

NOTES

NOTE A.—MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

MOST of the old marriage customs of Scotland have died out. The pay-wedding, admirably described in *The Annals of the Parish*, survives in the West only among the colliers. It is not considered a reputable ceremony: it is rarely, if ever, countenanced by the decent agricultural labourer; and, like "the creeling," lingers only because of the occasion it gives for an exceeding jollity. The manner of "the creeling" (in its present modified form) is this:—When the bridegroom goes down the pit on the day after the wedding, he is partially stripped, and "hurled" in one of the hutches, or coal-buggies: unless, indeed, he compounds by a liberal furnishing of strong drink.

The "green-garter" is still worn at weddings by the elder unmarried sisters of the bride, who had to dance in their stocking-soles, as have, to this day in Ayrshire, the elder bachelor brothers of the bridegroom. When all the sons of a family have been married save the youngest, Kyle folk will say to him, "Ha, lad! ye're the pickle next the wind noo!"—that is, "You are now the only ear left on the family stalk," *pickle* here being the *tap-pickle* of Burns.

In some remote corners of the country, the custom of washing the bride's feet (the feet-washing in the case of the bridegroom is quite common) held until recently. The manner of it closely resembled the description in *The Entail* (Chapter xxviii.), the only difference being that salt was mingled with the hot water, which seems to point to the idea of purification in the rite. Another gathering previous to the wedding was "the Bookin'," on the night on which the names of the