

moved, and a hole dug in the opening, which was filled with small wood. In the meanwhile the fowl's toilette had been made : this consisted simply in removing the entrails, and rolling it, feathers and all, in a paste of clay. This done it was laid on the sticks, arranged so as to burn easily, and the piece of grass laid over all as a lid."

This method of cooking, which will probably be new to all our readers, has many merits ; for not only does it impart a delicious flavor to the meat, but it has the charm of concealing the culinary preparations,—a very valuable quality in Gipsy life. In this very case it proved so. The farmer from whom the fowl had been stolen, came up in a rage, while the cooking was in process, to inspect the camp. He walked two or three times over the spot where the animal was secretly baking, without discovering its presence. Our traveller was puzzled, as probably our readers are, as to the mode of disposing of the feathers. The clay was broken with a hammer, the feathers came off themselves, and the dainty was served up on a wooden dish.

The English Gipsies, like their brethren all over the world, have no definite religion. They take their children to be baptised, but rather as a mode of identification than as a religious practice. They have no traditional faith, though some few dogmas of an ancient creed flit, like shadows of the past, over their imagination. The doctrine of the metempsychosis, is not altogether abandoned by them. But though without religion, they are not altogether without law. They have some recognized statutes, which, however, are few and simple.

"The first enjoins on the Gipsy to live with his brethren ; to reside under a tent like a traveller, and not in a house rooted in the ground. The second is chiefly addressed to the women ; it is proscribed to them an

absolute fidelity to their husbands. The third refers to the payment of debts."

These debts, of course, are only those which are contracted among themselves. It is not a point of honor with a Gipsy to pay promiscuous debts. But a gipsy who has borrowed from his brother will make any sacrifice to free himself from an obligation which he considers to be degrading.

The marriage ceremony is conducted with all the splendor they can give it, and is continued three days, during which the tent of the Romany is open to all. Wanderers though they are, the Gipsies exhibit the deepest anxiety respecting their places of burial. With little care for the future of their souls, their one ambition is a decent coffin and a quiet grave. So great is the respect for the wishes of their dying friends on this point that they have been known to transport the body more than a hundred miles, in deference to the request of the deceased. The clothes of a dead Gipsy is burned, as well as the straw of his bed. His rug, snuff-box, any old silver spoon, his horse or his donkey, are scrupulously preserved ; and nothing but the greatest distress will drive them to part with these relics of the dead.

The Gipsies are not without a literature. Their language is not to be confounded with the dialect of English thieves. "Daughter of the Sanscrit and the Zend, it has preserved traces of its noble origin." The first book printed in the Romany idiom was the Holy Bible, translated by Mr. Barrow. Of this translation the Gipsies are very proud, not because of its moral value, but because it seems to invest their tongue with a dignity before denied to it. Songs and ballads descriptive of Gipsy life, and not remarkable for their beauty, constitute the staple of the Romany literature. The idiom, like the very existence of the tribe, is fading away.