

The Book of Were-Wolves

Sabine Baring-Gould

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THE BOOK OF WERE-WOLVES

by SABINE BARING-GOULD

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THE BOOK OF WERE-WOLVES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

I shall never forget the walk I took one night in Vienne, after having accomplished the examination of an unknown Druidical relic, the Pierre labie, at La Rondelle, near Champigni. I had learned of the existence of this cromlech only on my arrival at Champigni in the afternoon, and I had started to visit the curiosity without calculating the time it would take me to reach it and to return. Suffice it to say that I discovered the venerable pile of grey stones as the sun set, and that I expended the last lights of evening in planning and sketching. I then turned my face homeward. My walk of about ten miles had wearied me, coming at the end of a long day's posting, and I had lamed myself in scrambling over some stones to the Gaulish relic.

A small hamlet was at no great distance, and I betook myself thither, in the hopes of hiring a trap to convey me to the posthouse, but I was disappointed. Few in the place could speak French, and the priest, when I applied to him, assured me that he believed there was no better conveyance in the place than a common charrue with its solid wooden wheels; nor was a riding horse to be procured. The good man offered to house me for the night; but I was obliged to decline, as my family intended starting early on the following morning.

Out spake then the mayor--"Monsieur can never go back to-night across the flats, because of the--the--" and his voice dropped; "the loups-garoux."

"He says that he must return!" replied the priest in patois. "But who will go with him?"

"Ah, ha,! M. le Curé. It is all very well for one of us to accompany him, but think of the coming back alone!"

"Then two must go with him," said the priest, and you can take care of each other as you return."

"Picou tells me that he saw the were-wolf only this day se'nnight," said a peasant; "he was down by the hedge of his buckwheat field, and the sun had set, and he was thinking of coming home, when he heard a rustle on the far side of the hedge. He looked over, and there stood the wolf as big as a calf against the horizon, its tongue out, and its eyes glaring like marsh-fires. Mon Dieu! catch me going over the marais to-night. Why, what could two men do if they were attacked by that wolf-fiend?"

"It is tempting Providence," said one of the elders of the village;" no man must expect the help of God if he throws himself wilfully in the way of danger. Is it not so, M. le Curé? I heard you say as much from the pulpit on the first Sunday in Lent, preaching from the Gospel."

"That is true," observed several, shaking their heads.

"His tongue hanging out, and his eyes glaring like marsh-fires!" said the confidant of Picou.

"Mon Dieu! if I met the monster, I should run," quoth another.

"I quite believe you, Cortrez; I can answer for it that you would," said the mayor.

"As big as a calf," threw in Picou's friend.

"If the loup-garou were only a natural wolf, why then, you see"--the mayor cleared his throat--"you see we should think nothing of it; but, M. le Curé, it is a fiend, a worse than fiend, a man-fiend,--a worse than man-fiend, a man-wolf-fiend."

"But what is the young monsieur to do?" asked the priest, looking from one to another.

"Never mind," said I, who had been quietly listening to their patois, which I understood. "Never mind; I will walk back by myself, and if I meet the loup-garou I will crop his ears and tail, and send them to M. le Maire with my compliments."

A sigh of relief from the assembly, as they found themselves clear of the difficulty.

"Il est Anglais," said the mayor, shaking his head, as though he meant that an Englishman might face the devil with impunity.

A melancholy flat was the marais, looking desolate enough by day, but now, in the gloaming, tenfold as desolate. The sky was perfectly clear, and of a soft, blue-grey tinge; illumined by the new moon, a curve of light approaching its western bed. To the horizon reached a fen, blacked with pools of stagnant water, from which the frogs kept up an incessant trill through the summer night. Heath and fern covered the ground, but near the water grew dense masses of flag and bulrush, amongst which the light wind sighed wearily. Here and there stood a sandy knoll, capped with firs, looking like black splashes against the grey sky; not a sign of habitation anywhere; the only trace of men being the white, straight road extending for miles across the fen.

That this district harboured wolves is not improbable, and I confess that I armed myself with a strong stick at the first clump of trees through which the road dived.

This was my first introduction to were-wolves, and the circumstance of finding the superstition still so prevalent, first gave me the idea of investigating the history and the habits of these mythical creatures.

I must acknowledge that I have been quite unsuccessful in obtaining a specimen of the animal, but I have found its traces in all directions. And just as the palæontologist has constructed the labyrinthodon out of its foot-prints in marl, and one splinter of bone, so may this monograph be complete and accurate, although I have no chained were-wolf before me which I may sketch and describe from the life.

The traces left are indeed numerous enough, and though perhaps like the dodo or the dinormis, the werewolf may have become extinct in our

age, yet he has left his stamp on classic antiquity, he has trodden deep in Northern snows. has ridden rough-shod over the mediævals, and has howled amongst Oriental sepulchres. He belonged to a bad breed, and we are quite content to be freed from him and his kindred, the vampire and the ghoul. Yet who knows! We may be a little too hasty in concluding that he is extinct. He may still prowl in Abyssinian forests, range still over Asiatic steppes, and be found howling dismally in some padded room of a Hanwell or a Bedlam.

In the following pages I design to investigate the notices of were-wolves to be found in the ancient writers of classic antiquity, those contained in the Northern Sagas, and, lastly, the numerous details afforded by the mediæval authors. In connection with this I shall give a sketch of modern folklore relating to Lycanthropy.

It will then be seen that under the veil of mythology lies a solid reality, that a floating superstition holds in solution a positive truth.

This I shall show to be an innate craving for blood implanted in certain natures, restrained under ordinary circumstances, but breaking forth occasionally, accompanied with hallucination, leading in most cases to cannibalism. I shall then give instances of persons thus afflicted, who were believed by others, and who believed themselves, to be transformed into beasts, and who, in the paroxysms of their madness, committed numerous murders, and devoured their victims.

I shall next give instances of persons suffering from the same passion for blood, who murdered for the mere gratification of their natural cruelty, but who were not subject to hallucinations, nor were addicted to cannibalism.

I shall also give instances of persons filled with the same propensities who murdered and ate their victims, but who were perfectly free from hallucination.

CHAPTER II.

LYCANTHROPY AMONG THE ANCIENTS.

What is Lycanthropy? The change of man or woman into the form of a wolf, either through magical means, so as to enable him or her to gratify the taste for human flesh, or through judgment of the gods in punishment for some great offence.

This is the popular definition. Truly it consists in a form of madness, such as may be found in most asylums.

Among the ancients this kind of insanity went by the names of Lycanthropy, Kuanthropy, or Boanthropy, because those afflicted with it believed themselves to be turned into wolves, dogs, or cows. But in the North of Europe, as we shall see, the shape of a bear, and in

Africa that of a hyæna, were often selected in preference. A mere matter of taste! According to Marcellus Sidetes, of whose poem {Greek _perì lukanōrw'pou_} a fragment exists, men are attacked with this

madness chiefly in the beginning of the year, and become most furious in February; retiring for the night to lone cemeteries, and living precisely in the manner of dogs and wolves.

Virgil writes in his eighth Eclogue:--

Has herbas, atque hæc Ponto mihi lecta venena
Ipse dedit Mrs; nascuntur plurima Ponto.
His ego sæpe lupum fieri et se conducere sylvis
Mrim, sæpe animas imis excire sepulchris,
Atque satas alio, vidi traducere messes.

And Herodotus:--"It seems that the Neuri are sorcerers, if one is to believe the Scythians and the Greeks established in Scythia; for each Neurian changes himself, once in the year, into the form of a wolf, and he continues in that form for several days, after which he resumes his former shape."--(Lib. iv. c. 105.)

See also Pomponius Mela (lib. ii. c. 1) "There is a fixed time for each Neurian, at which they change, if they like, into wolves, and back again into their former condition."

But the most remarkable story among the ancients is that related by Ovid in his "Metamorphoses," of Lycaon, king of Arcadia, who, entertaining Jupiter one day, set before him a hash of human flesh, to prove his omniscience, whereupon the god transferred him into a wolf:-- [1]

[1. OVID. Met. i. 237; PAUSANIAS, viii. 2, § 1; TZETZE _ad Lycoph._ 481; ERATOSTH. _Catas._ i. 8.]

In vain he attempted to speak; from that very instant
His jaws were bespluttered with foam, and only he thirsted
For blood, as he raged amongst flocks and panted for slaughter.
His vesture was changed into hair, his limbs became crooked;
A wolf,--he retains yet large trace of his ancient expression,
Hoary he is as afore, his countenance rabid,
His eyes glitter savagely still, the picture of fury.

Pliny relates from Evanthes, that on the festival of Jupiter Lycæus, one of the family of Antæus was selected by lot, and conducted to the brink of the Arcadian lake. He then hung his clothes on a tree and plunged into the water, whereupon he was transformed into a wolf. Nine years after, if he had not tasted human flesh, he was at liberty to swim back and resume his former shape, which had in the meantime become aged, as though he had worn it for nine years.

Agriopas relates, that Demænetus, having assisted at an Arcadian human sacrifice to Jupiter Lycæus, ate of the flesh, and was at once transformed into a wolf, in which shape he prowled about for ten years, after which he recovered his human form, and took part in the Olympic games.

The following story is from Petronius:--

"My master had gone to Capua to sell some old clothes. I seized the opportunity, and persuaded our guest to bear me company about five miles out of town; for he was a soldier, and as bold as death. We set out about cockcrow, and the moon shone bright as day, when, coming

among some monuments. my man began to converse with the stars, whilst I jogged along singing and counting them. Presently I looked back after him, and saw him strip and lay his clothes by the side of the road. My heart was in my mouth in an instant, I stood like a corpse; when, in a crack, he was turned into a wolf. Don't think I'm joking: I would not tell you a lie for the finest fortune in the world.

"But to continue: after he was turned into a wolf, he set up a howl and made straight for the woods. At first I did not know whether I was on my head or my heels; but at last going to take up his clothes, I found them turned into stone. The sweat streamed from me, and I never expected to get over it. Melissa began to wonder why I walked so late. 'Had you come a little sooner,' she said, 'you might at least have lent us a hand; for a wolf broke into the farm and has butchered all our cattle; but though he got off, it was no laughing matter for him, for a servant of ours ran him through with a pike. Hearing this I could not close an eye; but as soon as it was daylight, I ran home like a pedlar that has been eased of his pack. Coming to the place where the clothes had been turned into stone, I saw nothing but a pool of blood; and when I got home, I found my soldier lying in bed, like an ox in a stall, and a surgeon dressing his neck. I saw at once that he was a fellow who could change his skin (*_versipellis_*), and never after could I eat bread with him, no, not if you would have killed me. Those who would have taken a different view of the case are welcome to their opinion; if I tell you a lie, may your genii confound me!"

As every one knows, Jupiter changed himself into a bull; Hecuba became a bitch; Actæon a stag; the comrades of Ulysses were transformed into swine; and the daughters of Prius fled through the fields believing themselves to be cows, and would not allow any one to come near them, lest they should be caught and yoked.

S. Augustine declared, in his *_De Civitate Dei_*, that he knew an old woman who was said to turn men into asses by her enchantments.

Apuleius has left us his charming romance of the *_Golden Ass_*, in which the hero, through injudicious use of a magical salve, is transformed into that long-eared animal.

It is to be observed that the chief seat of Lycanthropy was Arcadia, and it has been very plausibly suggested that the cause might be traced to the following circumstance:--The natives were a pastoral people, and would consequently suffer very severely from the attacks and depredations of wolves. They would naturally institute a sacrifice to obtain deliverance from this pest, and security for their flocks. This sacrifice consisted in the offering of a child, and it was instituted by Lycaon. From the circumstance of the sacrifice being human, and from the peculiarity of the name of its originator, rose the myth.

But, on the other hand, the story is far too widely spread for us to attribute it to an accidental origin, or to trace it to a local source.

Half the world believes, or believed in, were-wolves, and they were supposed to haunt the Norwegian forests by those who had never remotely been connected with Arcadia: and the superstition had probably struck deep its roots into the Scandinavian and Teutonic minds, ages before Lycaon existed; and we have only to glance at

Oriental literature, to see it as firmly engrafted in the imagination of the Easterns.

CHAPTER III.

THE WERE-WOLF IN THE NORTH.

In Norway and Iceland certain men were said to be *_eigi einhamir_*, not of one skin, an idea which had its roots in paganism. The full form of this strange superstition was, that men could take upon them other bodies, and the natures of those beings whose bodies they assumed. The second adopted shape was called by the same name as the original shape, *_hamr_*, and the expression made use of to designate the transition from one body to another, was at *_skipta hömum_*, or *_at hamaz_*; whilst the expedition made in the second form, was the *hamför*. By this transfiguration extraordinary powers were acquired; the natural strength of the individual was doubled, or quadrupled; he acquired the strength of the beast in whose body he travelled, in addition to his own, and a man thus invigorated was called *_hamrammr_*.

The manner in which the change was effected, varied. At times, a dress of skin was cast over the body, and at once the transformation was complete; at others, the human body was deserted, and the soul entered the second form, leaving the first body in a cataleptic state, to all appearance dead. The second *hamr* was either borrowed or created for the purpose. There was yet a third manner of producing this effect-it was by incantation; but then the form of the individual remained unaltered, though the eyes of all beholders were charmed so that they could only perceive him under the selected form.

Having assumed some bestial shape, the man who is *_eigi einhammr_* is only to be recognized by his eyes, which by no power can be changed. He then pursues his course, follows the instincts of the beast whose body he has taken, yet without quenching his own intelligence. He is able to do what the body of the animal can do, and do what he, as man, can do as well. He may fly or swim, if he is in the shape of bird or fish; if he has taken the form of a wolf, or if he goes on a *_gandreið_*, or wolf's-ride, he is full of the rage and malignity of the creatures whose powers and passions he has assumed.

I will give a few instances of each of the three methods of changing bodies mentioned above. Freyja and Frigg had their falcon dresses in which they visited different regions of the earth, and Loki is said to have borrowed these, and to have then appeared so precisely like a falcon, that he would have escaped detection, but for the malicious twinkle of his eyes. In the *Vælundar kviða* is the following passage:--

I. I.

Meyjar flugu sunnan From the south flew the maidens
Myrkvið igögnum Athwart the gloom,
Alvitr unga Alvit the young,
Orlög drýgja; To fix destinies;
þær á savarströnd They on the sea-strand
Settusk at hvilask, Sat them to rest,
Dró sir suðrnar These damsels of the south

Dýrt lín spunnu. Fair linen spun.

II. II.

Ein nam þeirra	One of them took
Egil at verja	Egil to press,
Fögr mæð fíra	Fair maid, in her
Faðmi ljósum;	Dazzling arms.
Önnur var Svanhvít,	Another was Svanhwit,
Svanfjaðrar dró;	Who wore swan feathers;
En in þriðja	And the third,
þeirra systir	Their sister,
Var í hvítan	Pressed the white
Háls Völundar.	Neck of Vlund.

The introduction of Smund tells us that these charming young ladies were caught when they had laid their swan-skins beside them on the shore, and were consequently not in a condition to fly.

In like manner were wolves' dresses used. The following curious passage is from the wild Saga of the Völsungs:--

"It is now to be told that Sigmund thought Sinfjötli too young to help him in his revenge, and he wished first to test his powers; so during the summer they plunged deep into the wood and slew men for their goods, and Sigmund saw that he was quite of the Völsung stock. . . . Now it fell out that as they went through the forest, collecting monies, that they lighted on a house in which were two men sleeping, with great gold rings on them; they had dealings with witchcraft, for wolf-skins hung up in the house above them; it was the tenth day on which they might come out of their second state. They were kings' sons. Sigmund and Sinfjötli got into the habits, and could not get out of them again, and the nature of the original beasts came over them, and they howled as wolves--they learned "both of them to howl. Now they went into the forest, and each took his own course; they made the agreement together that they should try their strength against as many as seven men, but not more, and. that he who was ware of strife should utter his wolf's howl.

"Do not fail in this,' said Sigmund, 'for you are young and daring, and men would be glad to chase you.' Now each went his own course; and after that they had parted Sigmund found men, so he howled; and when Sinfjötli heard that, he ran up and slew them all--then they separated. And Sinfjötli had not been long in the wood before he met with eleven men; he fell upon them and slew them every one. Then he was tired, so he flung himself under an oak to rest. Up came Sigmund and said, 'Why did you not call out?' Sinfjötli replied, 'What was the need of asking your help to kill eleven men?'

"Sigmund flew at him and rent him so that he fell, for he had bitten through his throat. That day they could not leave their wolf-forms. Sigmund laid him on his back and bare him home to the hall, and sat beside him, and said, 'Deuce take the wolf-forms!'"--Völsung Saga, c. 8.

There is another curious story of a were-wolf in the same Saga, which I must relate.

"Now he did as she requested, and hewed down a great piece of timber,

and cast it across the feet of those ten brothers seated in a row, in the forest; and there they sat all that day and on till night. And at midnight there came an old she-wolf out of the forest to them, as they sat in the stocks, and she was both huge and grimly. Now she fell upon one of them, and bit him to death, and after she had eaten him all up, she went away. And next morning Signy sent a trusty man to her brothers, to know how it had fared with them. When he returned he told her of the death of one, and that grieved her much, for she feared it might fare thus with them all, and she would be unable to assist them.

"In short, nine nights following came the same she-wolf at midnight, and devoured them one after another till all were dead, except Sigmund, and he was left alone. So when the tenth night came, Signy sent her trusty man to Sigmund, her brother, with honey in his hand, and said that he was to smear it over the face of Sigmund, and to fill his mouth with it. Now he went to Sigmund, and did as he was bid, after which he returned home. And during the night came the same she-wolf, as was her wont, and reckoned to devour him, like his brothers.

"Now she snuffed at him, where the honey was smeared, and began to lick his face with her tongue, and presently thrust her tongue into his mouth. He bore it ill, and bit into the tongue of the she-wolf; she sprang up and tried to break loose, setting her feet against the stock, so as to snap it asunder: but he held firm, and ripped the tongue out by the roots, so that it was the death of the wolf. It is the opinion of some men that this beast was the mother of King Siggeir, and that she had taken this form upon her through devilry and witchcraft."--(c. 5.)

There is another story bearing on the subject in the Hrolfs Saga Kraka, which is pretty; it is as follows:--

"In the north of Norway, in upland- dales, reigned a king called Hring; and he had a son named Björn. Now it fell out that the queen died, much lamented by the king, and by all. The people advised him to marry again, and so he sent men south to get him a wife. A gale and fierce storm fell upon them, so that they had to turn the helm, and run before the wind, and so they came north to Finnmark, where they spent the winter. One day they went inland, and came to a house in which sat two beautiful women, who greeted them well, and inquired whence they had come. They replied by giving an account of their journey and their errand, and then asked the women who they were, and why they were alone, and far from the haunts of men, although they were so comely and engaging. The elder replied--that her name was Ingibjorg, and that her daughter was called Hvit, and that she was the Finn king's sweetheart. The messengers decided that they would return home, if Hvit would come with them and marry King Hring. She agreed, and they took her with them and met the king who was pleased with her, and had his wedding feast made, and said that he cared not though she was not rich. But the king was very old, and that the queen soon found out.

"There was a Carle who had a farm not far from the king's dwelling; he had a wife, and a daughter, who was but a child, and her name was Bera; she was very young and lovely. Björn the king's son, and Bera the Carle's daughter, were wont, as children, to play together, and they loved each other well. The Carle was well to do, he had been out harrying in his young days, and he was a doughty champion. Björn and Bera loved each other more and more, and they were often together.

Time passed, and nothing worth relating occurred; but Björn, the king's son, waxed strong and tall; and he was well skilled in all manly exercises.

"King Hring was often absent for long, harrying foreign shores, and Hvit remained at home and governed the land. She was not liked of the people. She was always very pleasant with Björn, but he cared little for her. It fell out once that the King Hring went abroad, and he spake with his queen that Björn should remain at home with her, to assist in the government, for he thought it advisable, the queen being haughty and inflated with pride.

"The king told his son Björn that he was to remain at home, and rule the land with the queen; Björn replied that he disliked the plan, and that he had no love for the queen; but the king was inflexible, and left the land with a great following. Björn walked home after his conversation with the king, and went up to his place, ill-pleased and red as blood. The queen came to speak with him, and to cheer him; and spake friendly with him, but he bade her be of. She obeyed him that time. She often came to talk with him, and said how much pleasanter it was for them to be together, than to have an old fellow like Hring in the house.

"Björn resented this speech, and struck her a box in the ear, and bade her depart, and he spurned her from him. She replied that this was ill-done to drive and thrust her away: and 'You think it better, Björn, to sweetheart a Carle's daughter, than to have my love and favour, a fine piece of condescension and a disgrace it is to you! But, before long, something will stand in the way of your fancy, and your folly.' Then she struck at him with a wolf-skin glove, and said, that he should become a rabid and grim wild bear; and 'You shall eat nothing but your father's sheep, which you shall slay for your food, and never shall you leave this state.'

After that, Björn disappeared, and none knew what had become of him; and men sought but found him not, as was to be expected. We must now relate how that the king's sheep were slaughtered, half a score at a time, and it was all the work of a grey bear, both huge and grimly.

"One evening it chanced that the Carle's daughter saw this savage bear coming towards her, looking tenderly at her, and she fancied that she recognized the eyes of Björn, the king's son, so she made a slight attempt to escape; then the beast retreated, but she followed it, till she came to a cave. Now when she entered the cave there stood before her a man, who greeted Bera, the Carle's daughter; and she recognized him, for he was Björn, Hring's son. Overjoyed were they to meet. So they were together in the cave awhile, for she would not part from him when she had the chance of being with him; but he said that this was not proper that she should be there by him, for by day he was a beast, and by night a man.

"Hring returned from his harrying, and he was told the news, of what had taken place during his absence; how that Björn, his son, had vanished, and also, how that a monstrous beast was up the country, and was destroying his flocks. The queen urged the king to have the beast slain, but he delayed awhile.

"One night, as Bera and Björn were together, he said to

her:--'Methinks to-morrow will be the day of my death, for they will come out to hunt me down. But for myself I care not, for it is little pleasure to live with this charm upon me, and my only comfort is that we are together; but now our union must be broken. I will give you the ring which is under my left hand. You will see the troop of hunters to-morrow coming to seek me; and when I am dead go to the king, and ask him to give you what is under the beast's left front leg. He will consent.'

"He spoke to her of many other things, till the bear's form stole over him, and he went forth a bear. She followed him, and saw that a great body of hunters had come over the mountain ridges, and had a number of dogs with them. The bear rushed away from the cavern, but the dogs and the king's men came upon him, and there was a desperate struggle. He wearied many men before he was brought to bay, and had slain all the dogs. But now they made a ring about him, and he ranged around it., but could see no means of escape, so he turned to where the king stood, and he seized a man who stood next him, and rent him asunder; then was the bear so exhausted that he cast himself down flat, and, at once, the men rushed in upon him and slew him. The Carle's daughter saw this, and she went up to the king, and said,--'Sire! wilt thou grant me that which is under the bear's left fore-shoulder?' The king consented. By this time his men had nearly flayed the bear; Bera went up and plucked away the ring, and kept it, but none saw what she took, nor had they looked for anything. The king asked her who she was, and she gave a name, but not her true name.

"The king now went home, and Bera was in his company. The queen was very joyous, and treated her well, and asked who she was; but Bera answered as before.

"The queen now made a great feast, and had the bear's flesh cooked for the banquet. The Carle's daughter was in the bower of the queen, and could not escape, for the queen had a suspicion who she was. Then she came to Bera with a dish, quite unexpectedly, and on it was bear's flesh, and she bade Bera eat it. She would not do so. 'Here is a marvel!' said the queen; 'you reject the offer which a queen herself deigns to make to you. Take it at once, or something worse will befall you.' She bit before her, and she ate of that bite; the queen cut another piece, and looked into her mouth; she saw that one little grain of the bite had gone down, but Bera spat out all the rest from her mouth, and said she would take no more, though she were tortured or killed.

"'Maybe you have had sufficient,' said the queen, and she laughed."--(Hrolfs Saga Kraka, c. 24-27, condensed.)

In the Faroëse song of Finnur hin friði, we have the following verse:--

Hegar íð Finnur hetta sær. When this peril Finn saw,
Mannspell var at meini, That witchcraft did him harm,
Skapti hann seg í varglíki: Then he changed himself into a were-wolf:

Hann feldi allvæl fleiri. He slew many thus.

The following is from the second Kviða of Helga Hundingsbana (stroph. 31):--

May the blade bite,

Which thou brandishest
Only on thyself,
when it Chimes on thy head.
Then avenged will be
The death of Helgi,
When thou, as a wolf,
Wanderest in the woods,
Knowing nor fortune
Nor any pleasure,
Haying no meat,
Save rivings of corpses.

In all these cases the change is of the form: we shall now come to instances in which the person who is changed has a double shape, and the soul animates one after the other.

The Ynglinga Saga (c. 7) says of Odin, that "he changed form; the bodies lay as though sleeping or dead, but he was a bird or a beast, a fish, or a woman, and went in a twinkling to far distant lands, doing his own or other people's business." In like manner the Danish king Harold sent a warlock to Iceland in the form of a whale, whilst his body lay stiff and stark at home. The already quoted Saga of Hrolf Krake gives us another example, where Bödvar Bjarki, in the shape of a huge bear, fights desperately with the enemy, which has surrounded the hall of his king, whilst his human body lies drunkenly beside the embers within.

In the Vatnsdæla Saga, there is a curious account of three Finns, who were shut up in a hut for three nights, and ordered by Ingimund, a Norwegian chief, to visit Iceland and inform him of the lie of the country, where he was to settle. Their bodies became rigid, and they sent their souls the errand, and, on their awaking at the end of three days, gave an accurate description of the Vatnsdal, in which Ingimund was eventually to establish himself. But the Saga does not relate whether these Finns projected their souls into the bodies of birds or beasts.

The third manner of transformation mentioned, was that in which the individual was not changed himself, but the eyes of others were bewitched, so that they could not detect him, but saw him only under a certain form. Of this there are several examples in the Sagas; as, for instance, in the Hromundar Saga Greypsonar, and in the Fostbræðra Saga. But I will translate the most curious, which is that of Odd, Katla's son, in the Eyrbyggja Saga.--(c. 20.)

"Geirrid, housewife in Mafvahlið, sent word into Bolstad, that she was ware of the fact that Odd, Katla's son, had hewn off Aud's hand.

"Now when Thorarinn and Arnkell heard that, they rode from home with twelve men. They spent the night in Mafvahlið, and rode on next morning to Holt: and Odd was the only man in the house.

"Katla sat on the high seat spinning yarn, and she bade Odd sit beside her; also, she bade her women sit each in her place, and hold their tongues. 'For,' said she, 'I shall do all the talking.' Now when Arnkell and his company arrived, they walked straight in, and when they came into the chamber, Katla greeted Arnkell, and asked the news. He replied that there was none, and he inquired after Odd. Katla said that he had gone to Breidavik. 'We shall ransack the house though,'

quoth Arnkell. 'Be it so,' replied Katla, and she ordered a girl to carry a light before them, and unlock the different parts of the house. All they saw was Katla spinning yarn off her distaff. Now they search the house, but find no Odd, so they depart. But when they had gone a little way from the garth, Arnkell stood still and said: 'How know we but that Katla has hoodwinked us, and that the distaff in her hand was nothing more than Odd.' 'Not impossible!' said Thorarinn; 'let us turn back.' They did so; and when those at Holt saw that they were returning, Katla said to her maids, 'Sit still in your places, Odd and I shall go out.'

"Now as they approached the door, she went into the porch, and began to comb and clip the hair of her son Odd. Arnkell came to the door and saw where Katla was, and she seemed to be stroking her goat, and disentangling its mane and beard and smoothing its wool. So he and his men went into the house, but found not Odd. Katla's distaff lay against the bench, so they thought that it could not have been Odd, and they went away. However, when they had come near the spot where they had turned before, Arnkell said, 'Think you not that Odd may have been in the goat's form?' 'There is no saying,' replied Thorarinn; 'but if we turn back we will lay hands on Katla.' 'We can try our luck again,' quoth Arnkell; 'and see what comes of it.' So they returned.

"Now when they were seen on their way back, Katla bade Odd follow her; and she led him to the ash-heap, and told him to lie there and not to stir on any account. But when Arnkell, and his men came to the farm, they rushed into the chamber, and saw Katla seated in her place, spinning. She greeted them and said that their visits followed with rapidity. Arnkell replied that what she said was true. His comrades took the distaff and cut it in twain. 'Come now!' said Katla, 'you cannot say, when you get home, that you have done nothing, for you have chopped up my distaff.' Then Arnkell and the rest hunted high and low for Odd, but could not find him; indeed they saw nothing living about the place, beside a boar-pig which lay under the ash-heap, so they went away once more.

"Well, when they got half-way to Mafvahlíð, came Geirrid to meet them, with her workmen. 'They had not gone the right way to work in seeking Odd,' she said, 'but she would help them.' So they turned back again. Geirrid had a blue cloak on her. Now when the party was seen and reported to Katla, and it was said that they were thirteen in number, and one had on a coloured dress, Katla exclaimed, 'That troll Geirrid is come! I shall not be able to throw a glamour over their eyes any more.' She started up from her place and lifted the cushion of the seat, and there was a hole and a cavity beneath: into this she thrust Odd, clapped the cushion over him, and sat down, saying she felt sick at heart.

"Now when they came into the room, there were small greetings. Geirrid cast off her the cloak and went up to Katla, and took the seal-skin bag which she had in her hand, and drew it over the head of Katla. [1] Then Geirrid bade them break up the seat. They did so, and found Odd. Him they took and carried to Buland's head, where they hanged him. . . . But Katla they stoned to death under the headland."

[1. A precaution against the "evil eye." Compare *Gisla Saga Surrsonnar*, p. 34. *Laxdæla Saga*, cc. 37, 38.]

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SCANDINAVIAN WERE-WOLF.

One of the great advantages of the study of old Norse or Icelandic literature is the insight given by it into the origin of world-wide superstitions. Norse tradition is transparent as glacier ice, and its origin is as unmistakable.

Mediæval mythology, rich and gorgeous, is a compound like Corinthian brass, into which many pure ores have been fused, or it is a full turbid river drawn from numerous feeders, which had their sources in remote climes. It is a blending of primæval Keltic, Teutonic, Scandinavian, Italic, and Arab traditions, each adding a beauty, each yielding a charm, but each accretion rendering the analysis more difficult.

Pacciuchelli says:--"The Anio flows into the Tiber; pure as crystal it meets the tawny stream, and is lost in it, so that there is no more Anio, but the united stream is all Tiber." So is it with each tributary to the tide of mediæval mythology. The moment it has blended its waters with the great and onward rolling flood, it is impossible to detect it with certainty; it has swollen the stream, but has lost its own identity. If we would analyse a particular myth, we must not go at once to the body of mediæval superstition, but strike at one of the tributaries before its absorption. This we shall proceed to do, and in selecting Norse mythology, we come upon abundant material, pointing naturally to the spot whence it has been derived, as glacial moraines indicate the direction which they have taken, and point to the mountains whence they have fallen. It will not be difficult for us to arrive at the origin of the Northern belief in were-wolves, and the data thus obtained will be useful in assisting us to elucidate much that would otherwise prove obscure in mediæval tradition.

Among the old Norse, it was the custom for certain warriors to dress in the skins of the beasts they had slain, and thus to give themselves an air of ferocity, calculated to strike terror into the hearts of their foes.

Such dresses are mentioned in some Sagas, without there being any supernatural qualities attached to them. For instance, in the *Njála* there is mention of a man *_i geitheðni_*, in goatskin dress. Much in the same way do we hear of Harold Harfagr having in his company a band of berserkr, who were all dressed in wolf-skins, *_ulfheðnir_*, and this expression, wolf-skin coated, is met with as a man's name. Thus in the *Holmverja Saga*, there is mention of a Björn, "son of *_Ulfheðin_*, wolfskin coat, son of *_Ulfhamr_*, wolf-shaped, son of *_Ulf_*, wolf, son of *_Ulfhamr_*, wolf-shaped, who could change forms."

But the most conclusive passage is in the *Vatnsdæla Saga*, and is as follows:--"Those berserkr who were called *_ulfheðnir_*, had got wolf-skins over their mail coats" (c. xvi.) In like manner the word *_berserkr_*, used of a man possessed of superhuman powers, and subject to accesses of diabolical fury, was originally applied to one of those doughty champions who went about in bear-sarks, or habits made of bear-skin over their armour. I am well aware that Björn Halldorson's derivation of berserkr, bare of sark, or destitute of clothing, has

been hitherto generally received, but Sveibjörn Egilsson, an indisputable authority, rejects this derivation as untenable, and substitutes for it that which I have adopted.

It may be well imagined that a wolf or a bear-skin would make a warm and comfortable great-coat to a man, whose manner of living required him to defy all weathers, and that the dress would not only give him an appearance of grimness and ferocity, likely to produce an unpleasant emotion in the breast of a foe, but also that the thick fur might prove effectual in deadening the blows rained on him in conflict.

The berserkr was an object of aversion and terror to the peaceful inhabitants of the land, his avocation being to challenge quiet country farmers to single combat. As the law of the land stood in Norway, a man who declined to accept a challenge, forfeited all his possessions, even to the wife of his bosom, as a poltroon unworthy of the protection of the law, and every item of his property passed into the hands of his challenger. The berserkr accordingly had the unhappy man at his mercy. If he slew him, the farmer's possessions became his, and if the poor fellow declined to fight, he lost all legal right to his inheritance. A berserkr would invite himself to any feast, and contribute his quota to the hilarity of the entertainment, by snapping the backbone, or cleaving the skull, of some merrymaker who incurred his displeasure, or whom he might single out to murder, for no other reason than a desire to keep his hand in practice.

It may well be imagined that popular superstition went along with the popular dread of these wolf-and-bear-skinned rovers, and that they were believed to be endued with the force, as they certainly were with the ferocity, of the beasts whose skins they wore.

Nor would superstition stop there, but the imagination of the trembling peasants would speedily invest these unscrupulous disturbers of the public peace with the attributes hitherto appropriated to trolls and jötuns.

The incident mentioned in the Völsung Saga, of the sleeping men being found with their wolf-skins hanging to the wall above their heads, is divested of its improbability, if we regard these skins as worn over their armour, and the marvellous in the whole story is reduced to a minimum, when we suppose that Sigmund and Sinfjötli stole these for the purpose of disguising themselves, whilst they lived a life of violence and robbery.

In a similar manner the story of the northern "Beauty and Beast," in Hrolf's Saga Kraka, is rendered less improbable, on the supposition that Björn was living as an outlaw among the mountain fastnesses in a bearskin dress, which would effectually disguise him--_all but his eyes_--which would gleam out of the sockets in his hideous visor, unmistakably human. His very name, Björn, signifies a bear; and these two circumstances may well have invested a kernel of historic fact with all the romance of fable; and if divested of these supernatural embellishments, the story would resolve itself into the very simple fact of there having been a King Hring of the Updales, who was at variance with his son, and whose son took to the woods, and lived a berserkr life, in company with his mistress, till he was captured and slain by his father.

I think that the circumstance insisted on by the Saga-writers, of the eyes of the person remaining unchanged, is very significant, and points to the fact that the skin was merely drawn over the body as a disguise.

But there was other ground for superstition to fasten on the berserkr, and invest them with supernatural attributes.

No fact in connection with the history of the Northmen is more firmly established, on reliable evidence, than that of the berserkr rage being a species of diabolical possession. The berserkr were said to work themselves up into a state of frenzy, in which a demoniacal power came over them, impelling them to acts from which in their sober senses they would have recoiled. They acquired superhuman force, and were as invulnerable and as insensible to pain as the Jansenist convulsionists of S. Medard. No sword would wound them, no fire would burn them, a club alone could destroy them, by breaking their bones, or crushing in their skulls. Their eyes glared as though a flame burned in the sockets, they ground their teeth, and frothed at the mouth; they gnawed at their shield rims, and are said to have sometimes bitten them through, and as they rushed into conflict they yelped as dogs or howled as wolves. [1]

[1. Hic (Syraldus) septem filios habebat, tanto veneficiorum usu callentes, ut sæpe subitis furoris viribus instincti solerent ore torvum infremere, scuta morsibus atrectare, torridas fauce prunas absumere, extracta quævis incendia penetrare, nec posset conceptis dementiæ motus alio remedii genere quam aut vinculorum injuriis aut cædis humanæ piaculo temperari. Tantam illis rabiem site sævitia ingenii sive furiaram ferocitas inspirabat.--_Saxo Gramm_. VII.]

According to the unanimous testimony of the old Norse historians, the berserkr rage was extinguished by baptism, and as Christianity advanced, the number of these berserkr decreased.

But it must not be supposed that this madness or possession came only on those persons who predisposed themselves to be attacked by it; others were afflicted with it, who vainly struggled against its influence, and who deeply lamented their own liability to be seized with these terrible accesses of frenzy. Such was Thorir Ingimund's son, of whom it is said, in the *_Vatnsdæla Saga_*, that "at times there came over Thorir berserkr fits, and it was considered a sad misfortune to such a man, as they were quite beyond control."

The manner in which he was cured is remarkable; pointing as it does to the craving in the heathen mind for a better and more merciful creed:--

"Thorgrim of Kornsa had a child by his concubine Vereydr, and, by order of his wife, the child was carried out to perish.

"The brothers (Thorsteinn and Thorir) often met, and it was now the turn of Thorsteinn to visit Thorir, and Thorir accompanied him homeward. On their way Thorsteinn asked Thorir which he thought was the first among the brethren; Thorir answered that the reply was easy, for 'you are above us all in discretion and talent; Jökull is the best in all perilous adventures, but I,' he added, 'I am the least worth of us brothers, because the berserkr fits come over me, quite against my will, and I wish that you, my brother, with your shrewdness, would

devise some help for me.'

"Thorsteinn said,--'I have heard that our kinsman, Thorgrim, has just suffered his little babe to be carried out, at the instigation of his wife. That is ill done. I think also that it is a grievous matter for you to be different in nature from other men.'

"Thorir asked how he could obtain release from his affliction Then said Thorsteinn, 'Now will I make a vow to Him who created the sun, for I ween that he is most able to take the ban of you, and I will undertake for His sake, in return, to rescue the babe and to bring it up for him, till He who created man shall take it to Himself-for this I reckon He will do!' After this they left their horses and sought the child, and a thrall of Thorir had found it near the Marram river. They saw that a kerchief had been spread over its face, but it had rumbled it up over its nose; the little thing was all but dead, but they took it up and flitted it home to Thorir's house, and he brought the lad up, and called him Thorkell Rumble; as for the berserkr fits, they came on him no more." (c. 37)

But the most remarkable passages bearing on our subject will be found in the Aigla.

There was a man, Ulf (the wolf) by name, son of Bjálfi and Hallbera. Ulf was a man so tall and strong that the like of him was not to be seen in the land at that time. And when he was young he was out viking expeditions and harrying . . . He was a great landed proprietor. It was his wont to rise early, and to go about the men's work, or to the smithies, and inspect all his goods and his acres; and sometimes he talked with those men who wanted his advice; for he was a good adviser, he was so clear-headed; however, every day, when it drew towards dusk, he became so savage that few dared exchange a word with him, for he was given to dozing in the afternoon.

"People said that he was much given to changing form (hamrammr), so he was called the evening-wolf, kveldúlfr."--(c. 1.) In this and the following passages, I do not consider hamrammr to have its primary signification of actual transformation, but simply to mean subject to fits of diabolical possession, under the influence of which the bodily powers were greatly exaggerated. I shall translate pretty freely from this most interesting Saga, as I consider that the description given in it of Kveldulf in his fits greatly elucidates our subject.

"Kveldulf and Skallagrim got news during summer of an expedition. Skallagrim. was the keenest-sighted of men, and he caught sight of the vessel of Hallvard and his brother, and recognized it at once. He followed their course and marked the haven into which they entered at even. Then he returned to his company, and told Kveldulf of what he had seen Then they busked them and got ready both their boats; in each they put twenty men, Kveldulf steering one and Skallagrim the other, and they rowed in quest of the ship. Now when they came to the place where it was, they lay to. Hallvard and his men had spread an awning over the deck, and were asleep. Now when Kveldulf and his party came upon them, the watchers who were seated at the end of the bridge sprang up and called to the people on board to wake up, for there was danger in the wind. So Hallvard and his men sprang to arms. Then came Kveldulf over the bridge and Skallagrim with him into the ship. Kveldulf had in his hand a cleaver, and he bade his men go through the vessel and hack away the awning. But he pressed on to the

quarter-deck. It is said the were-wolf fit came over him and many of his companions. They slew all the men who were before them. Skallagrim did the same as he went round the vessel. He and his father paused not till they had cleared it. Now when Kveldulf came upon the quarter-deck he raised his cleaver, and smote Hallvard through helm and head, so that the haft was buried in the flesh; but he dragged it to him so violently that he whisked Hallvard into the air., and flung him overboard. Skallagrim cleared the fore-castle and slew Sigtrygg. Many men flung themselves overboard, but Skallagrim's men took to the boat and rowed about, killing all they found. Thus perished Hallvard with fifty men. Skallagrim and his party took the ship and all the goods which had belonged to Hallvard . . . and flitted it and the wares to their own vessel, and then exchanged ships, lading their capture, but quitting their own. After which they filled their old ship with stones, brake it up and sank it. A good breeze sprang up, and they stood out to sea.

It is said of these men in the engagement who were were-wolves, or those on whom came the berserkr rage, that as long as the fit was on them no one could oppose them, they were so strong; but when it had passed off they were feebler than usual. It was the same with Kveldulf when the were-wolf fit went off him--he then felt the exhaustion consequent on the fight, and he was so completely 'done up,' that he was obliged to take to his bed."

In like manner Skallagrim had his fits of frenzy, taking after his amiable father.

"Thord and his companion were opposed to Skallagrim in the game, and they were too much for him, he wearied, and the game went better with them. But at dusk, after sunset, it went worse with Egill and Thord, for Skallagrim became so strong that he caught up Thord and cast him down, so that he broke his bones, and that was the death of him. Then he caught at Egill. Thorgerd Brák was the name of a servant of Skallagrim, who had been foster-mother to Egill. She was a woman of great stature, strong as a man and a bit of a witch. Brák exclaimed,--'Skallagrim! are you now falling upon your son?' (hamaz þú at syni þínum). Then Skallagrim let go his hold of Egill and clutched at her. She started aside and fled. Skallagrim. followed. They ran out upon Digraness, and she sprang off the headland into the water. Skallagrim cast after her a huge stone which struck her between the shoulders, and she never rose after it. The place is now called Brak's Sound."--(c. 40.)

Let it be observed that in these passages from the *Aigla*, the words *að hamaz*, *hamrammr*, &c. are used without any intention of conveying the idea of a change of bodily shape, though the words taken literally assert it. For they are derived from *_hamr_*, a skin or habit; a word which has its representatives in other Aryan languages, and is therefore a primitive word expressive of the skin of a beast.

The Sanskrit *### _carmma_*; the Hindustanee *### _cam_*, hide or skin; and *### _camra_*, leather; the Persian *### _game_*, clothing, disguise; the Gothic *_ham_* or *_hams_*, skin; and even the Italian *_camicia_*, and the French *_chemise_*, are cognate words. [1]

[1. I shall have more to say on this subject in the chapter on the Mythology of Lycanthropy.]

It seems probable accordingly that the verb *_að hamaz_* was first applied to those who wore the skins of savage animals, and went about the country as freebooters; but that popular superstition soon invested them with supernatural powers, and they were supposed to assume the forms of the beasts in whose skins they were disguised. The verb then acquired the significance "to become a were-wolf, to change shape." It did not stop there, but went through another change of meaning, and was finally applied to those who were afflicted with paroxysms of madness or demoniacal possession.

This was not the only word connected with were-wolves which helped on the superstition. The word *_vargr_*, a wolf, had a double significance, which would be the means of originating many a were-wolf story. *_Vargr_* is the same as *_u-argr_*, restless; *_argr_* being the same as the Anglo-Saxon *_earg_*. *_Vargr_* had its double signification in Norse. It signified a wolf, and also a godless man. This *_vargr_* is the English *_were_*, in the word were-wolf, and the *_garou_* or *_varou_* in French. The Danish word for were-wolf is *_var-ulf_*, the Gothic *_vaira-ulf_*. In the *_Romans de Garin_*, it is "Leu warou, sanglante beste." In the *_Vie de S. Hildefons_* by Gauthier de Coinsi,--

Cil lon desve, cil lou garol,
Ce sunt deable, que saul
Ne puent estre de nos mordre.

Here the loup-garou is a devil. The Anglo-Saxons regarded him as an evil man: *_wearg_*, a scoundrel; Gothic *_varys_*, a fiend. But very often the word meant no more than an outlaw. Pluquet in his *_Contes Populaires_* tells us that the ancient Norman laws said of the criminals condemned to outlawry for certain offences, *_Wargus esto_*: be an outlaw!

In like manner the Lex Ripuaria, tit. 87, "Wargus sit, hoe est expulsus." In the laws of Canute, he is called *verevulf*. (*_Leges Canuti_*, Schmid, i. 148.) And the Salic Law (tit. 57) orders: "Si quis corpus jam sepultum effoderit, aut expoliaverit, *_wargus_* sit." "If any one shall have dug up or despoiled an already buried corpse, let him be a *varg*."

Sidonius Apollinaris. says, "Unam feminam quam forte *_vargorum_*, hoc enim nomine indigenas latrunculos nuncupant," as though the common name by which those who lived a freebooter life were designated, was *varg*.

In like manner Palgrave assures us in his *_Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth_*, that among the Anglo, Saxons an *_utlagh_*, or out-law, was said to have the head of a wolf. If then the term *_vargr_* was applied at one time to a wolf, at another to an outlaw who lived the life of a wild beast, away from the haunts of men "he shall be driven away as a wolf, and chased so far as men chase wolves farthest," was the legal form of sentence--it is certainly no matter of wonder that stories of out-laws should have become surrounded with mythical accounts of their transformation into wolves.

But the very idiom of the Norse was calculated to foster this superstition. The Icelanders had curious expressions which are sufficiently likely to have produced misconceptions.

[1. SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS: Opera, lib. vi. ep. 4.]

Snorri not only relates that Odin changed himself into another form, but he adds that by his spells he turned his enemies into boars. In precisely the same manner does a hag, Ljot, in the *Vatnsdæla Saga*, say that she could have turned Thorsteinn and Jökull into boars to run about with the wild beasts (c. xxvi.); and the expression *_verða at gjalti_*, or at *_gjöltum_*, to become a boar, is frequently met with in the Sagas.

"Thereupon came Thorarinn and his men upon them, and Nagli led the way; but when he saw weapons drawn he was frightened, and ran away up the mountain, and became a boar. . . . And Thorarinn and his men took to run, so as to help Nagli, lest he should tumble off the cliffs into the sea" (*Eyrbyggja Saga*, c. xviii.) A similar expression occurs in the *Gisla Saga Surrsonar*, p. 50. In the *Hrolfs Saga Kraka*, we meet with a troll in boar's shape, to whom divine honours are paid; and in the *Kjalnessinga Saga*, c. xv., men are likened to boars--"Then it began to fare with them as it fares with boars when they fight each other, for in the same manner dropped their foam." The true signification of *_verða at gjalti_* is to be in such a state of fear as to lose the senses; but it is sufficiently peculiar to have given rise to superstitious stories.

I have dwelt at some length on the Northern myths relative to were-wolves and animal transformations, because I have considered the investigation of these all-important towards the elucidation of the truth which lies at the bottom of mediæval superstition, and which is nowhere so obtainable as through the Norse literature. As may be seen from the passages quoted above at length, and from an examination of those merely referred to, the result arrived at is pretty conclusive, and may be summed up in very few words.

The whole superstructure of fable and romance relative to transformation into wild beasts, reposes simply on this basis of truth--that among the Scandinavian nations there existed a form of madness or possession, under the influence of which men acted as though they were changed into wild and savage brutes, howling, foaming at the mouth, ravening for blood and slaughter, ready to commit any act of atrocity, and as irresponsible for their actions as the wolves and bears, in whose skins they often equipped themselves.

The manner in which this fact became invested with supernatural adjuncts I have also pointed out, to wit, the change in the significance of the word designating the madness, the double meaning of the word *_vargr_*, and above all, the habits and appearance of the maniacs. We shall see instances of berserkr rage reappearing in the middle ages, and late down into our own times, not exclusively in the North, but throughout France, Germany, and England, and instead of rejecting the accounts given by chroniclers as fabulous, because there is much connected with them which seems to be fabulous, we shall be able to refer them to their true origin.

It may be accepted as an axiom, that no superstition of general acceptance is destitute of a foundation of truth; and if we discover the myth of the were-wolf to be widely spread, not only throughout Europe, but through the whole world, we may rest assured that there is a solid core of fact, round which popular superstition has crystallized; and that fact is the existence of a species of madness, during the accesses of which the person afflicted believes himself to

be a wild beast, and acts like a wild beast.

In some cases this madness amounts apparently to positive possession, and the diabolical acts into which the possessed is impelled are so horrible, that the blood curdles in reading them, and it is impossible to recall them without a shudder.

CHAPTER V.

THE WERE-WOLF IN THE MIDDLE-AGES.

Olaus Magnus relates that--"In Prussia, Livonia, and Lithuania, although the inhabitants suffer considerably from the rapacity of wolves throughout the year, in that these animals rend their cattle, which are scattered in great numbers through the woods, whenever they stray in the very least, yet this is not regarded by them as such a serious matter as what they endure from men turned into wolves.

"On the feast of the Nativity of Christ, at night, such a multitude of wolves transformed from men gather together in a certain spot, arranged among themselves, and then spread to rage with wondrous ferocity against human beings, and those animals which are not wild, that the natives of these regions suffer more detriment from these, than they do from true and natural wolves; for when a human habitation has been detected by them isolated in the woods, they besiege it with atrocity, striving to break in the doors, and in the event of their doing so, they devour all the human beings, and every animal which is found within. They burst into the beer-cellars, and there they empty the tuns of beer or mead, and pile up the empty casks one above another in the middle of the cellar, thus showing their difference from natural and genuine wolves. . . . Between Lithuania, Livonia, and Courland are the walls of a certain old ruined castle. At this spot congregate thousands, on a fixed occasion, and try their agility in jumping. Those who are unable to bound over the wall, as; is often the case with the fattest, are fallen upon with scourges by the captains and slain." [1] Olaus relates also in c. xlvii. the story of a certain nobleman who was travelling through a large forest with some peasants in his retinue who dabbled in the black art. They found no house where they could lodge for the night, and were well-nigh famished. Then one of the peasants offered, if all the rest would hold their tongues as to what he should do, that he would bring them a lamb from a distant flock.

[1. OLAUS MAGNUS: *_Historia de Vent. Septent_*. Basil. 15, lib. xviii. cap. 45.]

He thereupon retired into the depths of the forest and changed his form into that of a wolf, fell upon the flock, and brought a lamb to his companions in his mouth. They received it with gratitude. Then he retired once more into the thicket, and transformed himself back again into his human shape.

The wife of a nobleman in Livonia expressed her doubts to one of her slaves whether it were possible for man or woman thus to change shape. The servant at once volunteered to give her evidence of the possibility. He left the room, and in another moment a wolf was

observed running over the country. The dogs followed him, and notwithstanding his resistance, tore out one of his eyes. Next day the slave appeared before his mistress blind of an eye.

Bp. Majolus [1] and Caspar Peucer [2] relate the following circumstances of the Livonians:--

[1. MAJOLI _Episc. Vulturoniensis Dier. Canicul._ Helenopolis, 1612, tom. ii. colloq. 3.]

[2. CASPAR PEUCER: _Comment. de Præcipuis Divin. Generibus_, 1591, p. 169.]

At Christmas a boy lame of a leg goes round the country summoning the devil's followers, who are countless, to a general conclave. Whoever remains behind, or goes reluctantly, is scourged by another with an iron whip till the blood flows, and his traces are left in blood. The human form vanishes, and the whole multitude become wolves. Many thousands assemble. Foremost goes the leader armed with an iron whip, and the troop follow, "firmly convinced in their imaginations that they are transformed into wolves." They fall upon herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, but they have no power to slay men. When they come to a river, the leader smites the water with his scourge, and it divides, leaving a dry path through the midst, by which the pack may go. The transformation lasts during twelve days, at the expiration of which period the wolf-skin vanishes, and the human form reappears. This superstition was expressly forbidden by the church. "Credidisti, quod quidam credere solent, ut illæ quæ a vulgo Parcæ vocantur, ipsæ, vel sint vel possint hoc facere quod creduntur, id est, dum aliquis homo nascitur, et tunc valeant illum designare ad hoc quod velint, ut quandocunque homo ille voluerit, in lupum transformari possit, quod vulgaris stultitia, _werwolf_ vocat, aut in aliam aliquam figuram?"--Ap. Burchard. (d. 1024). In like manner did S. Boniface preach against those who believed superstitiously in it strigas et fictos lupos." (_Serm_. apud Mart. et Durand. ix. 217.)

In a dissertation by Müller [1] we learn, on the authority of Cluverius and Dannhaverus (_Acad. Homilet._ p. ii.), that a certain Albertus Pericofcius in Muscovy was wont to tyrannize over and harass his subjects in the most unscrupulous manner. One night when he was absent from home, his whole herd of cattle, acquired by extortion, perished. On his return he was informed of his loss, and the wicked man broke out into the most horrible blasphemies, exclaiming, "Let him who has slain, eat; if God chooses, let him devour me as well."

[1. De {Greek _Lukanōrwpía_}. Lipsiæ, 1736.]

As he spoke, drops of blood fell to earth, and the nobleman, transformed into a wild dog, rushed upon his dead cattle, tore and mangled the carcasses and began to devour them; possibly he may be devouring them still (_ac forsā hodie que pascitur_). His wife, then near her confinement, died of fear. Of these circumstances there were not only ear but also eye witnesses. (_Non ab auritis tantum, sed et ocidatis accepi, quod narro_). Similarly it is related of a nobleman in the neighbourhood of Prague, that he robbed his subjects of their goods and reduced them to penury through his exactions. He took the last cow from a poor widow with five children, but as a judgment, all his own cattle died. He then broke into fearful oaths, and God transformed him into a dog: his human head, however, remained.

S. Patrick is said to have changed Vereticus, king of Wales, into a wolf, and S. Natalis, the abbot, to have pronounced anathema upon an illustrious family in Ireland; in consequence of which, every male and female take the form of wolves for seven years and live in the forests and career over the bogs, howling mournfully, and appeasing their hunger upon the sheep of the peasants. [1] A duke of Prussia, according to Majolus, had a countryman brought for sentence before him, because he had devoured his neighbour's cattle. The fellow was an ill-favoured, deformed man, with great wounds in his face, which he had received from dogs' bites whilst he had been in his wolf's form. It was believed that he changed shape twice in the year, at Christmas and at Midsummer. He was said to exhibit much uneasiness and discomfort when the wolf-hair began to break out and his bodily shape to change.

[1. PHIL. HARTUNG: *_Conciones Tergeminæ_*, pars ii. p. 367.]

He was kept long in prison and closely watched, lest he should become a were-wolf during his confinement and attempt to escape, but nothing remarkable took place. If this is the same individual as that mentioned by Olaus Magnus, as there seems to be a probability, the poor fellow was burned alive.

John of Nüremberg relates the following curious story. [1] A priest was once travelling in a strange country, and lost his way in a forest. Seeing a fire, he made towards it, and beheld a wolf seated over it. The wolf addressed him in human-voice, and bade him not fear, as "he was of the Ossyrian race, of which a man and a woman were doomed to spend a certain number of years in wolf's form. Only after seven years might they return home and resume their former shapes, if they were still alive." He begged the priest to visit and console his sick wife, and to give her the last sacraments. This the priest consented to do, after some hesitation, and only when convinced of the beasts being human beings, by observing that the wolf used his front paws as hands, and when he saw the she-wolf peel off her wolf-skin from her head to her navel, exhibiting the features of an aged woman.

[1. JOHN EUS. NIERENBERG *_de Miracul. in Europa_*, lib. ii. cap. 42.]

Marie de France says in the *Lais du Bisclaveret*:-- [1]

Bisclaveret ad nun en Bretan
Garwall Papelent li Norman.
* * * *

Jadis le poet-hum oir
Et souvent suleit avenir,
Humes pluseirs Garwall deviendrent
E es boscages meisun tindrent

[1. An epitome of this curious were-wolf tale will be found in Ellis's *_Early English Metrical Romances_*.]

There is an interesting paper by Rhanæus, on the Courland were-wolves, in the *Breslauer Sammlung*. [2] The author says,--"There are too many examples derived not merely from hearsay, but received on indisputable evidence, for us to dispute the fact, that Satan--if we do not deny that such a being exists, and that he has his work in the children of darkness--holds the Lycanthropists in his net in three

ways:--

[2. Supplement III. *Curieuser_ und nutzbarer Anmerkungen von Natur und Kunstgeschichten, gesammelt von Kanold. 1728.*]

"1. They execute as wolves certain acts, such as seizing a sheep, or destroying cattle, &c., not changed into wolves, which no scientific man in Courland believes, but in their human frames, and with their human limbs, yet in such a state of phantasy and hallucination, that they believe themselves transformed into wolves, and are regarded as such by others suffering under similar hallucination, and in this manner run these people in packs as wolves, though not true wolves.

"2. They imagine, in deep sleep or dream, that they injure the cattle, and this without leaving their conch; but it is their master who does, in their stead, what their fancy points out, or suggests to him.

"3. The evil one drives natural wolves to do some act, and then pictures it so well to the sleeper, immovable in his place, both in dreams and at awaking, that he believes the act to have been committed by himself."

Rhanæus, under these heads, relates three stories, which he believes be has on good authority. The first is of a gentleman starting on a journey, who came upon a wolf engaged in the act of seizing a sheep in his own flock; he fired at it, and wounded it, so that it fled howling to the thicket. When the gentleman returned from his expedition he found the whole neighbourhood impressed with the belief that he had, on a given day and hour, shot at one of his tenants, a publican, Mickel. On inquiry, the man's Wife, called Lebba, related the following circumstances, which were fully corroborated by numerous witnesses:--When her husband had sown his rye he had consulted with his wife how he was to get some meat, so as to have a good feast. The woman urged him on no account to steal from his landlord's flock, because it was guarded by fierce dogs. He, however, rejected her advice, and Mickel fell upon his landlord's sheep, but he had suffered and had come limping home, and in his rage at the ill success of his attempt, had fallen upon his own horse and had bitten its throat completely through. This took place in the year 1684.

In 1684, a man was about to fire upon a pack of wolves, when he heard from among the troop a voice exclaiming--"Gossip! Gossip! don't fire. No good will come of it."

The third story is as follows:--A lycanthropist was brought before a judge and accused of witchcraft, but as nothing could be proved against him, the judge ordered one of his peasants to visit the man in his prison, and to worm the truth out of him, and to persuade the prisoner to assist him in revenging himself upon another peasant who had injured him; and this was to be effected by destroying one of the man's cows; but the peasant was to urge the prisoner to do it secretly, and, if possible, in the disguise of a wolf. The fellow undertook the task, but he had great difficulty in persuading the prisoner to fall in with his wishes: eventually, however, he succeeded. Next morning the cow was found in its stall frightfully mangled, but the prisoner had not left his cell: for the watch, who had been placed to observe him, declared that he had spent the night in profound sleep, and that he had only at one time made a slight motion with his head and hands and feet.

Wierius and Forestus quote Gulielmus Brabantinus as an authority for the fact, that a man of high position had been so possessed by the evil one, that often during the year he fell into a condition in which he believed himself to be turned into a wolf, and at that time he roved in the woods and tried to seize and devour little children, but that at last, by God's mercy, he recovered his senses.

Certainly the famous Pierre Vidal, the Don Quixote of Provençal troubadours, must have had a touch of this madness, when, after having fallen in love with a lady of Carcassone, named Loba, or the Wolfess, the excess of his passion drove him over the country, howling like a wolf, and demeaning himself more like an irrational beast than a rational man.

He commemorates his lupine madness in the poem *_A tal Donna_* :--
[1]

[1. BRUCE WHYTE: *_Histoire des Langues Romaines_*, tom. ii. p. 248.]

Crowned with immortal joys I mount
The proudest emperors above,
For I am honoured with the love
Of the fair daughter of a count.
A lace from Na Raymbauda's hand
I value more than all the land
Of Richard, with his Poïctou,
His rich Touraine and famed Anjou.

When *_loup-garou_* the rabble call me,
When vagrant shepherds hoot,
Pursue, and buffet me to boot,
It doth not for a moment gall me;
I seek not palaces or halls,
Or refuge when the winter falls;
Exposed to winds and frosts at night,
My soul is ravished with delight.

Me claims my she-wolf (*_Loba_*) so divine:
And justly she that claim prefers,
For, by my troth, my life is hers
More than another's, more than mine.

Job Fincelius [1] relates the sad story of a farmer of Pavia, who, as a wolf, fell upon many men in the open country and tore them to pieces. After much trouble the maniac was caught, and he then assured his captors that the only difference which existed between himself and a natural wolf, was that in a true wolf the hair grew outward, whilst in him it struck inward. In order to put this assertion to the proof, the magistrates, themselves most certainly cruel and bloodthirsty wolves, cut off his arms and legs; the poor wretch died of the mutilation. This took place in 1541. The idea of the skin being reversed is a very ancient one: *_versipellis_* occurs as a name of reproach in Petronius, Lucilius, and Plautus, and resembles the Norse *_hamrammr_*.

[1. FINCELIUS *_de Mirabilibus_*, lib. xi.]

Fincelius relates also that, in 1542, there was such a multitude of were-wolves about Constantinople that the Emperor, accompanied by his guard, left the city to give them a severe correction, and slew one

hundred and fifty of them.

Spranger speaks of three young ladies who attacked a labourer, under the form of cats, and were wounded by him. They were found bleeding in their beds next morning.

Majolus relates that a man afflicted with lycanthropy was brought to Pomponatius. The poor fellow had been found buried in hay, and when people approached, he called to them to flee, as he was a were wolf, and would rend them. The country-folk wanted to flay him, to discover whether the hair grew inwards, but Pomponatius rescued the man and cured him.

Bodin tells some were-wolf stories on good authority; it is a pity that the good authorities of Bodin were such liars, but that, by the way. He says that the Royal Procurator-General Bourdin had assured him that he had shot a wolf, and that the arrow had stuck in the beast's thigh. A few hours after, the arrow was found in the thigh of a man in bed. In Vernon, about the year 1566, the witches and warlocks gathered in great multitudes, under the shape of cats. Four or five men were attacked in a lone place by a number of these beasts. The men stood their ground with the utmost heroism, succeeded in slaying one puss, and in wounding many others. Next day a number of wounded women were found in the town, and they gave the judge an accurate account of all the circumstances connected with their wounding.

Bodin quotes Pierre Marnier, the author of a treatise on sorcerers, as having witnessed in Savoy the transformation of men into wolves. Nynauld [1] relates that in a village of Switzerland, near Lucerne, a peasant was attacked by a wolf, whilst he was hewing timber; he defended himself, and smote off a fore-leg of the beast. The moment that the blood began to flow the wolf's form changed, and he recognized a woman without her arm. She was burnt alive.

[1. NYNAULD, *_De la Lycanthropie_*. Paris, 1615, p. 52.]

An evidence that beasts are transformed witches is to be found in their having no tails. When the devil takes human form, however, he keeps his club-foot of the Satyr, as a token by which he may be recognized. So animals deficient in caudal appendages are to be avoided, as they are witches in disguise. The Thingwald should consider the case of the Manx cats in its next session.

Forestus, in his chapter on maladies of the brain, relates a circumstance which came under his own observation, in the middle of the sixteenth century, at Alcmaar in the Netherlands. A peasant there was attacked every spring with a fit of insanity; under the influence of this he rushed about the churchyard, ran into the church, jumped over the benches, danced, was filled with fury, climbed up, descended, and never remained quiet. He carried a long staff in his hand, with which he drove away the dogs, which flew at him and wounded him, so that his thighs were covered with scars. His face was pale, his eyes deep sunk in their sockets. Forestus pronounces the man to be a lycanthropist, but he does not say that the poor fellow believed himself to be transformed into a wolf. In reference to this case, however, he mentions that of a Spanish nobleman who believed himself to be changed into a bear, and who wandered filled with fury among the woods.

Donatus of Altomare [1] affirms that he saw a man in the streets of Naples, surrounded by a ring of people, who in his were-wolf frenzy had dug up a corpse and was carrying off the leg upon his shoulders. This was in the middle of the sixteenth century.

[1. _De Medend. Human. Corp_. lib. i. cap. 9.]

CHAPTER VI.

A CHAMBER OF HORRORS.

Pierre Bourgot and Michel Verdung--'Me Hermit of S. Bonnot--The Gandillon Family--Thievenne Paget--The Tailor of Châlons--Roulet.

IN December, 1521, the Inquisitor-General for the diocese of Besançon, Boin by name, heard a case of a sufficiently terrible nature to produce a profound sensation of alarm in the neighbourhood. Two men were under accusation of witchcraft and cannibalism. Their names were Pierre Bourgot, or Peter the Great, as the people had nicknamed him from his stature, and Michel Verdung. Peter had not been long under trial, before he volunteered a full confession of his crimes. It amounted to this:--

About nineteen years before, on the occasion of a New Year's market at Poligny, a terrible storm had broken over the country, and among other mischiefs done by it, was the scattering of Pierre's flock. "In vain," said the prisoner, "did I labour, in company with other peasants, to find the sheep and bring them together. I went everywhere in search of them.

"Then there rode up three black horsemen, and the last said to me: 'Whither away? you seem to be in trouble?'

"I related to him my misfortune with my flock. He bade me pluck up my spirits, and promised that his master would henceforth take charge of and protect my flock., if I would only rely upon him. He told me, as well, that I should find my strayed sheep very shortly, and he promised to provide me with money. We agreed to meet again in four or five days. My flock I soon found collected together. At my second meeting I learned of the stranger that he was a servant of the devil. I forswore God and our Lady and all saints and dwellers in Paradise. I renounced Christianity, kissed his left hand, which was black and ice-cold as that of a corpse. Then I fell on my knees and gave in my allegiance to Satan. I remained in the service of the devil for two years, and never entered a church before the end of mass, or at all events till the holy water had been sprinkled, according to the desire of my master, whose name I afterwards learned was Moyset.

"All anxiety about my flock was removed, for the devil had undertaken to protect it and to keep off the wolves.

"This freedom from care, however, made me begin to tire of the devil's service, and I recommenced my attendance at church, till I was brought back into obedience to the evil one by Michel Verdung, when I renewed my compact on the understanding that I should be supplied with money.

"In a wood near Chastel Charnon we met with many others whom I did not recognize; we danced, and each had in his or her hand a green taper with a blue flame. Still under the delusion that I should obtain money, Michel persuaded me to move with the greatest celerity, and in order to do this, after I had stripped myself, he smeared me with a salve, and I believed myself then to be transformed into a wolf. I was at first somewhat horrified at my four wolf's feet, and the fur with which I was covered all at once, but I found that I could now travel with the speed of the wind. This could not have taken place without the help of our powerful master, who was present during our excursion, though I did not perceive him till I had recovered my human form. Michel did the same as myself.

"When we had been one or two hours in this condition of metamorphosis, Michel smeared us again, and quick as thought we resumed our human forms. The salve was given us by our masters; to me it was given by Moyset, to Michel by his own master, Guillemin."

Pierre declared that he felt no exhaustion after his excursions, though the judge inquired particularly whether he felt that prostration after his unusual exertion, of which witches usually complained. Indeed the exhaustion consequent on a were-wolf raid was so great that the lycanthropist was often confined to his bed for days, and could hardly move hand or foot, much in the same way as the berserker and _ham rammir_ in the North were utterly prostrated after their fit had left them.

In one of his were-wolf runs, Pierre fell upon a boy of six or seven years old, with his teeth, intending to rend and devour him, but the lad screamed so loud that he was obliged to beat a retreat to his clothes, and smear himself again, in order to recover his form and escape detection. He and Michel, however, one day tore to pieces a woman as she was gathering peas; and a M. de Chusnée, who came to her rescue, was attacked by them and killed.

On another occasion they fell upon a little girl of four years old, and ate her up, with the exception of one arm. Michel thought the flesh most delicious.

Another girl was strangled by them, and her blood lapped up. Of a third they ate merely a portion of the stomach. One evening at dusk, Pierre leaped over a garden wall, and came upon a little maiden of nine years old, engaged upon the weeding of the garden beds. She fell on her knees and entreated Pierre to spare her; but he snapped the neck, and left her a corpse, lying among her flowers. On this occasion he does not seem to have been in his wolf's shape. He fell upon a goat which he found in the field of Pierre Lerugen, and bit it in the throat, but he killed it with a knife.

Michel was transformed in his clothes into a wolf, but Pierre was obliged to strip, and the metamorphosis could not take place with him unless he were stark naked.

He was unable to account for the manner in which the hair vanished when he recovered his natural condition.

The statements of Pierre Bourgot were fully corroborated by Michel Verdung.

Towards the close of the autumn of 1573, the peasants of the neighbourhood of Dôle, in Franche Comté, were authorized by the Court of Parliament at Dôle, to hunt down the were-wolves which infested the country. The authorization was as follows:-- "According to the advertisement made to the sovereign Court of Parliament at Dole, that, in the territories of Espagny, Salvange, Courchapon, and the neighbouring villages, has often been seen and met, for some time past, a were-wolf, who, it is said, has already seized and carried off several little children, so that they have not been seen since, and since he has attacked and done injury in the country to some horsemen, who kept him off only with great difficulty and danger to their persons: the said Court, desiring to prevent any greater danger, has permitted, and does permit, those who are abiding or dwelling in the said places and others, notwithstanding all edicts concerning the chase, to assemble with pikes, halberts, arquebuses, and sticks, to chase and to pursue the said were-wolf in every place where they may find or seize him; to tie and to kill, without incurring any pains or penalties. . . . Given at the meeting of the said Court, on the thirteenth day of the month September, 1573." It was some time, however, before the loup-garou was caught.

In a retired spot near Amanges, half shrouded in trees, stood a small hovel of the rudest construction; its roof was of turf, and its walls were blotched with lichen. The garden to this cot was run to waste, and the fence round it broken through. As the hovel was far from any road, and was only reached by a path over moorland and through forest, it was seldom visited, and the couple who lived in it were not such as would make many friends. The man, Gilles Garnier, was a sombre, ill-looking fellow, who walked in a stooping attitude, and whose pale face, livid complexion, and deep-set eyes under a pair of coarse and bushy brows, which met across the forehead, were sufficient to repel any one from seeking his acquaintance. Gilles seldom spoke, and when he did it was in the broadest patois of his country. His long grey beard and retiring habits procured for him the name of the Hermit of St. Bonnot, though no one for a moment attributed to him any extraordinary amount of sanctity.

The hermit does not seem to have been suspected for some time, but one day, as some of the peasants of Chastenoy were returning home from their work, through the forest, the screams of a child and the deep baying of a wolf, attracted their notice, and on running in the direction whence the cries sounded, they found a little girl defending herself against a monstrous creature, which was attacking her tooth and nail, and had already wounded her severely in five places. As the peasants came up, the creature fled on all fours into the gloom of the thicket; it was so dark that it could not be identified with certainty, and whilst some affirmed that it was a wolf, others thought they had recognized the features of the hermit. This took place on the 8th November.

On the 14th a little boy of ten years old was missing, who had been last seen at a short distance from the gates of Dole.

The hermit of S. Bonnot was now seized and brought to trial at Dole, when the following evidence was extracted from him and his wife, and substantiated in many particulars by witnesses.

On the last day of Michaelmas, under the form of a wolf, at a mile from Dole, in the farm of Gorge, a vineyard belonging to Chastenoy,

near the wood of La Serre, Gilles Gamier had attacked a little maiden of ten or twelve years old, and had slain her with his teeth and claws; he had then drawn her into the wood, stripped her, gnawed the flesh from her legs and arms, and had enjoyed his meal so much, that, inspired with conjugal affection, he had brought some of the flesh home for his wife Apolline.

Eight days after the feast of All Saints, again in the form of a were-wolf, he had seized another girl, near the meadow land of La Pouppe, on the territory of Athume and Chastenoy, and was on the point of slaying and devouring her, when three persons came up, and he was compelled to escape. On the fourteenth day after All Saints, also as a wolf, he had attacked a boy of ten years old, a mile from Dôle, between Gredisans and Menoté, and had strangled him. On that occasion he had eaten all the flesh off his legs and arms, and had also devoured a great part of the belly; one of the legs he had rent completely from the trunk with his fangs.

On the Friday before the last feast of S. Bartholomew, he had seized a boy of twelve or thirteen, under a large pear-trees near the wood of the village Perrouze, and had drawn him into the thicket and killed him, intending to eat him as he had eaten the other children, but the approach of men hindered him from fulfilling his intention. The boy was, however, quite dead, and the men who came up declared that Gilles appeared as a man and not as a wolf. The hermit of S. Bonnot was sentenced to be dragged to the place of public execution, and there to be burned alive, a sentence which was rigorously carried out.

In this instance the poor maniac fully believed that actual transformation into a wolf took place; he was apparently perfectly reasonable on other points, and quite conscious of the acts he had committed.

We come now to a more remarkable circumstance, the affliction of a whole family with the same form of insanity. Our information is derived from Boguet's *_Discours de Sorciers_*, 1603-1610.

Pernette Gandillon was a poor girl in the Jura, who in 1598 ran about the country on all fours, in the belief that she was a wolf. One day as she was ranging the country in a fit of lycanthropic madness, she came upon two children who were plucking wild strawberries. Filled with a sudden passion for blood, she flew at the little girl and would have brought her down, had not her brother, a lad of four years old, defended her lustily with a knife. Pernette, however, wrenched the weapon from his tiny hand, flung him down and gashed his throat, so that he died of the wound. Pernette was tom to pieces by the people in their rage and horror.

Directly after, Pierre, the brother of Pernette Gandillon, was accused of witchcraft. He was charged with having led children to the sabbath, having made hail, and having run about the country in the form of a wolf. The transformation was effected by means of a salve which he had received from the devil. He had on one occasion assumed the form of a hare, but usually he appeared as a wolf, and his skin became covered with shaggy grey hair. He readily acknowledged that the charges brought against him were well founded, and he allowed that he had, during the period of his transformation, fallen on, and devoured, both beasts and human beings. When he desired to recover his true form, he rolled himself in the dewy grass. His son Georges asserted that he had

also been anointed with the salve, and had gone to the sabbath in the shape of a wolf. According to his own testimony, he had fallen upon two goats in one of his expeditions.

One Maundy-Thursday night he had lain for three hours in his bed in a cataleptic state, and at the end of that time had sprung out of bed. During this period he had been in the form of a wolf to the witches' sabbath.

His sister Antoinnette confessed that she had made hail, and that she had sold herself to the devil, who had appeared to her in the shape of a black he-goat. She had been to the sabbath on several occasions.

Pierre and Georges in prison behaved as maniacs, running on all fours about their cells and howling dismally. Their faces, arms, and legs were frightfully scarred with the wounds they had received from dogs when they had been on their raids. Boguet accounts for the transformation not taking place, by the fact of their not having the necessary salves by them.

All three, Pierre, Georges, and Antoinnette, were hung and burned.

Thievenne Paget, who was a witch of the most unmistakable character, was also frequently changed into a she-wolf, according to her own confession, in which state she had often accompanied the devil over hill and dale, slaying cattle, and falling on and devouring children. The same thing may be said of Clauda Isan Prost, a lame woman, Clauda Isan Guillaume, and Isan Roquet, who owned to the murder of five children.

On the 14th of December, in the same year as the execution of the Gandillon family (1598), a tailor of Châlons was sentenced to the flames by the Parliament of Paris for lycanthropy. This wretched man had decoyed children into his shop, or attacked them in the gloaming when they strayed in the woods, had torn them with his teeth, and killed them, after which he seems calmly to have dressed their flesh as ordinary meat, and to have eaten it with great relish. The number of little innocents whom he destroyed is unknown. A whole cask full of bones was discovered in his house. The man was perfectly hardened, and the details of his trial were so full of horrors and abominations of all kinds, that the judges ordered the documents to be burned.

Again in 1598, a year memorable in the annals of lycanthropy, a trial took place in Angers, the details of which are very terrible.

In a wild and unfrequented spot near Caude, some countrymen came one day upon the corpse of a boy of fifteen, horribly mutilated and bespattered with blood. As the men approached, two wolves, which had been rending the body, bounded away into the thicket. The men gave chase immediately, following their bloody tracks till they lost them; when suddenly crouching among the bushes, his teeth chattering with fear, they found a man half naked, with long hair and beard, and with his hands dyed in blood. His nails were long as claws, and were clotted with fresh gore, and shreds of human flesh.

This is one of the most puzzling and peculiar cases which come under our notice.

The wretched man, whose name was Roulet, of his own accord stated that

he had fallen upon the lad and had killed him by smothering him, and that he had been prevented from devouring the body completely by the arrival of men on the spot.

Roulet proved on investigation to be a beggar from house to house, in the most abject state of poverty. His companions in mendicity were his brother John and his cousin Julien. He had been given lodging out of charity in a neighbouring village, but before his apprehension he had been absent for eight days.

Before the judges, Roulet acknowledged that he was able to transform himself into a wolf by means of a salve which his parents had given him. When questioned about the two wolves which had been seen leaving the corpse, he said that he knew perfectly well who they were, for they were his companions, Jean and Julian, who possessed the same secret as himself. He was shown the clothes he had worn on the day of his seizure, and he recognized them immediately; he described the boy whom he had murdered, gave the date correctly, indicated the precise spot where the deed had been done, and recognized the father of the boy as the man who had first run up when the screams of the lad had been heard. In prison, Roulet behaved like an idiot. When seized, his belly was distended and hard; in prison he drank one evening a whole pailful of water, and from that moment refused to eat or drink.

His parents, on inquiry, proved to be respectable and pious people, and they proved that his brother John and his cousin Julien had been engaged at a distance on the day of Roulet's apprehension.

"What is your name, and what your estate?" asked the judge, Pierre Hérault.

"My name is Jacques Roulet, my age thirty-five; I am poor, and a mendicant."

"What are you accused of having done?"

"Of being a thief--of having offended God. My parents gave me an ointment; I do not know its composition."

"When rubbed with this ointment do you become a wolf?"

"No; but for all that, I killed and ate the child Cornier: I was a wolf."

"Were you dressed as a wolf?"

"I was dressed as I am now. I had my hands and my face bloody, because I had been eating the flesh of the said child."

"Do your hands and feet become paws of a wolf?"

"Yes, they do."

"Does your head become like that of a wolf--your mouth become larger?"

"I do not know how my head was at the time; I used my teeth; my head was as it is to-day. I have wounded and eaten many other little children; I have also been to the sabbath."

The lieutenant criminel sentenced Roulet to death. He, however, appealed to the Parliament at Paris; and this decided that as there was more folly in the poor idiot than malice and witchcraft, his sentence of death should be commuted to two years' imprisonment in a madhouse, that he might be instructed in the knowledge of God, whom he had forgotten in his utter poverty. [1]

[1. "La cour du Parlement, par arrêt, mist l'appellation et la sentence dont il avoit esté appel au néant, et, néanmoins, ordonna que le dit Roulet serait mis à l'hospital Saint Germain des Prés, où on a accoustumé de mettre les folz, pour y demeurer l'espace de deux ans, afin d'y estre instruit et redressé tant de son esprit, que ramené à la cognoissance de Dieu, que l'extrême pauvreté lui avoit fait mescognoistre."]

CHAPTER VII.

JEAN GRENIER

On the Sand-dunes--A Wolf attacks Marguerite Poirier--Jean Grenier brought to Trial--His Confessions--Charges of Cannibalism proved--His Sentence--Behaviour in the Monastery--Visit of Del'ancre.

One fine afternoon in the spring, some village girls were tending their sheep on the sand-dunes which intervene between the vast forests of pine covering the greater portion of the present department of Landes in the south of France, and the sea.

The brightness of the sky, the freshness of the air puffing up off the blue twinkling Bay of Biscay, the hum or song of the wind as it made rich music among the pines which stood like a green uplifted wave on the East, the beauty of the sand-hills speckled with golden cistus, or patched with gentian-blue, by the low growing Gremille couchée, the charm of the forest-skirts, tinted variously with the foliage of cork-trees, pines, and acacia, the latter in full bloom, a pile of rose-coloured or snowy flowers,--all conspired to fill the peasant maidens with joy, and to make their voices rise in song and laughter, which rung merrily over the hills, and through the dark avenues of evergreen trees.

Now a gorgeous butterfly attracted their attention, then a flight of quails skimming the surface.

"Ah!" exclaimed Jacqueline Auzun, "ah, if I had my stilts and bats, I would strike the little birds down, and we should have a fine supper."

"Now, if they would fly ready cooked into one's mouth, as they do in foreign parts!" said another girl.

"Have you got any new clothes for the S. Jean?" asked a third; "my mother has laid by to purchase me a smart cap with gold lace."

"You will turn the head of Etienne altogether, Annette!" said Jeanne Gaboriant. "But what is the matter with the sheep?"

She asked because the sheep which had been quietly browsing before

her, on reaching a small depression in the dune, had started away as though frightened at something. At the same time one of the dogs began to growl and show his fangs.

The girls ran to the spot, and saw a little fall in the ground, in which, seated on a log of fir, was a boy of thirteen. The appearance of the lad was peculiar. His hair was of a tawny red and thickly matted, falling over his shoulders and completely covering his narrow brow. His small pale-grey eyes twinkled with an expression of horrible ferocity and cunning, from deep sunken hollows. The complexion was of a dark olive colour; the teeth were strong and white, and the canine teeth protruded over the lower lip when the mouth was closed. The boy's hands were large and powerful, the nails black and pointed like bird's talons. He was ill clothed, and seemed to be in the most abject poverty. The few garments he had on him were in tatters, and through the rents the emaciation of his limbs was plainly visible.

The girls stood round him, half frightened and much surprised, but the boy showed no symptoms of astonishment. His face relaxed into a ghastly leer, which showed the whole range of his glittering white fangs.

"Well, my maidens," said he in a harsh voice, "which of you is the prettiest, I should like to know; can you decide among you?"

"What do you want to know for?" asked Jeanne Gaboriant, the eldest of the girls, aged eighteen, who took upon herself to be spokesman for the rest.

"Because I shall marry the prettiest," was the answer.

"Ah!" said Jeanne jokingly; "that is if she will have you, which is not very likely, as we none of us know you, or anything about you."

"I am the son of a priest," replied the boy curtly.

"Is that why you look so dingy and black?"

"No, I am dark-coloured, because I wear a wolf-skin sometimes."

"A wolf-skin!" echoed the girl; "and pray who gave it you?"

"One called Pierre Labourant."

"There is no man of that name hereabouts. Where does he live?"

A scream of laughter mingled with howls, and breaking into strange gulping bursts of fiendlike merriment from the strange boy.

The little girls recoiled, and the youngest took refuge behind Jeanne.

"Do you want to know Pierre Labourant, lass? Hey, he is a man with an iron chain about his neck, which he is ever engaged in gnawing. Do you want to know where he lives, lass? Ha., in a place of gloom and fire, where there are many companions, some seated on iron chairs, burning, burning; others stretched on glowing beds, burning too. Some cast men upon blazing coals, others roast men before fierce flames, others again plunge them into caldrons of liquid fire."

The girls trembled and looked at each other with scared faces, and then again at the hideous being which crouched before them.

"You want to know about the wolf-skin cape?" continued he. "Pierre Labourant gave me that; he wraps it round me, and every Monday, Friday, and Sunday, and for about an hour at dusk every other day, I am a wolf, a were-wolf. I have killed dogs and drunk their blood; but little girls taste better, their flesh is tender and sweet, their blood rich and warm. I have eaten many a maiden, as I have been on my raids together with my nine companions. I am a were-wolf! Ah, ha! if the sun were to set I would soon fall on one of you and make a meal of you!" Again he burst into one of his frightful paroxysms of laughter, and the girls unable to endure it any longer, fled with precipitation.

Near the village of S. Antoine de Pizon, a little girl of the name of Marguerite Poirier, thirteen years old, was in the habit of tending her sheep, in company with a lad of the same age, whose name was Jean Grenier. The same lad whom Jeanne Gaboriant had questioned.

The little girl often complained to her parents of the conduct of the boy: she said that he frightened her with his horrible stories; but her father and mother thought little of her complaints, till one day she returned home before her usual time so thoroughly alarmed that she had deserted her flock. Her parents now took the matter up and investigated it. Her story was as follows:--

Jean had often told her that he had sold himself to the devil, and that he had acquired the power of ranging the country after dusk, and sometimes in broad day, in the form of a wolf. He had assured her that he had killed and devoured many dogs, but that he found their flesh less palatable than the flesh of little girls, which he regarded as a supreme delicacy. He had told her that this had been tasted by him not unfrequently, but he had specified only two instances: in one he had eaten as much as he could, and had thrown the rest to a wolf, which had come up during the repast. In the other instance he had bitten to death another little girl, had lapped her blood, and, being in a famished condition at the time, had devoured every portion of her, with the exception of the arms and shoulders.

The child told her parents, on the occasion of her return home in a fit of terror, that she had been guiding her sheep as usual, but Grenier had not been present. Hearing a rustle in the bushes she had looked round, and a wild beast had leaped upon her, and torn her clothes on her left side with its sharp fangs. She added that she had defended herself lustily with her shepherd's staff, and had beaten the creature off. It had then retreated a few paces, had seated itself on its hind legs like a dog when it is begging, and had regarded her with such a look of rage, that she had fled in terror. She described the animal as resembling a wolf, but as being shorter and stouter; its hair was red, its tail stumpy, and the head smaller than that of a genuine wolf.

The statement of the child produced general consternation in the parish. It was well known that several little girls had vanished in a most mysterious way of late, and the parents of these little ones were thrown into an agony of terror lest their children had become the prey of the wretched boy accused by Marguerite Poirier. The case was now taken up by the authorities and brought before the parliament of Bordeaux.

The investigation which followed was as complete as could be desired.

Jean Grenier was the son of a poor labourer in the village of S. Antoine do Pizon, and not the son of a priest, as he had asserted. Three months before his seizure he had left home, and had been with several masters doing odd work, or wandering about the country begging. He had been engaged several times to take charge of the flocks belonging to farmers, and had as often been discharged for neglect of his duties. The lad exhibited no reluctance to communicate all he knew about himself, and his statements were tested one by one, and were often proved to be correct.

The story he related of himself before the court was as follows:--

"When I was ten or eleven years old, my neighbour, Duthillaire, introduced me, in the depths of the forest, to a M. de la Forest, a black man, who signed me with his nail, and then gave to me and Duthillaire a salve and a wolf-skin. From that time have I run about the country as a wolf.

"The charge of Marguerite Poirier is correct. My intention was to have killed and devoured her, but she kept me off with a stick. I have only killed one dog, a white one, and I did not drink its blood."

When questioned touching the children, whom he said he had killed and eaten as a wolf, he allowed that he had once entered an empty house on the way between S. Coutras and S. Anlaye, in a small village, the name of which he did not remember, and had found a child asleep in its cradle; and as no one was within to hinder him, he dragged the baby out of its cradle, carried it into the garden, leaped the hedge, and devoured as much of it as satisfied his hunger. What remained he had given to a wolf. In the parish of S. Antoine do Pizon he had attacked a little girl, as she was keeping sheep. She was dressed in a black frock; he did not know her name. He tore her with his nails and teeth, and ate her. Six weeks before his capture he had fallen upon another child, near the stone-bridge, in the same parish. In Eparon he had assaulted the hound of a certain M. Millon, and would have killed the beast, had not the owner come out with his rapier in his hand.

Jean said that he had the wolf-skin in his possession, and that he went out hunting for children, at the command of his master, the Lord of the Forest. Before transformation he smeared himself with the salve, which he preserved in a small pot, and hid his clothes in the thicket.

He usually ran his courses from one to two hours in the day, when the moon was at the wane, but very often he made his expeditions at night. On one occasion he had accompanied Duthillaire, but they had killed no one.

He accused his father of having assisted him, and of possessing a wolf-skin; he charged him also with having accompanied him on one occasion, when he attacked and ate a girl in the village of Grilland, whom he had found tending a flock of geese. He said that his stepmother was separated from his father. He believed the reason to be, because she had seen him once vomit the paws of a dog and the fingers of a child. He added that the Lord of the Forest had strictly forbidden him to bite the thumb-nail of his left hand, which nail was

thicker and longer than the others, and had warned him never to lose sight of it, as long as he was in his were-wolf disguise.

Duthillaire was apprehended, and the father of Jean Grenier himself claimed to be heard by examination.

The account given by the father and stepmother of Jean coincided in many particulars with the statements made by their son.

The localities where Grenier declared he had fallen on children were identified, the times when he said the deeds had been done accorded with the dates given by the parents of the missing little ones, when their losses had occurred.

The wounds which Jean affirmed that he had made, and the manner in which he had dealt them, coincided with the descriptions given by the children he had assaulted.

He was confronted with Marguerite Poirier, and he singled her out from among five other girls, pointed to the still open gashes in her body, and stated that he had made them with his teeth, when he attacked her in wolf-form, and she had beaten him off with a stick. He described an attack he had made on a little boy whom he would have slain, had not a man come to the rescue, and exclaimed, "I'll have you presently."

The man who saved the child was found, and proved to be the uncle of the rescued lad, and he corroborated the statement of Grenier, that he had used the words mentioned above.

Jean was then confronted with his father. He now began to falter in his story, and to change his statements. The examination had lasted long, and it was seen that the feeble intellect of the boy was wearied out, so the case was adjourned. When next confronted with the elder Grenier, Jean told his story as at first, without changing it in any important particular.

The fact of Jean Grenier having killed and eaten several children, and of his having attacked and wounded others, with intent to take their life, were fully established; but there was no proof whatever of the father having had the least hand in any of the murders, so that he was dismissed the court without a shadow of guilt upon him.

The only witness who corroborated the assertion of Jean that he changed his shape into that of a wolf was Marguerite Poirier.

Before the court gave judgment, the first president of assize, in an eloquent speech, put on one side all questions of witchcraft and diabolical compact, and bestial transformation, and boldly stated that the court had only to consider the age and the imbecility of the child, who was so dull and idiotic--that children of seven or eight years old have usually a larger amount of reason than he. The president went on to say that Lycanthropy and Kuanthropy were mere hallucinations, and that the change of shape existed only in the disorganized brain of the insane, consequently it was not a crime which could be punished. The tender age of the boy must be taken into consideration, and the utter neglect of his education and moral development. The court sentenced Grenier to perpetual imprisonment within the walls of a monastery at Bordeaux, where he might be instructed in his Christian and moral obligations; but any attempt to

escape would be punished with death.

A pleasant companion for the monks! a promising pupil for them to instruct! No sooner was he admitted into the precincts of the religious house, than he ran frantically about the cloister and gardens upon all fours, and finding a heap of bloody and raw offal, fell upon it and devoured it in an incredibly short space of time.

Delancre visited him seven years after, and found him diminutive in stature, very shy, and unwilling to look any one in the face. His eyes were deep set and restless; his teeth long and protruding; his nails black, and in places worn away; his mind was completely barren; he seemed unable to comprehend the smallest things. He related his story to Delancre, and told him how he had run about formerly in the woods as a wolf, and he said that he still felt a craving for raw flesh, especially for that of little girls, which he said was delicious, and he added that but for his confinement it would not be long before he tasted it again. He said that the Lord of the Forest had visited him twice in the prison, but that he had driven him off with the sign of the cross. The account he then gave of his murders coincided exactly with what had come out in his trial; and beside this, his story of the compact he had made with the Black One, and the manner in which his transformation was effected, also coincided with his former statements.

He died at the age of twenty, after an imprisonment of seven years, shortly after Delancre's visit. [1]

[1. DELANCRE: *_Tableau de l'inconstance_*, p 305.]

In the two cases of Roulet and Grenier the courts referred the whole matter of Lycanthropy, or animal transformation, to its true and legitimate cause, an aberration of the brain. From this time medical men seem to have regarded it as a form of mental malady to be brought under their treatment, rather than as a crime to be punished by law. But it is very fearful to contemplate that there may still exist persons in the world filled with a morbid craving for human blood, which is ready to impel them to commit the most horrible atrocities, should they escape the vigilante of their guards, or break the bars of the madhouse which restrains them.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOLK-LORE RELATING TO WERE-WOLVES.

Barrenness of English Folk-lore--Devonshire Traditions--Derivation of Were-wolf--Cannibalism in Scotland--The Angus Robber--The Carle of Perth--French Superstitions--Norwegian Traditions--Danish Tales of Were-wolves--Holstein Stories--The Werewolf in the Netherlands--Among the Greeks; the Serbs; the White Russians; the Poles; the Russians--A Russian Receipt for becoming a Were-wolf--The Bohemian Vlkodlak--Armenian Story--Indian Tales--Abyssinian Budas--American Transformation Tales--A Slovakian Household Tale--Similar Greek, Béarnais, and Icelandic Tales.

ENGLISH folk-lore is singularly barren of were-wolf stories, the

reason being that wolves had been extirpated from England under the Anglo-Saxon kings, and therefore ceased to be objects of dread to the people. The traditional belief in were-wolfism must, however, have remained long in the popular mind, though at present it has disappeared, for the word occurs in old ballads and romances. Thus in Kempion--

O was it war-wolf in the wood?
Or was it mermaid in the sea?
Or was it man, or vile woman,
My ain true love, that mis-shaped thee?

There is also the romance of William and the Were-wolf in Hartshorn; [1] but this professes to be a translation from the French:--

[1. HARTSHORN: Ancient Metrical Tales, p. 256. See also "The Witch Cake," in CRUMEK'S Remains of Nithsdale Song.]

For he of Frenche this fayre tale ferst dede translate,
In ese of Englysch men in Englysch speche.

In the popular mind the cat or the hare have taken the place of the wolf for witches' transformation, and we hear often of the hags attending the devil's Sabbath in these forms.

In Devonshire they range the moors in the shape of black dogs, and I know a story of two such creatures appearing in an inn and nightly drinking the cider, till the publican shot a silver button over their heads, when they were instantly transformed into two ill-favoured old ladies of his acquaintance. On Heathfield, near Tavistock, the wild huntsman rides by full moon with his "wush hounds;" and a white hare which they pursued was once rescued by a goody returning from market, and discovered to be a transformed young lady.

Gervaise of Tilbury says in his Otia Imperalia--

"Vidimus frequenter in Anglia, per lunationes, homines in lupos mutari, quod hominum genus gerulfos Galli vocant, Angli vero wer-wlf, dicunt: wer enim Anglice virum sonat, wlf, lupum." Gervaise may be right in his derivation of the name, and were-wolf may mean man-wolf, though I have elsewhere given a different derivation, and one which I suspect is truer. But Gervaise has grounds for his assertion that wér signifies man; it is so in Anglo-Saxon, vair in Gothic, vir in Latin, verr, in Icelandic, vîra, Zend, wirs, old Prussian, wirs, Lettish, vîra, Sanskrit, bîr, Bengalee.

There have been cases of cannibalism in Scotland, but no bestial transformation is hinted at in connection with them.

Thus Bthius, in his history of Scotland, tells us of a robber and his daughter who devoured children, and Lindsay of Pitscottie gives a full account.

"About this time (1460) there was ane brigand ta'en with his hail family, who haunted a place in Angus. This mischievous man had ane execrable fashion to take all young men and children he could steal away quietly, or tak' away without knowledge, and eat them, and the younger they were, esteemed them the mair tender and delicious. For the whilk cause and damnable abuse, he with his wife and bairns were

all burnt, except ane young wench of a year old who was saved and brought to Dandee, where she was brought up and fostered; and when she came to a woman's years, she was condemned and burnt quick for that crime. It is said that when she was coming to the place of execution, there gathered ane huge multitude of people, and specially of women, cursing her that she was so unhappy to commit so damnable deeds. To whom she turned about with an ireful countenance, saying:--'Wherefore chide ye with me, as if I had committed ane unworthy act? Give me credence and trow me, if ye had experience of eating men and women's flesh, ye wold think it so delicious that ye wold never forbear it again.' So, but any sign of repentance, this unhappy traitor died in the sight of the people." [1]

[1. LINDSAY'S *_Chronicles of Scotland_*, 1814, p. 163.]

Wyntoun also has a passage in his metrical chronicle regarding a cannibal who lived shortly before his own time, and he may easily have heard about him from surviving contemporaries. It was about the year 1340, when a large portion of Scotland had been devastated by the arms of Edward III.

About Perth thare was the countrie
Sae waste, that wonder wes to see;

For intill well-great space thereby,
Wes nother house left nor herb'ry.
Of deer thare wes then sic foison (profusion),
That they wold near come to the town,
Sae great default was near that stead,
That mony were in hunger dead.
A carle they said was near thereby,
That wold act settis (traps) commonly,
Children and women for to slay,
And swains that he might over-ta;
And ate them all that he get might;
Chwsten Cleek till name behight.
That sa'ry life continued he,
While waste but folk was the countrie. [1]

[1. WYNTOUN'S *_Chronicle_*, ii. 236.]

We have only to compare these two cases with those recorded in the last two chapters, and we see at once how the popular mind in Great Britain had lost the idea of connecting change of form with cannibalism. A man guilty of the crimes committed by the Angus brigand, or the carle of Perth, would have been regarded as a were-wolf in France or Germany, and would have been tried for Lycanthropy.

S. Jerome, by the way, brought a sweeping charge against the Scots. He visited Gaul in his youth, about 880, and he writes:--"When I was a young man in Gaul, I may have seen the Attacotti, a British people who live upon human flesh; and when they find herds of pigs, droves of cattle, or flocks of sheep in the woods, they cut off the haunches of the men and the breasts of the women, and these they regard as great dainties;" in other words they prefer the shepherd to his flock. Gibbon who quotes this passage says on it: "If in the neighbourhood of the commercial and literary town of Glasgow, a race of cannibals has really existed, we may contemplate, in the period of the Scottish

history, the opposite extremes of savage and civilized life. Such reflections tend to enlarge the circle of our ideas, and to encourage the pleasing hope that New Zealand may produce in a future age, the Hume of the Southern hemisphere."

If traditions of were-wolves are scanty in England, it is quite the reverse if we cross the water.

In the south of France, it is still believed that fate has destined certain men to be lycanthropists--that they are transformed into wolves at full moon. The desire to run comes upon them at night. They leave their beds, jump out of a window, and plunge into a fountain. After the bath, they come out covered with dense fur, walking on all fours, and commence a raid over fields and meadows, through woods and villages, biting all beasts and human beings that come in their way. At the approach of dawn, they return to the spring, plunge into it, lose their furry skins, and regain their deserted beds. Sometimes the loup-garou is said to appear under the form of a white dog, or to be loaded with chains; but there is probably a confusion of ideas between the were-wolf and the church-dog, bar-ghest, pad-foit, wush-hound, or by whatever name the animal supposed to haunt a churchyard is designated.

In the Périgord, the were-wolf is called loulérou. Certain men, especially bastards, are obliged at each full moon to transform themselves into these diabolic beasts.

It is always at night that the fit comes on. The lycanthropist dashes out of a window, springs into a well, and, after having struggled in the water for a few moments, rises from it, dripping, and invested with a goatskin which the devil has given him. In this condition, the loulérou runs upon four legs, pass the night in ranging over the country, and in biting and devouring all the dogs they meet. At break of day they lay aside their goatskins and return home. Often they are ill in consequence of having eaten tough old hounds, and they vomit up their undigested paws. One great nuisance to them is the fact that they may be wounded or killed in their loulérou state. With the first effusion of blood their diabolic covering vanishes, and they are recognized, to the disgrace of their families.

A were-wolf may easily be detected, even when devoid of his skin; for his hands are broad, and his fingers short, and there are always some hairs in the hollow of his hand.

In Normandy, those who are doomed to be loups-garoux, clothe themselves every evening with a skin called their *_hère_* or *_hure_*, which is a loan from the devil. When they run in their transformed state, the evil one accompanies them and scourges them at the foot of every cross they pass. The only way in which a werewolf can be liberated from this cruel bondage, is by stabbing him three times in the forehead with a knife. However, some people less addicted to allopathic treatment, consider that three drops of blood drawn by a needle, will be sufficient to procure release.

According to an opinion of the vulgar in the same province, the loup-garou is sometimes a metamorphosis forced upon the body of a damned person, who, after having been tormented in his grave, has torn his way out of it. The first stage in the process consists in his devouring the cerecloth which enveloped his face; then his moans and

muffled howls ring from the tomb, through the gloom of night, the earth of the grave begins to heave, and at last, with a scream, surrounded by a phosphorescent glare, and exhaling a ffid odour, he bursts away as a wolf.

In Le Bessin, they attribute to sorcerers the power of metamorphosing certain men into beasts, but the form of a dog is that principally affected by them.

In Norway it is believed that there are persons who can assume the form of a wolf or a bear (Huse-björn), and again resume their own; this property is either imparted to them by the Trollmen, or those possessing it are themselves Trolls.

In a hamlet in the midst of a forest, there dwelt a cottager named Lasse, and his wife. One day he went out in the forest to fell a tree, but had forgot to cross himself and say his paternoster, so that some troll or wolf-witch (varga mor) obtained power over him and transformed him into a wolf. His wife mourned him for many years, but, one Christmas-eve, there came a beggar-woman, very poor and ragged, to the door, and the good woman of the house took her in, fed her well, and entreated her kindly. At her departure the beggar-woman said that the wife would probably see her husband again, as he was not dead, but was wandering in the forest as a wolf. Towards night-fall the wife went to her pantry to place in it a piece of meat for the morrow, when, on turning to go out, she perceived a wolf standing before her, raising itself with its paws on the pantry steps, regarding her with sorrowful and hungry looks. Seeing this she exclaimed, "If I were sure that thou wert my own Lasse, I would give thee a bit of meat." At that instant the wolf-skin fell off, and her husband stood before her in the clothes he wore on the unlucky morning when she had last beheld him.

Finns, Lapps, and Russians are held in particular aversion, because the Swedes believe that they have power to change people into wild beasts. During the last year of the war with Russia, when Calmar was overrun with an unusual number of wolves, it was generally said that the Russians had transformed their Swedish prisoners into wolves, and sent them home to invest the country.

In Denmark the following stories are told:--

A man, who from his childhood had been a were-wolf, when returning one night with his wife from a merrymaking, observed that the hour was at hand when the evil usually came upon him; giving therefore the reins to his wife, he descended from the vehicle, saying to her, "If anything comes to thee, only strike at it with thine apron." He then withdrew, but immediately after, the woman, as she was sitting in the vehicle, was attacked by a were-wolf. She did as the man had enjoined her, and struck it with her apron, from which it rived a portion, and then ran away. After some time the man returned, holding in his mouth the rent portion of his wife's apron, on seeing which, she cried out in terror,--"Good Lord, man, why, thou art a were-wolf!" "Thank thee, wife," said he, "now I am free." And from that time he was no more afflicted.

If a female at midnight stretches between four sticks the membrane which envelopes the foal when it is brought forth, and creeps through it, naked, she will bear children without pain; but all the boys will

be were-wolves, and all the girls maras. By day the were-wolf has the human form, though he may be known by the meeting of his eyebrows above the nose. At a certain time of the night he has the form of a dog on three legs. It is only when another person tells him that he is a were-wolf, or reproaches him with being such, that a man can be freed from the ban.

According to a Danish popular song, a hero transformed by his step-mother into a bear, fights with a knight:--

For 'tis she who bath bewitched me,
A woman false and fell,
Bound an iron girdle round me,
If thou can'st not break this belt,
Knight, I'll thee destroy!
* * * *

The noble made the Christian sign,
The girdle snapped, the bear was changed,
And see! he was a lusty knight,
His father's realm regained.

Kjæmpeviser, p. 147.

When an old bear in Ofodens Priestegjeld was killed, after it had caused the death of six men und sixty horses, it was found to be girded with a similar girdle.

In Schleswig and Holstein they say that if the were-wolf be thrice addressed by his baptismal name, he resumes his human form.

On a hot harvest day some reapers lay down in the field to take their noontide sleep, when one who could not sleep observed that the fellow next to him rose softly, and having girded himself with a strap, became a were-wolf.

A young man belonging to Jägerup returning late one night from Billund, was attacked, when near Jägerup, by three were-wolves, and would probably have been torn to pieces, had he not saved himself by leaping into a rye-field, for there they had no more power over him.

At Caseburg, on the isle of Usedom, a man and his wife were busy in the field making hay, when after some time the woman said to the man that she had no more peace, she could stay no longer, and went away. But she had previously desired her husband to promise, that if perchance a wild beast should come that way, he would cast his hat at it and then run away, and it would do him no injury. She had been gone but a short while, when a wolf came swimming across the Swine, and ran directly towards the haymakers. The man threw his hat at it, which the animal instantly tore to rags. But in the meantime a boy had run up with a pitchfork, and he dabbed the wolf from behind: in the same moment it became changed, and all saw that the boy had killed the man's wife.

Formerly there were individuals in the neighbourhood of Steina, who, by putting on a certain girdle, could transform themselves into were-wolves. A man of the neighbourhood, who had such a girdle, forgot one day when going out to lock it up, as was his wont. During his absence, his little son chanced to find it; he buckled it round him., and was instantaneously turned into an animal, to all outward

appearance like a bundle of peat-straw, and he rolled about like an unwieldy bear. When those who were in the room perceived this, they hastened in search of the father, who was found in time to come and unbuckle the belt, before the child had done any mischief. The boy afterwards said, that when he had put on the girdle, he was seized with such a raging hunger, that he was ready to tear in pieces and devour all that came in his way.

The girdle is supposed to be made of human skin, and to be three finger-breadths wide.

In East Friesland, it is believed, when seven girls succeed each other in one family, that among them one is of necessity a were-wolf, so that youths are slow in seeking one of seven sisters in marriage.

According to a curious Lithuanian story related by Schleicher in his Litauische Märchen, a person who is a were-wolf or bear has to remain kneeling in one spot for one hundred years before he can hope to obtain release from his bestial form.

In the Netherlands they relate the following tale:--A man had once gone out with his bow to attend a shooting match at Rouse, but when about half way to the place, he saw on a sudden, a large wolf spring from a thicket, and rush towards a young girl, who was sitting in a meadow by the roadside watching cows. The man did not long hesitate, but quickly drawing forth an arrow, took aim, and luckily hit the wolf in the right side, so that the arrow remained sticking in the wound, and the animal fled howling to the wood.

On the following day he heard that a serving-man of the burgomaster's household lay at the point of death, in consequence of having been shot in the right side, on the preceding day. This so excited the archer's curiosity, that he went to the wounded man, and requested to see the arrow. He recognized it immediately as one of his own. Then, having desired all present to leave the room, he persuaded the man to confess that he was a were-wolf and that he had devoured little children. On the following day he died.

Among the Bulgarians and Slovakians the were-wolf is called vrkolak, a name resembling that given it by the modern Greeks {Greek brúkolakas}. The Greek were-wolf is closely related to the vampire. The lycanthropist falls into a cataleptic trance, during which his soul leaves his body, enters that of a wolf and ravens for blood. On the return of the soul, the body is exhausted and aches as though it had been put through violent exercise. After death lycanthropists become vampires. They are believed to frequent battlefields in wolf or hyæna shapes, and to suck the breath from dying soldiers, or to enter houses and steal the infants from their cradles. Modern Greeks call any savage-looking man, with dark complexion, and with distorted, misshapen limbs, a {Greek brúkolakas}, and suppose him to be invested with power of running in wolf-form.

The Serbs connect the vampire and the were-wolf together, and call them by one name vlkoslak. These rage chiefly in the depths of winter: they hold their annual gatherings, and at them divest themselves of their wolf-skins, which they hang on the trees around them. If any one succeeds in obtaining the skin and burning it, the vlkoslak is thenceforth disenchanted.

The power to become a were-wolf is obtained by drinking the water which settles in a foot-print left in clay by a wolf.

Among the White Russians the *_wawkalak_* is a man who has incurred the wrath of the devil, and the evil one punishes him by transforming him into a wolf and sending him among his relations, who recognize him and feed him well. He is a most amiably disposed were-wolf, for he does no mischief, and testifies his affection for his kindred by licking their hands. He cannot, however, remain long in any place, but is driven from house to house, and from hamlet to hamlet, by an irresistible passion for change of scene. This is an ugly superstition, for it sets a premium on standing well with the evil one.

The Slovakians merrily term a drunkard a *vlkodlak*, because, forsooth, he makes a beast of himself. A Slovakian household were-wolf tale closes this chapter.

The Poles have their were-wolves, which rage twice in the year--at Christmas and at midsummer.

According to a Polish story, if a witch lays a girdle of human skin on the threshold of a house in which a marriage is being celebrated, the bride and bridegroom, and bridesmaids and groomsmen, should they step across it, are transformed into wolves. After three years, however, the witch will cover them with skins with the hair turned outward; immediately they will recover their natural form. On one occasion, a witch cast a skin of too scanty dimensions over the bridegroom, so that his tail was left uncovered: he resumed his human form, but retained his lupine caudal appendage {i.e. tail--j**h** }.

The Russians call the were-wolf *_oborot_*, which signifies "one transformed." The following receipt is given by them for becoming one.

"He who desires to become an *oborot*, let him seek in the forest a hewn-down tree; let him stab it with a small copper knife, and walk round the tree, repeating the following incantation:--

On the sea, on the ocean, on the island, on Bujan,
On the empty pasture gleams the moon, on an ashstock lying
In a green wood, in a gloomy vale.
Toward the stock wandereth a shaggy wolf.
Horned cattle seeking for his sharp white fangs;
But the wolf enters not the forest,
But the wolf dives not into the shadowy vale,
Moon, moon, gold-horned moon,
Cheek the flight of bullets, blunt the hunters' knives,
Break the shepherds' cudgels,
Cast wild fear upon all cattle,
On men, on all creeping things,
That they may not catch the grey wolf,
That they may not rend his warm skin
My word is binding, more binding than sleep,
More binding than the promise of a hero!

"Then he springs thrice over the tree and runs into the forest, transformed into a wolf." [1]

[1. SACHAROW: *_Inland_*, 1838, No. 17.]

In the ancient Bohemian Lexicon of Vacerad (A. D. 1202) the were-wolf is called vilkodlak, and is explained as faunus. Safarik says under that head,-

"Incubi sepe improbi existunt mulieribus, et earum peragunt concubitum, quos demones Galli _dusios_ nuncupant." And in another place: "Vilkodlaci, incubi, sive invidi, ab inviando passim cum animalibus, unde et incubi dicuntur ab incubando homines, i. e. stuprando, quos Romani faunos ficarios dicunt."

That the same belief in lycanthropy exists in Armenia is evident from the following story told by Haxthausen, in his *Trans-Caucasia* (Leipzig, i. 322):--"A man once saw a wolf, which had carried off a child, dash past him. He pursued it hastily, but was unable to overtake it. At last he came upon the hands and feet of a child, and a little further on he found a cave, in which lay a wolf-skin. This he cast into a fire, and immediately a woman appeared, who howled and tried to rescue the skin from the flames. The man, however, resisted, and, as soon as the hide was consumed, the woman had vanished in the smoke."

In India, on account of the prevalence of the doctrine of metempsychosis, the belief in transformation is widely diffused. Traces of genuine lycanthropy are abundant in all regions whither Buddhism has reached. In Ceylon, in Thibet, and in China, we find it still forming a portion of the national creed.

In the *Pantschatantra* is a story of an enchanted Brahmin's son, who by day was a serpent, by night a man.

Vikramâditya's father, the son of Indra, was condemned to be an ass by day and a man by night.

A modern Indian tale is to this effect:--A prince marries a female ape, but his brothers wed handsome princesses. At a feast given by the queen to her stepdaughters, there appears an exquisitely beautiful lady in gorgeous robes. This is none other than the she-ape, who has laid aside her skin for the occasion: the prince slips out of the room and burns the skin, so that his wife is prevented from resuming her favourite appearance.

Nathaniel Pierce [1] gives an account of an Abyssinian superstition very similar to that prevalent in Europe.

[1. *Life and Adventures of Nathaniel Pierce*, written by himself during a residence in Abyssinia from 1810-19. London, 1831.]

He says that in Abyssinia the gold and silversmiths are highly regarded, but that the ironworkers are looked upon with contempt, as an inferior grade of beings. Their kinsmen even ascribe to them the power of transforming themselves into hyænas, or other savage beasts. All convulsions and hysterical disorders are attributed to the effect of their evil eye. The Amhara call them *Buda*, the Tigré, *Tebbib*. There are also Mahomedan and Jewish Budas. It is difficult to explain the origin of this strange superstition. These Budas are distinguished from other people by wearing gold ear-rings, and Coffin declares that he has often found hyænas with these rings in their ears, even among the beasts which he has shot or speared himself. But how the rings got into their ears is more than Coffin was able to ascertain.

Beside their power to transform themselves into hyænas or other wild beasts, all sorts of other strange things are ascribed to them; and the Abyssinians are firmly persuaded that they rob the graves by midnight, and no one would venture to touch what is called *_quanter_*, or dried meat in their houses, though they would not object to partake of fresh meat, if they had seen the animal, from which it came, killed before them. Coffin relates, as eye-witness of the fact, the following story:--

Among his servants was a Buda, who, one evening, whilst it was still light, came to his master and asked leave of absence till the following morning. He obtained the required leave and departed; but scarcely had Coffin turned his head, when one of his men exclaimed,--"Look! there he is, changing himself into hyæna," pointing in the direction taken by the Buda. Coffin turned to look, and although he did not witness the process of transformation, the young man had vanished from the spot on which he had been standing, not a hundred paces distant, and in his place was a hyæna running away. The place was a plain without either bush or tree to impede the view. Next morning the young man returned, and was charged by his companions with the transformation: this he rather acknowledged than denied, for he excused himself on the plea that it was the habit of his class. This statement of Pierce is corroborated by a note contributed by Sir Gardner Wilkinson to Rawlinson's *_Herodotus_* (book iv. chap. 105). "A class of people in Abyssinia are believed to change themselves into hyænas when they like. On my appearing to discredit it, I was told by one who lived for years there, that no well-informed person doubted it, and that he was once walking with one of them, when he happened to look away for a moment, and on turning again towards his companion, he saw him trotting off in the shape of a hyæna. He met him afterwards in his old form. These worthies are blacksmiths.--G. W."

A precisely similar superstition seems to have existed in America, for Joseph Acosta (*_Hist. Nat. des Indes_*) relates that the ruler of a city in Mexico, who was sent for by the predecessor of Montezuma, transformed himself, before the eyes of those who were sent to seize him, into an eagle, a tiger, and an enormous serpent. He yielded at last, and was condemned to death. No longer in his own house, he was unable to work miracles so as to save his life. The Bishop of Chiapa, a province of Guatemala, in a writing published in 1702, ascribes the same power to the Naguals, or national priests, who laboured to bring back to the religion of their ancestors, the children brought up as Christians by the government. After various ceremonies, when the child instructed advanced to embrace him, the Nagual suddenly assumed a frightful aspect, and under the form of a lion or tiger, appeared chained to the young Christian convert.--(*_Recueil de Voyages_*, tom. ii. 187.)

Among the North American Indians, the belief in transformation is very prevalent. The following story closely resembles one very prevalent all over the world.

"One Indian fixed his residence on the borders of the Great Bear lake, taking with him only a dog big with young. In due time, this dog brought forth eight pups. Whenever the Indian went out to fish, he tied up the pups, to prevent the straying of the litter. Several times, as he approached his tent, he heard noises proceeding from it, which sounded like the talking, the laughing, the crying, the wail,

and the merriment of children; but, on entering it, he only perceived the pups tied up as usual. His curiosity being excited by the noises he had heard, he determined to watch and learn whence these sounds proceeded, and what they were. One day he pretended to go out to fish, but, instead of doing so, he concealed himself in a convenient place. In a short time he again heard -voices, and, rushing suddenly into the tent, beheld some beautiful children sporting and laughing, with the dog-skins lying by their side. He threw the dog-skins into the fire, and the children, retaining their proper forms, grew up, and were the ancestors of the dog-rib nation."--(_ Traditions of the North American Indians_, by T. A. Jones, 1830, Vol. ii. p. 18.)

In the same work is a curious story entitled _The Mother of the World_, which bears a close analogy to another world-wide myth: a woman marries a dog, by night the dog lays aside its skin, and appears as a man. This may be compared with the tale of Björn and Bera already given.

I shall close this chapter with a Slovakian household tale given by T. T. Hanush in the third volume of _Zeitschrift für Deutsche Mythologie_.

The Daughter of the Vlkolak

"There was once a father, who had nine daughters, and they were all marriageable, but the youngest was the most beautiful. The father was a were-wolf. One day it came into his head: 'What is the good of having to support so many girls?' so he determined to put them all out of the way.

"He went accordingly into the forest to hew wood, and he ordered his daughters to let one of them bring him his dinner. It was the eldest who brought it.

"'Why, how come you so early with the food?' asked the woodcutter.

"'Truly, father, I wished to strengthen you, lest you should fall upon us, if famished!'

"'A good lass! Sit down whilst I eat.' He ate, and whilst he ate he thought of a scheme. He rose and said: 'My girl, come, and I will show you a pit I have been digging.'

"'And what is the pit for?'

"'That we may be buried in it when we die, for poor folk will not be cared for much after they are dead and gone.'

"'So the girl went with him to the side of the deep pit. 'Now hear,' said the were-wolf, 'you must die and be cast in there.'

"'She begged for her life, but all in vain, so he laid hold of her and cast her into the grave. Then he took a great stone and flung it in upon her and crushed her head, so the poor thing breathed out her soul. When the were-wolf had done this he went back to his work, and as dusk came on, the second daughter arrived, bringing him food. He told her of the pit, and brought her to it, and cast her in, and killed her as the first. And so he dealt with all his girls up to the last. The youngest knew well that her father was a were-wolf, and she

was grieved that her sisters did not return; she thought, 'Now where can they be? Has my father kept them for companionship; or to help him in his work?' So she made the food which she was to take him, and crept cautiously through the wood. When she came near the place where her father worked, she heard his strokes felling timber, and smelt smoke. She saw presently a large fire and two human heads roasting at it. Turning from the fire, she went in the direction of the axe-strokes, and found her father.

"See," said she, "father, I have brought you food."

"That is a good lass," said he. "Now stack the wood for me whilst I eat."

"But where are my sisters?" she asked.

"Down in yon valley drawing wood," he replied "follow me, and I will bring you to them."

"They came to the pit; then he told her that he had dug it for a grave. 'Now,' said he, 'you must die, and be cast into the pit with your sisters. '

"Turn aside, father," she asked, "whilst I strip of my clothes, and then slay me if you will."

"He turned aside as she requested, and then--tchich! she gave him a push, and he tumbled headlong into the hole he had dug for her.

"She fled for her life, for the were-wolf was not injured, and he soon would scramble out of the pit.

"Now she hears his howls resounding through the gloomy alleys of the forest, and swift as the wind she runs. She hears the tramp of his approaching feet, and the snuffle of his breath. Then she casts behind her her handkerchief. The were-wolf seizes this with teeth and nails, and rends it till it is reduced to tiny ribands. In another moment he is again in pursuit foaming at the mouth, and howling dismally, whilst his red eyes gleam like burning coals. As he gains on her, she casts behind her her gown, and bids him tear that. He seizes the gown and rives it to shreds, then again he pursues. This time she casts behind her her apron, next her petticoat, then her shift, and at last runs much in the condition in which she was born. Again the were-wolf approaches; she bounds out of the forest into a hay-field, and hides herself in the smallest heap of hay. Her father enters the field, runs howling about it in search of her, cannot find her, and begins to upset the different haycocks, all the while growling and gnashing his gleaming white fangs in his rage at her having escaped him. The foam flakes drop at every step from his mouth, and his skin is reeking with sweat. Before he has reached the smallest bundle of hay his strength leaves him, he feels exhaustion begin to creep over him, and he retires to the forest.

"The king goes out hunting every clay; one of his dogs carries food to the hay-field, which has most unaccountably been neglected by the hay-makers for three days. The king, following the dog, discovers the fair damsel, not exactly 'in the straw,' but up to her neck in hay. She is carried, hay and all, to the palace, where she becomes his wife, making only one stipulation before becoming his bride, and that

is, that no beggar shall be permitted to enter the palace.

"After some years a beggar does get in, the beggar being, of course, none other than her were-wolf father. He steals upstairs, enters the nursery, cuts the throats of the two children borne by the queen to her lord, and lays the knife under her pillow.

"In the morning, the king, supposing his wife to be the murderess, drives her from home, with the dead princes hung about her neck. A hermit comes to the rescue, and restores the babies to life. The king finds out his mistake, is reunited to the lady out of the hay, and the were-wolf is cast off a high cliff into the sea, and that is the end of him. The king, the queen, and the princes live happily, and may be living yet, for no notice of their death has appeared in the newspaper."

This story bears some resemblance to one told by Von Hahn in his Griechische und Albanesishe Märchen; I remember having heard a very similar one in the Pyrenees; but the man who flies from the were-wolf is one who, after having stripped off all his clothes, rushes into a cottage and jumps into a bed. The were-wolf dares not, or cannot, follow. The cause of his flight was also different. He was a freemason who had divulged the secret, and the were-wolf was the master of his lodge in pursuit of him. In the Bearnais story, there is nothing similar to the last part of the Slovakian tale, and in the Greek one the transformation and the pursuit are omitted, though the woman-eater is called "dog's-head," much as an outlaw in the north of Europe was said to be wolf-headed.

It is worthy of notice in the tale of The Daughter of the Ulkolak, that the were-wolf fit is followed by great exhaustion, [1] and that the wolf is given clothes to tear, much as in the Danish stories already related. There does not seem to be any indication of his having changed his shape, at least no change is mentioned, his hands are spoken of, and he swears and curses his daughter in broad Slovakian. The fit very closely resembles that to which Skallagrim, the Icelander, was subject. It is a pity that the maid Bråk in the Icelandic tale did not fall upon her legs like the young lady in the hay.

[1. Compare this with the exhaustion following a Berserkir fit, and that which succeeded the attacks to which M. Bertrand was subject.]

CHAPTER IX.

NATURAL CAUSES OF LYCANTHROPY.

Innate Cruelty--Its Three Forms--Dumollard--Andreas Bichel--A Dutch Priest--Other instances of Inherent Cruelty--Cruelty united to Refinement--A Hungarian Bather in Blood--Suddenness with which the Passion is developed--Cannibalism; in pregnant Women; in Maniacs--Hallucination; how Produced--Salves--The Story of Lucius--Self-deception.

WHAT I have related from the chronicles of antiquity, or from the traditional lore of the people, is veiled under the form of myth or

legend; and it is only from Scandinavian descriptions of those afflicted with the wolf-madness, and from the trials of those charged with the crime of lycanthropy in the later Middle Ages, that we can arrive at the truth respecting that form of madness which was invested by the superstitious with so much mystery.

It was not till the close of the Middle Ages that lycanthropy was recognized as a disease; but it is one which has so much that is ghastly and revolting in its form, and it is so remote from all our ordinary experience, that it is not surprising that the casual observer should leave the consideration of it, as a subject isolated and perplexing, and be disposed to regard as a myth that which the feared investigation might prove a reality.

In this chapter I purpose briefly examining the conditions under which men have been regarded as werewolves.

Startling though the assertion may be, it is a matter of fact, that man, naturally, in common with other carnivora, is actuated by an impulse to kill, and by a love of destroying life.

It is positively true that there are many to whom the sight of suffering causes genuine pleasure, and in whom the passion to kill or torture is as strong as any other passion. Witness the number of boys who assemble around a sheep or pig when it is about to be killed, and who watch the struggle of the dying brute with hearts beating fast with pleasure, and eyes sparkling with delight. Often have I seen an eager crowd of children assembled around the slaughterhouses of French towns, absorbed in the expiring agonies of the sheep and cattle, and hushed into silence as they watched the flow of blood.

The propensity, however, exists in different degrees. In some it is manifest simply as indifference to suffering, in others it appears as simple pleasure in seeing killed, and in others again it is dominant as an irresistible desire to torture and destroy.

This propensity is widely diffused; it exists in children and adults, in the gross-minded and the refined., in the well-educated and the ignorant, in those who have never had the opportunity of gratifying it, and those who gratify it habitually, in spite of morality, religion, laws, so that it can only depend on constitutional causes.

The sportsman and the fisherman follow a natural instinct to destroy, when they make wax on bird, beast, and fish: the pretence that the spoil is sought for the table cannot be made with justice, as the sportsman cares little for the game he has obtained, when once it is consigned to his pouch. The motive for his eager pursuit of bird or beast must be sought elsewhere; it will be found in the natural craving to extinguish life, which exists in his soul. Why does a child impulsively strike at a butterfly as it flits past him? He cares nothing for the insect when once it is beaten down at his feet, unless it be quivering in its agony, when he will watch it with interest. The child strikes at the fluttering creature because it has life in it, and he has an instinct within him impelling him to destroy life wherever he finds it.

Parents and nurses know well that children by nature are cruel, and that humanity has to be acquired by education. A child will gloat over the sufferings of a wounded animal till his mother bids him "put it

out of its misery." An unsophisticated child would not dream of terminating the poor creature's agonies abruptly, any more than he would swallow whole a bon-bon till he had well sucked it. Inherent cruelty may be obscured by after impressions, or may be kept under moral restraint; the person who is constitutionally a Nero, may scarcely know his own nature, till by some accident the master passion becomes dominant, and sweeps all before it. A relaxation of the moral check, a shock to the controlling intellect, an abnormal condition of body, are sufficient to allow the passion to assert itself.

As I have already observed, this passion exists in different persons in different degrees.

In some it is exhibited in simple want of feeling for other people's sufferings. This temperament may lead to crime, for the individual who is regardless of pain in another, will be ready to destroy that other, if it suit his own purposes. Such an one was the pauper Dumollard, who was the murderer of at least six poor girls, and who attempted to kill several others. He seems not to have felt much gratification in murdering them, but to have been so utterly indifferent to their sufferings, that he killed them solely for the sake of their clothes, which were of the poorest description. He was sentenced to the guillotine, and executed in 1862. [1]

[1. A full account of this man's trial is given by one who was present, in *_All the Year Round_*, No. 162.]

In others, the passion for blood is developed alongside with indifference to suffering.

Thus Andreas Bichel enticed young women into his house, under the pretence that he was possessed of a magic mirror, in which he would show them their future husbands; when he had them in his power he bound their hands behind their backs, and stunned them with a blow. He then stabbed them and despoiled them of their clothes, for the sake of which he committed the murders; but as he killed the young women the passion of cruelty took possession of him, and he hacked the poor girls to pieces whilst they were still alive, in his anxiety to examine their insides. Catherine Seidel he opened with a hammer and a wedge, from her breast downwards, whilst still breathing. "I may say," he remarked at his trial, "that during the operation I was so eager, that I trembled all over, and I longed to rive off a piece and eat it."

Andreas Bichel was executed in 1809. [1]

[1. The case of Andreas Bichel is given in Lady Duff Gordon's *_Remarkable Criminal Trials_*.]

Again, a third class of persons are cruel and bloodthirsty, because in them bloodthirstiness is a raging insatiable passion. In a civilized country those possessed by this passion are forced to control it through fear of the consequences, or to gratify it upon the brute creation. But in earlier days, when feudal lords were supreme in their domains, there have been frightful instances of their excesses, and the extent to which some of the Roman emperors indulged their passion for blood is matter of history.

Gall gives several authentic instances of bloodthirstiness. [1] A

Dutch priest had such a desire to kill and to see killed, that he became chaplain to a regiment that he might have the satisfaction of seeing deaths occurring wholesale in engagements. The same man kept a large collection of various kinds of domestic animals, that he might be able to torture their young. He killed the animals for his kitchen, and was acquainted with all the hangmen in the country, who sent him notice of executions, and he would walk for days that he might have the gratification of seeing a man executed.

[1. GALL: *Sur les Fonctions du Cerveau*, tom. iv.]

In the field of battle the passion is variously developed; some feel positive delight in slaying, others are indifferent. An old soldier, who had been in Waterloo, informed me that to his mind there was no pleasure equal to running a man through the body, and that he could lie awake at night musing on the pleasurable sensations afforded him by that act.

Highwaymen are frequently not content with robbery, but manifest a bloody inclination to torment and kill. John Rosbeck, for instance, is well known to have invented and exercised the most atrocious cruelties, merely that he might witness the sufferings of his victims, who were especially women and children. Neither fear nor torture could break him of the dreadful passion till he was executed.

Gall tells of a violin-player, who, being arrested, confessed to thirty-four murders, all of which he had committed, not from enmity or intent to rob, but solely because it afforded him an intense pleasure to kill.

Spurzheim [1] tells of a priest at Strasbourg, who, though rich, and uninfluenced by envy or revenge, from exactly the same motive, killed three persons.

[1. *Doctrine of the Mind*, p. 158.]

Gall relates the case of a brother of the Duke of Bourbon, Condé, Count of Charlois, who, from infancy, had an inveterate pleasure in torturing animals: growing older, he lived to shed the blood of human beings, and to exercise various kinds of cruelty. He also murdered many from no other motive, and shot at slaters for the pleasure of seeing them fall from the roofs of houses.

Louis XI. of France caused the death of 4,000 people during his reign; he used to watch their executions from a neighbouring lattice. He had gibbets placed outside his own palace, and himself conducted the executions.

It must not be supposed that cruelty exists merely in the coarse and rude; it is quite as frequently observed in the refined and educated. Among the former it is manifest chiefly in insensibility to the sufferings of others; in the latter it appears as a passion, the indulgence of which causes intense pleasure.

Those bloody tyrants, Nero and Caligula, Alexander Borgia, and Robespierre, whose highest enjoyment consisted in witnessing the agonies of their fellow-men, were full of delicate sensibilities and great refinement of taste and manner.

I have seen an accomplished young woman of considerable refinement and of a highly strung nervous temperament, string flies with her needle on a piece of thread, and watch complacently their flutterings. Cruelty may remain latent till, by some accident, it is aroused, and then it will break forth in a devouring

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