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*West-Country Verses*



# *West-Country Verses*

BY

ARTHUR L. SALMON

AUTHOR OF

'WEST-COUNTRY BALLADS AND VERSES,' 'A BOOK OF VERSES,' ETC.

COLLECTED AND REVISED

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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## PREFACE.

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THE present volume is a collection of the West of England verses published in my 'West-Country Ballads and Verses' (Blackwood, 1899), and 'Lyrics and Verses' (Blackwood, 1902), with some additions that have not yet been issued in volume-form. The dialect is mainly that of Devonshire, but some of the pieces are equally representative of that of Somerset, where the same old Wessex speech lingers. The chief difference between the two counties is in the tone and inflection of the vowel-sounds. There is considerable similarity also in the dialect of Dorset, as will be noted by readers of William Barnes.

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The Author owes his best thanks to the Publishers of 'Macmillan's Magazine,' 'Longmans' Magazine,' 'The Pall Mall Magazine,' and 'The Lady's Realm,' for their consent to the republication of verses from those periodicals.

A. L. S.

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## WEST-COUNTRY VERSES.



### A SONG OF DEVON.

**L**AND of the tor and torrent, of tillage and of  
wild,  
Thou most imperial mother of many a noble child.

Thou haunt of old romances, thou nest of golden  
dreams,  
Thou hope of hopeless causes, thou land of glorious  
gleams!

Give me the grace to sing thee in one exulting song,  
Through whose impetuous numbers thy pulse beats  
true and strong.

A song whose breath may echo the legends of thy  
breeze,  
The magic of thy moorlands, the rapture of thy  
seas.

I see thy winding rivers in beauty seek the main,  
Bringing the breath of forest, of pasture, and of  
plain ;

The kindly fostering harbours, from whence thy  
children sailed,  
Who in the need of England might die yet never  
failed ;

Thy granite-heaving moorlands, whereon we dimly  
trace  
Traditionary footsteps of many a vanished race :

A wilderness of heather, a paradise of gold,  
Where every ancient trackway is strewn with stories  
old.

I see thy Faithful City, and many a lovely town,  
Thy villages and hamlets that lurk 'mid furze and  
down ;

Thy gaunt and mighty headlands that front the  
Severn Sea,

Where in gigantic caverns the waves beat cease-  
lessly ;

Thy meadow-lands and orchards that blossom to the  
south ;

Thy shelving sand and shingle, thy many a river's  
mouth.

O Devon, mother Devon, whose heart is warm and  
strong,

Give me the grace to sing thee in one triumphant  
song.

Whene'er the voice of England has echoed to the  
wind,

The dauntless sons of Devon have never lagged  
behind.

They never lost their courage, they never lost their  
love :

Behind their faith in Devon lay faith in God above.

For life they lusted keenly, these playmates of the  
sea ;

They never ceased to labour for England and for  
thee,

Till worlds of new-born knowledge poured forth  
their wealth untold,

For English hands to gather in western lands of  
gold.



“JAN COO.”

A RHYME OF THE DARTMOOR BORDERS.

THE air of the lonely moors for ever  
 Throbs with the pulse of the leaping river,  
 Where over its boulders foamingly  
 The Dart is fain for its haven sea.

Glorious it is when the summer gold  
 Is scattered widely o'er moor and wold—  
 When oaken leaves and ivies quiver  
 Responsive to the rushing river.

But when the wizard winter reigns  
 O'er Dartmoor wilds and Devon lanes,  
 With deeper tone, with keener shiver,  
 Dashes and dives the tameless river.

. . . . .

The winter sundown had ebbed and died  
Over the tors and the valleys wide,  
And through the hush came only the thrill  
Of the moorland torrent, never still.

Brief are the toils of the winter day ;  
The night came fast, a phantom grey ;  
And round the fire the farm-folk told  
Tidings and happenings, new and old.

Sudden the door flew open wide,  
And the farm-boy entered, eager-eyed :  
“ Out in the dusk and the winter sighing  
I heard the voice of a something crying.”

The men rose willingly. “ Ay, for sure,  
'Tis a body lost out on the moor ; ”  
And they shouted loud where the night-time's hush  
Tremulous carried the river's rush.

No cry at first. Then clear and true  
Through the air there rang, “ Jan Coo, Jan Coo ! ”  
Said they, “ An' who may Jan Coo be ever ?—  
' I'll war'n—'tis a body down by the river.”

And they shouted again, but to their crying  
There came no further voice replying ;  
And nothing they heard and nothing they found,  
Save the river's ceaseless leap and bound.

Next night again, as the shadows grew,  
The same cry sounded, “Jan Coo, Jan Coo !”  
And to their lusty shouts and crying  
“Jan Coo, Jan Coo !” came still replying.

Then a grey-haired man said solemnly,  
“For sure 'tis the pisgies—that it be ;  
'Tis the pisgies—and whatever betide  
'Tis best for us to let un bide.”

Back to the fire the farm-folk went  
With chilly dread and wonderment ;  
And they took no note of the eerie cry—  
And the winter-tide dragged slowly by.

The winter slackened fast, and earth  
Was quick with impulses of birth,  
When through the twilight's hazy blue  
The same cry came again—“Jan Coo !”

On the hillside stood the boy and heard,  
His mind most powerfully stirred ;  
And he called aloud, " I'll go and see,  
Pisgy or not, what the cry may be."

Adown the slope he hotly sped  
To the dips and crags of the river's bed,  
While still beyond came clear and true  
" Jan Coo !"—and yet again " Jan Coo !"

The farmer watched his headlong way,  
And loudly called to him to stay ;  
But the boy soon disappeared from view  
Towards the cry—" Jan Coo, Jan Coo !"

Then sudden through the nightfall chill  
That lone mysterious cry was still,  
And only from the gorge as ever  
Trembled the pulse of the leaping river.

The night came on with dreamy gloom,  
O'er tor and torrent, moss and combe ;  
With deeper tone, with keener shiver,  
Tumbled and tossed the tameless river.

Whether the boy might be or not  
A pisgy brought to an earthly cot,  
And whether from their dwellings dim  
His pixy-folk were calling him,

Or whether it was the voice of the Dart,  
That every year will claim a heart—  
Calling the boy to a restless grave  
In the eddies of its hungering wave—

Is a question we must ask in vain.  
But the boy was never seen again,  
Though night and day they sought him wide  
By bog and bush of the moorland-side.

And never again the moor-folk knew  
That lone mysterious cry "Jan Coo!"  
Where over its boulders foamingly  
The Dart is fain for its haven sea.

## WIDDECOMBE ON THE MOOR.

THE devil came to Widdecombe  
With thunder and with flame ;  
He left behind at Widdecombe  
A terror and a name ;  
And this, the moorland voices tell,  
Is how the devil came.

The autumn flashed with red and gold  
Along the Devon lanes ;  
The tangled hedges of the wold  
Were rich with mellow stains,—  
The torrents of the moorland old  
Were turbulent with rains.

There came a stranger to the inn  
And sought to know his way—  
To Poundstock on the moor he came  
In sombre black array ;  
He asked the road to Widdecombe—  
It was the Sabbath-day.

He shouted loudly for a drink—  
His sable steed he stroked ;  
And when he tossed the liquor down,  
It boiled and hissed and smoked ;  
Like water on a red-hot iron  
The hissing liquor soaked.

“ Good woman, will you be my guide  
To Widdecombe on the moor ? ”  
With trembling accent she declined—  
She said the road was sure.  
She saw a cloven hoof strike out  
As he spurred away from the door.

Low on the massy cleaves and tors  
A boding trouble lay—  
A ceaseless murmur of the streams  
Came through the silent day.

The stranger rode to Widdecombe,—  
Full well he found the way.

The folk were gathered in the church  
To hear the evening pray'r,  
And if 'twas dark enough without,  
'Twas threefold darker there ;  
And on the gathered people fell  
A shudder and a scare.

Now is the time, oh kneeling folk,  
To pray with fervent fear,  
For the enemy of the soul of man,  
Devouring fiend, is near,  
And evil thoughts and base desires  
Unbind his fetters here.

Sudden upon the moorland kirk  
The crash of thunder broke—  
A noise as of a thousand guns,  
With many a lightning-stroke,—  
A blackness as of blackest night,  
With fitful fire and smoke.



It seemed the Day of doom had come ;  
The roof was torn and rent,  
And through the church from end to end  
A fearful flame-ball went.  
It seemed the dreadful Day had come  
In wild bewilderment.

The stranger came to Widdecombe—  
He tied his horse without ;  
He rushed into the crashing door  
With fiendish laugh and shout ;  
Through the door the fiery stranger came,  
Through the shattered roof went out.

Men prayed with terror and remorse—  
In frenzied fear they cried ;  
And one lay dead with cloven head,  
His blood besprinkled wide—  
And one was struck so dire a stroke  
That of his hurt he died.

Down through the roof the turret came—  
The spire was twisted stark.  
A beam came crushing down between  
The parson and the clerk,—

And fearful was the sudden light,  
And fearful was the dark.

Then fell a deep and deathlike hush ;  
And through the silence dead,  
“ Good neighbours, shall we venture out ? ”  
A trembling farmer said—  
“ I’ the name o’ God, shall we venture out ? ”—  
For the fearsome time seemed sped.

Then up and spake the minister  
With white yet dauntless face :  
“ ’Tis best to make an end of prayer,  
Trusting to Christ His grace ;  
For it were better to die here  
Than in another place.”

So in the kirk at Widdecombe  
They finished evening pray’r ;  
And then at last they ventured out  
Into the autumn air.  
Brightly the jagged moorland lay  
In sundown calm and fair.

The devil came to Widdecombe  
With thunder and with flame,—  
He left behind a shattered kirk,  
A terror, and a fame ;  
And this, the moorland voices tell,  
Is how the devil came.

## THE PARSON AND THE CLERK.

A BALLAD OF THE DEVON COAST.

WHOEVER goes to Dawlish town  
May see, in dawn or dark,  
Two rocks that front the dashing sea—  
The Parson and the Clerk.

And till the sea hath sucked them down,  
Which it haply soon will do,  
To all the watching Devon coasts  
They tell this legend true.

'Twas from the Faithful City  
The parson spurred that day,  
And when he came to Haldon  
He failed to trace his way.

The storms of night were howling,  
The Wish-hounds yelled and bayed ;  
And the clerk, who swore he knew the track,  
Still farther from it strayed.

Their weary horses stumbled  
In ridges deep and wide,  
And the parson breathed a sinful wish  
That the Fiend might be his guide.

The parson swore unholy—  
And suddenly behind  
They heard a clanking horse's hoofs  
Come after like the wind.

It was a peasant mounted.  
“Good e'en to you,” he cried ;  
“You've wandered from the trackway far,  
But I will be your guide.”

With ease and skill unerring  
He led them o'er the down ;  
And he begged of them to sup with him  
In his house by Dawlish town.

“ My merry friends are waiting,”  
He cried with laughter loud ;  
“ And to have a parson sup with them  
Will make them mighty proud.”

The house looked old and crazy—  
High dashed the neighbouring sea ;  
And “ Thanks, my man,” the parson cried—  
“ We’ll take pot-luck,” said he.

Merry and high the feasting was,  
The guests drank deep and free ;  
And the parson sang a stirring song—  
Not from the Liturgy.

A stirring song the parson sang,  
And the clerk intoned Amen ;  
And when the chorus had been yelled  
They begged for it again.

And the parson shouted gladly,  
“ ’Tis better than droning pray’r  
In the church to the drowsy people,  
With my foxy clerk in the chair.”

Loud laughed the clerk at the jesting,  
But he stooped to his master's ear :  
" 'Tis best for us to be going—  
The dawn is drawing near."

" Good night, my merry masters ;  
The hour is drawing late."  
And the host cried to the parson,  
" We'll see you from the gate."

The parson clomb to his saddle,  
To his dragged up the clerk ;  
Strange flashes from the doorway  
Shone out into the dark.

The air was blind with sea-spray ;  
And, spite of whip and spur,  
The beasts of clerk and parson  
Like rocks refused to stir.

" The Fiend is in the horses,"  
Cried the parson furiously ;  
" But devil or no, we'll make them go !"  
And the host laughed loud with glee.

Then thicker the foam descended,  
The waves more closely dashed,  
And there stood at the door a troop of fiends  
With eyes that wildly flashed.

The crazy house had vanished—  
The breakers surged and ran ;  
And to the flanks of their horses  
Clung master and clung man.

Prone on the rocks next morning  
They stretched there, stiff and stark :  
On one rock lay the parson,  
On one rock lay the clerk.

Beaten and torn and mangled,  
They clung with dead-cold hands,  
While their horses wandered harmless  
On shining Dawlish sands.



## THE CORNISH WRECKER'S DEATH.

'T WAS the time of the barley-harvesting :  
The wrecker lay on his bed  
With the fire of grievous sin at his heart,  
Death's chill upon his head.  
There came a storm-cloud from the sea,  
Thick black with fringe of red.

By his dying bed the parson stood  
With pow'rful words of pray'r.  
The trembling fishers stayed without,  
Nor dared to enter there,  
For they heard the pirate-wrecker's groans  
And the shrieks of his despair.

There came a fearful crash and flame,  
Then deepest, blackest gloom,  
And it seemed as though the surging waves  
Were dashing through the room—

A fierce alternate dark and light,  
A thunderous billowing boom.

Unsteered, it seemed, by earthly hands  
A black ship neared the shore,  
Of a rig that never Cornishmen  
Had recognised before ;  
And the fishers crossed themselves with dread  
As they stood around the door.

To hear the dying wrecker's cries  
Might make the bravest quail.  
He yelled, "The fiend is tearing me  
With bloody tooth and nail!—  
His hand is like the claw of a hawk!"—  
And the cry became a wail.

He shouted, "Put the sailors out!—  
Their fingers drip with blood!"—  
And the shock that rent the cottage walls  
Was like the shock of a flood,  
As though the breakers beat within  
With ceaseless mighty thud.

Above the wrecker's shatt'ring roof  
Hung full the cloud of night—  
The deepest darkness ever known,  
While all beside was bright.  
Foiled by the fiend, the parson brave  
Rushed forth into the light.

His pray'r was baffled by a heart  
Corrupt with constant sin,  
Whereto no peace of penitence  
Could steal a pathway in ;  
Remorse and deadly fear alone  
Can never pardon win.

Sudden the pitchy clinging cloud,  
Raised by resistless force,  
Rolled from the cottage to the ship,  
And the ship began her course.  
Behind, a loathsome sight to see,  
Remained the wrecker's corse.

The storm and trouble passed away  
As strangely as they fell.  
There came a peace upon the earth,  
As though all things were well ;

And the seaward-lying clouds became  
A field of asphodel.

Yet when they raised the wrecker's corse,  
To bury him in dread,  
Rolled in the pitchy cloud again  
With fringe of lurid red,  
And a sudden blaze of light caught up  
The coffin and the dead.

It whirled the coffin fearsomely  
Across the sea in flame ;  
And to the outer fire he went  
Who from the darkness came ;  
If there be hope for such an end,  
Such hope we dare not name.

The earth was lightened of her load—  
Sweet peace returned once more ;  
The loving touch of sundown lit  
The church upon the shore.  
Parson and people prayed that night  
As they never prayed before.

## THE MOUTH OF THE LYN.

FORTH from the fastness of its moorland home  
With ceaseless din  
Cometh the leaping Lyn,  
Seeking the coast with constant fret and foam—  
Bringing a wildness of the moors to wed  
The wildness of the sea,—from ferny bed  
And mossy boulders breaking, till it meet  
The haven where its fleet  
Disordered pulse shall stay its fitful beat,  
And find a rest  
In the more mighty swell of ocean's breast.

And when the flood-tide pours  
Into the combe where Lyn first meets the sea—  
When all the streamlet-shores  
Are lapped in ocean's calm immensity—

There comes a silence, and the restless din  
Of leaping Lyn  
Is swallowed by the hush  
That takes the fever from its moorland rush.  
The force and turmoil of its hastening  
Become a petty thing.  
To listening wood and hill  
Up-breathes an utter peace, and all is still.

O heart whose pulse with mad impetuous force  
Frets like the moorland river,  
Because the rocks and banks along its course  
Impede its way for ever,—  
Leave thou the self that is thy constant woe,—  
Let the great flood-tide flow.  
Return to thy true haven and thy source,  
Merging thy wilfulness in heaven's high will.  
Then shalt thou know  
The heat and conflict of thy hastening  
Were but a petty thing.  
Hushing thy tumult and thy murmuring  
Flows in the peace of God, and all is still.

## SUNSET BY THE EXE.

THE flood of light falls lingeringly  
 Where Exe flows out to meet the sea,  
 And through my heart the flood of dream  
 Flows deeper with the deepening gleam.

The sun hath touched with loving hand  
 The stretch of sea, the bars of sand,  
 And on each crying sea-bird's wing  
 His kisses still are quivering.

The world of spirits opens wide—  
 The sea of soul that hath no tide ;  
 A moment's passport comes to me,  
 Where Exe flows out to meet the sea.

I pass with sunset's passing gleam  
 Into the life that doth not dream ;  
 The secret guarded gates unfold  
 Unto the self that grows not old.

In moments thus, from youth to eld,  
Too briefly given, too long withheld,  
The soul is snatched from time and place  
To boundless peace, to boundless space.

The years that come with stain and soil,  
The years of hope, the years of toil,  
Pass by and leave no least impress  
Upon this inmost consciousness.

Only when life of long offence  
Hath dulled the soul with clouds of sense,  
Rarer or none our moments be  
Of glimpses at eternity ;

And when the spirit's nobler need  
Is sold for sordid aims or greed,  
Its sleep unbroken covets not  
The glories that it hath forgot.

Where Exe flows forth to meet the sea  
This comfort hath been granted me :  
The soul, though fast asleep it lie,  
Grows never old, can never die.



## ILFRACOMBE.

**B**Y day thy ways are loud with thronging feet,  
 Thy tors resound with jest and careless cries ;  
 Thy nooks are rifled of that presence sweet  
     Reserved for quiet hours and reverent eyes.  
 The voice of him who sells, of him who buys,  
     Blend with the sea-gull's call, the wash of sea.  
 Thou art despoiled of beauty's modest guise,  
     And loveliness hath lost her mystery.

But when the night falls and thy ways are dumb  
     There comes a witching change. Upon thy shore  
 With fuller harmony the billows come,  
     Bringing their tales of half-forgotten lore.  
 Our Lady of the sea is queen once more.  
     Stealeth a spirit from the moorlands grey,  
 Taking the taint from rocky path and tor,  
     Cleansing the stains that come of clamorous day.

Night hath a thousand ministers to chase  
The soilures that would mar her purity.  
Lo, they have passed with no abiding trace,—  
Earth reasserts her calm supremacy :  
So the polluted heart would ask to be,  
Bearing no soil of passions gone before.—  
We love thee better, nursling of the sea,  
When nature claims thee for her own once more.

## A LEGEND OF ST PETROCK.

ST PETROCK trod the craggy shore  
 And gazed at the glowing west,  
 And to his heart there came a dream,  
 A dream of the Isle of the Blest ;—

That isle which never living foot  
 With earthly stain has trod,  
 That lies away to the golden west,  
 Somewhere in the hand of God.

There came to his feet a silver boat,  
 Washed by the wave to his reach ;  
 Therein the saint put forth, and left  
 Sheepskin and staff on the beach.

For many days St Petrock sailed,  
 Nor ate nor drank the while ;  
 Yet he hungered not and he thirsted not  
 Till he came to the Blessed Isle.

It was a land of peace and flowers,  
With valleys towards the sea—  
A land of streams and singing birds,  
Where never tempests be :

Pure as the purest thoughts of heaven  
In the heart of a saint or a maid.  
St Petrock left his boat by the shore,  
And trod forth unafraid.

Seven years he spent, and what he saw  
No tongue of man may say ;  
But when he had spent seven years it seemed  
That he had but spent a day.

A single fruit from a tree that sprang  
Out of the verdurous sod  
Was all St Petrock ate in the isle  
That lies in the hand of God.

Then he came again to the sloping beach,  
And there he found once more  
The silver boat that had wafted him  
Away to this blessed shore.

Back from the island of the Blest  
He came to the western land,  
And he found his sheepskin and his staff  
Uninjured on the sand.

A grey old wolf had guarded them—  
They showed nor rent nor stain.  
St Petrock stepped to the shore, and donned  
His hermit-garb again.

St Petrock sailed to the Blessed Isle ;  
But when the vision broke  
He found that heaven had guarded still  
His staff and sheepskin cloak.

## SEA-GULLS.

(ILFRACOMBE.)

**A**BOVE the misty headlands  
 White sea-gulls soar and scream,  
 And their wings have lured the flashing  
     Of the sunset's crimson gleam.  
 O why are those wings so restless,  
     And whence that boding cry?—  
 Do they catch the breath of the tempest  
     And the storm that is coming nigh?

Are they the souls of sleepers  
     In ocean's restless bed?—  
 And do they speak of the living  
     Or do they speak of the dead?  
 O why do the gulls of the ocean  
     So ceaselessly circle and cry?—  
 Do they think of the storm that is coming,  
     Or the rest that will come by-and-by?

## DEVON LASSIES.

## I.

**F**OND glances follow where she goes,  
 Wooed of the wandering breeze ;  
 The sun that 'neath her bonnet glows  
 Is lured by what it sees  
 To write upon her blushing cheek  
 The words of love it fain would speak.

A cloudless gleam of summer light,  
 A breath of ocean wind,  
 She brings a dimness to the sight  
 And leaves a smile behind.  
 Who sees her pass will turn and bless  
 The God that gave such loveliness.

## II.

Her eyes are like the quiet sea,  
And in their changeful deeps  
I read the thought that timidly  
Within its shelter keeps.  
Like sunny gleams that come and go  
The ripples of her gladness flow.

The sea-bird cries above her head,  
And at her naked feet  
The seaweed trembles to her tread  
And feels its pressure sweet.  
The blushes of the sunset skies  
Have found a refuge in her eyes.



## AUTUMN.

AUTUMN came across the land,  
Tangle-haired, barefooted, brown,  
And the harebells from her hand  
Quivered as she cast them down.

Eyes of deep desire and dream,  
Lips that told a haunting tale—  
Cheek and brow an orchard-gleam,  
Voice, a sunset's hushing gale.

Ah, the legends that she told  
Turned the leaves to russet red—  
Scattered them in showers of gold  
Over path and forest-bed.

Fern and bramble glowed with fire,  
White clematis clustered rife ;  
And the heart's untold desire  
Was for other fields of life.

Autumn came across the wold  
Tangle-headed, barefoot, wan ;  
And her face grew sad and old—  
Darkness coming, gladness gone.

Suddenly, its madness wreaking,  
Broke a wind from out the west.  
Autumn, wearied, staggering, shrieking,  
Tore her hair and beat her breast.

Woodlands groaning, sobbing, crying—  
Heaven a mass of seething cloud !—  
Autumn, make an end of dying—  
Tattered leaves shall be thy shroud.

“IN THE GOLDEN WOOD.”

I HELD a feasting in the golden wood  
 To which I bade old friends from far away.  
 There in the mossy covert, where the day  
 Wore out its hours in charmèd solitude,  
 I called them—ancient comrades, tried and good,  
 Dear friends of boyhood, gay when I was gay,  
 Sad in my tears and playful in my play—  
 I called them, waiting where alone I stood.

Alas! no guest appeared to feast with me,  
 Save timid rabbit peeping from the fern,  
 And dove or wood-wren rustling in the tree  
 That overhung my stillness. And I learn  
 At last, in tears, that tender memory  
 Had called them whence they never may return.

## IN THE DIM CITY.

(BRISTOL.)

CITY of clanging bells  
And narrow, dingy streets,  
Where the continuous din of traffic swells,  
The throb of commerce beats.  
At times, when sundown over smoky piles  
Stretches a healing hand,  
There comes a touch of love that reconciles,  
A glory that the soul can understand.  
Round dusky roofs and spires  
Eddy the driven clouds of sunset fires ;  
With marvellous mutation  
Flames the swift mystery of transfiguration.  
One moment—and we deem  
Thou art the magic city of a dream ;  
One moment—and the gloom  
Hath foiled the gleam :  
City of toil, and want, and mortal doom.

Close to thine ancient walls  
Come subtle whisperings of the Severn Sea.  
I stand upon thy quay  
Amid the noisy calls,  
The dissonant cries,  
The clash and hurry of thy merchandise :  
And with the tide that creeps  
In stained impurity,  
There comes a legend of far ocean deeps,  
Of cave and crag and seaward mystery.  
I hear the wave that leaps  
In scattered foam : the sea-birds noisily  
Rifle the footprints of the ebbing tide.  
One moment—and the dream hath died.  
Sullied and black, the water sleeps  
Forgetful of the sea-fowl's wing ;  
City of sordid stain, and wealth, and hungering.



PIECES IN DIALECT





## THE PARISH CLERK.

**Z**O they've carried poor ol' passen tü the churchyard,

An' I reckon that they oughter carry me ;  
For when passen says the prayers up tü glory  
'Er'll lüke for me to vollow, dawntee see ?  
'Twill be strange tü 'en, I warrant, güde ol' passen,  
If I shüdden help'n out wi' my Amen.  
Uz be vorty year together i' the parish,  
An' tü old tü larn our reckonings agen.

They'm a-making many changes tü the church now,  
'Twid a' broken passen's 'art if 'er 'ad zeed,—  
Wi' their frill-de-dills and fantysheeny fashions  
What idden i' the Pray'r-Büke, as I read.  
'Tis vury well for sarvice to be dacent,—  
I always 'ad'n 'spectable and vitty ;  
But now they'm faking up the church so fullish,  
They make'n like a play-ouze tü the city.

Our passen, zo they tell us, wuz ol'-fashioned ;  
 Then I reckons that I be ol'-fashioned tü.  
 'Er'd ride a bit tü vox-hounds of a morning,  
 If zo be 'er 'ad nothen else tü dü.  
 They say that hunting vox beant fit for passen,—  
 It midden be, I dü not understan' ;  
 But 'tis a vury 'uman-natur'd practice,  
 An' passen wuz an 'uman-natur'd man.

I mind how wance the Bishop come tü zee un,  
 When passen 'ad a-donned 'is hunting red ;  
 An' missis, when 'er zeed the Bishop coming,  
 'Er tummilled poor ol' passen intü bed.  
 An' when my lard come axing for the passen  
 'Er met un vury zolemnly, tü zay,  
 "My 'usband be laid up wi' scarlet fayver,"—  
 An' Bishop vury quickly drove away.

Ah, that wuz in his rory-tory saison,  
 When 'er wuz but a vorty year or zo ;  
 But passen 'er repented of 'is hunting—  
 When 'er 'ad got tü faybul for tü go.  
 'Er knew zo much o' vox-hounds an' o' tarriers  
 As any man tü all the countryzide ;  
 They 'lected un tü judge mun tü the dog-show ;  
 But passen doffed 'is red avore he died.

Our passen düed 'is düty tü the gentry ;  
'Er waited till the squire wuz in 'is sayte.  
'Er praiched that all us men on airth be ekals—  
With a differns 'tween the little and the great.  
I mind how wance a curate tüke the sarvice,—  
I reckon 'er wuz but a güsey thing,  
For when I tell'd un “squire beant in 'is sayte yet,”  
'Er zed 'er widden wait for squire or king.

That beant the way tü taich the people düty,  
But that be how they taiches um to-day.  
There wunt be any order tü the parish  
When passen an' mysel' be gone away.  
I suffers zo from tissick an' brownkitty,  
It wunt be vury long avore I go :  
It didden take um long tü find a passen,  
But where they'll get a clerk tü I dawnt know.

I zim the Church be gwain tü get a tummil,—  
'Tis Pappistry, zo far as I can zee ;  
An' Pappistry be wurse than Nonconformies,  
Accordin' tü ol' passen an' tü me.  
I darezay that uz be a bit ol'-fashioned,—  
The Bible it must be ol'-fashioned tü.  
I'd rayther follow vox-hounds wi' the passen  
Than listen tü their fullish fillyloo.

It beant for want of charutty an' kindness,—  
 Our passen wuz zo kind's a man can be ;  
 Uz jogged along wi' Methody and Baptiss,  
 Zo long's they didden interfere wi' we.  
 Uz kep the Christen customs right and proper,  
 But I warrant now the divel 'ull come home.  
 There's a proper place for everything, zed passen,  
 An' the proper place of Romans is tü Rome.  
 Yü shüde 'a heard the singing and the hanthems  
 Uz giv'um tü the church o' Sabbath-days ;  
 With clarinet and viddle and with 'cheller,  
 Uz taught'n how tü sing an 'ymn o' praise.  
 But passen 'er got doiled and tüke an organ—  
 Zims totally unscripteral tü me ;  
 There beant a word o' organs where the Scriptor  
 Zes "zackbut, vlüte, and 'arp an' psalterie."  
 An' zo I've zeed the end o' poor ol' passen ;  
 'Er tottled, last I zaw'm upon 'is legs.  
 I reckerlecks a varmer tü a dinner,  
 As prayed for fewer passens and more pegs.<sup>1</sup>  
 'Tis trüe that pegs be vury handy crayters,  
 An' üsefuller than passens when they'm dead—  
 But yü might zay the same o' clerks, I reckon,  
 An' sartainly I widden 'ave it zed.

<sup>1</sup> Pigs.

It idden that I undervally pegs now,—

I widden be zo thankless tü the Lard ;

But zomehow clerks an' passens goes together,—

An' passen he be gone tü his reward.

An' when 'er gets tü praying, up tü glory,

'E'll lüke tü me tü vollow up 'is pray'r ;

When Scriptor müvèd 'im in zundry plazes,

I wuz always purty sartain tü be there.

## A DEVON WIFE.

WHATIVER dü 'er kep on vor? 'Er niver  
be 'appy, 'er baint,

Unless 'er can bullyrag zomebody ; an' I be zo meek  
as a zaint !

I've always a-bin a gude 'usband, a proper gude  
'usband to she,

But 'er be a rampaging, drabitted, fussocky body,  
'er be.

I can't a-zay 'er be lazy, vor that baint axackly trüe ;  
Yü niver did zee anybody rout about 'ouze as 'er  
dü ;

But Zolomon 'as zed, an' I reckon et's trüe as my  
life—

Better an.'ouze unvitty than a clapper-clawing wife.

What wi' 'er crinkum-crankums, dang my ole wig  
vor me,  
Ef 'er idden a wapsy wife as iver a man could zee!  
'Er 'oppeth about the 'ouze like a cat upon 'ot  
bricks,  
Wi' niver an end to 'er crāking an' fanty-sheeny  
tricks.

But yet 'er be my missis, the chillern's mawther  
too ;  
'Er's wan of the right zort, 'er is, at bottom, that be  
true ;  
An' what I 'ave zed, I'll zay et—I'll stand by what  
I 'ave zed—  
But ef any one else should zay et, I'll vetch'n a  
clout'n tha head.

Düee think I don't remember that Satterday in  
Jüne?—  
Us stüde in the daffadowndillies, us lüked up at the  
müne ;  
Us hadn't a deal to zay, but I'll warrant us thought  
the moar,  
An' a purtier little maid there niver was zeen avore.

Us lüked up at the müne as ef us niver had  
 zeed 'er,  
 An' then I lüked in 'er eyes as though my lüke cud  
 read 'er.  
 Zed I, "Et's a bütiful night"; 'er answered an' zed  
 "Zo et is";  
 An' zomehow I seed no rayson why I shudden  
 make vor a kiss.

Fegs! I wuz only a bwoy; an' I zed, "There is  
 pisgies<sup>1</sup> here,"  
 I knew 'er wuz feared o' pisgies, an I drü a bit  
 more near.  
 I tellee I niver feared the pisgies in the laist,  
 But I thort et a gude excüse to vetch my arm roun'  
 'er waist.

I didn't zee 'er then a rampaging, drabitted zoul—  
 'Er wuz a purty maid, wi' eyes zo black as a coal;  
 'Er wuz a purty maid, an' I wuz only a bwoy,  
 An' I liked 'er all the moar that 'er was a trifle  
 coy.

<sup>1</sup> Pixies.



An' zomehow et come about, what wi' the pigies  
an' müne,

I axed 'er tü be my missis, et couldn't be too  
züne.

I dunno what 'er answered—et wasn't No 'er zed—  
An' as 'er lived tü Kirton,<sup>1</sup> tü Kirton us wuz wed.

'Er beant the zame azackly as 'er appeared that  
day ;

It beant no gude to argyfy, 'er's bound tü get 'er  
way.

I've always bin a gude 'usband, a rare gude 'usband  
to she,

An' 'er's bin gude at the vittles, whatever 'er temper  
be.

A rare un at the vittles, an' everything be nayte ;

'Er knows to manage vitty tha tatties an' the mayte.

A little short tü temper—I'll stand tü what I've  
zed—

But ef any one else should zay et, I'll vetch'n a  
clout'n tha head.

<sup>1</sup> Crediton.

I beant a bwoy no longer, tü be takken wi' a show ;  
 I wants a busy missis tü make the vittles go.  
 Let 'er be vretful zometimes, and clapper-claw a  
     gude un—  
 In a' the countryside there beant 'er equal at ogs-  
     pudden.

A purty vace wur zummut, but when I marriet, züne  
 I vound there's zomething else to dü than lüking at  
     tha müne ;  
 An' when the chillern come to us tha coortin' days  
     wuz done,—  
 There's zummut more to thenk of now than ninny-  
     hammer vun.

Whativer dü 'er kep on vor ? But if et pleases she  
 I can't azackly reckon that it does much hurt to me ;  
 An' if the Almighty tüke 'er, as wuz a purty maid,  
 I warrant I'd want to vollow an' lie whur she be laid.

## IN THE DIMPSES.

I LOVE tü zit i' the dimpses,<sup>1</sup>  
 When the night begins tü vall,  
 An' zee the dear ol' vaces  
 An' yer the voices call.  
 In daytime I be lonzome—  
 The volks keep far away ;  
 But they come tü me i' the dimpses,  
 At the end o' the long long day.

I don't a-mean the chillern,  
 Though they be güde, I know,  
 But I dü mean the missis,  
 Whü died a year ago,—  
 An' I dü mean my mawther—  
 'Er's long bin gone away ;  
 They come to me i' the dimpses,  
 Though they midden come tü stay.

<sup>1</sup> Twilight.

I zit i' the chimbly cornder  
 An' watch the virelight dance,  
 An' fill my ol' churchwardin,—  
 The missis filled it wance.  
 It almost zimmeth zometimes  
 'Er lights my pipe agen ;  
 An' I smokes my ol' churchwardin  
 As I üsed to smoke'n then.

I beant zo chuckle-headed  
 As yü may think I be,  
 But the wits of my ol' missis  
 Wuz enough for 'er and me ;  
 An' now 'er beant a-nigh me  
 I'm awkard-like, no doubt,—  
 But I beant zo doiled i' the dimpses,  
 When I thinks 'er be about.

If yü come to me i' the dimpses  
 To tell o' craps an' weather,  
 Yü'll think I've bin a-draming  
 An' my wits beant pulled together.  
 I'll ax 'ee tü excüse it  
 That I should treat 'ee zo ;  
 I wuz talking wi' the missis  
 As died a bit ago.

## A DISTRICT VISITOR.

'TES kind of 'ee tü come and lave yer tracks tü  
 tha door,  
 But all tha same, I'll ax 'ee not dü et any moar.

I beant a forrin haythen, nur yet be I a saint,  
 Nor yet be I a pauper ; I dawnt mak no complaint.

When things be right and vitty, I goes tü church  
 an' prays ;  
 Accordin' tü my knowledge I lüke tü men' my  
 ways.

Accordin' tü my knowledge,—'tes much as wan  
 can dü ;  
 Tha Lard wunt ax no moar o' me nor yet o' yü.

But what then dü 'ee offer ef I read them tracks  
 tü-day?—  
 Be it tha loan o' a blanket, or 'arf a pun' o' tay?

An' ef I comes tü yer maytings vor tha benefit o'  
my soul,  
Of course yü'll gie me a ticket vor 'arf an underd  
o' coal?

Aw 'ess! There's Sally Skedger ain't 'tickular wher  
'er goes,  
So long as et brings a passel o' vittels an' winter  
clothes.

Yü bids vor tha biggest nummer, an' course yü 'as  
tü pay ;  
Ther's a power o' competition vor tha savin' o' souls  
tü-day.

A power o' competition, an' yü heads tha list, na  
doubt,—  
But dawnt yü think that tha Lard may be strikin'  
a few names out?

And dawntee think, ma cheel, 'twid be better tü  
stay away  
Than tü go tü wuship awnly vor tha sake o' a pun'  
o' tay?

Church or chapel or both, I reckon et's just tha  
same :

A thing ain't any tha better 'cause two can play at  
tha game.

But ef et's a matter o' barter, I warrant a body's  
soul

Ain't tü be bought wi' a ticket vor 'arf an underd o'  
coal.

You'm like tha 'tollers tü,—they argifies just tha  
same ;

Ef a body 'll tak tha pledge they thinks un tha crap  
o' tha crame.

They'm right tü be down on tha drink, but ther's  
many I knaws tü-day

Pledges a dizzen times vor tha sake o' tha buns an'  
tay.

Ther's some tü 'onest tü promise moar'n they thinks  
they'll du ;

Ther's some as 'll promise ought, an' niver a word  
o' et trüe.

'T'es kind 'o yü tü come and lave yer tracks tü tha  
 door,  
 But I dawnt fin' time tü read um,—I guess I've  
 told 'ee avore.

Ther's wan gude lady come i' tha marnin', t'other  
 day,  
 When I wuz tearin' wi' work, an' wanted tü zit an'  
 pray.

Tha 'ouse wuz all in a jakes, an' tha vittels 'ad all tü  
 be cüked ;  
 When tha vokes cam 'ome tü dinner a purty drab  
 I'd a-lüked.

Sed I, "I'll ax 'ee tü 'scuse et ; I beant in a vitty  
 state.  
 Tha vokes 'll be comin' süne, an' ther's nothin' vor  
 mun tü ayte ;

An' tha rooms must all be clayn'd, an' I can't  
 fin' time, no fay !  
 But ef yü come i' tha dimmets, you'm welcome tü  
 zit an' tü pray."



'Er give me an anger'd lüke, an' "Wumman," 'er  
stiffly sed,  
"Yü prizes tha food o' airth more than tha Living  
Bread."

Then up I got an' spake. "Tha Lard 'ath gi'en us  
mayte,  
An' 'tes a wumman's duty tü mak'n vit tü ayte.

I 'aves my duty tü 'ome,—et mid be tha same wi'  
thee ;  
But dawnt be comin' yer wi' texes an' tracks tü  
me."

I knaw I wuz wrong tü spake in sich a wapsy  
way,  
But I thort that tha wumman 'ad sed what 'er 'adn't  
no right tü say.

'Er niver 'll come agen—I can't say I'm sorry o'  
that ;  
But yü be so welcome as Spring tü come i' tha  
dimnets an' chat.

But dawnt be bringin' yer tracks. I knaw you'm  
a proper zort,  
Though yü belongs tü tha chapel an' I be church  
up-brort.

I'll niver begurge tü listen after tha work o' tha  
day,—  
But marnin's, my dear sawl! ther beant no time tü  
pray.

## THE CURATE.

PASSEN 'ad a bran'-nü cureit  
 Mannyfactor'd tü tha town ;  
 'E wuz licensed by tha Bisshop  
 Tü wear red upon 'es gown.

Passen's beard be long and vuzzy,  
 Jist a maze o' tuzzled 'air ;  
 Cureit's tattie-trap an' muzzle,  
 Like a bwoy's, be smooth an' bare.

Passen be o' rid complaxion,  
 Varmer-like an' gert an' strong ;  
 Cureit lüketh pale and pittice,  
 An' 'es vace be thin an' long.

Passen pracheth straight an' manly,  
 Like er spaketh tü our vace ;  
 Cureit pracheth vine an' screechy,  
 Wi' a deal o' airs an' grace.

All tha maids wuz mad on cureit—  
 Thoat'n sic a purty thing,—  
 Quite a tiddivated angel,  
 Special brand for wushipping.

Cureit lüked upon tha maidens  
 An' tha widders, ca'm an' zwate,—  
 Volded 'ands an' zed zo zaintlike,  
 "Vrends, I be a sellybate."

"Sellybate! An' what be that now?"  
 All tha zilly güses ax,  
 An' they rinned, zo mad as 'atters,  
 Tü ther bükes o' words an' facks.

Drü tha printed bükes they rampaged—  
 Little cüde they understan';  
 An' they zes, tha wan tü t'other,  
 "Sellybate be zingle man."

"Cureit tells us 'e be zingle—  
 Course 'er be, tha purty dear!—  
 What 'er manes es that 'er's waiting  
 Till tha proper maid appear."

Ivery maiden lüked 'er naytest,  
Like a hadge o' vlowers in May ;  
Ivery widder lüked 'er slyest,  
Thrawin' shape's-eyes in 'es way.

Then tha cureit prached a zarmun,  
An' wuz careful tü egsplain  
"Sellybate manes vargin-zingle ;—  
Zo I be, an' zo remain."

All tha maidens an' tha widders  
Tossed ther 'eads, zo mad's mid be,  
An' they zed tha cureit's zarmun  
Wuz tha plainest Pappistry.

"'Er be doiled an' 'er be dotty,"—  
An' a power o' other things ;  
"Zilly, dawy, beardless napper !"—  
Cureit 'ath a-doffed 'es wings.

## THE OLD SCHOOLMASTER.

'TIS written in tha güde ol' Buke, "There's  
 nothing nü beneath tha sun";  
 An't ain't for me to conterdick tha cunning words  
 o' Zolomon.

But if yü axes me my mind, I think 'twould be  
 more trüly told,  
 Not zackly that there's nothing nü, but that they'm  
 leaving nothing old.

They'm leaving nothing old, excep a fü ol' men the  
 like o' me,  
 And us be feeling out o' place in a' this jimcrack  
 company.

Us be forgot and unbeknawn; ther's nothing left  
 for us to dü  
 But get away tü Kingdom come, and let um make  
 tha world anü.

They think us proper natterals ; it midden be polite  
to say

In reasonable language what us sometimes comes to  
think of they.

Tha maidens and the nappers what I eddicated tü  
tha sküle,

They think their ol' skülemaister now na better than  
a knaw-nort füle.

They've got a gert nü school-'ouse now, an' taich a  
mighty lot o' truck,

Wi' algybries and chimistries tü babbies hardly left  
tü suck.

They gives a deal o' sküling there—they chuck'm  
full o' facks, na doubt,

But eddication is a thing they dawnt a-zim tü know  
about.

There's many a napper shüde a' helped his father tü  
tha farming-work,

As thinks 'eeself tü güde for that, and must be what  
they calls a clark ;

But what the güde o' sküling is I nivver could pre-  
tend tü see,

Unless it fits a bwoy to full the corner where his  
duty be.

An' for tha maids, they taiches them tha matty-  
matics an' pianner,—

I reckon vittels beant a-cüked no longer in the güde  
ol' manner ;

Tha ninny-hammer güses now just turn wi' mimpsy-  
pimsy scorn

An' proudness from tha wholesome lives their poor  
ol' mawthers lived avore'n.

Avore they had tha Boord-sküle built, when I wuz  
maister tü tha sküle,

I taiched um how to read an' write, and 'rithmetic  
by simple rüle ;

No jomettries and algybries—I taiched according  
tü my light,

Tü worship God and shame tha dowl, tü spake tha  
truth and dü tha right.

They didden larn for ornament—they larned for use  
and daily toil ;

They larned that hands be made for work and feet  
must sometimes take a soil.

Tü train tha 'art is güder far than simply eddicate  
tha mind ;

·I've nort against tha Sküle-boord if it makes tha  
chillern güde an' kind.



There wuz a terrubul storm one day—the sea wuz  
shouting tü tha land ;

An' on tha shore, a six mile off, they found a bwoy  
upon tha sand—

A little bwoy tha sea had dashed an' brought tü  
shore an' laid un there,—

A little bwoy—his mawther wance had kissed an'  
folded back his hair.

Down on tha coast, six mile away, they'm used tü  
wrecks an' death, they be ;

But hearing o' this little lad, I'll own it quite come  
over me ;

An' when tha passen buried un, I tüke tha chillern  
tu an' tu

Tü follow sorrowful behind tha little bwoy whom  
no one knew.

Tü talk about that little bwoy was better for tha  
chillern far

Than all their chimistries and truck, and all their  
'zamminations are ;

For all tha nappers an' tha maids—ay, an' tha grey  
ol' maister tü—

Wuz none ashamed tü cry about tha little bwoy  
whom no one knew.

God bless tha little bwoys an' maids ! I wuz a father  
tü um all ;

I often sits an' thinks o' mun, what time tha dimpsy-  
shadows fall ;

I beant a married man, yü see, and now that I be  
old an' grey

I miss tha rowstering bwoys an' girls—I miss um  
more than I can say.

I often sits an' thinks o' mun. Tü me they'm always  
girls an' bwoys,

Wi' cheeks so red as quarrenders, an' purty lükes  
an' merry noise.

They'm all grown men an' women now, and some be  
gone across tha sea,

An' some be in their churchyard-beds ; they'm  
always bwoys an' girls tü me.

They tell me if I tried tü pass tha 'zamminations tü  
tha sküle

I'd just be in tha hinfants' class an' sit upon tha  
dunce's stüle.

Ah, well, I nivver did profess such power o' intel-  
lecks as some,

An' jommettries wunt be no use when I be gone tü  
Kingdom come.

Yü'll think I be a doting füle, a-glumping 'cause I'm  
left alone ;

But I'm no longer maister now, and I've no chillern  
o' me own.

'Tis time for going home-along. There's nothing  
left for me tü dü

In this desaytful wheedling world, where they be  
making all things nü.

“THE WOOING O’T.”

I ZAYS to ’er, “Marnin’! marnin’!” an’ she zays  
 “Marnin’!” to me;

There wadden no more to zay vor all that I could  
 zee—

Leastways, there wadden no more ’at come to my  
 mind just then,

An’ I cudden thenk o’ a word, ’cept just to zay  
 “Marnin’!” agen.

’Tidden a lot to zay, but et means a mighty deal

When et comes vrom one who veels azackly as I did  
 veel;

An’ I knaw my vace wuz red, an’ I twiddled about  
 wi’ my cap,

An’ she zat there on the stile wi’ tha roses in ’er  
 lap.

There's times she'll talk a deal, she'll chackle and  
chatter away,

But now she wuz mum as a mouse, an' 'adden a  
word to zay;

An' she loked zo beautivul, too, with 'er tisty-tosty  
hair

A-blowin' about 'er cheeks—'twuz more than I  
could bear.

An' I turned zo red as vire, an' I loked vrom zide  
to zide,

An' I cudden stan' there steady, vor all that I up  
an' tried;

'Twuz like the pins-an'-needles, but in a different  
part,—

Not i' ma voot azackly, but suthin' to do wi' my  
'eart.

I longed to be zayin' a deal, but a word o' et  
wudden come;

I longed to be doin' a deal, i'stead o' stannin' there  
dumb.

I longed for a suthin' to kill an' lay et along at 'er  
veet;

There's nothin' I wudden 'a' done, 'er lukin' zo  
purty an' zweet.

Ef a regiment o' sogers 'ad passed, I'd 'a' tackled  
'em all like a bird;

I'd 'a' scattered 'em all or died, just vor tha sake  
of a word.

But there wasn't a foe within zight, not a reptile  
or baist cude I zee—

Zo I 'ad to zay "Marnin'!" agen, zo sheepish as  
sheepish mid be.

Then she dropped a rose to tha groun', an' I vell  
on tha grass wi' joy,

An' give et to 'er agen, wi' a blush like a zilly gert  
bwoy.

In coorse I can zee et now, that she meant et vor  
me to teake

An' kiss et and squeeze to my 'eart, an' cuddle et  
just vor 'er seake.

An' I knew when et wuz too late, vor she loked a  
little bit cross,

An' she got vrom off tha stile, a-givin' 'er 'ead a  
toss;

An' tha vlowers all fell to tha ground, an' I gathered  
'em all to my breast,

Close to tha vire o' my love that burned in under  
my vest.

An' I zaid, "I shall keep 'em all till the days when  
I be old,"

Vor my spirit 'ad come of a sudden, an' I velt un-  
common bold.

Zaid she, "You'm quare to plaise." Zaid I, "What  
I wanted is

That you would take tha rose an' gi' et back with  
a kiss."

Zaid she, "You've larned to speake—vor I thought  
you wuz stricken dumb."

Zays I, "'Twuz awnly my love that kept me stannin'  
mum."

Zays she, "Et zims that love es blind an' spacheless  
too."

Zays I, "Et well mid be, a-lukin' an' wushippin'  
you."

I vancy she liked tha words—I thought they wuz  
good mysel'—

An' 'ow I come to zay 'em es more than I can tell.

Zays she, "I'm goin' home, an' zo I'll wishee good-  
day."

Zaid I, "'Tes zort of strange, but I'm goin' tha very  
zame way."

“Mighten’ you wait to be axed?” she zays, wi’ a  
toss o’ tha ’ead.

“I’m feared I mid wait too long, an’ niver be axed,”  
I zaid.

“Well, tidden vor me to choose,” she zaid, “but a  
zims to me

You’m always hangin’ about, wheriver I mid be.”

“’Tes zort of comical, zure,” I zays, “but ’tes gospel  
true—

Either you vollers me or I be a-vollerin’ you.”

That made ’er mad i’ a trice, an’ ’er eyes wuz vlashin’  
vlame ;

“Ef I vollers a man an inch,” she zaid, “may I die  
o’ shame !

“An’ of all the men alive do ’ee thenk ’tes you I  
would choose?

You may thenk et, zure, ef ’ee like, but to me et is  
wunnerful news.”

Zaid I, “My awnly zweet—dawn’t ’ee knaw ’at I  
lov’ ’ee, dear,

Of àll tha girls i’ tha world?” an’ I zidled a bit more  
near.



"Voller a man!" she cried; "I darezay you vancy  
et, now;

But vancy goes a long way, as the girl zaid who  
kiss'd tha cow.

Now dawn't be comin' zo close with your 'sinnivatin'  
zmile;

You hadden' zo much to say when I zat there upo'  
tha stile."

'Twuz kind of mockin' she was, an' I got a li'l bit  
mad;

An' I zays to 'er, "As you plaise—there's plenty  
o' girls to be 'ad."

'Er zays to me, "Marnin'!" zo zly—but 'er loked  
as zweet as a rose—

An' I meant to be kissin' 'er lips, but I awnly could  
get at 'er nose.

Zaid she, "You'm a clumsy ol' vule"; but I answer'd  
'er hotly, "Aw well,

'Tes awnly tha practice I want—you must taich me  
to do et yoursel';

An' when shall tha lessons begin?" But she gi' me  
a zlap o' tha vace,

An' she runs like a vox vrom the 'ounds, an' yoicks;  
but I voller'd i' chase!

In coorse I 'adden a chance, wi' 'er start an' 'er veet  
like tha wind ;

She got to 'er vather's geate an' zlamm'd et zo  
vicious behind.

But I knaw et's as right as can be—'tes awnly tha  
vixing a day ;

You'm always quite zure o' your girl when 'er starts  
to be runnin' away.

## THE OLD WIFE TO THE NEW.

AN' zo you're gwaine to marry, an' et's natteral,  
na doubt;

Ye dawn't know much about et, but ye'll very zune  
vind out.

There's zum thengs I can tellee, just as an auld  
wife shude;

There's zum thengs you must larn, dear, just vor  
your proper gude.

I awnly hope experiance wunt be too heavy paid,  
Vor when all's zed an' done, dear, true wives are  
born, not made.

And wan theng at the startin' I'd have 'ee  
unnerstan',—

The very best o' husbands es nothing but a man.

'E has to be coaxed an' cuddled, an' humoured to  
 'es mind ;

Do what a wants bevore 'im, get what you want  
 behind.

You be the waker vessel,—at laist, bevore 'es  
 zight,

But a wife as knows her business does what she  
 thenks is right.

A man beant like a wumman,—dawnt iver thenk  
 a be ;

There's just a power o' differ'nce, you'll very quickly  
 zee ;

He'll go 'es awn way straightly, he'll ponder and  
 he'll pore,

While a wumman cuts the corner an' gets there  
 long avore.

I wudden have 'ee vule en an' blind en to 'es  
 ill ;

He'll like to thenk he's rulin' azackly to 'es will.

Zo long as 'e thenks 'e's master, dawn't naggel an'  
 dawn't vret ;

Ef you yield to en tha inches, there's many an ell  
 you'll get.

Dawn't talk too much. Wi' a wumman there's often  
too much spoke ;

A man can't unnerstan' et,—'twill do wi' tha wumman-  
voke.

A man takes all zo sayrous, a's terrible matter-o'-  
vact ;

When a wumman's tongue gets waggin', 'er idden  
always azact.

Zumtimes a man be glumpin' and zour tha whole  
day long ;

He down't knaw why whotiver,—most likely 'es  
liver's wrong :

Just lave 'im to himself ; dawn't tease and ax en  
why,

But kape a zivil tongue ; a'll come round by-an'-bye.

Beware o' words an' lukes that can lead 'ee into  
strife :

Be ready to give an' take, vor remember et is vor  
life ;

An' dawn't be too much set on zayin' out your  
zay :

What matter who spakes tha last zo long as you get  
your way ?

He may not zay a lot, but be sure a thenks a  
deal ;

An' a man beant like a wumman for showin' what 'e  
veel.

A may zim chuff and glum an' savage as a bear,  
But a'll givee a word o' love wance in a while, ma  
dear.

An' when tha chillern come,—as zune, plase God,  
they will,—

An' you be doiled an' moiled wi' 'ungry mouths to  
vill,

There'll be a thousan' thengs a pair o' arms must  
do ;

But dawn't vorget your man 'as claims upon 'ee  
too.

There's zorrow comes to us all, an' zum will come  
to thee,

An' zum will be God's doing,—an' zum your awn,  
may be ;

But tha griefs that God'll zend 'ee He'll help 'ee to  
endure :

'T'es tha ills of our awn makin' that be zo hard to  
cure.

But dawntee go to meet your trouble an' grief  
halfway ;

We awnly live by minutes, an' a day is enough vor  
a day.

Zee that your 'usband's clothes be always clane an'  
nate.

An' as often as you can gie'en pudden to 'es mate.

Tidden a heaven upon 'arth, this married life, you'll  
vind,

But et needen' be t'other place zo long as you're  
both of a mind.

I'm trying to advise 'ee as an aulder wumman  
can :—

Dawn't think to marry a zaint when you awnly  
marry a man.

Tha dreams must go, my dear, bevore you get to  
rights.

You wawn't stan' out at the geät together o' vrosty  
nights ;

He wawn't be scratchin' 'es 'ands to gather vlowers  
vor you ;

But there's score o' other thengs that ef 'e's a man  
'e'll do.

An' zo you're gwaine to marry, an' sure I wishee joy ;  
Zims awnly a year agone that you wuz girl an' bwoy.  
I reckon you're come to tha end o' your vancies an'  
    your plays ;  
An' now 'tes tha time vor work :—God blessee vor  
    all your days.



## A FATHER OF TWINS.

**Z**O tha Lord 'ath zent us twins, an' ef us must  
'ave 'em us must ;

But I'd a' takken et kind ef tha Lard 'ad axed us  
fust.

Ef tha Lard 'ad axed us fust, I guess I'd 'ave  
answered flat—

“Wan at a time, ef 'ee plaze, an' none tü many at  
that.”

'T'as kind o' takken us sudden an' jitted us un-  
awares—

More nor us zort o' bargained, vor tha babbies to  
come in pairs.

The neighbours zmile zo cunnin', but us dawn't see  
the joke ;

I'd like to be zendin' back tha babe that wuzn't  
bespoke.

'T'es pity tha babbies beant zent to them as properly  
needs 'em ;

My missis thinks that Him as zends tha mouths 'ill  
veed 'em.

Et mid be that 'E du, but I 'ave zometimes thort,  
Ef et beant tu bold to zay, that 'E keeps 'em un-  
common short.

Ef them as comes unaxed wid bring purvisions wi'  
'em,

An' vitted out wi' clothes, we'd be more plazed to  
zee 'em ;

But 'tes a differ'nt theng, accordin' to my mind,  
When um comes wi'out a stitch, and vittles all  
to vind.

And ther be tü to clothe, and likewise tü to veed,  
An' tü when um be growed to taich to write an' read.  
When tha babes du come in drees tha King du zend  
'em gold ;

But nought be given to them as awnly 'as twins,  
I'm told.

The passen ses to me, " Well, Jan, and beant 'ee  
proud

O' tü such bütivul babes, wi' voices strong an' loud ? "

I scratches my poor 'ead, an' ses, ses I, "Why, zur,  
Ef 'twuzn't for tha pride I'd wish um wuzn't yer.

"The pride wawnt gi' 'em vittles, nor clothe 'em, as  
I zee—

Nor when they both be yalling, the pride wawnt  
comfort me ;

An' when tha holler'n's wustest, an' I du seek to  
lose et

By goin' to tha public, tha pride wawnt mak'ee  
'scuse et."

Er dawnt know much o' babbies, vor tha Lard ain't  
zent un none ;

Er thinks 'em beer an' skittles, but I dawnt zee the  
vun.

Ses 'e, "'Tes a preshus charge, Jan ; an' now I  
thinks of it,

Be sure to bring 'em to church when the missus be  
quite vit."

But then tha tall young Baptiss comes yer a-tarkin'  
tü ;

'Twixt Baptissy an' passen us dawnt knaw what  
to dü ;

Vor the Baptiss man comes roun' to my missis, an'  
ses, ses 'e,  
"Ther beant no use in chris'nin' as iver a zoul  
did zee.

"Wait till the chillern's older—they'm now a deal  
tü small—  
An' then give me tha doin' et, I'll duck 'em aich  
and all."  
An' 'twixt they tü direxions tha missus zims 'clined  
to stick,  
But ses I, "Ef they'm got to be drowned, they  
better be drowned quick."

But then I ses to the missis, "Tha passen be gude  
to we,  
Zo let 'em be chris'n'd now, an' when they'm older  
we'll zee.  
'T'es better to plaize 'em both, ef zo be as us  
can."  
"But Baptiss," ses the missis, "be such a nice  
young man."

Now, passen an' tha Baptiss be vury civil to other,  
An' passen zometimes calls'n "My dear young  
Christen brother."

But zometimes passen 'ints that 'es taichin' beant  
quite trü,  
An' the Baptiss lükes, zo to say, "I'm quite zo  
gude as yü."

Et ain't vor us poar vokes to say who'm right an'  
who ain't.

Vather 'e stuck to the Church, but vather er wuzn't  
a zaint ;

An' mawther wuz zwate on tha Methodies, zo I've  
a-yer'd 'er zay ;

An' 'er wuz tha gudest wumman yü'd zee in a long,  
long day.

I vancies the Church mysel'—not as I often goes,  
Vor I'm sure to vall aslape right under tha passen's  
nose.

'T'es a rare gude place vor slape, an' I beant a  
larned man,

An' tha passen's sarmon I widden persume to  
understan'.

But as vor they blessed twins, I reckon et zims  
to me

They be tü young to know what trü religion be ;  
An' takkin' 'em to passen be the properest thing  
to dü,

But when they be growed, ef 'em like, the Baptiss  
mid duck 'em tü.

## A VILLAGE CELIBATE.

I BEANT a-gwaine to marry, zo dawntee thenk  
I be ;

Ther's zum be made vor marriage, but marryin'  
beant vor me.

The passen he dü tell me I be a "zilly-bait"—

I guess I beant zo zilly as vor to change my ztate.

Et aint no üse, I tellee, to name a power o' names ;

I beant a bwoy no longer, to be takken wi' maygames.

Thee go an' coort thee widder—'er'll givee marriage  
enough ;—

I be tu old a bird to be caught wi' a pinch o' snuff.

Sint Paul, the passen tells uz, 'ad a thorn in 'es vlesh  
vor life,—

Some zay 'twuz this an' t'other—I reckon et wuz 'es  
wife ;

An' what beant gude vor a zaint I know beant gude  
vor me ;

Thee go an' marry thee widder,—I'm better as I be.

An' passen 'e tells o' another gert man to Greace or  
to Rome—

'Tes Sockertes or zummut—'er wuzn't zo gert to  
home ;

'Es words wuz cunning an' zwete, but 'ers wuz zharp  
as a knife,—

'E got zo bald as a badger, a-quarling wi' 'es wife.

Ther's many a theng i' tha warld completely mazes  
me,

But wumman, by my fegs, be tha gertest mystery !  
Thee'll niver get upzides wi' a wumman, I tellee  
trüe ;

'Er'll givee tha first word, an' 'er'll givee tha last  
word tu.

Ther's gude an' bad an' middling—they'm passelled  
out like we—

But a wumman be always a wumman, whatever else  
'er be ;

'Er may be a drabbitted twoad, or 'er may be win-  
zome an' kind,

But a man always lükes at a wumman wi' an eye  
that be partways blind.



Thee go an' marry thee widder, an' I du make na  
doubt

'Er'll twiddle 'ee round 'er thumb avore a week be  
out.

Thee thinks thee's zly as a vox, an' firm as a rock  
thee'll be,—

I guess thee'll find tha widder a zlyer ol' vox than  
thee.

Ef any zingle wumman's a match vor a man an'  
moar,

A widder's a double match, because 'er 'as tried  
avore.

I warrant 'er wits be dapper, an' tha tongue within  
'er 'ead

'Ave 'ad a power o' practice on the poar man that  
be dead.

I reckon that wumman be made to be lüked at a  
long ways off,—

A gude bit o' mayte to tha eye, but to ate it thee'll  
vind'n tough.

I likes mun well enough as a purty picter to zee,  
But I midden go tu near, an' tha picter's enough  
vor me.

Ther's this yer widder o' thine, wi 'er lackadaisy eye  
 A-lükin' round tha cornder like a duck that be  
     gwaine to die,—

'Er mid be gude to luke at—I dawnt a-zay 'er  
     beant—

But what ef 'er 'air be valse, lad, an' what ef 'er skin  
     be paint?

Ther beant a wumman alive what knaws 'er awn  
     mind a day—

Ther beant a wumman alive but'll manage tu 'ave  
     'er way ;

A man mid be tha better ef et come to clouts an'  
     jits,<sup>1</sup>

But show me tha living man that can better a  
     wumman's wits.

What a wumman liketh wan day mayhap 'er'll hate  
     tha next,

An' when thee thinks to plaze 'er more likely 'er'll  
     be vexed.

An' iverything thee du, lad, an' iverything thee zay  
 Be just tha wrong azackly, an' then tha dowl's to  
     pay.

<sup>1</sup> Blows.

Hast watched a cat an' a dawg—I dawnt mean them  
as fights,

But them as is best o' vrends?—'Twid put thee  
notions to rights.

They mid be tha gertest o' vrends, but zometimes  
tha cat comes nigh

An' takking tha dawg unawares, 'er'll giv'n a sclum  
i' tha eye.

Wan moment 'er's playsome an' kind—next minnit  
as vicious can be—

An' tha dawg dawnt know 'ow to take 'er,—'e niver  
can get awver she.

I warrant 'er's like a wumman, an' tha dawg be liker  
a man,

An' a cat an' a wumman be things that us niver can  
understan'.

Dawnt think I means to vex 'ee—I'm awnly spaking  
my mind,

An' I beant a-zaying that marriage beant gude for  
yumman-kind.

Thee go an' marry thee widder, and 'appy mid thee  
be,—

But I beant made vor marriage an' marrying beant  
vor me.

“COMPLICATIONS.”

**D**AWN'T 'ee give nought to 'er, doctor—'er's  
 well as a wumman can be;  
 Yu niver knew a missis wi' half the ailments o' she.  
 'Er's always sniffing o' zummut—one day it be  
 palpitations;  
 'T'es all me eye, I be zartain,—'er ses it be com-  
 plications.

I used to be terrabul scared, and running to vetch  
 'ee o' nights;  
 I thort 'er wus dying for sure, an' it giv me no end  
 o' affrights.  
 'Er'd wakken me out o' me slape to gi' me a word  
 o' goodbye—  
 But blessee, 'er's dapper as iver—'er's niver the  
 wumman to die.

'Tis wunnerful how 'er thrives, an' et just gets  
awver me ;

Tha wusser tha complications, tha more delighted  
'er be.

'Er vancies 'erself a deal, an' 'er's just chuckvull o'  
pride

To be tha most suffering zoul in all tha country-  
zide.

I yümmers 'er to 'er will, vor sake o' a quiet life.

Zo long as 'er's downright bad 'er's a cabbical zort  
o' wife ;

But my dear sawl! ef I ses "You'm lukiing better  
to-day,"

'Er's rough as a badger to-wance, and then ther's  
the divel to pay.

When 'er an' tha gossipy vokes gets cacklin' aroun'  
tha door,

A-boastin' of all the disaises yu iver 'ave yer'd of an  
more—

They chitters 'till all is blue, yu'd thenk they niver  
wid stop—

An' though I ses it as shudden, ma wife comes out  
on top.

Wi' proper powerful words ('er gets um oût of a buke),

Er makes um zour as a crab to find umselves o'ertuke.

Aw fegs, 'er's a wunnerful zoul; an' et makes um ready to cuss,

For whatever they'm got tha matter, my missis 'ave got et wuss.

'T'es tha power o' tha gab, zo I ses, as makes 'er get awver um zo;

But then 'er gets 'agging at me, an' I finds et is best to lie low.

Zo I leaves um to fix et umselves; but I'm proud in me way, zo I be,

When none o' um knaws how to brag of such terrabul ailments as she.

Zome days the minister comes, to twiddle 'es vingers an' zay

"Tha top o' tha marnin', an' be-'ee a *leetle* better tu-day?"

Ses she, "I'm middlin' bad"; ses 'e "'T'es a dis-pensation."

Ses she, "O' coorse ye knaws best, zur—I thort 'twuz a complication."

Ses 'e, "These things be zent to mind us o' our  
end—

To 'monish us o' sins an' taich us how to  
mend."

Ses I, "I s'pose er's wusser than us be, an' that's  
why

'Er gets these complications—'er needs 'um more,"  
ses I.

'Er wuzn't zo plaised at that, an' 'er tried to prüve  
to me,

Ef sufferin' went by merit, I'd suffer more than  
she.

I chuckled, and minister sed 'er 'adn't quite under-  
stude'n;

But 'er got upzides wi' un later, in sarvin' out tha  
pudden.

'E's powerful at tha vittels, and consequent, dawntee  
zee,

'E honeys to tha missis more than 'e does to me.

'Er's fine at viggy puddens — 'er's gert at jun-  
kets tü;

Ef 'twuzn't for the wummin, what wid tha passens  
dü?

Come in an' zee tha missus, an' ax 'er what's tha  
cheer ;  
I've got zum prime nü zider, zum lickin' gude ol'  
beer,  
An' a crumb of burd an' cheese 'ill du'ee gude  
inzide,  
While missis be gettin' dinner, ef so be as ye'll  
bide.

'Er'll tell'ee a stramming tale o' sorrows an' aches  
an' ills ;  
Just yümmer 'er down to tha groun'—but dawn't be  
givin' 'er pills ;  
Though I reckon it mid' be as well to colour some  
watter, an' zay,  
“ When tha 'gestion and liver be bad, just swaller tü  
spünevulls a-day.”



## A VILLAGE SPINSTER.

**B**LESSEE, cheel, I didden want to, I wuz better  
as I be ;

Marriages be made to heaven, but ther's none wuz  
made vur me.

Them as dües tha marriage bizniss thort et best to  
lave me out,

'Cause ther wuz no application sütable vur me, na  
doubt.

Not a man wuz waitin' 'andy süted to my special  
zort ;

I required pertickler traytement an' a power o' care-  
ful thort.

Men be vüles, ther's no denying—tes as well to be  
exact,

An' a vüle I might 'ave borne with, ef er'd recog-  
nised the vact ;

I'd 'ave holp to beer 'es burden, 'cording to tha  
 Scriptor tex,  
 Ef 'e'd awnly veel compleately that 'e wuz tha weaker  
 sex.

But tha men, they be sich gawkims—they'm as  
 blind as blind can be  
 To um's awn infarior merit, an' our better qualitee.

'Twuzn't likely I'd be willing 'thout a struggle long  
 an' 'ard,  
 To be awnin' any mortal vur my maister an' my lard.

Ther'd a-bin a dale o' quarlin', I wid 'ave 'ee under-  
 stan'—  
 An' tes likely that tha wumman wid 'a prüved tha  
 better man.

I wuz niver sich a gladdie as so many maidens be,  
 Paying vur tha joys o' coortship with a life o'  
 slavery.

Zo 'twuz right I shüdden marry—lükee-zee, I'm  
 sure 'twuz best—  
 Vur tha proper man weren't ready, an' I widden  
 tak tha rest.

I be difficul' to manage, an' I wished a better fate  
Than to men' an' 'usband's breeches an' be fakin'-  
up 'es mayte.

What an 'usband wants azackly be a sarvint as can  
cūke,  
Whu can vill 'es mouth wi' vittels when 'e 'as an  
'ungry lūke ;

When er's glowrin' an' er's glumpin', take a long  
loblolly spūne—  
Chuck'n vull o' mayte an' tatties—er'll be mild as  
butter sūne.

'T'es a differ'nt thing wi' wumman. Man be of a  
brütish mind ;  
When er's empty chuff an' zour, when er's vull er's  
zoft an' kind.

Wait a bit, an' when you'm married yu'll agree I  
spake tha trüth ;  
Yu be vull o' vulish vancies that be natteral to  
youth.

Zo yu thenk I 'as a story buried in my 'art away—  
somethin' zwete and zentimental from my gallivant-  
ing day ;

Yu expects to see me tremmil an' a tear come to  
 my eye  
 Wi' a power o' recollection—blessee, cheel, there  
 beant a zigh!

Didden some despairin' mortal go away across the  
 zea,  
 An' be niver yer'd of after, all because o' love  
 vur me?

Didden some poar dotty lover marry some-un else  
 i' spite?  
 No, er didden—no sich lover iver come avore mi  
 sight.

An' I niver zed a *no*, cheel, when I 'tended zayin  
 'ess;  
 You've a-got thease zilly notions somewher out o  
 bükes, I guess.

I'm an ol' maid born, they tells me, an' I reckon  
 , zo I be,  
 Vor I niver zought tha men-voke an' they niver  
 voller'd me.

Be um cürates, sodgers, sailors, or tha men-voke  
to tha varm,

I wuz niver tüke wi' breeches, an' I niver come tu  
harm ;

An' I didden want to marry 'less tha right man  
came my way,

An' 'e niver came whativer, an' I'm zingle to this  
day.

'E'd a-bin a vüle, vur sartin, but I might a' come  
to chüse'n

Ef er'd awn'd to 'es zhortcomin's an' 'ad axed me  
to excüse'n.

Blessee, cheel, et didden matter ; I've bin better  
as I be.

Marriages be made to heaven. Thank tha Lard,  
ther's none vor me !

## TACKLING THE CURATE.

[Many of the cottagers in Devon and Cornwall are Methodists, or Bryanites, or Plymouth Brethren.]

YÜ'M a vury nice young man, as they make  
young men to-day—

I've nothen to say against 'ee, in whotsomever way ;  
But this be what I dü say, and I dü mean et weel—  
Thee knaws no moar o' religion than any nü-born  
cheel.

'Taint given to tha larned, but to them o' little wit,—  
I dawnt say that's a reason thee shudden knaw a  
bit ;

'Taint given to eddication and colleges and sküles—  
'Tes given to tha simple—and yet us be no füles.

Yü'm quite a decent napper—I dawnt mean no  
offence—

But what be trü religion to men o' warldly sense ?

Tha Bishop 'ath a-larned 'ee, and says that thee  
will dü,  
But tha Bishop 'issel' is a reed that's broken dru  
and dru.

Yu be all in tha bonds o' darkness, and Satan 'olds  
'ee tight ;  
'Tes awnly given to few, lad, to read tha message  
aright.  
I'm auld enough vor thee muther, and thee midden  
think to see  
Me settin' at thy feet, lad, to larn religion o' thee.

And zo thee be a passen—or düee call et priest ?  
Whatever thee du call et dawnt sinnify i' tha least ;  
And if 'ee reads tha Bible thee'lt vury quickly zee  
All Christen vokes be priests, lad, as much and  
more'n thee.

Tes thee, as I du yer, with a' thy new-come ways,  
'Ath turned old passen's 'ead, and set tha church  
in a maze.  
Though church be naught to me, as reckons it's  
none o' it right,  
I beant 'alf-pleased to see un i' sich a terrubal plight.

I went to church mysel' when my poor eyes were  
sealed ;  
And though I left tha dark when light 'ad been  
revealed,  
I feels a kindness still—after tha flesh, thee must  
know,  
Vor tha pleasant darksome ways I walked in long  
ago.

But naw tha church be changed, and thee be part  
to blame ;  
'T'es gone fro' bad to wurse—and dawntee feel no  
shame ?  
Tha fiddlin' chaps be gone, the flutes, the stram-  
ming bass,  
And now yü'm got a passel o' sniggerin' bwoys i'  
their place.

Thee calls et a surplus choir, and na doubt thee  
thinks et fine  
Vor tha little thieves in their bed-goons to zing tha  
praise divine.  
I knaw tha little rascals, an' hear tha vokes' com-  
plaints—  
Et takes a deal o' whitewash to turn 'em into saints.



Et idden tha bwoys I blame—they dü as they be  
taught ;

But surely thee an' tha passen know better—at  
least, ye ought.

Idden et terrabul sad?—'tes terrabul wicked to me,  
Laying tha Bishop's 'ands on bwoys as bad as  
can be.

Mysteries deeper far than can ever be fathomed by  
man—

Düee think that tha rosy-cheeked bwoys can properly  
unnerstan' ?

O man, may God forgive 'ee! Thee'rt doing a  
terrabul thing,

An' I widden stan' i' your shoon vor tha treasury  
o' tha king.

Now dawnt be goin' away zo niffed as a body  
mid be ;

Thee likes 'em to come to confession, an' I been  
confessin' to thee ;

An' ef what I've been an' said 'ave properly driv'n  
'ee mad,

Thee be a priest now, beant 'ee?—zo give me a  
penance, me lad.

I be a chitterin' soul, and I likes to 'ave my say ;  
 Thee canst cackle thee full in pü'pit o' Sabbath day.  
 I'm auld enough vor thee muther, and sure I'm  
     proud as can be  
 To 'ave a real live passen zittin' an' listenin' tu me.

Wance in a way 'tes gude tu 'ear a body's mind,  
 An ef thee'rt much o' a man, thee wissent take et  
     unkind.

Yü'm a vury nice young man, as they makes young  
     men tu-day—

I likes 'ee well as a lad—but not as a passen, no  
     fey!

## THE STORY OF ST PIRAN.

A CORNISH TRADITION.

'TIS the legend of old Perranzabuloe,  
 On the Cornish coast where the sand-storms  
 blow.

In those good times of myth and of dream,  
 Of giant and pixy and Cornish cream,

The beautiful Duchy, I'm much afraid,  
 Had not many saints that were quite home-made.

St Piran himself, of blessed fame,  
 Sure 'twas from County Cork he came.

He lived in a time when the Irish folk  
 Thought breaking of heads was a capital joke.

Now Piran hadn't a word to say  
 'Gainst breaking a head in a casual way ;

But at last things grew to a pass so bad  
That he cried, "Be aisy now—stop it, bedad!"

Said they, "Begorra, an' what are ye sayin'?—  
Och, but a saint should be afther his prayin'.

But sure if it's marthyrdom ye would be at,  
We are the bhoys to obleege ye in that."

So they tied the saint to a millstone strong;  
To the top of a hill they dragged him along.

"Ye'll be wishing bad luck to the dhrop," said they;  
"Go on wid your praichin' now—out in the say."

They rolled the stone over the cliff so steep,  
Down where the waters were cruel and deep;

But as soon as it touched on the top of the sea  
It steadied and floated as nice as could be.

Said Piran, "I'm shaking your dust from me shoes"  
(Though never a shoe did the good man use).

“It’s demaning to spake to sich blackguards,” he  
said ;  
So he turned to a drop of the crayter instead.

(For he’d wisely concealed in a fold of his vest  
A choice little flask of the Irish best.)

“And sure ’tis to Cornwall I’m going to-day,  
And wanting a something for sich a long way.”

Now when the crowd saw that the saint wasn’t  
drowned,  
But sailed on the millstone quite happy and sound,  
Said they, “’Tis the howly man floats on a stone,”  
And were straightway converted with many a groan.

But Piran sailed on till he came to that bay  
Where the sand-heaps are drifting about to this day.

And with such little Latin as Piran did know  
He said, “This is *Piran-in-sabulo*.”

He got off his millstone and murmured a grace ;  
And “arrah,” he said, “’tis an illigant place.

A little too much o' the sand, maybe,  
And a little too much o' the wet," said he.

"'Tis murther thrying to find one's way ;  
I'm almost wishing I'd stopped at say."

And so he walked and wandered and ran,  
Till he came to a hermit Cornishman.

He wished him most kindly the top of the day :  
"Troth, I'm St Piran from over the way.

You're a dacent bhoy," said the saint most sweetly,  
"And a howly man," he added discreetly.

"I'm only axing a sup and a bite,  
And a shake of straw for me bed the night."

So the pair of saints hobnobbed together,  
And grumbled a bit at the Cornish weather.

Said Piran, "I've something to kape out the wet ;  
'Tis a dhrop of the Oirish best, me pet."

But the Cornish saint looked a little awry  
Out of the corner of his eye ;

So he added, afraid of a wrong solution,  
“ I’m ordered a dhrop for me constitution ;

’Tis not as a biverage, sure, that I take,  
But arrah, me health is so mortal wake.”

The Cornishman coughed, and then murmured,  
“ Aw well,  
I reckon I’ll try just a li’l bit mysel’,

For I get the rheumatic so terrible bad ;”  
Said Piran, “ Rheumatic’s the divel, me lad !”

They swallowed in turns, so that by-and-bye  
The neat little flagon was quite drained dry.

The saint held it lovingly up to his lip ;  
“ Bad cess to it thin, but I’ve had the last dhrip.

“ Niver mind, me riverend friend,” he said,  
“ It’s me that knows how the crayter is made.”

They piled the stones that lay within reach,  
And gathered the driftwood from off the beach ;

And Piran said, " If the powers be willin',  
We'll do a nate little bit o' distillin'."

The fire was lit and the barley was brought,  
And St Piran did all that he had been taught.

But lo and behold, when the stones grew hot  
A stream of white metal ran out on the spot.

Cried Piran, " By all the powers, Amin !  
Bedad if we haven't discovered Tin !

" Whirrish and whirroo ! me riverend brother,  
How one good thing may lead to another !"

And that is why Piran, the truth to say,  
Is the miners' saint to this very day.



## THE OLD SEXTON.

**W**HY, 'ess, I be the saxton, but uz doan't  
 want tha kay;  
 Uz lave tha chu'ch-doar awpen the hull o' a  
 zummer's day,  
 An' I can teake 'ee round as well as tha passen do;  
 'T'es zort o' bone o' my bone,—I knows un droo  
 an droo.

I know tha graves that reache fro' tha poorch-way  
 to tha geate,  
 'Cept zum o' the older voke az come avore my  
 deate,  
 Or yer an' there a babby, too young to 'ave a  
 neame,  
 That tha passen buried Christen i' spite o' tha  
 mother's sheame.

In coorse I knaws about 'en, vor I buried 'em all  
mysel',  
An' I knaw wan theng vor zartin—they be all o'm  
buried well ;  
An' zum 'ave blocks above 'em, an' zum 'ave grass  
to their bones,  
But 'twill teake a power o' raisin' to loosen tha  
grass or the stwones.

Tha faith as can move a mountain, as passen do  
zumtimes zay,  
Ill raise 'em up quite aisy upon tha proper day ;  
An' zo I showls upon 'em and rams 'em down'ard  
hard,  
But 'taint tha like o' my speade as 'ill sarcumwent  
tha Lard.

I'm like to be yer mysel' avore many a year 'ave  
passed,  
An' I'll go to rest wi' ma work, as is vittin' at tha  
last.  
There's wan theng I wud like avore I drops ma  
speade—  
I'd like to dig my awn grave and knaw 'at it's  
proper meade.

Will 'ee come i'side tha chu'ch? They zay 'tis  
a No'man door,  
An' tha vont within 'ave stude vor a thousan' year  
an' more ;  
I veels a kin' o' love vor't,—I wuz kirsen'd in't, 'tis  
true,—  
But I think ef I wuz passen I'd like to 'ave some-  
thing new.

But passen wun't be twold, an' all ma words be  
weaste ;  
'Tis a pity, zims to me, 'e 'assen't a better teaste,  
Tho' it ain't vor me to tell'n what a shude 'a  
larned at school,  
An' I reckon that a thenks I be awnly a gert ol'  
vule.

There's zum dawn't thenk a dale o' passen, vor you  
zee  
'Es zarmons be as zimple an' natteral as can be.  
Et mazes us completely that a larned college man  
Shude speake a common lang'age that uz all can  
unnerstan'.

What be tha use of larnin', of Latin, an' of  
 Greake,  
 Ef a speakes to uz azackly as we oursels do  
 speake?  
 'T'es a tidy livin', too, — but passen's mode of  
 speache  
 Do bring 'es sacred teachin's too much within our  
 reache.

A speakes to uz too hwomely, a dawn't get out o'  
 zight,  
 Which, 'cordin' to our notions, ain't riverent or  
 right.  
 A's a good man whatsomiver, but vor knawin' what  
 a do zay  
 Uz might as well be list'nin' to tha Methodies awver  
 tha way.

I dawn't speake ill about 'em, or of how they  
 wuships there ;  
 Boäth mysel' an' passen do always speake 'em vair.  
 Let aich man zay 'es prayers whatever way a  
 please ;  
 But they chop an' change tha Scriptor as tho' 'twuz  
 bread an' cheease.

Et may be that they draws a vew more voke than  
we,

But they chiefly get tha drash, uz gets tha  
qualitee ;

An' sure tha gerter tha zin, they zay, tha gerter tha  
greace :

My zins be awnly sech as they thenk be common-  
pleace.

They'd mak' me veel quite zmall an' shamed to be  
no wuss ;

'Taint awver sech as me that their Lard 'ud mak' a  
vuss.

I'm quite a 'spectable man,—leastwise, I've tried  
to be,—

An' o' coorse there ain't no glory to be got o'  
savin' me.

Our passen teaches us to be honest as can be ;

They zay a teaches warks, an' warks be devilry.

'Tes vaith an' vaith an' vaith—all warks be just  
decaivin' ;

Nawthen' to do at all but awnly just belainin'.

An' they 'ollers to tha Lard as tho' A lived next  
door ;

Ef they want a theng pertikler they shouts an'  
'ollers tha more.

My notion o' tha Lard, ef you've anytheng to  
tell,

Es to speake to Un as riv'rent as tho' 'twuz tha  
king 'issel'.

An' passen i' tha prayers is as riverent as can  
be—

'T'es awnly i' tha pu'pit that a speakes zo or'nary ;  
But I dawn't listen much—'tain't properly wu'th  
tha while

When not a word a zays wud puzzle a zimple  
chile.

A thank 'ee kindly, zir, an' I've twold 'ee all that I  
can ;

Not much o' tha 'tiquities, p'raps, which I niver can  
unnerstan',

But passen 'ill tellee more, an' a lives just awver  
, tha way ;

You'll vind en a dacent man vor all that I do zay.

## JILTED.

**D**AWNT take on so, mawther,  
 An' spake such ill o' she ;  
 'Er had 'ersel' tü yümmer—  
 An' 'er didden vancy me.

Zit still and dawnt zay nawthen.  
 My droat is 'ard an' dry ;  
 I'm gwaine to bear et man-like—  
 'Tes babbyish to cry.

I beant agwaine to cry now—  
 Et mid be well I cüde ;  
 A-sniv'lin' and a-snulin'  
 Mid du a power o' güde.

Dawnt take on so, mawther,—  
 An' dawntee go to think  
 'At I shall drawn ma trouble  
 In tosticatin' drink.

Düee remember, mawther—  
 I call-it 'ome full weel—  
 When 'er wuz but a maidie  
 An' I wuz but a cheel ?

Wance when I 'ad an apple  
 I bargained vor a kiss,—  
 "Wan purty leetle kiss now,  
 An' then I'll givee this."

'Er 'eld 'er rosy lips up ;  
 I kissed um wance an' twice ;  
 I zed, "'Taint worth tha apple—  
 "Tes awnly rather nice."

O' course I kep ma bargain,  
 But ded'n like et weel ;  
 I awnly wuz a napper,  
 An' 'er wuz but a cheel.



A bwoy liked apples better,  
An' 'twuzn't no disgrace ;  
But now I'd give a fortin  
To kiss that rosy vace.

No fey, us ded'n trouble  
To play wi' maidens then ;  
They awnly cude be wimmen,  
An' uz wuz proper men.

Dawnt take on zo, mawther,  
An' spake such ill o' she  
That, now 'er be a wumman,  
Wawnt come an' play wi' me.

I'm gwaine to bear et man-like—  
Leastwise, I'm gwaine to try.  
Dawnt ask me to vorget 'er,  
Not yet a bit,—by'm-bye.

Yet when I wuz a napper  
'Er gave what now I miss,—  
An' acres vull o' apples  
Wunt buy vrom 'er wan kiss.

'Er awnly wuz a maidie,  
An' I wuz but a bwoy ;  
An' what I ded'n care vor  
Zims now a world o' joy.

Zit still an' dawnt zay nawthen.  
An' mawther, dawntee cry ;  
Et makes me choke to yer 'ee ;—  
I'll talk a bit—by'm-bye.





## CHILDLESS.

**D**AWNT'EE be comin' an' tellin' me tales o' 'em,  
 Wonderfu' tales o' 'em, there's a dear sawl.  
 Sure, 'tis too often I cry vor tha lack o' 'em,  
 I that have niver a childie at all ;—  
 Often I cry vor 'em, often I pray vor 'em,  
 I that have niver a childie at all.

Niver a child vor tha trouble an' joy o' me—  
 Niver a child, o' tha thousands I zee ;  
 Niver a child i' tha next warld to run to me,—  
 Dawnt'ee be tellin' o' chillern to me !  
 God 'ill vorgive me vor frettin' an' wonderin'  
 Why He has trusted na chillern to me.

See, i' tha corner there—dawnt'ee be tellin' it—

Wee little clothes that have niver been worn ;  
Socks that I knitted wi' hands that had love in 'em,  
Sweet little gowns vor tha child to be born.  
Dawnt'ee be tellin' it !—often I'm huggin' 'em,  
Clothes of tha child that has niver been born.

Often I sit i' tha dimmits and dream of 'im,

Talk to 'im, sing to 'im, rock 'im to rest ;  
Coaxin' mysel' till I vancy tha feel of 'im—  
Dear little hands of 'im pressin' my breast ;  
Mockin' mysel' wi' tha softness and warmth of 'im,  
Dear little lips of 'im, pressing my breast.

Sometimes I vancy small feet that are patterin',

Lips sayin' "Mother,"—small hands at my knees ;  
Then I awake vrom tha maze of my foolishness,  
Hearin' tha wind as it cries through tha trees,—  
Just like tha wail of a babe that is motherless,—  
Awnly tha wind as it cries i' tha trees.

## A FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE.

**W**HEN all the house be still as death,  
 And I lie wakin',  
 There comes a rattlin' at the door,  
 A vanced step upo' the floor ;  
 I lie an' scarce can draw my breath,  
 Wakin', wakin'.

Es et the ghosts, that come an' go  
 When voke es zleepin',  
 Of those who toiled an' zorrowed here  
 Long zince? or es et you, ma dear,  
 Come home to me?—I do not know—  
 Weepin', weepin'.

Zumtimes I watch upo' the shore  
 The boats come home'ard.  
 I count 'em as they come to view :  
 O God, there's always wan too few!—  
 Wan boat that cometh nivermore  
 Home'ard, home'ard.

I veel zo lonzome dru the day,  
    Zo weary waitin' ;  
But night-times i' my little room,  
There i' the zilence an' the gloom  
You dawn't zim quite zo far away,  
    Waitin', waitin'.

When all the house es dumb an' drear,  
    And I lie wakin',  
Es et a callin' o' the sea,  
Or es et you that calls to me?—  
The door is on the latch, ma dear,  
    And I lie wakin'.



## A WIDOW'S MITE.

I 'AD awnly wan li'l bwoy,  
 An' 'es vather wuz dead.  
 Aw, ma dear sawl—tha cheel  
 Wi' 'es touzled head!

'Tweren't much that I cude du ;  
 But me 'eart wuz glad  
 To toil tha long day dru  
 Vor ma li'l lad.

I 'ad awnly wan thing left—  
 Ma barefoot bwoy ;  
 He 'ad a thousand things  
 To give 'im joy :

Tha sea, tha weeds an' shells,  
An' tha boats a-fishin' ;  
An' still to be a man  
Tha cheel wuz wishin'.

Wan day they brought 'im 'ome—  
Wet touzled 'ead!—  
An' they never spake a word—  
An' tha bwoy wuz dead.

Dawn't talk to me, ma dear,  
But let me be.  
I can hear my laddie call  
In tha cry o' tha sea.

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