

was an universal eating of fat geese; and nobody that I ever heard of complained of the injunction. Queen Elizabeth was eating her goose at the time that the news of the defeat of the Spanish Armada was brought to her, and no doubt she thought the Spaniards great and very green geese for having come there, and that they would be much greater if ever they came there again. Ever after, Queen Bess most assiduously ate her goose at Michaelmas, and, probably, with Spanish chesnuts, as people on the continent do now; or, if she did not, she would not have repented it if she had, for it is a princely addition. Queen Bess ate her goose all the more assiduously because it was an old saying that, if you ate your goose at Michaelmas, you would have plenty of money all the year round,—a prescription that, if its efficacy were at all proportioned to its agreeableness, people would be geese, indeed, not to comply with. How, indeed, could any one desire a pleasanter way of replenishing a purse? Queen Bess was always dreadfully in want of money; and as this came to be seen, and not the less to be felt by those who had the taxes to pay, and as no more Armadas came to be defeated, people lost all faith in eating roasts' goose, except the comfortable faith that Robert Southey had, when he addressed one in a sonnet, and asking the goose where it could have been so bravely fed, and, receiving no answer, added himself:—

‘But this I know, that thou art very fine,
Season'd with sage, with onions, and port wine.’

“Jolly times, then, it is clear, there have been at Michaelmas. Into these, except in the City of London, there has been made a dreadful inroad by the Municipal Reform Act, which forbade all eating of Michaelmas goose in a corporate capacity. Driven out of convents and corporations, yet I imagine roast goose at Michaelmas finds a welcome reception in many a farm, gentlemen's and other private houses. Roast pigs no longer run about with oranges in their mouths, crying, ‘Come eat me!’ but stubble geese really do seem to meet you at every turn, and cackle out invitingly that pathetic request. * * * *

“But I fear me much that there are many houses where this portly visitor finds the door too narrow to get in. Some way, Catholicism having so long gone out of fashion in England, we have forgotten many of its sensible customs. Michaelmas has ceased to be anything of a holiday, except to landlords. A holiday! mercy on us! why it is a rent-day! All might lighten their purses, but that is a

process with thousands which does not lighten the heart. It is quarter-day:—

At length this jolly time begins
‘Come neighbors, we must wag.’
The money chinks, down drops their chins,
Each lugging out his bag.”

We may just add that the festival of St. Michael and all angels was instituted in the year 487, to commemorate the ministry of these holy angels, the messengers of *good will towards men*.

It is at this period, in many parts of England, when the old or off-going tenants give up possession of their farms, and the new or in-coming tenants enter; though the custom in some places is to take possession at Lady-day; while elsewhere it is usual to enter upon new farms at mid-April, May-day or even at Whitsuntide. Tusser, in his *September's Husbandry*, observes:—

“At Michaelmas lightly new farmers come in,
New husbandry forceth him now to begin;
Old farmers still taking the time to him given,
Makes August to last until Michaelmas even.

“New farmers may enter (as champions say)
On all that is fallow at Lent Lady-day;
In woodland old farmer to that will not yield,
For losing his pasture and feed of his field.”

In this month hops are gathered and cured for malt etc. This forms an important portion of the husbandry of a few of the southern counties of England, and in Canada the cultivation of hops is gradually extending. The hop is a climbing plant, having long, strong roots and growing on poles to the height of fourteen or eighteen feet, according to the condition of the soil and the character of the season. The fruit consists of scaly seed-vessels of the female plants, and is gathered principally by women and children—the poles on which the vines grow being pulled up, and taken to large baskets or boxes constructed for the purpose. After the hops are gathered, or “picked,” as it is commonly termed, they are taken to a building fitted up with grates and a hair-cloth for spreading them on, to be dried, and, when cooled, they are tightly packed in larger boxes or bales ready for market. This crop is perhaps the most precarious and uncertain of any within the range of field culture. Blights, arising from various causes, often injure the quality and diminish the quantity of this crop, and sometimes wholly frustrate the hope of the cultivator, and, in a few days, desolate the most promising plantations. No certain remedy has yet been found for these evils—high cultivation and manuring sometimes only tend to increase them, when they result from insect