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Folk-Lore of the Negroes of Jamaica

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FOLK-LORE OF THE NEGROES OF JAMAICA.

(Continued from Vol. XV., pp. 87, 206, 450. See Prefatory Note, p. 87.)

VII.

SIGNS, OMENS, MYTHS, AND SUPERSTITIONS OF JAMAICA.

Those relating to the Human Body. I. Infancy.

If a child be born with a caul it will be able to see duppies.

Do not cut the nails of infants with a pair of scissors: it makes them light-handed, *i.e.* thieves.

Do not say that an infant is pretty: it makes him grow ugly. Should you say he is ugly he will grow handsome.

When an infant smiles in its sleep it is dreaming of the death of its mother, but when he cries he is dreaming of the death of its father.

Children, before they are able to talk, understand the language of animals.

2. *Manhood.*

White dots on the nails signify luck.

Grey hairs on the head of a young person signify luck.

Do not turn your hat down on a table: it gives you bad luck and prevents you from marrying early.

Do not carry peppers in your pockets: it makes you poor.

If you are going out shooting or fishing and anyone should ask you to bring "one" for him he spoils your luck.

If you dream that you have failed in an undertaking you are going to succeed, and vice-versa.

If your right eye dances you are going to laugh, but if your left eye dances you will hear of some bad news, or something will happen to you that will make you cry.

If your right ear rings you are going to hear something good or some friend is calling your name, but if your left ear rings someone is calling your name who is your enemy.

When the middle of your hand scratches you, you are going to receive money.

When you feel a hitching [*sic*] sensation on the soles of your feet you are going to travel.

Do not comb your hair at night: it makes you forgetful.

Do not sweep your house in the night: you will sweep out your luck.

Do not hold a piece of cane whilst another person is cutting it: it makes you lose friendship.

Do not give a straight pin to your lover: it breaks your love.

Do not make a present to your lover of a pair of scissors or a pocket-handkerchief: it spoils your friendship, or rather "love."

When you are eating and a bit of food drops from you it signifies that your lover is hungry.

Never step over dirty water: it makes you sick.

Those relating to Animals.

If a birds flies into the house it signifies death in the family.

Fireflies in the house at nights signifies that you will have a visitor.

Fireflies under a bed signifies death in the house.

When two fowls put their beaks together as if in conversation it signifies that you are going to have two visitors. If it be two hens you will have two women, if it be a cock and a hen you will have a man and a woman.

When fowls cackle on going to roost and on coming off, and even whilst they are on the roost, someone in the district is going to die.

Cows lowing mournfully and dogs howling at nights signifies death in the district.

If you hold the eggs of Gie-me-me-bit you will become unlucky.

If you want to catch a scorpion that you see say the Lord's Prayer and he will stop.

If people speak too much of your horse, mule, etc., they will pine away.

Ground doves that inhabit a particular spot are duppies.

Miscellaneous.

When washing dead people do not wet their backs, for should you do so they will follow you, saying they are cold.

It is believed that the ghost of a person rises on the third night after burial and returns to the house, which he finally leaves on the ninth night. This absurd belief causes people to keep what is known as "wakes" or "nine nights."

When a man dies who is not good enough to go to heaven, and not bad enough for hell, he returns to the earth and becomes a "rolling calf."

If duppies trouble you in your house put a horse shoe over the doorway and this will keep them away.

If you want to prevent any ghost whatever from coming into your house cross ten (X) on the doors.

Duppies cannot count over nine.

Do not throw water outside in the nights, for you may wet ghosts, and consequently catch harm.

Do not whistle in the nights, for duppies will catch your voice.

Do not knock a green lizard that lives in a grave-yard, for he is a duppy and will hurt you.

Do not let your house remain at nights without water, for the ghosts of those who have died in it will come back to drink water, and will show you some token of their displeasure should they find none.

If a duppy should be following you, to stop him you must cross ten (X) across the road, and stick up a pin or a pen-knife in it. In the morning, should you go back and observe the spot, you will find an ant or some small insect dead beside it.

If you happen to be in a bush, and should hear a stick break, arise and go away at once, for it is a warning from some one of your dead relatives that the place is not good to stay in, and that some harm will attend you if you remain.

If you should draw out a hair of your head and wish for anything at "New Moon," before you speak to any one, you will obtain your wish.

Do not flog duppies with your right hand, for they will hurt you, but flog them with your left hand.

Duppies do not follow carpenters and tailors, because they walk with rules in their pockets.

If in the early morning you happen to come across a warm stratum of air it is believed that a ghost was sleeping on that spot during the night.

G.

VIII.

When a firefly flies into your house at nights, a stranger will surely give you a visit.

When a crow or crows fly late in the evening some one is expected to depart this life.

When fowls cackle in the night or are startled from their roost some one would die.

When cows bellow speedy death is expected.

If rats destroy your clothes by gnawing, some one is expected to die.

If two hens put their beaks together some one is sure to visit you, if a cock and hen, the visit of a man and woman.

The dirt should not be swept out of a house in which there is a dead person or some one would surely follow.

To turn down your hat when you enter a house is an omen which foreshadows no marriage.

To open an umbrella over you in a house foreshadows the same result.

To come in a warm current of air when travelling in the night signifies that evil spirits are about the surroundings.

Openings between the front teeth signifies a giddy brazen disposition.

If the palm of your hands itches, you shall receive money.

If your eyes dance you would either laugh or cry.

If you handle birds' eggs or kill a spider you will always be breaking crockeries.

If a branch of a tree should give way some one would die.

Should the bottom of a tumbler fall off some one would die.

You should not answer to your name, if any calls it after you are gone to bed, or they will catch your shadow.

H.

IX.

Love and Courtships.

Whenever there is leap year, women write letters of engagement.

When a lady's skirt or stockings drop, her lover is thinking of her.

If one is peeling an orange, and at the same time repeating the letters of the alphabet, and if the peel break, the letter on which it breaks will be that with which the name of the one's lover will be commenced.

Get an egg, bore a hole at each end, allow another person to suck out its contents. Fill the shell with salt, chew and swallow the shell and its present contents before going to bed, you will then dream of a person coming to give you water, and that person will be your lover.

Fill a glass vessel with water and write each letter of the alphabet on a separate bit of paper. Throw the bits on the surface of the water in the vessel. The letters that appear on the surface of the water will be the initial letters of the one's lover. (The one who experiments.)

Marriages.

If an umbrella be opened in a house over a person, that person will never be married.

The falling of one's seat signifies that he or she will never be married.

Persons who meet a corpse in chapel when going to be married, never enjoy a happy life.

If the corpse be met when the couple is returning from chapel, the life of the two parties will be agreeable and happy.

The shining of the sun on a wedding day signifies the living of a happy life between the married couple.

The falling of rain on a similar day is a sign of an unpleasant union.

When a married couple is going home for the first time after the ceremony has been performed, the one that first enters the threshold of the house and goes in before the other, will rule the other.

If a lady's veil get torn on putting it on to attend her marriage ceremony she will lead a wretched life.

During a marriage ceremony should the bridegroom push the ring too far down on the bride's finger, they will live together miserably.

Births.

To be born on a Friday indicates bad luck.

Deaths and Funerals.

The flying of a bat in a house is a sign that either a relative or a friend of the inmates is about to die.

The falling of and the sticking up of a pair of scissors in the floor signifies death.

The cry of an owl over a dwelling-house signifies death.

The flying together of six crows and one hawk signifies death.

The sudden crash of the limb of a tree signifies death.

The cries of dogs and cats when one is very ill signifies death.

A slight drizzle when any one is seriously ill signifies death.

The constant digging of a hole by a dog signifies death.

If persons afflicted with sores look on the face of a dead [body] or go to the grave, the sores will become worse.

Should anyone put his head between his legs and stand at a far distance (say half a mile) away from a hearse going on with a corpse, he will discern whether the dead be a male or a female. If he stand too near under similar conditions, his neck will be broken.

Put water on a dead man's back and he will open his eyes.

A dead person frowns when attended to by one whom he dislikes. On the other hand he puts on a pleasing countenance when one whom he loves enters the house.

If you don't bid your dead farewell his spirit will return in the same familiar style as when he was alive.

After one is dead his spirit returns every night for nine nights, and on the last night he visits all his relatives and associates, overlooks all that are his, and then departs altogether.

Ghosts.

If a spider's web get across one's face, he is being accompanied by a ghost.

A ghost seen in black has no intention to harm anyone, but a ghost seen in white is dangerous.

Cursing at the sight of a good spirit drives it away.

The calling of God's name at the sight of an Evil spirit drives it away also.

To prevent you seeing the ghost of a dead person, plant red peas on his grave.

To enable you to see ghosts readily, take the matter from a dog's eyes and put in yours.

Sand stops the visit by ghosts.

The nailing of a horse's shoe on a gate or door, hinders ghosts from entering in.

To drive away a ghost, flog him with a whip held in the left hand.

If dogs howl in a yard, ghosts are in it.

Visits.

Two fowls appearing to be talking foretells of a strange visit.

The crowing of a cock before the proper time foretells of a strange visit.

The dropping and sticking up of a pin foretells of a strange visit.

The sight of a spider on the wall of a house when it is being attended to in the morning, signifies that there will be a visitor in the evening.

The Weather.

When toads croak there will be bad weather.

The flying of many crows to and fro in the air signifies that there will be rain soon.

When many swallows fly together in the air it will soon rain.

The dancing of the right eye signifies laughing by the one.

The dancing of the left eye signifies weeping by the one.

If the palm of one's right hand scratches him he will soon get money.

If the palm of his left hand scratches him he will soon pay money.

If a person's knee scratches him he is going to change his bed.

The itching of the nose shows that the individual is going to kiss a fool.

When the sole of your feet itches you are about to travel.

The butting of the right foot is a sign of good luck.

Butting the left foot signifies bad luck.¹

If your ears ring someone is calling your name.

When your lips tremble you will be in confusion soon.

The number of marks in the palm of one's hand are the number of trials which he will endure.

When your elbow scratches you another will soon shake your hands.

When a thrill passes through a person's body an insect is crossing the place where he will be buried.

A sudden and startling movement of your heart signifies that you are being spoken of.

White spots on the fingers are signs of riches.

Persons with large ears are always rich.

When your left eye tingles you are being traitored.

¹[This is the contrary of the superstition among the Fjort. Dr. Nassau quotes Mr. R. E. Dennett as follows: "See that your men start with their left foot first, and that they are 'high-steppers,' for if their left foot meet with an obstacle, and is badly hurt, it is not a bad sign; but if their right foot knock against anything you must go back to town."—*Fetichism in West Afrika*, p. 195.—E. S. HARTLAND.]

When your lips scratches you you are going to get a kiss.
 When young persons have grey hairs they always have good luck.

Raiments.

When the end of a lady's dress is turned over, if she ask a male to put it down, and if he oblige her, she will get a new one.

If you take off the skin of an orange without breaking the peel you will get a new suit of clothes.

If the end of a man's jacket is turned over he is about to get a new one.

Miscellaneous.

If one's spittal [*sic*] fall on himself someone is saying something untrue of him.

Going out but returning before reaching the place for which you started is a sign of bad luck.

If you mend your clothes on yourself people will trample over you and will tell lies on you.

When a person cries on being confirmed he will not remain long in church.

The breaking of a looking-glass is a sign that you will have seven years of trouble.

If you kill a spider you will always break crockeries.

If you hold a give-me-my-bit's egg you will break every other egg.

If you see a scorpion repeat the Lord's prayer and it will remain still.

If in tidying a house you sling round a chair there will soon be a confusion, in which you will be engaged.

Dreams.

The dreaming of new boots signifies [a] new intended.

The dreaming of fire signifies confusion.

The dreaming of a tooth signifies death.

The dreaming of a new house signifies death.
 The dreaming of a wedding signifies a funeral.
 To dream of a new born means death.
 To dream of a fish means a new born soon.

Miscellaneous (continued).

The mournful lowing of cows indicates death.
 Wicked people are generally born again in the shape of
 savage beasts.

A man who neither goes to heaven nor hell becomes a rolling
 calf after death.

If you are handing a lady a knife bend a pin meanwhile or
 your love will be lost.

To check vomiting put a bit of stick behind each ear.

I.

(Concluded.)

ADDITIONS TO "THE GAMES OF ARGYLESHIRE."

[SINCE the publication of *The Games of Argyleshire* as the Society's occasional volume for 1900, Dr. MacLagan has received, as he always foresaw would be the case, much additional information on the subject, which he has forwarded to the Society for publication in *Folk-Lore*. His offer, it is needless to say, has been gratefully accepted by the Council, and the additional matter will appear in our volume for 1905. Dr. MacLagan has arranged it under the "Class" headings used in the *Games of Argyleshire*, with a reference before each item to the page and line of the work where it should have come in if it had been included in the original volume. ED.]

ACTIVITY, GENERAL.

(On p. 1, after line 9.)

A modification of this [Hop, Step, and Jump] was called—

Three Stones.

Three small stones were taken in the hand of the first player

who toed a line, his heels together. Bending down he stretched his arm as far as he could without moving his feet at all and placed one of the stones on the ground. Rising to his full height, his feet still steady, he jumped as far as he could in the line of the stone placed and placed the second stone, the same being repeated and the third stone placed. Separating the feet, wobbling so as to move from the spot jumped on put the competitor out. The one who could reach furthest with three leaps was successful. The ground must not be touched by the other hand from that which places the stones. It is usual not to place the stones at the uttermost stretch on a first trial.

(P. 2, after line 12.)

Leum a Bhradain. (The Salmon's Leap.)

The performer lay flat down, his feet together, his hands close to his side, on the ground. Drawing up the feet and with a powerful jerk of the whole body, the upright position had to be gained without staggering or stumbling, with no assistance from the hands. A successful performance was a veritable salmon's leap.

Leum Maighiche. (Hare's Leap.)

Several take part in this. One lies down on the ground on his back; another jumps over him and lies down where he has landed parallel to the one already down. Another leaps over both and likewise lies down till all are down, or the distance that can be leapt is covered. The first to go down then rises and leaps over the party, followed in rapid succession by the remainder, the fun largely consisting in the rapidity in which they follow each other. If one is slow in clearing the way for his successor, he is said to be "run down," and must retire from the game.

This was also played in Orkney.

Cuddies and Weights.

The players are divided into two parties, and, with the assistance of a counting-out rhyme, the one half become "cuddies," the other the "weights." The "cuddies" on all fours are ridden by the "weights," and their business is to prance and fling and in every way to do their best to rid themselves of their riders, shout-

ing the while "weights, weights." A tumbled "weight" becomes in turn a "cuddy," and the performance is repeated.

Port the Helm.

The description comes from Cowal. The players form a chain by joining hands. The one at the end of the chain, the leader for the time being, continues crying "Port the helm," wriggling and jerking the others about as much as he can, trying to get them into a condition of unstable equilibrium. When he thinks he has achieved this, he lets go the hand of the boy next him with the intention that all should fall "in a heap" like the murdered wives of the King of the Cannibal Islands.

Supple joints and a long arm are necessary for the following feat. It is generally considered a girls' trick.

Passing her right hand round the front of her neck, she stretches round the back till she can catch her right ear with her right hand. Conversely, it may be done with the left hand and the left ear.

ARTICULATION.

(P. 4, after line 22.)

10. "Brod na poite bige air ceann na poite mhor ; Brod na poite mhor air ceann na poite bige."

(Lid (board) of the little pot on the top of the large pot ; lid of the large pot on the top of the little pot.)

11. "Cu dubh, stumpach dubh, gun earbull."

(Black dog, stumpy black, without a tail.)

12. "The cobbler came to cut pumps, new fashioned country cut, cut pumps cobbler."

AUGURIES.

(P. 7, after line 7.)

Falach a Chlobha. (Hiding the Tonga.)

This is an indoor amusement. All retire but one who remains to hide the tongs within the limits of the apartment. On the signal given the remainder return and commence searching for them, the one who finds them being the first to be married. There is a cryptic allusion in this use of the tongs which also

appears in the statement that "for luck" between entertainer and entertained, the tongs should be placed under the pillow of a guest.

The special observances of Hallowe'en have not been included among games, as they seem in fact, though now perhaps regarded as amusements, to be in origin religious rites. The following is given as being practised in Harris independently of any special anniversary:

Two selected stalks of bent-grass are named respectively after a girl and a lad known to those who are present and who are suspected of being favourably affected one towards the other. The stalks are laid side by side in the hot ashes, and regard is had to how they burn. If they burn together and equally, those represented are to be married. If only one burns the person represented desires marriage, the other does not. If neither burn, it is clear there is no love between them.

BALL GAMES.

(P. 7, at the bottom.)

A nearly similar game is called

Clinch an Righ. (The King's Play.)

If there are twelve players eleven points are marked, say with a stone, and a player stands at each. They are disposed in a circle and the twelfth, provided with a ball, stands in the centre. He gives a signal, and the others have to change their stations while he tries to strike one with the ball. If he is successful, the one struck and the thrower change places. If by any chance one of the runners does not move at the signal, he must take the centre, even if not struck with the ball; two players cannot occupy the same station at the same time.

(P. 9, after line 24.)

A game started in the same way as "Bonnety" is

Purley Houses.

He into whose bonnet the ball has been thrown having struck another player, the one struck puts a small stone in his own

bonnet, if the thrower has missed, the stone goes into his bonnet. The same thrower continues throughout the game. When any one of the players has in his bonnet the number of stones fixed upon before commencing, say six, the last stage of the game is reached. The number of stones in each bonnet is counted, and for every stone the player receives a "purley"; he places his bonnet against the wall and, laying his hand flat open against the bonnet, those who had no stones in their caps are entitled, from a given distance, to strike his hand with the ball as many times as stones were counted to him. The one to receive the greatest number suffers first, and so on in succession till all have stood their punishment, which is virtually the same as in the girls' game of "Cobs."

There is a modification of "Cobs" called

Jinkers.

In this, the player summoned by the name of the day tries to strike the one who has thrown the ball against the wall, and if struck he again throws against the wall, naming another player, always adding the word "Jinkers," Thursday Jinkers,—Friday Jinkers, etc. If the thrower misses he bounces the ball off the gable, naming a player to catch it. When any player has been hit three times, he stands out. The most successful is he who remains longest in. This game is played in Ross-shire by girls under the name of "Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday." If the girl named catches the ball, she hands it back to be bounced off the wall by the original thrower, but if the named one does not catch it, she picks it up and tries to strike some other, who then takes the ball. If she has missed, she makes it rebound from the wall and calls for another day of the week.

Piggie Wiggie

Is a girls' game closely allied to the above. The players stand in a circle, one with the ball in the centre. She stots the ball on the ground and names one in the circle to catch it. If the named one catches it, the thrower stands aside during that game and the one with the ball takes her place becoming "Piggie Wiggie." If

the one called fails to catch the ball, she commences running round the circle while the remainder call out "Piggie Wiggie," and the original stotter tries to strike the runner with the ball before she has run round the complete circle, inside. Struck or not struck she takes her old place in the circle, but each hit counts one till a number fixed is reached which puts the player out of the game. The most successful is the one who remains longest in.

Exercise Ball. Glasgow Ball.

It is played with an india-rubber ball, and consists in a certain number of feats, each more difficult than its predecessor.

1. The player stots the ball off the ground six times, catching it each time.

2. She throws the ball up, claps her hands once and then catches the ball, repeating throwing up the ball and increasing the number of claps between each throw till six are reached.

3. The same as No. 2, but the hands are clapped behind the back.

4. As 2, but she slaps her knees with her hands.

5. As 2, but she claps her sides each time.

6. As 2, but both hands are placed on the player's mouth.

7. As 2, but both hands are placed on the top of the player's head.

This completes the performance. If the ball fall to the ground the player commences where she left off when her turn comes again. First out wins the game.

Through the Mill.

Also a girls' game, but sometimes played by both sexes. Sides are chosen, and they toss for who is to have the ball. Each side is divided into two equal parts, those having won the toss standing in two parallel lines facing each other, those who have lost disposing themselves at the open sides so as to form a hollow square. The game consists in tossing the ball between the players of one of the "sides," the other "side" trying to intercept the ball in its flight and then keep it flying among themselves.

House Ball

Is the name for the ordinary English game of "Rounders," the ball being struck out by hand by each runner in succession of the party to the pitching of one of the party "out." The number of stations depends on the number playing. The striker out must run. No two can occupy the same station, and any one of the party if struck between stations puts that side out, unless one can catch the ball and hit one of those out before they all assemble in the "den."

(P. 10, continuing at line 20.) ("Description of cricket.")

There are, however, traditions of "Kick Ball" as played before the introduction of the rules for "Rugby" and "Association." It was a great game in Cowal; Tom na Bhoid, at Dunoon, being a regular meeting-place. There, a certain Donald White is by tradition said to have kicked the ball over the Parish Church, and with the same kick, sending his pump flying, causing a "bad eye" to another player.

In primitive "Kick Ball" each game seems to have ended by the winning of a goal. The distance between goals depended on the extent of ground at command. The sides are said to have tossed for first kick, the game commencing from the centre of the ground. Two persons were appointed, one from each side, who moved along on either flank as necessary, whose duty was to prevent the ball being sent too far a-field.

If the play-ground did not yield what was considered a sufficiently long course, the game was not a time one, but was won by one side or the other getting an agreed-on number of goals.

Shoot for Goal.

Now played, is evidently a modern invention. A goal is fixed and one appointed goal-keeper, the others spreading themselves out in front. Any convenient ball is used, which is kicked out by the keeper, who has then to prevent the others landing it within the goal. A reckoning of the number of times that any player has kicked it through the goal is kept, and when a certain number is reached it is the privilege of that player to become goal-keeper.

If the goal-keeper fails to stop the ball a certain number of times he must change places with the one who has most shots to his credit.

Nine Holes.

On a flat piece of turf nine holes, three holes in three rows at equal intervals, are made and a *stand* is fixed in front of them. Each hole has a number assigned it from one to nine. The player places himself at the stand and tries to roll a ball into one of the holes; he continues so long as he is successful, his score mounting up with the value attached to each hole. If he fail he is followed by another player, and so on in succession till the number fixed on for "game" is reached by one of the players.

Bullets.

The players were each provided with a round shot of about seven pounds weight. Two usually played against each other. The object was to cover a certain distance of road, as a rule between one and three miles, with the fewest number of throws. It might however be who would reach the greatest distance in a previously determined number of casts. From the starting-point each hurled his ball in the direction of the goal. On reaching the ball the player could with his foot draw a line across the road and might make his next cast from any point on that line. The skill of the player, as distinguished from his strength, was chiefly evident in being able to put twist on his bullet so that it would take a curve in the road and not be brought up at the road side before its travelling power was expended.

This game, which was played but a few years ago, was put a stop to by authority as dangerous to persons and horses on the public roads.

Snowballing

Has no doubt been indulged in from time immemorial. Combats between chosen sides and predetermined leaders, with the smaller boys to supply the fighting lines with ammunition, are organised when the fall of snow is heavy.

BALANCING.

(P. 12, after line 28.)

The description of the above feat, as seen practised in Uist, is as follows:

The performer stands on one foot on a table, his toe flush with the edge. To the toe of the foot on the table he brings the heel of the other foot; stooping forward he places one of his fists against the toe of the suspended foot and prolongs the line of foot and fist with his other hand, the success of the feat consisting in retaining his balance. The reciter saw masons performing this on the top of a wall. As thus described, the performer had the whole length of one foot as a base.

(P. 13, at bottom.)

Picking a pin up by the mouth.

In Barra a pin is stuck in the ground, and the performer, with his or her two hands clasped behind the back, stoops and picks up the pin with the teeth. This trick was popular in North Argyle in the Ledaig district. "The pin was placed upon a smooth surface, a broad smooth flagstone, a piece of wood. Standing erect the performer placed his hands behind his back and stooped until with his teeth he gripped the pin, having to lift it from the floor without placing his hands on the floor or his feet." He might be allowed to put his hands on his knees, but not lower than that. With the description of the trick as done in Barra before us, the question was put to our correspondent, "Was the pin not stuck by the point?" but the answer was quite clear that it was only laid down horizontally. A man who had done it in his youth said the hands were put behind the back and the legs spread out till the face could reach the pin.

Standing on one foot to touch the ground with the knee of the other leg.

Standing upright on the left foot, the performer raised the right foot backwards, bending the knee and held the toes with his right hand. Retaining his hold he had to bend the left knee

so as to touch the ground with the right and then regain the upright position without letting go of the right foot or staggering.

Seasamh Claidheimh. (Standing of a sword.)

The name in Barra for standing on the head and hands, feet together, extended upwards. The question was, who could stand most firmly and longest with the legs straight?

A swing is called in Lowland Scottish a "swee." Jamieson spells it "sway," "swey." As above mentioned, it is a name also applied to the pot chain which hung over the fire. A children's swing in Gaelic is a *drollag*, and a pair of pot hooks is called *drolla*, also the name for the handle of a pot. In Skye the following words are repeated while swinging a companion:

"Tuille gorachd nunn gu Muideart
Tuille eiridh nunn gu Rasaidh."

See Saw. (See p. 250 of games.)

In Uist they repeat while swinging on a plank, "Diol a bhocadan, ho-ro, chracadan." We give the spelling as we got it, the words probably mean "a plank waving, ho-ro cracking," making a cracking noise.

BAT GAMES.

(P. 17, after line 17.)

Oat and Dog.

In Perthshire "Cat and Dog" are played somewhat differently. Sides being formed, a ring is marked sufficiently large to contain those of the side which are *in*. About twelve yards from the ring a stone is set up, or other mark made called the "den." The side *out* spread themselves at convenient distances in front of the ring. The first player in the ring lays the *cat* on the ground, strikes it with his *dog* on one end so as to make it rise, and when it is in the air strikes it out; he then runs for the "den," which he must touch with his dog and back to the ring; if successful, this counts one for his side. If the cat is caught in the air by one of

his opponents, the sides exchange places, if not, the cat is lifted and thrown into the ring, and if it reaches it before the runner he is out till the game is finished. If the striker out has not only "run the den," but is ready to receive the cat when it is thrown in, he tries to strike it out before it reaches the ground, and if successful he steps the distance to which he has driven the cat and each pace counts one to his side. Another then takes the dog and follows the same system till all are put out. The game is won by the side which first makes the number agreed on before starting.

Pellet

Allied to the above games, is played in Orkney. Equal sides are chosen and a ball and bat are used. The bat is single-handed, the ball is usually made of cow's hair and soap worked together in the palm of the hands till it has become tough and hard; it is then covered with leather.

Suppose four are playing on each side, four holes are made with the heel of the boot or the point of the bat, ten to twelve yards apart. They are called "Hales." Each of the side in stands at a *Hale* with his bat in his hand. One of the side *out* bowls the ball to one of the batmen *in*, the remainder fielding. The batman strikes the ball out as far as he can, and all start to run a round of the hales, each round counting one. The side *in* try to run between as many of the hales as possible for each stroke, the ball being bowled to the player who finds himself at the first hale bowled to.

The side *in* is put *out* by the batman missing a bowl, by his stroke being "kepped," that is, caught before the ball touches the ground, by the ball being put into one of the hales when it is not occupied by the bat of a player, or when one of the batmen is struck with the ball by a member of the side out while running between two hales. The game is won by the side first reaching the agreed-on number of rounds of the hales.

Spellinn

Is an Uist form of the same game. The necessary apparatus is a bat (*straicean*), a ball of any available material—wood, a centre of cork wrapped with worsted; a favourite form was made

of horse hair, and the *speil*, a lath of wood ten to twelve inches long and about two inches broad. A hole is then made in the ground sufficiently large to admit the ball and the point of the *speil* (*an toll*), and forming a semicircle behind it with a radius of about twenty yards are five *calaïdh* or *calaichean* (ports, harbours). Sides being chosen, one of them takes possession of the hole, the other side fields out. One of the side in lays the *speil* with its one point in the hole and places the ball on it. With his *straicean* he hits the projecting end of the lath, jerking the ball into the air, which he tries to strike out. If he fails to do this three times, he stands aside till the game is finished. If he hits the ball, one of his party runs to the first of the five *calaichean*, and runs as many of them as he thinks he can with safety. If the ball is caught after being hit, the whole side is put out, or if the side out can get what is called *picean*, *i.e.* tossing the ball into the hole when returning it to the striker out. If one of the runners is struck with the ball between two *calaichean*, the individual is out till the end of the game. If none of these three misfortunes for the side in have happened, the batsman measures the number of *straicean* lengths between the hole and the place where the ball rested, and that number is scored to the party in. Another of the in party then takes the bat and the first striker out may start on the round. If two men are caught at one port, one is put out. During the course of a game, either side may be in several times. The match is won by the side which first makes the aggregate of *straicean* lengths fixed on.

(P. 19, after line 23.)

The age of these games is well attested. In the Cattle Spoil of Coolly (Grimm Library, xvi. 23) Cuchulainn is playing a ball game against three fifties of other boys. "When it was hole-driving that they did he filled the hole with his balls, and they could not ward him off. When they were all throwing into the hole he warded them off alone, so that not a single ball would go in it."

Single Pellet.

As played in Orkney is somewhat like the immediately preceding. A ball, a bat, and a tongue are required, the last being

the equivalent of the *speil* in Speilinn, but the tongue is said to be about half the size. Sides being chosen, and the party to be *in* fixed, the game commences by one of them striking the ball out. If he miss it he is out for the rest of the innings; the same happens if he is caught. Supposing the ball to have been struck and have a free course, one of the outs returns it as near to the hole as possible, and the distance from the centre of the hole to the centre of the ball where it then lies is measured by the bat, and the total added to the score of the party in, fractions of length are not counted. To save time in measuring the striker out may say "I'll take six," or any number he judges represents the distance. If this is deemed correct, the offer is accepted and forms the number scored, but any of the outs may challenge the correctness of the distance judged, and measurement with the bat is made. If the number of bat lengths turns out to be less than that mentioned, the striker is put out and the shot counts nothing to his side. If, on the other hand, the length is greater than he mentioned, his side has the advantage of the increase. The bat is taken in turn by each one of a side till all have been put out, the other side then goes in, and those who have scored most win the game.

(P. 24, after line 8.)

In Cowal the posts are called "dulls," and the hole in the den from which the ball is struck is the "moosh."

(P. 35, after line 6.)

A Barra variant of the dialogue on p. 32 commencing "Tulla (thulla) gus an iomain" is quite the same as far as "De an iteag?" after which comes

Iteag bronnaich	Wing (feather) of belly-band.
De am bronnach?	What belly-band?
Bronnach eich	Belly-band of horse.
De 'n t-each?	What horse?

Each buidhe blar, suas cnoc an teine. Thuit a' chailleach bharr a mhuin. Thubhairt a Bhanrigh "Thut." (A yellow horse with a white mark on its face, up the hill of fire. The old woman fell off its back. The Queen said "hoot.")

(P. 39, after line 8.)

In Sutherland and Caithness-shire and the Orkney Islands a name given to Shinty is "Knotty." Gateways are often chosen between which the ball must be driven, thus constituting the goals. Where gateways are non-existent, as was largely the case in these northern districts, the thing to be achieved was to drive the ball a certain distance from the central point at which it was thrown down between the contending parties. The imaginary lines to be reached were called in Orkney the Hales.

An interesting parallel to the method in which who was to drive off is fixed, described on p. 30, is to be found among the Cossacks. In a note by the Editor in a folk-tale in the *Kruptadia*, after the words "Come let us draw lots," we are informed, "To draw lots the lads in the Ukraine proceed after the following manner: one takes the stick about the centre, the one who follows him puts his hand above it, after him the other, and so on consecutively; he who will have a hand on the top and can yet hold the end of the stick without letting it fall, wins." (*Kruptadia*, vol. viii., p. 361.)

BLINDFOLD GAMES.

(P. 41, after line 5.)

Blindman's Buff receives the name of "Glim Glam" in Banffshire.

(P. 41, after line 4 from bottom of page).

In Harris the Bodach Dall has not to strike another player. A stick is fastened in the ground representing the Bodach he is bent upon killing. It is this stick which he must strike. The endeavour of the other players during the conversation given, and while he is moving about, is by talking and jostling him to make him lose all idea of where the object of his attack has been placed.

(P. 44, after line 15.)

Wheeling the Barrow.

Two stakes were stuck in the ground from sixty to one hundred yards apart. The competitors were blindfolded and each

provided with a barrow. If there was only one barrow, each took it in turn, but more than one might start at the same time. The object was, starting from one end of the ground to run the wheel-barrow up against the post at the other. Obstacles might be laid down between the stakes to increase the difficulty. In Cowal this was a common competition on New-Year's Day.

Other indoor games blindfolded were—

Cleas a' Bhuilgein (*buille*, 'a stroke,' *builgean*, 'a tap, a little stroke'.)

The chosen one of the party playing knelt down with both hands extended behind the back touching each other, palms upwards. The other players struck with the open palm the hands of the blindfolded one, one player at a time, after each stroke the kneler being expected to say who gave the blow. If the guess were correct, the striker and the kneler changed places and only after a correct guess was the kneler relieved. This was played in Barra.

Soldiers.

A pencil and paper or slate are necessary. Two parallel columns of figures are written down, say Os and Xs, at a slight distance apart, three-eighths of an inch perhaps, one below the other, a dot being marked over the topmost figure of each column. The length of the column would depend on the size of the paper or slate. Each figure was a 'soldier.' The first to play being arranged for, he was blindfolded and the point of his pencil put on the dot above one of the columns. He then drew his pencil down trying to run it through as many 'soldiers' as possible. The other player then had his chance, and they played alternately for the number of strokes fixed on before commencing, it might be three or four. The one whose pencil passed through most soldiers was the winner.

There is a very similar game in which rapidity of motion and not want of sight is employed to make the scoring uncertain. There are two columns of figures for each player, and a captain is marked in front of the centre of each column.

O		The single figures represent the centre		X
	O	of each party	X	
O				X
	O		X	
O				X
	O		X	
O				X
	O		X	
O				X
	O		X	
O				X
	O	O	X	
O				X
	O		X	
O				X
etc.	etc.		etc.	etc.

The players sit opposite each other. The first to play lays his pencil on one of his own "soldiers" and with a quick stroke, representing an arrow shot, runs it through the ranks of the enemy, trying to strike as many as he can. Otherwise the game is exactly as above, the captain however counting two.

ARCHERY.

(P. 45, after line 31.)

In the MS. poems collected by the Rev. James MacLagan, the following verse occurs in an ode in memory of Donald Gorm of Glengarry, composed by his widow. (*Transactions Gaelic Society of Inverness*, xxii. 170):

"O's maith thig dhuit bogha
 Cruaidh foghainteach laidr,
 Agus teafald chaol scorrach
 Bheireadh ceannuich a Flendras;
 Mar re glac a chinn leathainn,
 'N deis a fadhairt o'n chearduich;
 Sud air geal-ghlac mo chridhe
 Dheanadh Siothann mar p' ail leam."

(O well became you, a bow/Firm sufficient strong,/And slender cutting (twanging?) bow-string/That a merchant would bring from Flanders ;/ Like (the) moon (the) hollow of its broad head,/After its tempering in the shop ;/That, on (the) white palm of my heart (love)/Would provide venison as I would like.)

Having some acquaintance with archery, the translation is given with confidence, though *tempering* is more applicable to a blade than the adjusting of the "cast" of a bow. Donald Gorm fell at the battle of Killiecrankie, 1689, and the interesting point here, of which there can be no doubt, is that he imported his bow from Flanders. About the middle of last century, when the writer first made acquaintance with bows and arrows at Archers' Hall, Edinburgh, some of the members of the Royal Company still used shooting graith imported from Flanders. It is interesting to note that all the historic references here given of the practice of archery fall within the seventeenth century. In Waldron's *Description of the Isle of Man*, first published in 1726, he mentions that the young men of the island were "great shooters with bows and arrows. There are frequently shooting matches, parish against parish, and wagers laid which side shall have the better." (Manx Society's publications, xi. p. 50.) This refers us to the active practice of archery in a Gaelic-speaking locality during the same 17th century.

CHOOSING PARTNERS.

(P. 56, after line 15.)

There is an Ardrishaig variant of "Mary Matansy." The girl in the centre of the ring pretends to be weeping and the ring circling round sings—

"Oh, what is Mary weeping for, weeping for, weeping for,
Oh, what is Mary weeping for, upon Ardrishaig pier?"

Mary answers—

"She is weeping for her own true love, her own true love, her own true love,
She's weeping for her own true love, who has gone to the war."

The ring—

"Oh when will he come back again, back again, back again,
Oh when will he come back again to his own dear Mary?"

Mary steps forward, the ring stops and she chooses one to represent her lover ; joining hands the two whirl about singing—

“He has come back again, back again, back again,
He has come back again to his own dear Mary.”

Mary joins the ring and the chosen lover becomes “Mary.”

Jingo Ring.

They have a variant from that described above in Lorn. The players stand in a row with one walking up and down in front, singing,—

“As I went walking down the street
A German lady I did meet
With a pair of slippers on her feet
And a baby in her arms.”

She then chooses one from the row and, arm in arm, they march up and down in front of it, singing,—

“Jingo-ring fal la! la, (repeated three times)
And a baby in her arms.”

The first then joins the row and the other carries on the game.

The same game is played with a variant of the verse given on p. 85, each one chosen merely taking the chooser's place and repeating the verse—

“Sweet Mary, sweet Mary, my age is sixteen,
My father's a farmer in sweet Aberdeen,
He has plenty of money to dress me in green,
But there's no bonnie laddie will tak me awa.”

(P. 58, after line 27.)

In Uist, instead of the words “babbity, busty barley” on p. 57, they say “a Mhiss, a Mhiss, a bharley.”

Before the line commencing with the words “I wadna kiss a lassie O,” the following are often introduced—

“Choose ye wha we'll tak, wha ye'll tak, wha ye'll tak,
Choose ye wha ye'll tak, a laddie or a lassie O.”

(P. 66, after line 18.)

The bulk of the players standing in a ring or a row, with one

in front who sings a verse and chooses another to take her place are common.

"Cherry cheeks and roses, cherry cheeks and roses,
Cherry cheeks and roses, drumpy, drumpy, dry."

Having chosen the other she says—

"Here's the one that I love best, that I love best, that I love best,
Here's the one that I love best, drumpy drumpy, dry."

In the following the ring sings first as they circle round—

"Every wife for her husband,
Every widow for her son,
Every lassie for a laddie,
Till the boundary is done.

"Seize a basin full of water
And a towel in her hand
Rings of gold on every finger
Like a diamond in the sun."

The centre girl chooses another, they clasp and dance round singing—

"I will take a glass of whisky,
I will take a cup of tea,
I will take a bonnie lassie,
That's the thing that pleases me."

In the following the mass of the players stand in a row, the one to make the choice marching up and down in front.

1. "Green grows the rashies O,
My boots are made of silver,
A white rosette upon my breast,
And a gold ring on my finger."

The choice is made, both sing the same verse, the first one joins the row, etc.

2. The single player sings—

"Here's a poor widow, she's left alone,
She has no one to marry upon,
Come choose in the east, come choose in the west,
Come choose the very one you love best."

One is chosen and the two sing—

“Here’s a couple that’s married together,
Married together, married together;
Here’s a couple that’s married together,
Drinking tea and kissing each other.”

The Farmer’s Den

Comes under this heading, and is given as reported, but there is really no playing in it. The players stand in a circle with one in the centre. She says as she chooses one from the circle, “The farmer wants a wife.” The wife then chooses one, saying, “The farmer’s wife wants a child.” The chosen child says, while choosing one, “The farmer’s wife’s child wants a nurse,” and the chosen nurse says, “The farmer’s wife’s child’s nurse wants a dog.” If the performance is to be repeated, the dog chosen represents the farmer.

When partners have been chosen they may amuse themselves in some particular way.

Row Chow Tobacco.

Having sought a green grassy slope, the couple lock themselves firmly together, and lying down roll from top to bottom, singing,

“Row chow, row chow, row chow tobacco O.
You’ll give me a cup of tea and I’ll give you tobacco O.”

2. The couple “cleek” their right arms and whirl round singing—

“Hook and eyes and oggris dean.” (Repeat.)

3. Each couple clasp hands facing each other, four playing, their arms crossed, right hand in right hand, left hand in left hand. They then pull each other backwards and forwards.

“If you want to see King William,
Take your trumpet to the cross,
There you’ll see a noble lady
Riding on a big black horse.
Riddle, doodle, deedle, daddle, (Repeat thrice.)
Riding on a big black horse.”

In Uist they repeat “Row chow tobacco” instead of “If ye want,” etc.

4. *Tie up the Dumplings.*

The position taken up is the same as in No. 3, but the pairs with their hands clasped stand separately, and one pair repeats—

“One in a bush, two in a bush,
Please, young ladies, come into my house.”

The couple invited pass in below the arms of the inviters, and then all four dance, singing—

“Tie up the dumplings, tie up the dumplings,
Tie up the dumplings, one, two, three.”

R. C. MACLAGAN.

(To be continued.)