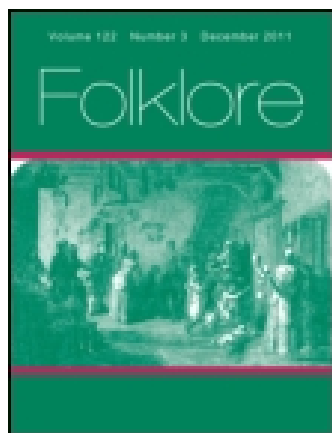


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Correspondence

E. Sidney Hartland , W. H. D. Rouse , Clothilde Balfour & Gertrude M. Godden
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CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. HARTLAND'S "SIN-EATER", AND PRIMITIVE SACRAMENTS.

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—Miss Godden's wide reading and rapid induction have anticipated a conclusion which, when I wrote the paper on "The Sin-Eater", had definitely formed itself in my mind, but which I did not feel justified in enunciating for want of evidence. The evidence, however, is accumulating, and I hope to deal with it ere long. Meantime, it Miss Godden would be good enough to direct my attention to any facts of special interest in this connection she would be conferring a favour upon me.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

MOUSE-NIBBLING.

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—*A propos* of Prof. Rhys's note on the Welsh mouse (p. 383, above), the following notes from the East may be of interest.

Jataka, No. 87 (*Fausb.*, i, 371, ff.), is introduced by the story of a superstitious man. A garment which lay in his coffer was *nibbled by a mouse*. . . . Thought he to himself, "If this change of raiment remain in the house, great loss will follow. Unlucky that it is, like the goddess of ill-luck herself! I cannot give it to my family or my servants, for whosoever shall receive it will be ruined miserably; it shall be cast out into the place where dead bodies are left to rot."

Jat., ii, p. 181. A dishonest man, who has been entrusted with some ploughshares, excuses himself for not returning them, on the ground that *the mice have nibbled them*. The word *nibbled* may be translated *eaten*; no doubt, *the mice have nibbled it*, would ordinarily be reason for throwing anything away.

(This may have passed into a proverb very early: we have in Herondas 3. 76, οἱ μῦς ὁμοίως τὸν σίδηρον τρώγουσιν.)

Lastly, in the Tevijja Sutta (trans. by Davids, *Sacr. Books*, xi, 196), we have a rebuke for such men as get a living "by divinations from the manner in which cloth and other such things have been bitten by rats".

W. H. D. ROUSE.

"BOGLES" AND "GHOSTS".

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—In the September No. of FOLK-LORE I have read with interest Mr. Stuart-Glennie's excellent article on "Animism"; and as in a footnote (see foot of page 298, vol. iii, No. 3) he refers to one of the Lincolnshire legends contributed by me, I wish to correct a slight misapprehension, for which I am perhaps myself responsible. I write at a disadvantage, as I have not the original by me to refer to; but if I said what Mr. Stuart-Glennie quotes, I expressed myself badly. I did not mean to assert that "bogles" meant "corpses (or emanations from them), etc., etc. . . . till corruption had completed its work", for this would have been a sweeping assertion, and would have inferred that these only were "bogles", and "bogles" were always these.

I meant that these emanations were called "bogles" certainly; but the name was also applied to all kinds of supernatural appearances, and I have heard it used where a sound or voice only was concerned. In fact, I heard no

other word employed. I think—though I do not wish to be too certain—that the “bogles” of persons recently dead were more dreaded, and considered more generally unlucky, than any other kind.

I have only to add that I quite confess my “perversity” as regards the title; I regretted having used the word afterwards when I realised its “foreign” look. I am afraid that, as I wanted a name of some sort, and wanted it in a hurry, I took the first one that suggested itself, and the result is, certainly, unhappy.

CLOTHILDE BALFOUR.

CHAINED IMAGES.

(*Tóvea Festival*.)

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—You kindly gave me space in a recent number of FOLK-LORE in which to ask for any facts likely to throw light on the meaning of the Greek festival of the Toncea, and of the appearance in ritual and myth of *chained gods*.

The interest of this festival, and of the curious myths in question, and the hope expressed by Mr. Hartland in the last number of the Journal that the matter might be pursued, will perhaps excuse my troubling you again. I would now ask specially for any custom of binding or “fettering” in burial rites, whether of savage or peasant folk.

The rites celebrated to Hera in the Toncea festival at Samos were, it will be remembered, *yearly*; and included the hiding of the image of the goddess “tightly bound in willow branches” according to the legend (*Athenæus*, xv, c. 13; Bohn trans., p. 1073). The nearer we approach to a knowledge of the religious calendar of primitive times, the more the dual seasons of death and rebirth, or recall, seem to dominate the cycle of ritual worship; and to the period of the death or absence of the god, or, as it is generally called, the Chthonic phase, belong of course the funeral rites so well known in Greek worship—such,

for example, as those of Adonis and Attis, where images of the god were "carried out as to burial".

It seems probable that the worship of Hera was performed in a yearly cycle of connected festivals, of which a central point would be the celebrated Holy Wedding, the *ἱερὸς γάμος*. That such a festival year should include a day of mourning and burial, would be in full harmony, not only with what we are learning of ancient Greek religion, but with the traces of primitive and religious thought which survive, fossilised, among European peasants. (See such usages as the "Carrying out Death"—"Hinaustragung und Eingrabung"—fully dealt with by W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, ch. iv, pp. 406 *sqq.*; cf. *Golden Bough*, J. G. Frazer, i, 253 *sqq.*) One must not hope, perhaps, to arrive at the full meaning of her Samos festival; but I think much interesting light might be thrown on it, and through it on early Greek religious thought, from parallel primitive usage, and, considering the above probabilities especially from funeral rites. Funeral rites of the god one would most wish for—or of sacred creatures or men; but also any similar ceremonies at the burial of tribesman or peasant.

The closest analogy that I have yet been able to note is the following Troglodyte custom, quoted by Strabo (Strabo, c. 776): "Some among the Troglodytes, when they bury their dead, *bind them firmly from back to feet with briar branches.*" A writer in the *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* (vol. vii, 19) comments on this passage: "The latter custom is like that of the Hottentots, who formerly not only bound their dead, like other African races, but ceremonially swathed them." Would anyone, learned in African ways, tell us who these races are, and where one may find the references the *Zeitschrift* omits to supply?

Perhaps by such aid one might arrive at the idea which moved primitive man to perform these ritual acts at the burial of his dead; and at the origin of the old Greek festival at which each year the image of Hera was bound, and carried away, to be hidden on the Samos sea-shore.

GERTRUDE M. GODDEN.