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First Foot in Lancashire

E. Skeffington Thompson

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SUNWISE PROCESSIONS.

In the Rev. S. Baring-Gould's *Book of the West* the following is recorded :

"There was a churchyard cross at Manaton [Devonshire]. The Rev. C. Carwithen, who was rector, found that the people carried a coffin thrice round it, the way of the sun, at a funeral ; although he preached against the usage as superstitious, they persisted in doing so. One night he broke up the cross and removed and concealed the fragments. It is a pity that the cross did not fall on and break his stupid head."—Vol. i., p. 39.

My daughter Mabel tells me that somewhat less than twenty years ago she was present at a wedding in the parish church of Lustnau, near Tübingen, which belongs to the Lutheran body. At the conclusion of the service the wedding party, including the guests invited to the marriage feast, walked round the stone altar and the crucifix behind it. They passed from the west to the north and thence to the east and then on to the south. The pastor's wife said it was the custom, but gave no explanation of its meaning.

These practices seem to be survivals of sun-worship, adapted to Christianity.

EDWARD PEACOCK.

FIRST FOOT IN LANCASHIRE.

My sister and I were staying with relations in Lancashire on New Year's Day, 1900, and about five o'clock a heavy step came up into the upper hall, off which the bedrooms opened, and a man's voice called out "Good new year to you !" We found that this is a very old Lancashire custom called "First foot in the house." The man who entered the house we were in, has been the first to enter it for eleven years, and he always gets ten shillings in gold.

He must be a man with dark hair, and not flat feet ; and he must come in at the hall door, go up all through the halls and cry out, "Good new year to you," three times, and go out at the back door.

E. SKEFFINGTON THOMPSON.

[The Rev. E. W. Clarke notes both dark hair and high instep occur at Hull, Yorkshire.—G. L. G.]