

Boys and Girls

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF HALLOWE'EN.

All Saints' Day is observed November 1 in the Catholic, Lutheran and Episcopal churches all over the world. The evening of October 31, All Saints' Eve, also called Hallowe'en, is known in the Church calendar as the *veille*, or vigil.

The festival did not start in the several churches, but was taken, with other customs, from the old Romans, who received their ecclesiastical traditions from the times of Baal, Astarte, and the other antique gods and goddesses. Religion, ideas and customs are slow to wear out, especially in regions where new ideas are rare and doubtful.

On this account idolatrous traditions from the time of Baal and before the days of Moses are remembered to this day in England, Ireland and Scotland, where the Walpurgis Night, devoted to the dances of the witches, is still remembered. Goethe celebrated it in his poetry and Mendelssohn with his music. The same idea is treated in the "Berlioz Damnation" of Faust, Boito's "Mephistopheles" and Gounod's opera, "Faust."

It is always treated now as something purely imaginary, but in old times it was actually believed that demons did run about on nights before Christmas and All Saints' Day. And so the night before All Saints' Day was the time when the ghosts of departed folks came back to earth again to visit their former haunts once more. It was the one night when those who were supposed to be suffering for their sins while in the flesh got a respite from their punishment and were allowed to be happy each in his own way.

Ghosts were supposed to walk and talk to those who had courage enough to address them and any question asked of a ghost was sure of its right answer. Witches were supposed to be in an especially good humor on Hallowe'en, and even the wicked fairies took a night off and did good things for folks, instead of the mean and spiteful things that they usually perpetrated.

At the present time they are only accused of mischief; and to make sure that mischief is done, the demons always engage enough assistance for their purposes from the sporty and venturesome boys who for many generations have considered it right and proper to roll away grindstones, remove pump handles, milk cows and play other not very wicked pranks under the rather tame belief that they are playing ventures and actually having fun. These pranks range all the way from blacking the face with soot and turning the ordinary coat inside out to tying cows inside houses and carrying the calves into church belfries.

Just when the fashion of holding special rites and entertainments on Hallowe'en first began there is really no saying, for it is so long ago that its history is lost in dim tradition and mystery. It is to the French, doubtless, that we are indebted for many rites and superstitions that are practiced by young and old alike on this last day of October.

Hallowe'en is the special night when witches hold high carnival in the forests; and if you celebrate All Saints' Eve in a mirthful manner, invite your friends to a witches' frolic. Send out invitations requesting the girls to come attired as witches and the men as goblins and imps. Use autumn leaves, corn stalks, pumpkin lanterns and vegetables lavishly for the

decoration of your house. Should you happen to have a barn, use it for your Hallowe'en party; for, when decorated with autumn leaves, cornstalks, pumpkins and small trees, it makes a proper setting for the witches' frolic.

The witches need not be costumed alike, for the witches of history and story can be represented—such as the famous witch of Endor, the witches of Salem, the three witches from Macbeth, the witch from Snow White and the equally renowned one from Hausel and Gretel. In fact, there are innumerable dames who were supposed to be workers of black magic.

The collation need not be elaborate, if expense is a consideration, and may consist of sandwiches, fruit or nuts, gingerbread and coffee. From a large pumpkin make a witches' caldron and suspend it from a tripod made by joining three gnarled branches at the top with a rope. Each stick should be two or three feet in height, according to the size of the pumpkin and the table on which it forms the centerpiece. Fill the huge caldron with cider, lemonade, or fruit and nuts. From smaller pumpkins make pumpkin lanterns and place them in the corners and from other larger pumpkins hollowed out form bowls, which may be filled with fruit, cake, or nuts.

The good old chestnut-roasting and chestnut-"burning" should come first, to loosen tongues and start the proper spirit. Chestnuts roasted in a corn popper and eaten hot with salt will promote social feeling anywhere. And do not forget the old incantation for two nuts laid on the coals:

"If ye love me, stay close by;
If ye hate me, pop and fly."

For another test of fortune let each girl hold salt in her left hand and a lighted candle in her right and walk slowly down the stairs, trying to blow out the candle at every step and repeating this old Scotch charm:

"One, he is lucky;
Two, he is plucky;
Three, he is tall and fair;
Four, he's a rover;
Five, a gude lover;
Six, he has silver to spare.
If still the light burn fair and free,
World full of gude he'll bring to me."

Or the old Scotch test of three "luggies" (or dishes) may be tried. Blindfolded, each guest (man or girl) approaches the luggies. If he touches the one containing clear water, his marriage will be happy; if the one with dirty water, unhappy; and if the empty dish, he will remain single. The position of the luggies is changed for each experiment.

After this each girl may be blindfolded and given an opal wrapped in a bay leaf to carry in her left hand for protection against witches. She is then led to a table holding objects representing all sorts of work—a needle and thread, whip, pen, Bible, corn, medicine bottle, etc. She repeats:

"Now, opal and bay leaf, protect me;
Now, witches and warlocks, direct me.
What thing I touch when I say nine
Shall show the work o' laird of mine."

She then counts nine slowly and lays her hand on the prophetic object.

For the men, the prophecy is made in this way: A woman's slipper, a kettle, a piece of money, a spoon, and a dish of ashes are placed on the table. Blindfolded, each man in turn touches one object. If a slipper, his wife will be a gadabout; if the corn, she will bring him

wealth; if the spoon, children; if the kettle, she will be an excellent housewife; if the ashes, a scold.—Nashville Christian Advocate.

WHY THE COON WAS SPARED.

Miss Folsom was losing the eggs out of the hen house where her prized barred Plymouth Rocks lived.

"It's a coon," said "Uncle" Ed Peters, when she consulted him. "I'll set a trap for the pesky thing."

The next morning "Uncle" Ed came into the house while Miss Folsom was eating her breakfast.

"I've caught him," he announced jubilantly. "Want to see him before I kill him?"

Miss Folsom went out to the chicken pen and looked at the little wild creature caught by his leg in the trap.

"It seems too bad to kill him, he's so cunning. You'd better let him go, 'Uncle' Ed."

"Oh, shucks, answered the old trapper. "You women folks are too tender hearted. You want him to eat all of your eggs?"

Miss Folsom sighed and went sadly into the house.

In about half an hour, "Uncle" Ed came sheepishly into the kitchen.

"Say, Miss Folsom," he said, "I don't know what you'll think, but I didn't kill that coon after all. Just couldn't, for the funniest thing happened. That little fellow seemed almost human. When I put my revolver to his head, he turned over on his back and put up his paws just as if he were begging for his life, and I couldn't do it. No, sir, I couldn't. I told him to eat the eggs if he wanted to, and I let him go. I don't know what you'll think."

"I'm certainly glad you let him go," answered Miss Folsom softly. "Now, let's go out and tack wire netting over the hen house windows."—Dumb Animals.

Children's Letters

Z. M. G.

Zion heard and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced. Ps. 97:8.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Ps. 100:1.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him. Ps. 67:7.

Zena Maybrook Gilkeson.

F. C. G.

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Mal. 4:1.

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. Prov. 16:3.

Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge. Prov. 14:7.

Francis Carlisle Gilkeson.

G. M. G.

Get wisdom, get understanding; forsake it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Prov. 4:5.

Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. Job 28:13.

God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof. Job 28:23.

Guy Meriweather Gilkeson.