors, 111-113, 432.
Animals, domestic, 239-244, 384-386, 490.
Apple, the chief fruit of the Anglo-Saxons, 295.
Archery, a favourite amusement of the ladies, 310;
practised generally, 433.
Arms suspended in the hall among the Anglo-Saxons, 20;
at a later period, 452.
Axes, Anglo-Saxon, 9, 10.

B.

Backgammon, the game of, 219, 220, 484.
Bagpipe, 184, 185, 188.
Ball, game of, 235.
Banquet, the 387-395;
in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 466, 467.
Barons, feudal, their power and cruelty, 102.
Baths, and bathing, 59, 259, 491, 492.
Bear, dancing, 64, 65, 304; baiting, 305.
Beds, among the Anglo-Saxons, 44-47;
among the Anglo-Normans, 110, 111;
the bed and its furniture among the English, 256-259, 403-408, 477-481.
Bedsteads, 262, 404.
Bees, 91.
Beggars, in the middle ages, 327, 328.
Bells, attached to the caparisons of horses, 314.
Bellows, 144.
Benches, 139.
Bever, the name of a meal, 395, 456.

Beverley, the minstrels of, 192.
Birds, kept in cages, 239-242, 384, 385, 491.
Blindman's-buff, game of, 229, 230.
Boar's head, the, 146.
Bourgeoisie, the, their mode of living, 170-173.
Bower, chamber, or sleeping-room, Anglo-Saxon, 11.
Bowls, vessels found in Anglo-Saxon graves, 8.
Box-iron, ornamental, 447.
Bread, and baking, 92, 161.
Breakfasts of the Percy family, 421.
Brewhouses, places for selling beer, 335.
Buckets, Anglo-Saxon, supposed to be for carrying liquor, 9, 25.
Buffet, or cupboard, 362, 379. See *Cupboard*.
Bull-baiting, 304.

C.

Cabinets, 246.
Cabriolet, 497, 498.
Caldron, forms of the, 144-147.
Candles, 43, 107, 249-252, 375, 376.
Candle-beam, 376.
Candlesticks, 376, 378, 475;
attached to the walls of halls, 378, 455.
Caquets de l'accouchée, 481.
Cards, history of the game of, 221-225, 386, 484-488.
Caroches, 495.
Carole, the name of a dance, 228.
Carpets, 245, 371, 402.
Carriages, among the Anglo-Saxons, 73;

among the English, 116, 434, 435, 495.
Cart, riding in, disgraceful, 344.
Cats, 243, 244.
Cellar, the, 133.
Chairs, 41, 42, 94, 155, 244, 374, 375, 378, 401, 473, 483.
Chairs, for conveyance, 497.
Chambers, Anglo-Saxon, 11, 40-47;
early English, 132, 244-246, 260-262;
in the fifteenth century, 381, 399-402.
Chamber-maidens, 270.
Chandeliers, 376, 475.
Chaplets of flowers, popular in the middle ages, 288.
Cherries, cultivated by the Anglo-Saxons, 295;
and generally in England during the middle ages, 299, 300, 302.
Cherry-fairs, 299.
Chess, game of, 41, 106;
history of the game, 195-214, 286, 287.
Chessmen, ancient, 202-206.
Chests, 110, 138, 262-268, 477.
Chestnut, meaning of the word, 296.
Children, treatment of, 47-51, 494.
Chimneys, 99, 245.
Churning, 92.
Cittern, the musical instrument, 186, 187.
Clergy, Anglo-Saxon, addicted to hunting, 68;
corruptors of domestic morals in the middle ages, 282.
***Cnithad* (boyhood), period of among the Anglo-Saxons, 52.**
Coaches, 495.
Coal, mineral, used among the Anglo-

Saxons, 21.
Coffers, 110, 263-268.
Cold-harbour, origin of the term, 76.
Cooks, 87, 88.
Cookery, among the Anglo Saxons, 26, 27;
English, 91, 148-150, 347-356, 395;
in the fifteenth century, 381.
Couch, the, 474.
Counter, or table for writing, 450.
Couples, guests placed at table in, 157.
Court-cupboards, 474.
Cradle, Anglo-Saxon, 49, 50;
English, 402.
Cressets, implements for giving light, 454.
Cupboard, 173, 362, 371, 379, 450, 461, 462.
Curtains, bed, 403-411.
Curtains of chamber, 244.
Cymbals, 189.

D.

Dais, the, 30, 139, 153, 154.
Dames, the game of, 220.
Damsons, considered as delicacies, 388.
Dancing, among the Anglo-Saxons, 35;
among the Anglo-Normans, 111;
among the English, 227-229, 285;
in the fifteenth century, 387, 419, 426, 427.
Day, divisions and different occupations of the, 92-94, 246, 247, 396, 424-426.
Dice, the game of, 214-217, 485, 486.
Dinner, among the Anglo-Saxons, 22-24;
among the Anglo-Normans, 88-90;
forms and ceremonies attending the mediæval dinner, 150-153, 156-163;
dinner in the fifteenth century, 389, 396;

after the Reformation, 458-466.
Dinner, number of courses at, 349, 463.
Dogs, Anglo-Saxon, 68, 69;
pets and house-dogs, 242, 243;
dogs used in hawking, 307.
Draught chamber, or drawing-room, 408.
Draughts, the game of, 221.
Dresser, or cupboard, 173, 379, 393, 450, 461, 462.
Drinking, among the Anglo-Saxons, 3, 4, 30, 31;
among the Anglo-Normans, 113;
among the English, 168.
Drinking ceremonies and formalities, 33, 467-470.
Drinking-cups, Anglo-Saxon, 5, 6, 31;
Anglo-Norman, 89, 90;
in the fifteenth century, 390;
drinking-vessels, 465.
Drum, the, 188, 393.
Dulcimer, the, 184, 190.

E.

Eating, greediness in, characteristic of the English, 422, 423;
their diet in the seventeenth century, 465.
Education, 118, 338-340, 439.
Embroidery, among the Anglo-Saxons, 52;
among the English, 237, 238.

F.

Faldestol, the, 95.
Fashions, extravagant, among the Anglo-Normans, 81.
Feasts, great, 357.

Female character, estimate of, 105.
Feudal society, its classes and prejudices, 280, 416-418.
Feudalism, 100, 101, 103;
its barbarity, 316;
its decline, 415, 441.
Fiddle, the, 34, 184, 185, 193.
Fighting, love of the English for, 489.
Fire, lighted in the hall among the Anglo-Saxons, 20, 21;
in the chamber, 245.
Fire-irons, 445-448.
Fireplace, the, 99, 244, 367, 444, 448-450.
Floor, strewed with rushes, 154, 246, 366.
Flowers, love of, among the Anglo-Saxons, 60;
among the English, 289.
what, cultivated by the Anglo-Saxons, 295;
by the English, 297, 298, 300, 301.
Food, Anglo-Saxon, 26, 28;
Anglo-Norman, 91.
See *Cookery*.
Fool, court or domestic, 390.
Forfeits, games of, 233.
Forks for eating, not used in the middle ages, 29;
when first used, 457, 458.
Fostering, practice of, and foster-children, 269, 271.
Friends, sworn, 271.
Friendship, value of, in the middle ages, 271, 272.
Frog-in-the-middle, game of, 232, 233.
Fruit cultivated by the Anglo-Saxons, 295;
in Neckam's description of a garden, 297;
in that of John de Garlande, 298.

G.

Gambling, propensity of the Teutonic race for, 214.
Games, among the Anglo-Saxons, 40;
among the Anglo-Normans, 106, 107;
in the middle ages, 195, 236, 432, 433;
at a later period, 483-490.
Garden, the, in the middle ages, 284-290, 397, 429-432, 488.
Garden-houses, 488.
Gardening, 60;
history of English gardening, 293-303.
Gardening, early English treatises on, 302.
Garlands, very popular, 288-290, 431.
Glass vessels, Anglo-Saxon, 89.
Gleemen, 33, 35, 36, 175, 176.
Godmundingaham, story of, 55.
Gossips, their character, 421.
Grammar schools, origin of, 338.

H.

Hall, the Anglo-Saxon, 2, 3, 11, 12, 18, 19, 39;
the Anglo-Norman, 84, 98;
the early English, 141, 153;
in the fifteenth century, 362;
furniture of the, 364, 365;
after the Reformation, 443-445, 450-455.
Hanging, as a punishment, 58, 346.
Harlots, the name of a class in mediæval society, 407.
Harp, 35, 36, 164, 166, 175, 193.
Hawking, among the Anglo-Saxons, 70;
among the English, 305-310, 434.
Hedgehogs, how cooked, 356.
Herbergeors, 333.

Herodias, dancing, 167, 168, 463.
Hoodman-blind, game of, 229, 230.
Horn, drinking, 32, 89.
Horn, the musical instrument, 186, 187, 188.
Horses, and horsemanship, among the Anglo-Saxons, 71;
among the Anglo-Normans, 114;
history of the horse in the middle ages, 316-319.
Hospitality, and its forms, 22, 23, 76, 328-333.
Hot cockles, game of, 230-232.
Hothouses (baths), 491-493.
Hours, early, kept by our ancestors, 247.
Hour of rising, 93, 155, 247, 248, 395, 425, 437.
of breakfast, 93, 248, 424, 455.
of dinner, 93, 155, 248, 425, 455, 456.
of supper, 94, 155, 425, 455, 456.
of going to bed, 94, 155, 246, 425.
House, the, among the Anglo-Saxons, 2, 11-17;
among the Anglo-Normans, 82, 83;
the early English, 120-136;
in the fifteenth century, 359-362;
after the Reformation, 442.
Hummums, 491.
Hunting, among the Anglo-Saxons, 67-70;
among the Anglo-Normans, 112;
a favourite amusement with the ladies, 310-312.
Hutch, or chest, 262-267, 402, 409-411, 450.

Ivory, in the middle ages, made of the horn of the walrus, 202.

J.

Joined furniture, 374, 375, 472, 473, 483.
Jougleurs, 165, 177-181.

K.

Kayles, game of, 237.
Keys, 135.
Kitchen, Anglo-Norman, 84, 86-88;
early English, 142-147.
Knife-cases, ornamental, 464.
Knight, characteristics of the, 104.
Knives, Anglo-Saxon, 9, 10, 29, 30;
Anglo-Norman, 89.
Knives, not furnished to the guests, 363, 364.
Knockers to doors, 361.

L.

Lamps, 44, 252-254.
Lanterns, 108, 252.
Latten, a mixed metal, 376.
Learning, state of, 118.
Lechers. See *Ribalds*.
Leek, the favourite vegetable in the middle ages, 294.
Lighting, 43, 249, 375-378, 398, 454.
Liquors, drunk by the Anglo-Saxons, 32.
Londesborough, lord, his collection of ancient plate, 462.
Lute, the, 186.

M.

Magpie, the favourite talking bird, 239-242.
Marriage, among the Anglo-Saxons, 54.
Masques after dinner, 462.
Mead, 32.
Meals, Anglo-Saxon, 22.
Meals, hours of the, 155. See *Hours*.
Meat, how cooked, 148.
Medicine, administered by the ladies, 278, 279.
Mess, meaning of the word, 464.
Milking, 92.
Millichope, Norman house at, 129-131.
Minstrels, 33-37, 106, 164-167, 175-193, 227, 228, 285, 286, 365, 391, 393.
Mirrors, 260, 412-414.
Money dealings, 78, 79, 263, 265.
Monks, luxury of the, 348.
Monkeys, domesticated, 242, 491.
Moon, a contrivance for giving light, 455.
Moral character of the Anglo-Saxons, 53-58.
Morality of the middle ages, 273, 281.
Mummings and masquerades at dinner, 460.
Music, cultivated as a domestic accomplishment, 427.
Musical instruments, 34, 35, 109, 184-192.
Music-galleries in the halls, when introduced, 182, 444.

N.

Naked, sleeping in bed, 257-259, 335, 411.
Nature, beauties of, love of the Anglo-Saxons for, 60;
of the English in the middle ages, 283.
Nef, the, an ornamental vessel at the

dinner-table, 163.
Nightingales, domesticated, and the food for them, 385.
Noah's wife, mediæval character of, 420, 437.

O.

Occleve, the poet, his manner of living in his youth, 437.
Oranges, 297.
Ordinaries, 493.
Organ, the musical instrument, 184.

P.

Painting, as a domestic accomplishment, 428, 429.
Paintings, wall, 371-373, 403.
Parlour, the, 134, 370, 371, 379-381, 386, 475, 476.
Parrot, domesticated in the middle ages, 239, 242, 491.
Pavements, under the Anglo-Saxons, 16.
Peaches, known to the Anglo-Saxons, 296; and cultivated in England during the middle ages, 297, 303.
Peacock, how served at table, 354.
Perche, the, 111, 136-138, 305.
Percy family, their diet, 421.
Pic-nics, origin of, 438, 493.
Pie. See *Magpie*.
Pillion, riding on, 495, 496.
Pine, the kernels of the cone used in the same way as almonds (misprinted *olives* in the first reference), 296, 350.

Pipe, the musical instrument, 188.
Pipe, double, musical instrument, 64, 190.
Plants, cultivated in gardens, 297, 298, 300, 301.
Plate, an article of ostentation in the middle ages, 174;
great fashion for in the sixteenth century, 461.
Play, fondness of the Anglo-Saxons for, 63.
Poisoning in the middle ages, 279, 431.
Pottery, Anglo-Saxon, 6-8;
Anglo-Norman, 85, 90.
Priesthood, family, among the unconverted Angles, 55.
Printing, origin of the art of, 224.
Psaltery, the musical instrument, 186, 187.
Pudding, the love of the English for, 466.
Punch and Judy, 433.
Punishments, Anglo-Saxon, 58, 59;
English, 342-346.

Q.

Quarrels in the hall after drinking, 38.
Questions and commands, games of, 232-234.

R.

Ragman's Roll, game of, 233, 234.
Rere-suppers, 387, 393-395, 467.
Ribalds, or lechers, a class of mediæval society, 85, 104, 178.
Ridels, 403.
Riding, 115, 311-315, 495, 496.
Riding, prejudice against, 313.
Rings, their importance in the middle ages,

266-269.
Roads, insecurity of the, 77, 326, 436.
Robbers, 326, 327.
Roy-qui-ne-ment, game of, 232, 233.
Ruelle, of the bed, 404.

S.

Salt, its importance at table, and superstition concerning it, 362;
customs relating to it, 459.
Scholars, begging, 339.
Schools, 117-119.
Scissors, 109.
Seats, among the Anglo-Saxons, 31, 41;
among the Anglo-Normans, 94-97;
in the fifteenth century, 369, 370;
after the Reformation, 472-474.
Servants, cruel treatment of, by the Anglo-Saxon ladies, 56, 57.
Servants, how to be governed, 277;
how treated, 278;
riotous and ungovernable, 313, 424.
Service, young gentlemen going to seek, 269,272.
Settle, the, 97, 401.
Shalm, the musical instrument, 186, 187.
Side-saddles, used by women, 72, 115, 311-313.
Sitting, etiquette in, 293.
Soler, of a house, 12, 83, 126-128.
Spectacles, 439.
Spense, the, 133.
Spinning, an occupation of the ladies, 238, 426, 482.
Squirrels, domesticated, 384-386;
cooked for the table, 355, 356.

Stocks, as a punishment, 59, 116.
Subtilty, an ornamental device at table, 355, 393.
Supernaculum, explanation of the term, 468.
Suppers, 246, 247, 391, 395, 397.
Supper, rere, 387, 393-395, 467.
Swaddling of babies, 48, 50, 402, 494.
Sweetmeats, use of, 467.

T.

Table, manners at, 161, 162, 363, 364, 366-369.
Tables, of the Anglo-Saxons, 21, 42;
of the Normans, 94;
Early English, 139;
in the fifteenth century, 364, 371, 374;
of the subsequent period 471.
Tables, arrangement of, in the hall, 153.
Tables for books, 340, 341.
Table dormant, 139, 365.
Tables, folding, 450, 453, 454.
Tables with leaves, 450.
Tables, for writing, 440, 450.
Tables, game of, 40, 217-220.
Tabor, the musical instrument, 183, 193, used to rouse game, 308, 309.
Tambourine, the, 188.
Tapestry for the walls of houses, 19, 20, 160, 244, 371, 450, 474.
Taverns, Anglo-Saxon, 75, 77; Anglo-Norman, 113;
early English, 258, 333-337;
in the fifteenth century, 436-439.
Tavern-keepers, their extortions, 215.
Thane's seat, 62.

Timepieces, 477, 478.
Toilette, the, among the Anglo-Saxons, 59;
among the English, 260, 491.
Top, game of, 235, 236.
Torches, use of, 254, 377.
Towns, 65, 66.
Travelling, among the Anglo-Saxons, 75-78;
among the Anglo-Normans, 114-116;
among the English, 319-327.
Trencher, the, 158.
Truckle-beds, 408.
Trumpet, 189.
Tumblers, for drinking, origin of the name, 6.

U.

Umbrellas, used by the Anglo-Saxons, 75.

V.

Vessels used at table, 25, 34, 150.
Villains, how regarded by the Normans, 101.
Vine, the, cultivated in England, 33, 99, 296.
Visitors, how received, 141, 142.

W.

***Waghe*, difference between this word and *wall*, 12.**
Wakes, village, 67.
Walking, rules for behaviour in, 290-293.
Washing, before and after meals, 156, 367, 368, 396, 397.
Weaving, as practised by the ladies, 109, 237, 426, 427, 482, 483.
Well, the, 86, 361.

Whips, 235, 315.
Windows, 83, 121, 134.
Windows, with seats, 373, 374.
Wine, 33, 90.
Woman, her character among the Anglo-Saxons, 52, 53.
Women, their occupations, 52, 53, 108, 109, 237-239;
their want of delicacy in the middle ages, 274;
treated with rudeness, 275;
instructions to them, 275;
acted as doctors, 278, 279;
poisoners, 279, 431;
frequenters of taverns, 282, 420, 437-439;
education and employment of gentlewomen, 383, 384, 419, 426;
their undomestic character, 420;
addicted to gambling and drinking, 483-485;
their manner of riding. See *Side-saddle*, *Pillion*.
Writing, implements of, 96, 117, 266, 340, 341, 439.

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OF 1862.

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FOOTNOTES:

1
The distinction between the *waghe* and *walle* continued to a comparatively late period. Halliwell, "Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words," v. *waghe*, quotes the following lines from a manuscript of the fifteenth century—

So hedously that storme ganne falle,
That sondir it braste bothe waghe and walle.

2
It appears not, however, to have been customary to lock the doors during the absence of the family, but merely to leave some one to take care of the house. This, at least, was the case in Winchester, as we learn from the miracles of St. Swithun, by the monk Lantfred.

3
Strutt has engraved, without indicating the manuscript from which it is taken, a small Saxon house, consisting of one hall or place for living in, with a chamber attached, exactly like the domestic chapel and its attached chamber in our cut, No.

12. This seems to have been the usual shape of small houses in the Anglo-Saxon period.

4
William of Malmesbury, de Gest. Pontif. printed in Gale, p. 249, describes the Saxons as cooking their meat *in lebete*, evidently meaning the sort of vessel figured in the foregoing cuts. The Latin *lebes*, a cauldron or kettle, is interpreted in the early glossaries by the Anglo-Saxon *hwer*, or *huer*, from which we derive the English word *ewer*; *hwær-boll* or *hwær-cytel* are interpreted in the Anglo-Saxon dictionaries as meaning a frying-pan, which is evidently not correct.

5
There is one of these knives in the Cambridge Museum, which has been there rather singularly labelled “a Roman razor!” Mr. Roach Smith always suspected that these knives were late Saxon, and their similarity in form to those given in the manuscripts shows that he was correct.

6
Post prandium ad pocula, quibus Angli nimis sunt assueti.—Chron. J. Wallingford, in Gale, p. 542.

7
“Duos ciphos argenteos ... ad serviendum fratribus in refectorio, quatenus, dum in eis potus edentibus fratribus ministratur, memoria mei eorum cordibus arctius

inculcetur."—Hist. Ramesiensis, in Gale, p. 406.

8
We shall return to this subject in a subsequent chapter.

9
Regem adhuc tesserarum vel scaccarum ludo longioris tædia noctis relevantem invenit.

10
Mater, si juxta focum infantem suum posuerit, et homo aquam in caldarium miserit, et ebullita aqua infans superfusus mortuus fuerit; pro negligentia mater pœniteat, et ille homo securus sit.

11
This, I suppose, is the meaning of the canon of Alfric (No. 9), which allows a layman to marry, with a dispensation, a second time, "if his wife desert him" (*gyf his wíf ætfylð*) but the priest was not allowed to give his blessing to the marriage, because it was a case in which the church enjoined a penance, the performance of which it would be his duty to require. But the meaning of the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical laws on this subject is rather obscure.

12
This fact of family priesthood may perhaps explain a circumstance in the early history of Northumbria, which has much puzzled

some antiquaries; I mean the story, given by Bede, of the conversion of king Edwin, and of the part acted on that occasion by the Northumbrian priest Coifi. The place where the priesthood was held, and where the temple stood, was called Godmundingaham, a name which it has preserved, slightly modified, to the present day. This name has been the victim of the most absurd attempts at derivation, which are not worth repeating here, because every one who knows the Anglo-Saxon language, and anything of Anglo-Saxon antiquities, is aware that it can only have one meaning—the home, or head residence, of the Godmundings, or descendants of Godmund. Perhaps the priesthood was at this time in the family of the Godmundings, and Coifi may have been then the head of the family.

13
Habebant etiam ex consuetudine patriæ unoquoque die comam pectere, sabbatis balneare, sæpe etiam vestituram mutare, et formam corporis multis talibus frivolis adjuvare.—Hist. Eliensis ap. Gale, p. 547.

14
It is curious that the modern English words play (*plega*), and game (*gamen*), are both derived from the Anglo-Saxon, which perhaps shows that they represent sentiments we have derived from our Saxon forefathers.

15

Pueri et adolescentes, ... illic convenientes, more Anglorum luctamina et alia ludicra exercebant puerilia, et cantilenis et musicis instrumentis sibi invicem applaudebant, unde propter turbam puerorum et puellarum illic concurrentium, mos inolevit ut in eodem die illic conveniret negotiandi gratia turba vendentium et ementium.—MS. Harl. No. 3601 fol. 12, vo.

16
This erroneous statement is repeated by most of our writers on such subjects, and will be found in Mr. Planché's "History of British Costume." Statements of this kind made by old writers are seldom to be depended upon; people were led by political bias or personal partiality, to ascribe the introduction of customs that were odious, to persons who were unpopular, or whom they disliked, while they ascribed everything of a contrary character to persons who were beloved.

17
The word occurs in the reflections of our first parents on their nakedness, in the poem attributed to Cædmon. Adam says that when the inclement weather arrives (*cymeð hægles scúr*—the hail shower will come) they had nothing before them to serve for a defence or shade against the storm—

"*Nys unc wuht beforan*

to scur sceade.”

18
This valuable MS. is preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. It is a very remarkable circumstance, which has not hitherto been noticed, that the illuminations are in general copies from those of the Harleian MS. No. 603, except that the costume and other circumstances are altered, so that we may take them as correct representatives of the manners of the Anglo-Normans.

19
“Quod, mola detritum, et aqua rorante perfusum, more usitato, in camino æstuante est depositum.” *Reg. Dunelm*, p. 128. He owns they were so small that they hardly deserved the name of loaves. “Vix enim bis seni panes erant numero, qui tamen minores adeo quantitate fuerant quod indignum videretur panum eos censeri vocabulo.”

20
Quod si super aquas seu ad ignem se calefactura sedisset.—Reg. Dunelm., c. 124.

21
Quidam de villula in confinio posita, artificiosus minister, sub diurno tempore studiosus advenit, cujus negotiationis opus in pectinibus conformandis, tabulatis et scaccariis, talis, spiniferis, et cæteris talibus, de cornuum vel solidiori ossuum

materia procreandis et studium intentionis effulsit.—Reg. Dunelm, c. 88.

22
Quidam Walterus ... qui ad domum sacerdotis villulæ prædictæ cum hospitibus potaturus accessit. Cum igitur noctis spacium effluxisset, &c.—Reg. Dunelm, c. 17

23
Lantfridus, in his collection of the miracles of St. Swithun, MS. Reg. 15, C. vii., fol. 41, vo., tells us how—"quidam consul regis, in caducis præpotens rebus, cum ingenti comitatu, sicut mos est Anglo-Saxonum, properater equitabat ad quendam vicum in quo grandis apparatus ad necessarios convivandi usus erat illi opipare constructus," &c.

24
In the description of a splendid hall, in the English metrical romance of kyng Alisaunder (Weber, i. 312), the windows are made "of riche glas."

25
The old literary antiquaries, through mistaking the *u* of the manuscripts for an *n*, and not attending to the derivation, have created a meaningless word—*jongleur*—which never existed, and ought now to be entirely abandoned.

26
The Latin original of this story is so quaint

that it deserves to be given *ipsissimis verbis*. "*De rustico et simia.* Quidam aulam cujusdam nobilis intrans, vidensque simiam de secta filiorum vestitum, quia dorsum ad eum habebat, filium credidit esse domini, cui cum reverentia qua debuit loqueretur. Invenit esse simiam super eum cachinnantem, cui ille, 'Maledicaris!' inquit, 'credidi quod fuisses Jankyn filius domini mei.'"—Latin Stories, p. 122.

27

Item, que par la dicte dame Agnes vous faciez principalment et diligemment penser de vos bestes de chambre, comme petis chiennés, oiselets de chambre; et aussi la beguine et vous pensez des autres oiseauls domeschés, car ils ne pevent parler, et pour ce vous devez parler et penser pour eulx, se vous en avez.—(Ménagier de Paris, ii. 62.)

28

Et ayez fait adviser par avant, qu'ils aient chascun loing de son lit chandelier à platine pour mettre sa chandelle, et les aiez fait introduire sagement de l'estaindre à la bouche ou à la main avant qu'ils entrent en leur lit, et non mie à la chemise.—(Ménagier de Paris, ii. 71.)

29

To show the extreme ignorance which has prevailed on the history of English gardening in the middle ages, it need only be mentioned that Loudon, "Encyclopædia

of Gardening" (edition of 1850), was not aware that the leek had been cultivated in England before the time of Tusser, the latter half of the sixteenth century (p. 854); and states that garlic "has been cultivated in this country since 1548" (p. 855); and that the radish is "an annual, a native of China, and was mentioned by Gerard in 1584" (p. 846).

30
Loudon (p. 887) was not aware that the cultivation of sage dated farther back than the time of Gerard, who wrote in 1597, and he could trace back to no older date the cultivation of rue.

31
Our word *chestnut* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *cyste-hnutu*, the nut of the cyste-tree. I may remark, on these names of fruits, that Loudon imagined that the peach was "introduced into England about the middle of the sixteenth century" ("Encyclopædia of Gardening," p. 912); and that of the fig, the "first trees were brought over from Italy by Cardinal Pole, in 1525." He seems to think that quinces and mulberries came into this country also in the course of the sixteenth century.

32
There is, however, an Anglo-Saxon name of a tree which I suspect has been misinterpreted. The glossaries give "*ramnus*, þefe-þorn," and our lexicographers, taking the old sense of the

word *rhamnus*, interpret it, the dog-rose. But in a very curious glossary of names of plants of the middle of the thirteenth century, printed in my "Volume of Glossaries," in which the meaning of the Latin word is given in Anglo-Norman and in English, we have "*Ramni*, grosiler, þefe-þorn" (p. 141). I have no doubt that the thefe-thorn was the gooseberry. In the dialect of Norfolk, gooseberries are still called *theabes*.

33
It may be well to remark, once for all, that it is almost impossible to identify some of these mediæval names of plants.

34
For many references, the reader is referred to Halliwell's "Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words," under the word *Cherry-Fair*.

35
Buglos.

36
The corn-marigold.

37
Marjoram.

38
Clary.

39
Basil.

40
Probably sowthistle, although it is placed under the letter F in the alphabetical list.

41
The plant Alexander.

42
Cives.

43
The herb serpentine.

44
Eyebright.

45
Better known as Solomon’s seal.

46
Dropwort.

47
Eringoes.

48
Gooseberries? See before, p. 296.

49
Quidam juvenis de domo domini Lundoniensis episcopi, spiritum habens in avibus cœli ludere, nisum suum docuit cercellas affectare propensius. Itaque juxta sonitum illius instrumenti quod a ripatoribus vocatur *tabur*, subito cercella quædam alarum remigio pernicitur evolavit. Nisus autem illusus lupum quendam nantem in locis sub undis

crispantibus intercepit, invasit, et cepit, et super spatium sicut visum est xl. pedum se cum nova præda recepit.—Rad. de Diceto, ap. Decem Striptores, col. 666.

50
A Bury will, of the date 1522, mentioned a little further on, enumerates among the household furniture “the steynyd clothes hangyng abowte the parlour behynde the halle chemny.”

51
This receipt is curious enough to be given here; it is as follows:—“Fyrst, take and geve hym yelow antes, otherwyse called pysmerys, as nere as ye may, and the white ante or pysmers egges be best bothe wynter and somer, ij. tymes of the day an handful of bothe. Also, geve hym of these sowes that crepe with many fete, and falle oute of howce rovys. Also, geve hym whyte wormes that breede betwene the barke and the tre.”—Reliquiæ Antiquæ, vol. i. p. 203.

52
Dagswain was a sort of rough material of which the commoner sort of coverlets were made. A hap-harlot or hop-harlot, was also a very coarse kind of coverlet. Harlot was the term applied to a low class of vagabonds, the ribalds, who wandered from place to place in search of a living; and the name appears to have been given to this rug as being only fit to be the lot or hap of such people.

53
At a rather later period, sir Thomas Elyot, in his “Castell of Helth” (printed in 1541), recommends that breakfast should be taken about four hours before dinner, considering it therefore as a light meal, and he advises, in a sanitary view, that not less than six hours should be allowed to elapse between dinner and supper.

54
The reader who wishes for further information on the ornamental plate of the middle ages, and especially of the age of the Renaissance and succeeding period, may consult with advantage lord Londesborough’s handsome and valuable volume, the “Miscellanea Graphica,” and the “Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of the Collection of Antique Silver Plate formed by Albert, lord Londesborough, now the property of lady Londesborough,” printed by her ladyship for private distribution; the latter of which contains no less than a hundred and fourteen examples of ornamental plate excellently engraved by Mr. Fairholt, among which are several fine examples of the nef, or ship.

Transcriber’s Note:

Page 47, “We have few contemporary notices of the treatment children at this early age”

changed to read “We have few contemporary notices of the treatment of children at this early age”.

Page 192, “the fabliaus or metrical stories;” changed to read “the fabliaux or metrical stories;”.

Page 297, “The earliest account of an English garden is given by Alexander Neckham,” changed to read “The earliest account of an English garden is given by Alexander Neckam,”.

Page 325, “R man de Berte,” changed to read “Roman de Berte,”

Obvious printer errors corrected silently.

Inconsistent spelling and hyphenation are as in the original.

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