

Mother Bunch's Closet

Newly Broke Open;

CONTAINING

RARE SECRETS of NATURE and ART,

Tried and Experienced

By Learned Philosophers,

And recommended to all ingenious young men and maids, teaching them, in a natural way, how to get good wives and husbands.

Approved by several that have made trial of them; it being the product of forty-nine years study.

By our loving Friend Poor Tom, for the King, a lover of Mirth, but a hater of Treason.

IN TWO PARTS.



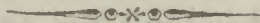
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TO THE READER.



No harm at all is in this set,
But teaching Maids Husbands to get;
Also young Men of each degree.
Turn o'er the leaf, and you shall see,
What herein is, is merriment,
Hoping to give you all content.



MOTHER BUNCH'S

Closet Broke Open.

PART I.

READING over many ancient Histories, it was my chance to meet with this story of an old woman who lived in the west, who took delight in studying her fortune when she found herself full twenty years old, she thought her luck worse than some who were married at fifteen or sixteen, which much troubled her mind; but to prevent all doubts she resolved too try a story she had often heard her mother talk of, and finding it true, she resolved to teach other maidens.

On a time, this old woman having newly buried her husband, was taking a walk in the fields, for the benefit of the air, sometimes thinking of the loss of her husbands, for she had had three, yet had a great desire for the fourth. So it happened, as she was walking alone, she espied a young maiden by the meadow-side. Good-morrow, maid, said the old woman, how do you do? are not you well? Yes, Mother, I am very well, but somewhat troubled in mind. What is it troubles you so much? If I can, I will willingly relieve you, therefore be not ashamed to tell the truth. Is it any thing of great concern? Indeed, Mother, seeing you urge me so much, I will tell you the truth: We are three sisters, the youngest was married about a year ago, the middlemost last week, and I am the eldest, and no man heeds me. Well, Daughter, if this be all, I believe I can assist thee, for when I was young, I was in the same condition, and with reading some histories, found out the art to know him that should be my husband

which, if you will keep my counsel, I am ready to teach thee. I will truly, and if you will do so much for me, I shall think myself much obliged to you; and if my fortune proves right, I will make you amends.

Why then I will tell you, in the first place, you must observe St. Agnes' day, which is the 21st of January, and on that day let no man salute thee, and at night, before thou goest to bed, put on the best clean shift thou hast, and when thou liest down lay thy right hand under thy head, and say these words, "Now the God of love send me my desires;" then go to sleep as soon as possible, and you shall be sure to dream of him who will be your husband, and see him stand before you, and may take notice of him, and his complexion; and if he offer to salute thee, do not deny him, but shew him as much favour as thou canst; but if he offers to be uncivil, be sure to hold your legs together. And now, Daughter, the counsel I have given you, be sure to tell no body. So, fare you well, till I see you again.

I give you thanks for your advice; but one thing more I have to say, What is your name? and where do you live? I will tell you, Daughter, my name is MOTHER BUNCH, and I live at a place called Bon-adventure, where, if you come, I will make you welcome.

NOW MOTHER BUNCH having departed from the maid, she met another pretty girl. Good-morrow, Mother Bunch. Good-morrow, pretty maid, whither are you going this morning? Methinks you are very fine to-day. Fine! Mother Bunch; you do not think so. Nay, I cannot discommend you; for such a brisk maid as you should go handsome, or you will never get a sweetheart, though you think the time long. No, no, Mother, I am too young. How old are you? I am eighteen. Eighteen! then I know

thou thinkest thou hast stayed long enough, and wouldest as willingly have a husband as another. Aye, Mother Bunch, but good husbands are hard to find, especially for me, who have no skill in chusing, or else it may be, I would be glad of a good husband. Be sure to take my advice: be wise in chusing, that is to say, take no one that has got a red head, for be sure he loveth a smock so well that he will scarce let his wife have a good one to her back; nor of yellow hair, as he is inclinable to be jealous; nor a black man, for he is dogged. Aye, but, Mother, if I must not have yellow, black, nor red, what colour must I take? Why, Daughter, I tell you, if he is jealous, you will be forced, by his speeches, to make it good, for how can a young woman forbear what she is always told of? And be sure, if he is jealous of thee, thou mayest well be so of him; for whores and thieves think ill of each other. But hold a little, one thing more I have to say to you, and that is, to take notice of thy sweethearts when they come a wooing to thee, I mean of their civil behaviour; for if they swear, vow, and make great protestations, then have a care of thyself, for many words breed dissimulation; therefore have a care of such: but if a man come to thee that is sober and civil-behaved, there are hopes of his proving a good man. Now, Mother, I will take my leave of you, giving you many thanks for your good advice; and so, farewell, till I see you again, and I intend to take this counsel.

Another time Mother Bunch was in a little meadow, not far from her house, on the 30th of April, before sun-rising. A handsome maid, seeing her alone, came to her, and said, Mother Bunch, good-morrow, how do you do? Pray what makes you abroad so early in the morning? You seem to be in a deep study. Daughter, you say very true; I am studying who shall be my next husband, and if thou

wilt but please to stay a little while, thou shalt see a pretty art, which thou never saw before, to teach you how to know your sweetheart. This is a pretty art indeed, and I should be glad to know it.

Hark! hark! Daughter, is not yonder the cuckoo singing? Yes, yes, and I have not heard her sing this year before now. Then, Daughter, sit down by me, but hold, Are you fasting? Yes. But has no man kissed you? No. Then sit thee down by me. I think the cuckoo is mad, what a life she leads; I think she is a witch; but no matter; put off thy right shoe and stocking, and let me look between thy great toe and the next: Now, Daughter, see, this hair is a long one; look well at it, and tell me what colour it is. I think it is really yellow. The same colour will thy husband's hair be. But, Mother Bunch, I do not matter the colour so much as the condition. I will tell you his condition: he may prove surly enough, and perhaps make you do as you did not imagine: you must give him good words, and give him one good turn for another; but as to this, thou must keep it to thyself; it is an ill bird that beshits its own nest; kiss and tell is foul play. Mother Bunch, you make me smile, you talk so merrily. Come, Daughter, it is no great matter; merry talk does no harm, but drives the time away; but as for the deed doing I leave that to yourself. But hark! Daughter, I have had three husbands myself, and I think to have another; and do you think I am so mad to tell him all I do? Then, my Daughter, I have another way to tell you who must be your husband; I have proved it true; and it is the best time of the year to try it, therefore, observe what I say: Take a St. Thomas' onion, pare it, and lay it on a clean handkerchief under your pillow; put on a clean smock; and as you lie down, lay your arms abroad, and say these words:

*Good St. Thomas, do me right,
And bring my love to me this night,
That I may view him in the face,
And in my arms may him embrace.*

Then lying on thy back, with thy arms abroad, go to sleep as soon as you can, and in your first sleep you shall dream of him who is to be your husband, and he will come and offer to kiss you; do not hinder him, but catch him in thy arms, and strive to hold him, for that is he. This I have tried, and it has proved true. Yet I have another pretty way for a maid to know her sweetheart, which is as follows: Take a summer apple of the best fruit, stick pins close into the apple, to the head, and as you stick them take notice which of them is the middlemost, and give it what name you fancy; put it into thy left hand glove, and lay it under thy pillow on Saturday night; after thou gettest into bed, then clap thy hands together, and say these words:

*If thou be he that must have me
To be thy wedded bride,
Make no delay, but come away,
This night to my bedside.*

And in thy sleep thou shalt see him come in his shirt, and if he offer thee any abuse, he will be great with another woman; but if he puts his hand over thee, be not afraid, for it is a sign he will prove a good husband: and this is a good way for a young man to know his sweetheart, giving the middlemost pin the name he fancies best, putting the apple in his right hand glove, and laying it under his pillow when he is in bed, saying,

*If thou be she that must have me
In wedlock for to join,
Make no delay, but come away
Unto this bed of mine.*

And that night he may see her, as if she came in her shift and petticoat, which is a sign she will prove a civil woman; but if she comes with her shift only, she will prove a ranter, and so better lost than found. And now, Daughter, the time passes away, and I must be gone, and so bid you farewell. Mother Bunch, I give you many thanks for your good counsel, and intend to take your advice.

Upon a time, Mother Bunch, being at a wedding, where young men and maids were met, who had a mind for some discourse with her, one young man said, Mother Bunch, we know you are a woman that has a judgment in many things, I pray tell my fortune. I cannot tell fortunes, said she, but thou blinkest too much with one eye to be true to one woman. Aye, but, Mother, says another, what think you of me? Thou mayest come to marry a lady, if thou canst but lay a great wager with her, three to one; and if she lays with thee, thou wilt be very likely to win, for thou hast mettle in thee; but have a care she win not the odds, if she does thou art clean gone. So farewell.

Now Mother Bunch took her leave; and going home, she met a maid going to a wedding. How do you do, Mother? Thank you, Daughter, whither are you going? To the wedding, I believe; but hark you, Mother, will you sit down a little, I have something to say to you. What is it, Daughter? When shall I be married? Would you fain be married? Yes, Mother, if I could get a good husband. Then, Daughter, I will tell you the best I can, if you will take my advice. In the month of January are many dangerous days for thee to take notice of, these are the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth: there are a great many more; but if thou marriest on these days, thy husband will cuckold thee, or thou wilt make him one, or else you will soon be parted by

one means or other; but for all there be so many bad days in this month I can tell you of one day which is lucky, and many young men and maids have a deal of heart's ease on that day, or the day after, as I shall let you understand; it is the 21st, called St. Agnes' day. This St. Agnes has a great favour for young men and maids, and will bring to their bedsides their sweethearts, if they follow my rules: Upon this day you must be sure to keep a fast. and neither eat nor drink all that day, nor at night; neither let man, woman, nor child, kiss thee on that day; and thou must be sure, when thou goest to bed, to put on a clean shift, and the best thou hast, and clean clothes on thy head, for St. Agnes loves to see all clean when she comes; when thou liest down, lie as straight as thou canst, and lay thy hands under thy head, and say,

*Now, St. Agnes, play thy part,
And send to me my own sweetheart;
And shew me such a happy bliss,
This night of him to have a kiss.*

And be sure fall asleep as soon as you can, and before you awake out of your first sleep, you shall see him come before you, and shall perceive by his habit what tradesman he is; and be sure thou declare not thy dream unto any one in ten days, and by that time thou mayest see thy dream come to pass. All this I have proved three times; for I have had three husbands, and they all proved tradesmen; the first was a straw joiner, the second a louse-trap maker, and the third a gentle craft, and he came to me with his awl in his hand, and would needs prick me, ay, and did prick, but did not hurt me, and so I waked out of my dream, and was never the worse; but I thought the time long till he came again, as all maids do that desire to be married. I know some maids

would have a husband with the best conditions, and endowed with the best qualifications; nay they would have impossibilities: but I am afraid they will make good the old Proverb, that says,

*If you will not when you may,
When you would you shall have nay.*

Therefore take my advice, if a young man comes to you of a civil carriage, and you think you can love him, be not scornful to him, but give him a civil entertainment, according to his behaviour: but be sure to hold your legs together, till the authority is signed, when you may open them as wide as you can.

And as to young men, my advice is, they be wary in their choice, since there is as much danger in chusing of a wife as a husband: wherefore, all young men, take my advice: chuse not one with a long nose, a scolding brow, and thin lips, for in such there is great danger: he who is tied to a scold is tied to sorrow; chuse not one who is counted a slut, if she be a slut, she is idle also, and these two companions will bring thee to poverty; nay, besides this, the old saying is, A slut will poison the gout, and if you can't eat with her, you won't lie with her, and you must have a bedfellow somewhere.

But this is the best way of chusing a wife: Take one for love, not for riches which fly away; for true love never varies; and where that is, the blessing of God is. If you desire to live a long life, be not overfond of riches, but chuse a civil handsome maid, who is not given to pride: such a maid may make a fine wife. But she that brings a handsome fortune, will be always throwing it in your teeth, which often occasions great disturbances; therefore let this suffice for those who desire to get good wives; and take notice of what I have already said, and you may fare the better.

And as for young maids, this is my advice, if they will not try St. Agnes, let them be sure to chuse a clever man, who is able to do his work; for if she be fain to seek another to do that work, it may breed great dissension.

THE END OF THE SECOND PART.

The INTRODUCTION

TO THE
SECOND PART.

ON Michaelmas day, MOTHER BUNCH, sitting on the bank of a river, joining to a neighbouring grove, beheld the late flourishing branches in their decay, whose sapless leaves were falling to the earth; from which she began seriously to consider her own mortality; and since time had hurried on the winter of her age, and covered her aged head with snowy locks, she might expect, ere long, to fall, like the enfeebled leaves: Therefore, she resolved, as she had been a kind friend to young men and maids, to give a further testimony of her regard before she left this world. For as her painful study, and strict observation had made a large improvement in her stock of knowledge, she would not have it buried in the grave with her, but leave it to posterity for the benefit of young men and maids, whereby they might learn to understand their good and bad fortunes, and by the directions of this book, be thoroughly furnished with many secret rarities, never before published to the world.

Accordingly, the next day she wrote letters of invitation to the young men and maids, to repair to her house on St. Luke's day: The maids she ap-

pointed to meet in the morning, to be first instructed, and that for two reasons. First, As she herself was a woman, she would teach them first, lest the batchelors should be too hard for them before they had learned their lessons. Secondly, That young women should be first served in this, it being Horn-Fair-Day, many of the batchelors would be employed in the morning, in handing old citizen's young wives to the fair; and in the afternoon they might be at liberty. This was the determination of old MOTHER BUNCH.



MOTHER BUNCH, &c.

NOW against the time appointed, old Mother Bunch decked up her house, neat and fine, and getting up early in the morning, placed herself in the closet, where her treasure lay.

Now the first that entered the room, was one Margery Loveman, a maltster's maid; who with a low courtsey, said, Good-morrow, MOTHER BUNCH, I am come to partake of your bounty; for I hear you have a second time opened your Golden Closet of Curiosities, for the benefit of young lovers. Yes, Daughter, quoth Mother Bunch, so I have; and thou shalt partake of the same: Here is infallible rules and directions to guide you in all manner of love intrigues; also, how to know what sort of man you shall marry, and whither he will prove loving or not.

Dear Mother, these are things I fain would know; for, believe me, I have many sweet hearts, and I willingly chuse the best, lest I should marry in haste and repent at leisure. 'Tis true, I have near a hundred and fifty pounds to my portion, the great noise of which, has brought many sweethearts; for I have

no less than five or six at this time; and, Mother, I would fain know which of them comes for love of me, and which of them for money.—Daughter, quoth Mother Bunch, here is an experiment, if you will but try, it will make a clear discovery of the reality of their love.—Let a report be spread, that thou hast lately been robbed of all that thou hast, both money and apparel: Now, if after this, there is one of them that continues his love as before, you may be very certain that he is faithful; but, be sure that you keep this counsel to yourself, that the secret be not discovered. I will take care of that, dear Mother, quoth Margery, and I heartily thank you for this kind and seasonable advice.

Good-morrow, Daughter, she reply'd,

Young men are false and must be try'd.

She was no sooner gone, but in comes Mrs Susan, a young sempstress from Salisbury, with sorrowful lamentation, weeping, and wringing her hands. How now! quoth good Mother Bunch, what is the matter with you, Daughter, that you go on at this rate? Alas! Mother Bunch, quoth Susan, my——my——my——my——my——my——! What my? said Mother Bunch. Quoth sobbing Susan, my sorrows are more than I am able to bear; for, Mother, dear Frank the fidler, my old love, and I, are fallen out, and he swears he will not have me: Come, Daughter, quoth Mother Bunch, be of good comfort, for I will put thee in an effectual way to find, whither Frank the fidler be really angry with thee or not; and if he be, I will teach thee infallibly how to obtain his favour again. “She that is afraid of every grass, must not think to piss in a meadow.” Let your angry love but alone for a season, and he will soon come to himself again; for I know that love is a puny darling, and wants very frequently to be humoured. Therefore let him alone, in time he will forget his

anger, and return to thee again, if he has any principle, good nature, or loyal love in him; and if not, you had better be without him, than during your whole life, to be tied to so sour an apple tree. Remember the old Proverb, "Set thy stool in the sun; if a knave goes, an honest man may come." I hope thou hast not been playing the Wanton Wagtail with him, hast thou? No indeed, dear Mother Bunch, but yet, I must needs confess that he fain would have played a lesson on my Lute last market-day, but I would not let him; and that was the cause of our falling out. Sayest thou so, Daughter? Why, then I will tell thee, that since he found thou withstood his temptations, with so much resolution, take my word for it, he will never forget thee. Well, dear Mother, quoth young Susan, your words have been comfortable to me; and when I find the good effects, I will return and give you an account of it. And so farewell, dear Mother, for the present.

*Right happy, Daughter, may you be,
In guarding your VIRGINITY.*

The next that entered the room, was Margery, the Malster's maid, who, after making a very low courtsey, and giving Mother Bunch the time of the day, desiring to know for what reason she sent her that letter? Why, says the old woman, to the end that I might reveal to you some secrets relating to love, which I have never discovered to the world. But, dear Mother Bunch, quoth Margery, I am a meer stranger to love, for I never in my life knew what it meant. That may be, quoth Mother Bunch; yet you know not how soon you may receive the arrows of Cupid; then you would be glad of some of my advice, for I know by myself, that the best Virgin of you all, at one time or other, has a desire to know what it is to lie with a man. Quoth Margery,

you talk merrily, Mother Bunch. Well, Daughter, quoth Mother Bunch, you may term it as you please; but I will appeal to your own conscience, whether or no you would be glad, with all your heart, of a kind and loving husband.

Dear Mother, quoth Margery, you come quite close to the matter; and if I may be so free as to speak my own mind, I could willingly embrace such a one; for though house-keeping is said, to be very chargeable often, yet on the other hand, a married state is honourable. Thou sayest well, Daughter, quoth Mother Bunch, and if thou hast a mind to see the man whom thou shalt marry, then follow strictly my directions, and you shall not fail of your desire. Let me see—this is St. Luke's day, which I have found by long study, to be of greater use to that purpose, than that of the celebrated St. Agnes, which I formerly recommended you to; and the ingredients now to be used, are of a quite different and finer quality, and far more excellent for performing the same.

Now I would have you take some marigold flowers, a large sprig of sweet marjoram, a sprig of fresh thyme, and a small quantity of wormwood; dry these together before the fire, till you may rub them to a powder; then sift the same thro' a piece of fine lawn: This being done, take a small quantity of virgin honey, and right white-wine vinegar, and simmer them together in a new earthen poringer, over a mild and gentle fire; all which being done, anoint your breasts and stomach, and lips, likewise, with the same, just the moment you are lying down in your bed; always remembering, to repeat these words three times.

*St. Luke, St. Luke, be kind to me,
And let me now my true love see.*

This said, hasten to sleep with all speed; then in the soft slumber of your night's repose, the very man you are to marry shall appear before you walking to and fro, near to your bedside, very plain and visible to be seen: you shall perfectly behold the colour of his hair, his visage, stature, and deportment: And if he be one that will prove faithful, he will approach you with a smile. and offer to salute you; which, when he does, do not seem to be over fond, or peevishly froward, but receive the same with a becoming mild and modest blush: Now. if he be one that will, after marriage, forsake thy bed to wander after strange women, then will he offer to be rude and uncivil with thee, at which time. thou shalt lift up thy hand to smite him; so doing, it will go well with thee, and thy Guardian Angel will keep thee ever safe; Daughter, these are rarities which I never before devulged. Do but put this in execution, and I am certain it will answer the desired effect. I must needs thank you for your love, quoth Margery; and so farewell, Mother Bunch. Good-by, Daughter, she replied.

*Let joy and pleasure crown your days,
And a kind man your fortune raise.*

The next that appeared, was Kate the cloth-wor-ker's Daughter; then Doll the dairy-maid, Joan, Bridget, Nancy, and Phillis, in number about forty together; each of them crying out with a loud voice, Dear Mother Bunch, remember me; O remember me, quoth another; and so did they all, till they made the poor old woman's ears deaf with the clamorous noise. My dear Daughters, quoth Mother Bunch, sit you all down and be quiet, for there is never a one amongst you, but will partake of my bounty. Daughters, I will sit in the midst of you, where I shall read over a very interesting lecture.

My real motive is to give you a full account of some rare and excellent curiosities, in my Golden Closet, newly broke open; declaring that it is my opinion, that those things which are profitable to one maid, may not be prejudicial, in any respect, to another, and this I shall begin.

First, If any of you here desire to know the name of the man whom you shall marry, let her seek in the summer time, for a green peasecod, in which there are nine pease; when you have done this, either write, or cause to be written on a slip of paper, these words:

*Come in, my dear,
And never fear.*

Writing which, you must carefully close within the aforesaid peasecod, and lay the same under the threshold of the door, and then observe the next man that comes into the house; for you shall certainly be married to one of the same name.

Secondly, She that desires to be satisfied whether she shall enjoy the man desired or no, let her take two lemon-peels in the morning, and wear them all the day under her arm-pit, then at night let her not fail to take them, and rub the four posts of the bed with the same; which being done, in your first sleep, he will seem to come and present you with a couple of choice lemons, if not, there is no hope.

Thirdly, She that is desirous to know what manner of fortune she shall marry, whether a gentleman, a tradesman, or a traveller, the experiment is thus: Take a walnut, a haselnut, and a nutmeg, crack the two nuts, and take off the scurf, peel them clear from the kernels, and grate part of the nutmeg to them; this being done, bruise the kernels of the nuts, and mix them with butter and sugar, making them up into peels, which are to be taken just when you are

lying down in your bed: then if your fortune be to marry a gentleman, your sleep will be filled with fine golden dreams, variety of sweet music, and many running footmen; if a tradesman, great noise and tumults; if a traveller (who is a seaman) then frightful visions of lightening and roaring thunder will disturb your sleep. This has been often tried, and as often approved.

Fourthly, St. Agnes's day I have not wholly blotted out of my book; No, but I have found a more exact way of trial than before: You shall not need to abstain from kisses, nor be forced to keep a fast from a glance of your love in the night. If you can rise to be at the parish church-door, punctually betwixt the hours of twelve and one in the morning, and then and there, put only the fore-finger of your right hand into the key-hole of the said door, repeating the following words, three times over:

*O sweet St. Agnes, now draw near,
With my true love, let him appear.*

Then he will straight approach to you with a chearful and smiling countenance. This is a new and infallible way of making the trial.

Fifthly, My dear Daughters, you all know the thirteenth day of February is Valentine's Day, at which time the fowls of the air couple together, and not only so, but the young men and maidens are for chusing mates at the same time. Now, that you may speed to your full satisfaction, follow this approved direction: Take five bay leaves, lay one under every corner of your pillow, and the fifth under the middle, then laying yourself down to rest, repeat the following words in the four lines, seven times over:

*Some Guardian Angel let me have,
What I most earnestly do crave,*

*A Valentine endow'd with Love,
Which will both kind and constant prove.*

Then to your great content, you shall either have the Valentine of him you desire, or, at least, one much more excellent.

Sixthly, the experiment of the mid-summer smock, found in a better manner than before, by my painful study in Philosophy. And now, Daughters, quoth she, take particular notice, for it is thus: Let seven of you together, on a mid-summer eve, exactly at the sun's setting, go silently into some garden, and gather each of you a sprig of red sage, then return to some private room, prepared particularly for that purpose, with a stool placed in the middle, each one of you having a clean smock, turned the wrong side outwards, hanging upon a line across the room, then let every one lay her sprig of red sage on a clean plate of rose-water set on a stool; which done, place yourselves in a row, where continue till twelve or one o'clock, saying nothing, whatever you see, for after midnight, each one's sweetheart or husband, that shall be, will take each maid's sprig out of the rose-water, and sprinkle his love's smock, and those who are so unfortunate as never to be married, their sprigs shall not be moved; and in consequence hereof, many sobs and heavy sighs will be heard. This has been very often tried in our own country, and never failed of the desired effect.

*These things I have found out of late,
To make young lovers fortunate.*

And now, my dear Daughters, I have but a few more words to say at this time, and they are by way of caution: In the twelve months, I find above one and thirty very unfortunate days; and therefore, as you regard the future happiness of your lives, take

care that you do not enter into wedlock upon those days. Now, for your better instruction, I'll tell you which they be.

In January, there are four; the 7th, 16th, 17th, and 18th.

February hath two; the 5th, and 10th.

March hath three; the 9th, 10th, and 21st.

April hath two; the 6th and 7th.

May hath two; the 4th and 13th.

June hath three; the 7th, the 9th, and 10th.

July hath two; the 9th, and 17th.

August hath two; the 11th and 15th.

September hath three; the 2d, the 3d, and 4th.

October hath three; the 4th, the 14th, and 15th.

November hath two; the 5th and 24th.

December hath three; the 6th, the 7th, and 9th.

*Observe my rules for all these days,
And then you will your fortune raise.*

This said, Old Mother Bunch presented them with a cup of her fine cordial water, and so dismissed them; and the young damsels, with rapturous hearts, returned her their hearty thanks.

After Mother Bunch had done dinner, the young men came, to wit, Tom the miller, Ralph the thatcher, and Robin the ploughman, with a great number of other trades and callings, all whom Mother Bunch invited to sit down, that she might deliver her wholesome counsels to them.

And first she begins with Tom the miller, saying, Ah, Tom! thou art a sad wild young fellow; there is not a maid that can come to the mill, but thou will be fooling with them, giving the poor lasses sly bobs under their aprons; but take my word for it, if you do not leave off in time, you will certainly spoil all your fortune: What woman do you think, having a portion, will have such a one? She may justly

conclude, that you will still run a catterwauling after young wenches, and leave her to sigh and weep, for want of the comforts of matrimony,——you know what I mean, Tom.

Yes, yes, Mother, quoth Tom, but sure you do not take me for such a one. Yes, Tom, I do, and am seldom mistaken. It is you millers, that fill the country so full of crack'd maidenheads, that when an honest husband comes to take possession, he finds the ground tilled before he comes with his plow. But farewell, I'll have no more to say to such a fellow as you.

Then turning to Ralph the thatcher, she said, I find you are very desirous of a wife, and your ambition is such, that she must be rich, young, and beautiful: cannot you content yourself with honest Joan, to whom you gave promise of marriage, and now I find you have a mind to leave her, which if you do, and obtain such a one as you desire, I can tell you what will follow: She won't stand picking of straws with you, her fair face will find many friends in a corner, and you may chance to be a cuckold, and indeed but justly served in your kind; and therefore, I advise you to return to your old love for she is a very honest girl, and therefore far more fit for you, than such a gay butterfly as you have lately followed.

Then she stretched forth her hand to Robin the ploughman, saying, Thou art an honest fellow, and good fortune will always attend thee; I mean not bags of gold, nor heaps of silver; but thou shalt have a careful and industrious wife, one that will ever be willing and ready to labour, a true and a faithful yoke-mate, and one that will be a chearful partner in thy weal and woe, to comfort and support thee under the greatest and most severe trials. For, as the Poet has it,

*That burden may be borne
by two with care,
Which is perhaps, to much
for one to bear.*

Honest Robin, this is thy happy fortune, and as thou art a downright honest fellow, I am glad to find it so.

Thus Mother Bunch went round the room,
And told them what would be their doom,
If they her Daughters did betray,
And steal their maidenheads away,
Each would be punish'd with a bride,
By whom he should be hornify'd;
But if they were right honest men,
Each of them should have fortune then.
This said, she did her blessing give,
In love and happiness to live;
Which when they did the same receive,
Of Mother Bunch they took their leave,
Declaring she had told them more,
Than e'er they understood before.

NOW for these poor young creatures that have pined themselves to death, and neglected the cure, the worst of pretenders to phisiognomy might prescribe them a remedy; and all those of what constitution soever, that have languished in single sheets till sixteen; I will show you how you shall see the person that is to ease you of your maidenhead, collected from Trismegistus, and Cornelius Agrippa.

On Midsummer Eve three or four of you must dip your shifts in fair water, then turn them wrong-side outwards, and hang them on chairs before the fire, and lay some salt in another chair, and speak not a word. In a short time the likeness of him you are to marry, will come and turn your smocks, and drink to you; but if there be any of you will never marry, they will hear a bell, but not the rest.

Another Way, quickly tried.

Take hemp-seed, and go into what place you will by yourself, carry the seed in your apron, and with your right hand, throw it over your shoulder, saying,

*Hemp-seed I sow, hemp-seed I sow,
And he that must be my true love,
Come after me and now:*

And at the ninth time expect to see the figure of him you are to wed, or else hear a bell as before.

*Yet though you hear the sad and dismal bell,
It is your fault if you lead apes in hell.*

Another Way.

You that dare venture into a church-yard, just as it strikes twelve at night, take a naked sword in your hand, and go nine times about the church, saying,

Here's the sword, but where's the scabbard?

Which continue the whole time you go round: and the ninth time the person you are to marry will meet you with a scabbard and so kiss you: if not, a bell as before.

Another, called The Dutch Cake.

Three, four, or more of you must make a cake of flour and salt, (no matter of what flour) and some of each of your own water; make your cake broad, and each of you set the two first letters of your name with a pin, but leave such a distance that it may be cut; then set it before the fire, but speak not one word. Turn it each of you once; and the person to be your husband, will cut out your name; then the next unto the last. If there be any who hear a bell, I wish I had them for my bedfellow, to prevent their leading APES in hell.

Another Way.

The first change of the New Moon on the New Year, the first time you see it, hold your hands across, saying this three times,

*New Moon, New Moon, I pray thee,
Tell me this night who my true love will be.*

Then go to bed without speaking a word, and you will certainly dream of the person you shall marry.

Another Way, experienced often.

Young men and maids may take some rosemary flowers, bay leaves, a little thyme, sweet marjoram and southernwood; make these into powder, and with barley flour make a cake, but do not bake it. Lay this under your head any Friday night; and if you dream of music, you will wed those you desire in a short time; if of the sea or ships, you will travel first; if of a church, you must be contented to die single.

FINIS.