

sufficiently caustic to erode anything less obdurate than granite.

Where severe cuts and kindred accidents are of frequent occurrence, as in the mining districts, a speedy method of stanching the flow of blood was "a consummation devoutly to be wished." Hence these charms:—

The wound being bound up the patient was turned with his face to the East. Then the charmer took his or her position behind the patient and with both hands held palm downwards, and the index fingers flexed upon the ball of the thumb, repeated these words:—

"Sanguis mane in te,  
Sicut Christus fuit in se;  
Sanguis mane in tuâ venâ,  
Sicut Christus in suâ penâ;  
Sanguis mane fixus.  
Sicut Christus quando crucifixus."

It is easily to be imagined what a jargon this would become in the mouths of ignorant country people, but it would be none the less impressive on that account.

A more common incantation was the ensuing:

Christ was born in Bethlehem,  
Baptized in the river Jordan;  
There He digg'd a well,  
And turn'd the water against the hill;  
So shall thy blood stand still.

A very curious charm was used for the cure of paralysis, rheumatism, sciatica and similar diseases. The afflicted person took his station in the church porch at the close of the Sunday morning service, penny after penny would be dropped into his open hand by the passers-by, for each of the congregation knew for what purpose the mendicant was there. Not a word would be uttered by the recipient of the doles until the parson came. Then, rising and making the sign of the cross, the sick person would beg the parson to give a piece of silver for the copper coins: this was readily done. This exchange made, the recipient proceeded up the church to the altar rails; the communion table having been removed from the wall, he would walk round it three times, repeating in a loud voice the Credo. Then exclaiming: "Now my silver piece must be made into a ring and in three weeks shall I be whole, blessed be God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," he would depart, firmly persuaded that a cure would be wrought.

Another charm of great repute for the cure of rheumatism was the crawling under a bramble, which had taken root a

second time in the ground; and being afterwards stepped upon by a woman, whose last child had been a breach presentation. We have ourselves seen one of these charm-brambles beneath which a deep furrow had been worn by frequent creepings.

The charms for tooth-ache were as many as are the modern advertized "certain cures." They almost invariably take the form of verse. Certain conditions have to be complied with, or the incantation is powerless. *Ab uno disce omnes*: "Fast a whole day: at sunrise repeat, with the face to the East, these lines:

"Christ pass'd by His brother's door,  
Saw His brother on the floor,  
What aileth thee, brother?  
Pain in the teeth?  
Thy teeth shall pain thee no more."  
In the name, etc.

Whooping-cough could be cured in ways galore. The following is one of the most singular charms:

The child was to be completely naked. It was to be passed three times three over the back of an ass, which had recently had young and three times three under the belly. Nine hairs from the back, nine from the tail and nine from the belly were to be taken. Three spoonfuls of milk were to be drawn from the teats, and the hairs to be steeped in this for seven hours. On three successive mornings the child was to have a little of this potion.

The only explanation we could ever get of this charm was, that, as Christ had ridden on an ass, no child who had sat where He had sat could cough any more.

For strumous children the ash tree charm was infallible. This charm is confined to no given district, but is widely believed in. M. Thoms has given a most interesting and valuable account in the *Athenæum*, Sept., 1846, of the antiquity and extent of this superstition.

The method of working the charm varies considerably, however, not only in different counties, but in different districts of the same county, one plan was to bore with a red-hot auger a hole in the bole of a young ash tree; into this hole a live shew-mouse, freshly caught, was put, and the hole closed with an ashen plug. As the miserable mouse slowly died the child would gain strength.

Another method was the following: A young ash being chosen, a vertical slit was made in the trunk by a knife, which had been exposed to the rays of the newly-