

such beliefs, it is only natural that rites and ceremonies should have been evolved to prevent an evil spirit from entering the body or to expel it when it has once entered, or in other words, the use of magic. The next step is the belief in the efficacy of charms and we find many of these associated with trees. Most of us as children have carried horse-chestnuts, acorns, walnuts or hickory nuts in our pockets for good luck or to ward off some ailment. Those of us who went often to the swimming

hole carried some charm to keep away the cramps. We can remember when our grandmothers stirred the home-made soft soap with an ash stick or hazel stick, or put an ash stick or some other charm into the churn to hasten the coming of the butter.

Strange Cures for Disease.

The ash tree, and by confusion of names, the mountain ash, plays an important part for some reason in tree magic. In my native State

within a few years, a man cured himself of fever and ague by tying himself (and it) to an ash tree and then crawling out of his bounds, leaving the disease tied to the tree. In England children are sometimes passed through a cleft ash tree to cure rupture. A young ash sapling is split longitudinally for a few feet and the child is passed three times from east to west through the fissure at sunrise. There are many variations in the ceremony in different localities, but in all of them as soon as

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