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# ANGLO-SAXON MAGIC

DOOR

G. STORMS

's-GRAVENHAGE  
MARTINUS NIJHOFF  
1948







## ANGLO-SAXON MAGIC

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**CENTRALE DRUKKERIJ N.V. — NIJMEGEN**

# ANGLO-SAXON MAGIC

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1948





*Voor mijn Vader  
en mijn Vrouw*



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**CORRIGENDA**

- p. 26, l. 20: Queen's *read* Queens'
- p. 164, No. 6, l. 2: begrifan *read* hegrifan
- p. 223, No. 17, l. 1 (translation): Add comma after fennel.
- p. 261, No. 28, l. 2 (translation): lupine, carrot *read* a root of lupine.





# PART I



CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTORY



By magic primitive man attempted to obtain results by means that seem to be abnormal and supernatural, at any rate by methods that strike us as distinct from those that we like to call normal and natural. Magic assumes the existence of an invisible, intangible and impersonal power. It is primarily a practical concern and success is the only thing that matters.

To a great extent magic is based on suggestion and therefore we see that the magic of other peoples is always held in greater respect and feared more than that practised at home. The qualities, idiosyncrasies and failures of the magician residing next door lead to familiarity, and though the familiarity need not breed contempt, it makes it more difficult for him to compete with rivals whose fame is firmly based on report, whose successes are repeated and exaggerated and whose failures remain unknown.

So it is small wonder that when Tacitus speaks of the Germanic tribes, living in the wild regions and impenetrable forests of central Europe and offering human sacrifices to Mercury or Woden, he should attribute great powers of divination to them, especially to the women<sup>1)</sup>. Several centuries later, when we have direct evidence from Germanic sources, we find that the Germanic peoples themselves were impressed by Celtic magic, and that they used Celtic loanwords, such as O.E. *dry-cræft*, 'the craft or power of a Druid, i.e., a magician', and O.E. *læce*, 'leech or doctor, i.e., a medicine-man'<sup>2)</sup>. The Anglo-Saxons borrowed from diverse sources, Greek, Irish, Hebrew and especially Latin, and a number of charm formulas evidently owe their effect to the mystification of a foreign tongue.

According to popular notions the power of magic knows prac-

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<sup>1)</sup> Germania, ch. 8-9.

<sup>2)</sup> Cf. Feist, *Etym. Wörterbuch der Gothischen Sprache*, s.v. *lekeis*.

tically no boundaries, no restrictions; it can provide a good or a bad crop, it can make the clouds rain and the sun shine, it can bring favour or disgrace, it can revive the dead and kill the living, it can change a man's shape and make him into a bird or a beast. Its very secrecy lends it the possibilities of dreams and youthful fancies. That is why it is often so difficult, also in our days, to make peasants and simple craftsmen talk of the means they use in curing a toothache or in staunching blood. A certain part of the process can be seen, but the words used to accompany the ritual will generally be kept a secret. The best way is to exchange information, for when they see that the questioner also has inside information, they are no longer afraid of betraying close-kept secrets. The same secrecy is maintained in the oldest Icelandic literature. The Eddic poems contain several references to magic practices, especially in the *Hávamál*, the sayings of the High One, i.e., Óðinn or Woden:

- 146 I know such charms as are unknown to the wife of a king,  
to the son of man.  
The first is called help, and it will help you  
against accusations and sorrows, and sufferings of every kind.
- 147 I know a second, which the sons of men need  
who wish to be physicians.
- 148 I know a third: if I am in urgent need  
of putting an enemy in irons;  
I blunt the sword-edges of my opponents,  
that their weapons will no longer bite.
- 149 I know a fourth: if men bring  
bonds for my limbs,  
such charms I utter that I can escape;  
from my feet will spring the fetters,  
from my hands the cuffs.
- 150 I know a fifth: if shot with hostile intentions  
I see a dart fly into a company of fighting men;  
however fixed its flight, still I shall slow it down,  
if I sight it with my eyes.
- 151 I know a sixth: if a man should (wish to) hurt me  
in (i.e., by) the roots of a young tree,  
this hero, who rouses my wrath,  
misfortune will eat him rather than me.

- 152 I know a seventh: if I see a high hall  
blazing about the banqueters;  
however high the flames will burn, I shall save it:  
I know how to sing a charm against it.
- 153 I know an eighth, which it is useful  
for everybody to acquire:  
wherever hate springs up among the sons of a warrior,  
I can settle it quickly.
- 154 I know a ninth: if the necessity arises  
to save my boat in a flood,  
I calm the wind on the waves  
and put the sea to slumber.
- 155 I know a tenth: if I see witches  
playing their game in the air,  
I shall so turn it that they will be bewildered  
as to their real shapes,  
their proper senses.
- 156 I know an eleventh: if into battle  
I have to lead friends of long standing,  
I charm under the shields, and they set out with power  
unhurt into the war,  
unhurt out of the war,  
they will return unhurt from every spot in the world.
- 157 I know a twelfth: if I see upon a tree  
the corpse of a strangled man,  
in such a way I cut and colour runes  
that the man walks  
and speaks with me.
- 158 I know a thirteenth: if I have to sprinkle  
a young retainer with water,  
he will never fall though he mixes with fighting men;  
this hero will not be hurt by a sword.
- 159 I know a fourteenth: if before a company of warriors  
I have to enumerate the gods;  
Aesir and elves, I know how to distinguish between all of them,  
a fool knows little of this.

- 160 I know a fifteenth: which Thjothreyrir, the dwarf,  
sang before the doors of Delligr.  
He sang power to the Aesir and honour to the elves,  
intelligence to Hroptatyr.
- 161 I know a sixteenth: if I wish to win  
the whole mind and love of a healthy maid;  
I turn the affection of a white-armed woman  
and change her whole heart.
- 162 I know a seventeenth: that the virginal maid  
will be loth to leave me.  
You, Loddfáfnir, will for a long time  
go without these charms.  
Still it will be good for you, if you get them,  
useful if you can take them,  
profitable if you obtain them.
- 163 I know an eighteenth, which I shall never make known  
neither to a virgin, nor to a married woman —  
it is ever best that only one should know;  
this may end up my songs —  
except to one who lies in my arms,  
or to my sister<sup>3)</sup>.

Though Woden boasts about all the charms he knows, he takes good care not to reveal them. A number of stanzas in the *Sigrdrífumál*, the *Regnismál* and the *Grógaldr* are construed on the same lines as the *Hávamál*, but nowhere in Old Icelandic do we find more than general statements. War-spells and love-spells appear to be the most popular in the Eddic poems, no doubt because the Edda mainly deals with that specific part of civilisation connected with fighting and love-making. Success abroad and success at home is everything for a young and vigorous people such as the settlers in Iceland. The actual proceedings are always carefully concealed, either because they are too simple or because they are too fanciful, as, for instance, in the *Sigrdrífumál* 13<sup>3)</sup>:

Mind-runes you should know if anyone else  
you wish to surpass in wisdom;  
Hroptr conceived them,

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<sup>3)</sup> I have used G. Neckel's edition: *Edda*, Heidelberg, 1927<sup>2</sup>.

cut them and devised them,  
from the liquid which leaked  
out of the skull of Heithdraupnir  
and out of the horn of Hoddrofnir.

The early sagas mention magic practices but they too are silent about details, though they are invaluable for a better understanding of the general atmosphere of magic among the Germanic peoples. Only in later folk-tales do we meet with particulars and can we gain insight into the ways and means of the magic act.

Old Icelandic sources continually point to the importance of Óðinn with regard to magic. He is either directly mentioned or indicated under some pseudonym, such as Hroptr in the stanza from the *Sigrdrífumál*. His claim of being *galdrsfadir*, the father of spells, is borne out in Old High German sources. A few charm formulas have been preserved in O.H.G., one of which is identical with a Sanskrit charm from the Atharva-Veda. In this charm, the so-called Second Merseburg Charm, Woden applied his magic after some other magicians had failed, and he cured a sprained ankle: *so he wola conda*, 'for he knew how to do so'. Woden is the only god mentioned by name in Anglo-Saxon charm texts (No. 9).

The Anglo-Saxon charms, given in full in part II, are of outstanding importance because they provide more than vague references or exceptional and short texts. They cannot be said to reveal everything, for there are numerous points in which they lamentably fail us, but they are numerous enough and, taken as a body, complete enough to give more than a tantalising hint of a strange world. The veil of mystification enveloping magic appears to be thin and transparent here, and our difficulties in understanding the magic formulas do not seem to be greater than those we experience in interpreting other O.E. texts, such as the Riddles or certain passages from the *Beowulf*. Generally our greatest difficulties are due to the corrupt state of the texts, rather than to problems of interpretation. In many O.E. texts the mysteriousness is largely due to the fact that the formulas have been borrowed from other languages and the words have not been translated but merely distorted. In several cases the result is a mere mass of jingling nonsense. The finest O.E. formulas, however, are simple and straightforward as long as the texts have not been tampered with, which unfortunately has happened but too frequently. Still it is usually possible to discern the general meaning of these formulas.



Of equal significance to a better understanding of magic are the accompanying practices, or, we had better say, the practices to which the charm formulas are accompaniments. Many of them have been preserved and they appear to be relatively simple if they are given in full. For both formulas and practices are directed towards a definite end, and, once the general purpose is known, it is possible for us to understand the significance of the details, to put them in their appurtenant places and to reconstruct a number of magic practices more or less completely.

An analysis of magic practices and formulas will show that their structure is based on the idea of magic power, on symbolical representations and on what Frazer calls homoeopathic and contagious magic<sup>4</sup>). The idea of mystification, the precept of virginity, the use of iron, the introduction of special colours, etc., appear to be secondary elements. All these elements have combined to make the magic ritual into so complicated an affair that it was hardly possible for an amateur to rival with the professional. Non-professional practices have to be assumed in Anglo-Saxon times and it was not necessary for one person to know all magic practices, but the close connection between magic and medicine presupposes long and continuous study, while the detailed knowledge required and the amount of time taken up by non-medicinal magic suggest the same thing.

Both practices and formulas show the close connection there was in Anglo-Saxon times between magic and religion. The influence of the Christian religion is so obvious that it is unnecessary to give instances here; it is spread throughout the charm texts and can be seen at a glance. The rich liturgy of the church was bound to make its mark on the ritual of magic. Christianity, however, is comparatively new and before its coming there was the connection between magic and pre-Christian religion. First of all we have the worship of Woden and his circle. Woden is the only god mentioned by name in Anglo-Saxon magic and he comes in but once, as we have just said. A much closer connection exists with the worship of the sun and, to a smaller extent, of the moon. Charm No. 8. is the outstanding instance of sun-worship in Anglo-Saxon magic, notably lines 28-34:

And then turn to the east and bow humbly nine  
times, and say then these words:

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<sup>4</sup>) See Chapter III.

Eastwards I stand, for favours I pray.  
I pray the great Lord, I pray the mighty prince,  
I pray the holy Guardian of the heavenly kingdom.  
Earth I pray and sky.

Lines 43-44 round off this particular part of the formula by enjoining the magician to turn three times with the course of the sun, and then to stretch himself on the ground and say some Christian prayers. Turning round with the course of the sun or moving against the course of the sun was a typical device in magic to propitiate the sun god or to invoke dark forces. The assistance of the sun is also called upon to bring back stolen property in charms No. 11-15. Line 6 in No. 12, for instance, which bids the charmer first to sing the charm standing upright, is completely obscure without taking into account certain aspects of the worship of the sun, some of which come out clearly in parallel formulas:

And worship then three times to the east and say  
three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the east.  
No. 13, ll. 7-8.

In most cases such pagan customs have been partly christianised, which is a cause of thankfulness as well as of regret, for it is pretty certain that without the Christianisation they, would hardly have been written down. All heathenism was prohibited by secular and ecclesiastical laws, and the laws of Canute state that it was special heathenism 'to worship the sun and the moon'<sup>5</sup>). Still such practices lingered on in magic, although gradually the original idea receded into the background and was eventually completely forgotten:

Against the dry disease (O.E. *þeor*): bark of ash, bark of aspen, bark of elm, bark of quickbeam (rattling asp), the lower part of the tall highway nettle, wormwood, water agrimony; paint all the pieces of bark a purple colour on the outside, and pound them thoroughly. Boil them together, take equal quantities of each, soak them in clear ale. Then let the potion stand for a night in a vessel before the patient will drink of it. In the morning let him drink a cupful of this potion. In the middle of the morning let him

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<sup>5</sup>) Cnut, § 5. ed. Liebermann I, p. 312.

stand towards the east, let him address himself earnestly to God and let him make the sign of the cross, let him turn about with the course of the sun. After the drink let him then go and stand for some time before he takes a rest. Let him pour on as much as he removes from it (i.e., the potion). Let him drink this potion for nine nights and eat whatever food he likes.

Leechbook I, XLVII

This prescription enables us to get a better insight into the ways of christianising pagan customs. 'Let him address himself earnestly to God and let him make the sign of the cross' appears at first sight to be fully Christian. Yet if we read these lines in their full context and see what immediately precedes and follows, the Christianisation is but superficial. It is the sun that is worshipped: Let him stand towards the east and pray to the sun and let him turn about with the course of the sun. Even the injunction to make the sign of the cross is unlikely to be of Christian origin, for the cross is an element in the worship of the sun to be found all over the world long before the Christian era. We cannot make out any more what cross was originally meant in the prescription just mentioned, the simple cross with four equilateral arms or the Germanic *fylfot*, i.e., the swastika form. Of the latter Hasting's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* says: "From the circumstances in which the gammate cross has been traced or employed, it follows that in every instance in which a symbolical meaning has been attributed to it, it is a sign of good omen, of propitiation and benediction, an emblem of prosperity, of life, of safety"<sup>6)</sup>. It is not the purpose of the present work to provide a study of comparative magic and religion, but under the heading *Cross* (American) there is another entrance in *E.R.E.*, which throws some light on Charm No. 8: "Many American peoples believe in the efficacy of the cross as a symbol whereby rain may be obtained. The rain-makers of the Lenni-Lenapi draw the figure of a cross upon the ground, with its extremities towards the cardinal points, and on this they place a gourd, some tobacco, and a piece of red material, afterwards invoking the rain-spirit"<sup>7)</sup>. The Anglo-Saxon field-ceremonies start by enjoining the magician to take four sods from the four

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<sup>6)</sup> Goblet d'Alviella in *E.R.E.*, s.v. *cross*.

<sup>7)</sup> Lewis Spence, *l.c.*

sides of the land and one in the middle, thus constituting a cross; then four crosses are made and laid in the holes formed by taking away the sods. The crosses are marked by writing the names of the four evangelists on the four arms, which again points to a pre-Christian origin, for why should the four evangelists come in if the crosses were regarded as emblems of Christ? The combination of the sun, the sky and the rain is not as strange as it may appear at first sight, for it was easy for primitive man to observe that the sun makes the water evaporate, so it may also give it back in the form of rain, which is just as necessary to make crops grow as heat and sunshine.

In the prescription quoted above the cross was retained and it was christianised by giving it a Christian interpretation. So again in the charms against theft, No. 11-15. In a prescription. of the Leechbook II, LXV some herbs are blessed by singing three Masses over them on three days: at Midwinter, on St. Stephen's day and on the feastday of St. John the Evangelist. The two last days are on the 26th and 27th of December, respectively, so it would seem that the midwinter celebrations of the sun cult have either been changed from the twenty-first of December to the twenty-fifth or that they had always been celebrated a few days after the winter solstice. The culminating point of the sun worship was of course at midsummer, when the sun was in its zenith. A Christian remnant of the midsummer celebrations may be found in the popularity of the feastday of St. John the Baptist, which falls on the twenty-fourth of June<sup>8)</sup>). Anglo-Saxon reminiscences are the directions preserved in the fourth section of the Lacnunga, an eleventh-century collection of medical lore :

Gather all those herbs together three nights before summer comes to town (i.e., before midsummer) . . . . And then in the night when summer comes to town in the morning, then the man who wishes to take the drink must keep awake all night; and when the cock crows for the first time, then he must drink once, a second time when day and night divide (i.e., at the first streak of dawn), a third time when the sun rises, and let him rest afterwards.

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<sup>8)</sup> Mugwort is known in Germany both as *St. Johannesgürtel* and *Sonnenwendgürtel*, i.e., St. John's wort and solstice-wort.

Herbs gathered on midsummer's day apparently had special powers:

Against liver complaint gather this same herb  
(vervain) on midsummer's day. Herbarium IV

Sunrise and sunset come in repeatedly in the instructions for the gathering of herbs or the preparing of prescriptions:

Scarify the neck after sunset Charm No. 6.

Go on Wednesday evening, when the sun is set, to a spot where you know that elecampane is growing.... Go back to the spot just as day and night divide.... Go back to church as quickly as possible and lay it under the altar. Let it lie until the sun has risen.

Charm No. 17, ll. 15-16; 20; 27-28.

Dig up waybread without iron before sunrise

Leechbook III, 1.

The worship of the moon is a little doubtful. Clear instances are lacking and only in the Herbarium do we find some indications:

If a man is fastidious (about food?) you may unbind him. Take five plants of lion foot, without tools, boil them in water while the moon is on the wane, and wash him with it. And lead him out of the house, and purify him with the herb called aristolochia. And when he goes out, let him not look behind him, then you may unbind him from the infirmity.

Herbarium VIII

Against a lunatic. Take this herb (clovewort), wreath it with a red thread about the man's neck when the moon is waning, in the month of April or early in October. Soon he will be healed.

Herbarium X

April and October are obligatory, perhaps, because they are halfway between midsummer and midwinter, and the influence of the moon was apparently stronger when the sun was weakest.

The worship of the earth is evident in Charm No. 8. Lines 51-66

contain a hymn to Mother Earth, the first line of which has baffled all editors:

Erce, Erce, Erce, mother of earth,  
may the omnipotent, eternal Lord grant you  
fields growing and thriving,  
flourishing and bountiful,  
bright shafts of millet-crops,  
and of broad barley-crops,  
and of all the crops of the earth.  
May the eternal Lord grant him,  
and his saints who are in heaven,  
that his produce may be safe against every foe,  
and secure from every harm,  
from witchcraft sown throughout the land.  
Now I pray the Sovereign Who created this world  
that no woman may be so eloquent, and no man so  
powerful  
that they can upset the words thus spoken.

The general atmosphere and the wording of this hymn are definitely pagan and the Christianisation is very slight. It is no use speculating about its precise pre-Christian form nor about the date of its composition.

The charm formulas are the oldest relics of Anglo-Saxon and Germanic literature. Some of them antedate *Widsid* by hundreds, in certain cases perhaps by thousands of years. They belong to the oldest traditions of the Germanic and Indo-European peoples. A comparative study of the ideas and conceptions of Germanic magic may lead us to a better understanding of the connections between the various peoples, and, possibly, give us a clue to the countries they originally inhabited. On the other hand Anglo-Saxon magic is there to warn us that no elements of primitive culture are as easily transmitted and as quickly assimilated as magic practices.

CHAPTER II  
THE MANUSCRIPTS



The main sources of our knowledge of magic in Anglo-Saxon times are medical manuscripts. Principal among them are two treatises to be found among the British Museum MSS, Regius 12 D XVII and Harley 585. They were first edited by the Rev. Oswald Cockayne for the Rolls Series between 1864 and 1866: "Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England, being a collection of documents, for the most part never before printed, illustrating the history of science in this country before the Norman Conquest", in three volumes.

§ 1. *The Leechbook*

The oldest manuscript in which magical practices and charms occur is Regius 12 D XVII, written about the middle of the tenth century and containing a collection of medical prescriptions, chiefly taken from classical sources and subdivided into three books. It was named *Læceboc* or *Leechbook* by Cockayne from a passage in the contents of Book II, section XLII, which says:

þonne sceal him mon blod lætan on þas wisan þe þeos  
læceboc segþ (Then he shall be let blood in the way  
this leechbook tells).

Section LX has a similar reference to *læceboc*, this time in the plural:

Swa on þisum læcebocum segþ (As it says in these  
leechbooks).

Cockayne's edition of the Leechbook is contained in vol. II of the work mentioned above and it appeared in 1865. It has remained the standard edition, and it is accompanied by a translation and a glossary. The translation is somewhat queer and old-fashioned, as Cockayne tried as much as possible to keep to the etymological forms of the words to be translated.

In 1905 another edition of the text was published by G. Leonhardi, as Vol. VI of Wülker's *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa*. It is without a translation, but it has a number of textual and linguistic notes. Instead of a translation Leonhardi intended to publish a full vocabulary and a long essay on the Leechbook, which have never come out, however, probably owing to the many obscurities offered by a work on early medicine. Up till the present year (1947) no new translation has been published, so that Cockayne's is still the only one.

The three books of which the Leechbook is made up in its present form were originally independent. First Book I and Book II were put together and afterwards Book III was added. It is quite clear that Book III is a later addition, for at the end of Book II there is a Latin poem in six lines mentioning Bald as the owner and Cild as the scribe of the work, and expressing the wish that nobody would ever attempt perfidiously to take away the book "neither by force, nor by stealth, nor by any false words", as it was his best and dearest treasure:

Bald habet hunc librum Cild quem conscribere iussit.  
Hic precor assidue cunctis in nomine Christi,  
Quod nullus tollat hunc librum perfidus a me,  
Nec vi nec furto nec quodam fame falso.  
Cur? Quia nulla mihi tam cara est optima gaza  
Quam cari libri quos Christi gratia comit.

As this piece of verse was put at the end of Book II it seems to have originally belonged to a MS, to which the third book had not yet been added, and which may or may not have been the immediate source from which Regius 12 D XVII was copied.

At first sight Book I and II present a greater unity, but here too the contents point to an original independence. Towards the end of both books we meet with a number of prescriptions that differ from the preceding ones. We also find two Germanic names, one Oxa towards the end of the first and one Dun towards the end of the second book. In Oxa and Dun we may suspect two Anglo-Saxon physicians who compiled books of medicine for their own use from the works of various classical writers, such as Alexander of Tralles, Marcellus, Pliny and several others, and they added what they had learned by their own experience or from oral tradition. It is impossible to tell at what time, in what century, lived those two Anglo-Saxon medicine-men who first compiled their practical lore.



In the eighth century, perhaps, or even earlier. But their work was copied and copied again and the form of the work gradually changed on account of the additions and omissions made at every copying. We are certain of one late ninth century addition in section LXIV of Book II, where there are some prescriptions said to originate from Dominus Helias, patriarch at Jerusalem, who ordered 'you' to tell them to King Alfred. From this statement we can infer that a number of Anglo-Saxons had gone to Jerusalem, probably on a pilgrimage to the holy places of Christendom, and that they had been sent, or at any rate supported, by King Alfred. While waiting upon the highest ecclesiastical authority of Jerusalem they were presented with an agate stone that was good against all sorts of diseases, and with a few other recipes. The story of this incident was added to Book II, so we can be certain that Book III had not yet been joined to it before the end of the ninth century. Elias, patriarch of Jerusalem, died in 907.

The only classical author mentioned by name in the Leechbook is Pliny. Gaius Plinius Secundus or Pliny the Elder was born about 23 A.D. He served in Gaul and the Roman occupied part of Germany. He was killed near Herculaneum by the eruption of the Vesuvius in 79. The only work extant is his *Natural History* in 37 books. Books XX — XXVII contain some medical prescriptions in which plants are used, and Books XXVIII — XXXII deal with other than botanical medical matter, namely medicines derived from the bodies of land animals. In the first half of the fourth century a compilation of Books XX — XXXII was made, consisting of three books, to which the title of *Medicina Plinii* was given. Early in the sixteenth century this collection was extended into five books, published under the name of Plinius Valerianus. The *Natural History* was one of the most popular writings of the Middle Ages and the fame of Pliny rose accordingly. The Leechbook I, LXXXVII calls him "Plinius the great physician."

Marcellus, living at the time of Theodosius II, about 400, largely borrowed from the *Medicina Plinii*, besides adding elements of folk-medicine gathered by himself. In the sixteenth century he received the name of Marcellus Empiricus. He seems to have been a Gaul by birth. His work *De Medicamentis*, consisting of fifteen books, was dedicated to his sons. He wrote it as a help for them, so that they would not be obliged to call in the help of professional doctors. As a medical work it is of little value, but it contains numerous instances of popular superstitions. In the preface the

author names several medical writers, mainly Greeks, whom he pretends to have studied but whom he only knows indirectly.

Alexander of Tralles was born in Lydia and lived about the middle of the sixth century. He was a military doctor, and as such he travelled through Italy, Africa, Spain and Gaul, picking up knowledge and popular customs as he went along. He seems to have been an independent thinker and was one of the few medical writers after Galen to promote the science of medicine. Towards the end of his life he wrote a large medical work *Therapeutica* in twelve books, in which he collected the tradition of his predecessors and compared it with his own experience. He paid great attention to popular traditions and reproduced a great many superstitious medicines in his work <sup>1)</sup>.

In the therapeutics of the various diseases the Leechbook follows the natural order of the human body, beginning with the head and ending with the feet.

Book I treats of the exterior body. It starts with the head, the eyes, the ears, the mouth, and systematically works down to the feet and the fingernails. Then follow medicines against skin diseases and wounds. So far there is little in it connected with magic, but from section XLV onwards we find directions against poisons, worms and fevers, three diseases that were often supposed to be caused by magic. The instructions are based on classical and northern sources, but Christian elements appear frequently.

Book II treats of internal disorders. It contains whole chapters that are almost literally taken over from Alexander of Tralles, whereas borrowings from other writers are rare compared with Book I. Hence it makes a more orderly impression. The order continues until section LVI, where there is a gap in the manuscript. The table of contents shows that the last nine sections speak of other things than internal disorders. Only the last three sections have been preserved, of which section LXV contains a charm and a cure for lung disease taught by Dun. From the table of contents we know that section LX contained a charm for women who cannot bear children. The loss of this charm is to be regretted as it might have shed some light on an Anglo-Saxon charm against miscarriage which is none too clear. Generally women are most influenced by magical beliefs in matters concerning their children,

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<sup>1)</sup> The information about Pliny, Marcellus and Alexander is taken from Pauly-Wissowa and from Schanz-Hosius, *Geschichte d. Röm. Literatur*.

and we have a few other short indications what a woman had to do and to avoid in order to promote conception and to aid the happy delivery of her child.

Of the three this book shows fewest additions; now if it had formed a unity with Book I from the very beginning we should expect most novelties to come at the end, that is, in Book II. Writing material must have been scarce and expensive in Anglo-Saxon days and space was utilised as much as possible. We never find that some leaves are left open for later additions, so that the additions to Book I prove that it was an independent manuscript until a comparatively late date.

Book III consists of all sorts of prescriptions, usually rather short. Christian influence is strongly marked in as far as holy water, incense, prayers and Masses are often used to increase the medicinal value of herbs, salves and drinks. It is generally impossible to decide whether these Christian influences are mere additions or whether they replace older pagan practices. There is little unity or order in this book, and there is sufficient internal evidence to put it down as a later compilation. But the manuscript as preserved is all written by the same scribe, as far as we can see, and by a scribe who lived somewhere about 950 A.D.

As a whole the Leechbook is a work of medicine chiefly based on classical sources<sup>2)</sup> and coloured with a mixture of southern and northern magic. Many prescriptions will be regarded by the modern reader as merely superstitious and ridiculous, some as detrimental to the patient's welfare. The atmosphere it breathes has few points of contact with that of modern science. Still it makes a claim to scientific exactitude and looks down scornfully on those *unwise læcas*, those foolish physicians, who do not know how to make a proper diagnosis (II, xxxi). It is the Handbook of the Anglo-Saxon medical student.

## § 2. *The Lacnunga*

Another collection of medical prescriptions is to be found in MS. Harley 585 in the British Museum. This manuscript opens with an O.E. translation of the *Herbarium Apulei*, a description of herbs and plants that was very popular in classical and medieval times. The Herbarium was collected from various Greek sources in

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<sup>2)</sup> They have been partly indicated by Cockayne in the margin of his text.

the fifth century A.D., and afterwards ascribed to Apuleius of Madaura, an encyclopedic writer who lived in the second century after Christ. The medicaments occur on ff. 130a-193a. They were first edited and translated in 1866 by Cockayne, in Vol. III of *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England*. Cockayne named them *Lacnunga* to distinguish them from the collection of the Leechbook. In the manuscript itself there is no indication of such a name.

In 1905 a new edition was brought out by Leonhardi in the same volume in which the text of the Leechbook appeared, but no other translation has as yet come out. Leonhardi's edition is of minor significance to us because he omitted the verse charms. They had been published in 1883 in the *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*, Vol. I, by Wülker, the general editor of the series. We think that Leonhardi did wrong in leaving them out, because much is to be learned from a continuous and unbroken reading of this kind of book, as the general atmosphere often suggests an explanation that can only partly be based on facts or logical arguments. Furthermore, the verse charms belong to the most difficult subjects in O.E. poetry and every textual emendation or explanatory note may be of value for a better understanding of the whole.

MS. Harley 585 dates from the middle of the eleventh century. It consists of 193 leaves; the number of lines on each page varies between fourteen and twenty-three and the writing is generally irregular. Still it seems to be the work of one man using several quills<sup>3)</sup>.

The *Lacnunga* does not contain a table of contents. In correspondence with the method used in editing the Leechbook Cockayne divided the *Lacnunga* into 118 sections. His division is sometimes rather arbitrary and needs revising in a new edition. However, his numbering has the advantage for the moment of enabling us to indicate that particular part of the text which we need, for any other internal and external arrangement is lacking.

The purpose of the *Lacnunga* was different from that of the Leechbook. The writer, or rather the compiler, whom we do not want to identify with the 11th-century scribe, did not aim at a scientific handbook. He started with recipes against headache, pain in the eyes and cough, and it is obvious at once that there is something queer in almost every recipe, for the sections that are some-

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<sup>3)</sup> Cp. Leonhardi, p. 158.

how connected with magic are more numerous than those that are not. Whenever he came across anything that struck his fancy for some reason or other, he immediately put it in without bothering about its meaning and form or the order of his book. He did not copy any one manuscript and he looked for his material everywhere: section 71 is a salve against lice; 72 a drink against lice; 73 is a cure for melancholy; 74 a Latin charm against flying venom, i.e., infectious diseases; 75 and 76 give an O.E. charm against a sudden stitch or rheumatism; and 77 gives more prescriptions to get rid of lice. One of these advises the sufferer to take wormwood and horehound and boil them in wine or sweetened water. When this concoction is put on the navel three times the lice will die and so will other small insects. The *Lacnunga* abounds in prescriptions like this. The prescriptions in section 77 are borrowed from a different source from those in 71 and 72, where we find the form *wið lusum*, whereas here we find *wið lusan*. The latter form is likely to be also a dative. The divergence of form, however, can only be explained by assuming literal copying of at least two written sources. Most of the sources, if not all, must have been in writing. We can infer this from a few parallel passages in the *Leechbook* and the *Lacnunga*. *Leechbook I*, for instance, has:

Wip heafodwærce genim heahheolþan and grundeswelgean and fencersan and gitrifan, wel on wætere, læt reocan on þa eagan, þonne hit hat sie and ymb þa eagan gnid mid þæm wirtum swa hatum.

The *Lacnunga* 1 has:

Wið heafodwærce hindhæleda and grundeswylgean and fæncyrsan and gidrifan wyl in wætere, læt reocan in þa eagan þa hwile hy hate synd and ymb ða eagan gnid mid þam wirtum swa hatum.

*Leechbook I*, xv:

Wip hwoſtan, hu he miſſenlice on mon become and hu hiſ mon tilian ſcyle. Se hwoſta hæfd manigfealdnc tocyme ſwa þa ſpatl beoð miſſenlicu, hwilum cymð of ungemetfæſtre hæto, hwilum of ungemetfæſtum cyle, hwilum of ungemetlicre drignesse. Wyr drenc wip hwoſtan, genim mucgwyr, ſeoþ on cyperenum citele and wyl oþþæt hio ſie ſwiþe þicce, and hio ſie of hwætenum mealte geworht, genim

þonne eoforfearnes mæst, bisceopwyr̃t, hindheoloðan, dweorgedwostlan, singrenan, do to eall on fæt, sele drincan middeldagum and forga sur and sealtes gehwæt. Wiþ hwostan eft genim hunan, seoð on wætere, sele swa wearme drincan. Eft genim clifwyr̃t, sume men hatað foxesclife, sume eawyr̃t, and hio sy geworht ofer midne sumor, seoþ þa on wætere oppæt ðriddan dæl þæs woses of sie, sele drincan þriwa on dæg.

Lacnunga 112, 113:

Wið hwostan, hu he missenlice on man becymð and hu his man tilian sceal. Se hwosta hæfð mænigfealdne tocyme, swa ða swat beoð missenlicu, hwilum he cymð of ungemætfæstre hæto, hwilum of ungemetfæstum cyle, hwilum of ungemetlicre wætan, hwilum of ungemætlicre drignesse. Wyr̃c drænc wið hwostan, genim mascwyr̃t, seoð on cyperenan cytele and wyll oddæt heo sy swipe þicce, and heo sy of hwætenum mealte geworht, genim þonne eoforfearnes mæst, bisceopwyr̃t, hindhæleþan, dweorgedwostlan, singrenan, do eall on fæt, syle drincan middeldagum and forga sur and sealtes gehwæt. Wið hwostan eft genim hunan, seoð on wætere, syle swa wearme drincan. Eft genim clifwyr̃t, sume men hatað foxesclife, sume eawyr̃t, and heo sy geworht ofer midne sumor, seoð ða on wætere oddæt . . .

The choice and order of words in these passages are practically the same, and with one or two insignificant exceptions the variations are only variations of spelling. They are, however, too numerous to assume that the Lacnunga was copied from the Leechbook, and on the other hand they are too slight to think of an independent translation of the Latin original, so that we have to conclude that an earlier O.E. translation existed of parts or the whole of the work of Alexander of Tralles, from which the second passage is borrowed (liber V). If we had a direct borrowing from the Leechbook the number of parallel passages would probably have been much greater. How far the parallelism in our second example went on is not known, as several leaves from the Lacnunga are missing after *oddæt*, but there is no reason to think that it went on much longer.

Sometimes the parallelism is not as close as in the preceding instances:

Leechbook III, xiv :

[Wip lungenadle]. Eft wyl on hunige anum marubian, do hwon berenmela to, ete on neahnestig and þonne þu him selle drenc oððe briw, sele him hatne and læt gerestan þone man æfter tide dægcs on þa swiþran sidan and hafa þone earm aþened.

Lacnunga 26:

Drænc wið lungenadle, wyl marubian in wine oððe in ealað, geswet hwon mid hunige, syle drincan wearne on nihtnicstig and þonne licge on ða swiðran sidan gode hwile æfter þæm dræncc and þænne þone swiðran earm swa he swiþast mæge.

Leechbook III, xxx:

Wyrcc godne ðeordrenc wermod, bogen, garclifan, polleian, wenwyrct þa smalan, felterre, eagwyrct, þeorwyrct, ceasteræscas II snæda, elenan III, commuces III, wuduweaxan godne dæl, curmeallan, gescearfa þas wyrta on god hluttur eala oþþe wylisc ealu, læt standan III niht bewrigen, sele drincan scenc fulne tide ær oþrum mete. Wip þeore and wip sceotendum wenne nim bogen and gearwan wuduweax and hrefnes fot, do on god ealu, sele drincan on dæge III scencas fulle. Gif þeor gewunige on anre stowe, wyrcc beþinge, nim pæt ifig þe on stane weaxe and gearwan and wudubindes leaf and cuslyppan, gecnua ealle wel, lege on hatne stan on troge, geot hwon wæteres on, læt reocan on pæt lic, þær him þearf sie, þonne se col sie, do oþerne hatne on, beþe swa gelome, him biþ sona sel.

Lacnunga 40-42:

40. Wyrcc ðeordrænc godne, genim wermod and boðen, acrimonian, pollegan, ða smalan wenwyrct, feltere, ægwyrct, ðyorwyrct, ceasteraxsan twa snada, eofolan þreo snada, cammuces IV, wuduweaxan godne dæl and curmeallan, gescearfa ða wyrta in god hluttur eala † in god wylisc eala. læt standan III niht be-

wrogen, syle drincan scænc fulne tide ær oþrum mete.

41. Wið þeore and wið sceotendum wenne genim boðen and gearwan and wuduweaxan and hræfnes fot, do in god eala, syle drincan on dæge III drænceas.

42. Gif ðeor sy gewunad in anre stowwe, wyrç gode beðingce, genim ifig ðe on stane wyxd on eorþan and gearwan and wudubindan leaf, cuslyppan and oxanslyppan, gecnuca hy ealle swiðe wel, lege on hatne stan in troge, do hwon wæteres in, læt reocan on þæt lic, swa him ðearf sy, oððæt col sy, do oþerne hatne stan in, beþe gelome, sona him bið sel.

The Lacnunga prefers æ as the mutated sound of *a*: fæncyrsan; ungemætfæstre; ungemætlicre; drænc; þænne; etc., where the earlier Leechbook nearly always has *e*.

There must have been a definite tradition or school in England for translating medical texts. The last passage does not make the impression of being translated by one and the same man, for the divergence between the Leechbook and the Lacnunga is too striking and yet the similarity in word order and in words is equally striking. The translation of Lacnunga 40-42 clearly reveals its Latin origin: the position of *godne* after *ðeordrænc*; the retention of *acrimonian* although there was an A-S. equivalent *garclife*; as also of the crossed *l* representing Latin *vel*, where the Leechbook has *oþþe*.

The two forms *eagwyr*t and *ægwyr*t are typical of the difficulties we come up against in the Leechbook and the Lacnunga in regard of the interpretation of plant names. The A.S.D. states *eagwyr*t to mean 'eyebright' and *ægwyr*t 'dandelion', but it is evident that only one plant is intended in the text. Are we to accept Anglian smoothing in *ægwyr*t? but in this case we should expect *egwyr*t or *ehwyr*t; or are we to accept an attempt of the scribe of the Leechbook to give a West-Saxon form to the word *ægwyr*t, because he thought it required a change of form? And which is the right form in the case of *bogen* and *boðen*?

The two treatises also run parallel in their treatment of erysipelatous inflammations:

Leechbook I, xxxix:

Her sint læcedomas wiþ ælces cynnes omum and onfeallum and bancopum, eahta and twentig. Nim grenes



merces leaf, gegnid oppe getrifula wið ecedes derstan, smire mid þy þa saran stowa. Wiþ omum utablegnedum, nim sur molcen, wyrce to cealre and beþ mid þy cealre. Wið omum eft, genim beordræsta and sapan and æges þæt hwite and ealde grut, lege on wiþ omena geswelle. Wiþ omena geberste, sitte on cealdum wætere oppæt hit adeadod sie, teoh þonne up, sleah þonne feower scarpan ymb þa poccas utan and læt yrnan þæt sticce þe hit wille; wyrce þe sealfe þus: Nim brunewyrt and merscmeargeallan and reade netlan, wyl on buteran and smire mid and beþe mid þam ilcum wyrtum. Wiþ þon ilcan, genim angoltwæccan, gegnid swiþe, do eced to and onbind and smire mid. Wiþ þon ilcan, genim safinan, gnid to duste and meng wiþ hunig and smire mid. Wiþ þon ilcan, genim gebrædde ægru, meng wið ele, lege on and beþe swiðe mid betan leafum. Eft, genim cealfes scearn oppe ealdes hryperes, wearm and lege on. Eft wiþ þon, genim heorotes scafoþan of felle ascafen mid pumice and wese mid ecede and smire mid. Eft, genim efores geallan, gif þu næbbe nim opres swines, gegnid and smire mid þy þær hit sar sie. Wiþ þon ilcan, genim swealwan nest, brec mid ealle aweg and gebærn mid scearne mid ealle and gnid to duste, meng wiþ eced and smire mid. Wiþ þon ilcan, gehæt ceald wæter mid hatan isene, and beþe gelome mid þy.

#### Lacnunga 56-59:

Her syndon læcedomas wið ælces cynnes omum and onfeallum bancopum, eahta and twentige. Grenes merces leaf gecnucude mid æges þæt hwite and ecedes dræstan, smyre on þa stowe þær þæt sar sy. Wið omum and blegnum: cistes natus aaius scs a xrs passus aaius. a xrs resurrexit a mortuis aaius scs aa suptare poteris. Wið omum and ablegnedum, sur meolc wyrce cealre and beþe mid cealre. Eft, genim beordræstan and sapan and æges þæt hwite and ealde grut, lege on wið omena geswelle. Eft, wið omena geberste, sitte on cealdum wætere oddæt hit adeadad sy, teoh þonne up, sleah þonne feower scarpan ymb þa poccas utan and læt yrnan þa hwile þe he wille, and wyrce þa sealfe:

brunewyrt, merscmergyllan and reade netlan, wel on buteran, smyre mid and beþe mid þam wyrtum. Eft, angeltwæccan gegnid swiþe, do eced to and onbind and smyre mid. Eft, safinan gegnid to duste and mængc wiþ hunige and smyre mid. Eft wið þon ylcan, genim gebrædde ægru, meng wið ele, lege on and besweþe mid betan leafum. Eft, cealfes scearn oððe ealdes hryþeres wearm and lege on. Eft, heortes sceafeþan of felle ascafen mid pumice, and wese mid ecede and smyre mid. Eft, genim efores geallan oððe oþeres swynes and smyre mid þær hit sar si. Wið þon ylcan, genim swolwan nest and gebræc mid ealle and gebærne mid scearne mid ealle and gegnid to duste and mængc wiþ eced and smyre mid. Eft gehæt ceald wæter mid isene and beþe mid gelome.

The prescriptions of the Leechbook continue and in all there are thirty though the heading only speaks of twenty-eight. The Lacnunga on the other hand does not give more than twelve and then passes on to another subject, probably because the interest of the collector was over for the present. It is worth observing that he managed to insert a Christian charm against the same disease before continuing with the text as found in the Leechbook. In sections 109 and 110 two more prescriptions are added, neither of which is found in the Leechbook. Cockayne's arbitrariness in numbering the sections is brought out by the fact that the heading of the passage is tacked on to an Anglo-Saxon charm against a dwarf (No. 7) and that the prescriptions themselves are spread over three sections.

Anglian forms indicate that both manuscripts were based on northern originals. The Lacnunga abounds in Anglian forms; compare for instance, our first passage, where the Leechbook has the West-Saxon form *wel on wætere* as against the Anglian *wyl in wætere* of the Lacnunga. The original translation must have been made when both Latin and Greek were understood, so before the days of King Alfred. St. Bede (*Hist. Eccl.* IV, II, ed. Plummer I, p. 205) tells us that in his days there were learned men who knew Greek and Latin well and who taught these languages to their pupils. The translation into O.E. of Alexander of Tralles, Pliny the Elder, Marcellus, Galen, Apuleius and other medical and pseudo-medical writers may well have been done at this period.

The variation in subject matter of the Lacnunga increases as the collector goes on. Half of the gibberish charms are from this manuscript, and Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, Celtic, Hebrew and Norse elements are freely mixed together. It is evident that the writer deviates more and more from his object of copying conventional medical prescriptions, if he ever had that object, which is more than doubtful. An enumeration of the subjects of sections 87 to 100 shows a singular medley:

87 is a prescription against stomach-ache.

88 is a recipe against sudden dumbness in women: 'If a woman suddenly turns dumb, take pennyroyal and pound it to dust and bind it up in wool; lay it under the woman, she will soon be better'.

89 is a drink against consumption and a drink against all evils.

90 is a remedy if food turns sour and another one against insomnia: 'If a man cannot sleep, take the seed of henbane and the juice of garden-mint, mix together and smear the head with it, he will soon be better'.

91 is a charm to recover stolen cattle (Charm No. 14).

92 & 93 give a prayer against pain in the eyes.

94 is a charm to be said when a horse has foundered (No. 46).

95 is a charm against kernels (No. 3).

96 is a charm against corns or kernels on the feet of a horse (No. 75).

97 is a charm to free a horse from elf-shot (No. 47).

98 is a charm to ease childbirth (No. 63).

99 is a charm against rheumatism (See No. 42).

100 is a charm to cure a tooth-ache, which is amusing by its naive opening lines: 'Christ was sitting upon a marble stone, Peter stood in front of Him sadly and held his hand against his jaw. And the Lord asked him, saying: "Why are you sad, Peter?". Peter answered and said: "Lord, my teeth ache!"' (No. 51).

In this way it goes on up to the end of the manuscript. The Leechbook may be characterised as the handbook of the Anglo-Saxon medical man, the Lacnunga may be characterised as the handbook of the Anglo-Saxon medicine-man.

The majority of the prescriptions of the Leechbook are taken from Latin or Greek sources. It is different with the Lacnunga. Although many passages are translated and copied from classical authors, a great many seem to be of Germanic origin and several charms are certainly so. Christian influence is at least as strong as in the Leechbook.

### § 3. Other Manuscripts

The amount of magic in the Leechbook and the Lacnunga that has nothing to do with medicine is naturally negligible. Some fine specimens of non-medical magic have been preserved in MS. 41 of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge. Its main contents are an O.E. version of St. Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*. St. Bede's prose work was edited by Miller for the E.E.T.S. in 1891, and eight years afterwards by Schipper as Vol. IV of the *Bibliothek der aqs. Prosa*. Miller dated the manuscript at about the time of the Conquest, Schipper about the middle of the eleventh century and Warner <sup>4)</sup> about 1030-1040. On p. 244 there is a statement in Latin and O.E. that Bishop Leofric gave the book to St. Peter's Cathedral at Exeter for the use of his successors, and the usual curse is added on him who would take the book away from there. The charm texts do not form part of the text of the History but are written down in the margins. They are in a different hand from that of the manuscript and they are a little later. Half of the charms are in O.E., half in Latin with O.E. titles. There are a great many marginal notes, all described by James, seven of which are charms. The numbering of the MS. is in pages, not in leaves, and has been altered since Grendon's edition of the Anglo-Saxon Charms in 1909. The charm *Wid Ymbe* (No. 1) is now on p. 182, formerly p. 202, and the charm against theft (No. 12) on p. 206, at the bottom of the page. On p. 329 the Christian 'Sator' formula makes its first appearance in England.

Various other manuscripts also, mainly and originally copies of Latin or Old English texts, and all dating from before 1200, contain O.E. charms either in the margins or on the fly-leaves or in the open spaces. They may have been copied from an ephemeral source in some monastic library, either as a curiosity, or in answer to some pressing need of the moment. I hold myself absolved from the necessity of describing these manuscripts in detail, and I shall simply give a full list of them, arranging them according to the number of charms found in each.

Harley 585. Twenty-nine charms : No. 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 31, 35, 44, 46, 47, 51, 53, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 73, 74, 75, 83, 84.  
Regius 12 D XVII. Sixteen charms : No. 5, 6, 17, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 42, 76, 79, 81.

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<sup>4)</sup> Cf. M. R. James, *A descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*. 1912.

Regius 2 A XX. Nine charms : No. 37, 38, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61.  
Corpus Christi College 41, Cambridge. Seven charms : No. 1, 12, 13,  
15, 16, 43, 48.

Cotton Caligula A XV. Three charms : No. 34, 68, 69.

Cotton Faustina A X. Three charms : No. 39, 40, 82.

Junius 85, Bodleian Library, Oxford. Three charms : No. 41, 45, 49.

Cotton Vitellius E XVIII. Three charms: No. 50, 85, 86.

Gonville & Caius College 379, Cambridge. Two charms : No. 62, 72.

Auct. 7-3-6, Bodleian Library, Oxford. Two charms : No. 77, 78.

Regius 4 A XIV. One charm: No. 4.

Cotton Caligula A VII. One charm: No. 8.

Cotton Tiberius A III. One charm: No. 11A.

Corpus Christi College 190, Cambridge. One charm: No. 11A.

Harley 438. One charm: No. 11A.

Textus Roffensis, Rochester Cathedral. One charm: No. 11B.

Cotton Julius C II. One charm: No. 11B.

Harley 464. One charm: No. 36.

Cotton Vespasianus D XX. One charm: No. 52.

St. John's College 17, Oxford. One charm: No. 54.

Queen's College 7, Cambridge. One charm: No. 64.

Junius 163, Bodleian Library, Oxford. One charm: No. 71.

Corpus Christi College 367, Cambridge. One charm: No. 80.

With a few exceptions (No. 36; 37; 38; 43; 52; 55; 56; 57; 58; 59; 60; 62; 64; 80) all the charm texts edited by me have been published before, and it has not been my primary aim to publish the texts but to analyse and, possibly, explain them. In order, however, to make certain of the exact readings I have personally gone through all the manuscripts again. I have expanded, without marking them in my edition, all the usual MS. abbreviations, such as † = þæt; þoñ = þonne; ū = um; 7 = and, ond; ġnī = genim; xpī = Christi; sp̄s sc̄s = Spiritus Sanctus; d̄s = deus; d̄ns = dominus; and so on. All emendations have been specially marked of course. The Latin texts have not been emended, except in a few cases, where I have followed Cockayne; if necessary and possible, I have suggested some changes in the notes.

### CHAPTER III

## ON MAGIC AND MAGICAL PRACTICES



Magic is a universal phenomenon. It is to be found among all peoples, in all parts of the world, at all times. The earliest information we obtain of a people usually contains a notice about magical beliefs and practices. Certain forms of magic may belong to the secret, treasured possessions of a definite class of men, magic of some sort or other is usually known to the community as a whole and practised by everyone. For magic does not demand a knowledge that has to be learned or a training that has to be acquired; it is a way of thinking as much as a technique, and although it may sometimes be necessary to learn a particular practice, the general idea underlying this practice is acquired spontaneously.

However easy it may often be to conceive a general idea of magic, and to distinguish between ordinary, natural facts of life and the abnormal, preternatural phenomena of magic, it is by no means easy to define magic in the abstract. Part of the difficulty is due to the extensive ground covered by magic, for it operates in every field of primitive human activity whether physical or intellectual: religion, art, agriculture, hunting, war, medicine and so forth. To the province of magic belong such phenomena and activities as seem to exist by their own right: telepathy, second sight, suggestion and hypnosis, ghosts and spirits, the evil eye, divination and foretelling by whatever means.

The work of the Society for Psychical Research has proved that many occult phenomena rejected by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are facts, and cannot be ascribed to the heated imaginations of credulous country folk. The study of psychology has done away with the supernatural connotation of suggestion and hypnosis, and nowadays the idea of magic is frequently limited to occurrences and phenomena that are presupposed to be false and deceptive. The dictionary defines magic as 'the pretended art of influencing the course of events, and of producing marvellous physical pheno-

mena, by processes supposed to owe their efficacy to their power of compelling the intervention of spiritual beings, or of bringing into operation some occult controlling principle of nature; sorcery, witchcraft. Also the practice of this art.' Sorcery is 'the use of magic or enchantment', and witchcraft means 'the practices of a witch or wizard; the exercise of supernatural power supposed to be possessed by persons in league with the devil or evil spirits' <sup>1)</sup>. Frazer expresses the same idea in much stronger terms when he asserts that 'it is a truism, almost a tautology, to say that all magic is necessarily false and barren; for were it ever to become true and fruitful, it would no longer be magic but science' <sup>2)</sup>. There is no denying that if we leave out everything that is true and fruitful in magic, the rest is necessarily false and barren, but what allows us to do so? The problem lies in what we understand by magic and what primitive people understand by it. Of course primitive people have no single word for magic, at least they have no word covering all the facts which they, consciously or unconsciously, group together. But ever since Herodotus outsiders have used the term and found it apt and valuable. Herodotus <sup>3)</sup> applied the word μάγος to a class of Persian priests who were at the same time scholars, astrologers, diviners, dream-readers, soothsayers and historians. They were principally regarded as 'magicians'. The Greeks themselves had other words for their own magical practices, but from Hellenic times onwards μάγος and μαγεία spread all through the Roman Empire. Leaving the nature and essence of magic involved in its original vagueness for the present, I should like to pass on to some closely related phenomena. The nineteenth century began to speak of Animism, and one of the founders of modern anthropology, E.B. Tylor, understood by it: a belief in the existence and activity of spirits. In his work on *Primitive Culture*, written in 1871, he even tried to trace the origin of such a belief:

It seems as though thinking men, as yet at a low level of culture, were deeply impressed by two groups of biological problems. In the first place, what is it that makes the difference between a living body and a dead one; what causes waking, sleep, trance, disease, death? In the second place, what are those human shapes which appear in dreams and visions? <sup>4)</sup>.

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<sup>1)</sup> *N.E.D.*, s.v. *magic, sorcery and witchcraft*.

<sup>2)</sup> J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art* I, London, 1913<sup>3</sup>, p. 222.

<sup>3)</sup> Herodotus, *History of the Persian Wars* I, c. 101.

<sup>4)</sup> E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* I, London, 1891<sup>3</sup>, p. 428.

From these two groups of phenomena the ancient savage philosopher concluded that man has two things belonging to him: a life and a phantom, and as they are so closely connected they were soon considered identical. There is only a short step from the ghost-soul to the independent spirit. The subtitle of Tylor's work is: 'Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom', and as his minimum definition of religion was 'the belief in Spiritual Beings' <sup>5)</sup>, the origin of animism was also the origin of religion. For about thirty years this explanation was widely accepted, until Marett <sup>6)</sup> pointed out that there were other elements, so-called pre-animistic, in religion and that animism could not be regarded as the origin of religion.

Neither can it be accepted as the origin of magic. Whenever people believe in animism, and with some rare exceptions this conviction is spread all over the world, a great many abnormal and preternatural occurrences are supposed to be caused by good or evil spirits; it is so easy to explain things in this way that primitive man cannot help having recourse to elves, goblins and devils. On the other hand there are a great many practices that cannot be explained along animistic lines. There are plenty of practices to which the term 'magic' can be safely applied, and is, as a matter of fact, applied by everyone, but which have nothing whatever to do with a belief in spirits. The Anglo-Saxons used a charm 'against a swelling':

Take a root of lily and sprouts of elder-tree and a leaf of garlic, and cut them into very small parts and pound them well, and put them in a thick cloth and bind on (the swelling).  
Lacnunga 9.

The three ingredients of which the paste consists show some thickening or swelling, and just as these swellings disappear by cutting them up and pounding them, so the swelling of the patient will disappear. The Romans inscribed some verses from Homer or Virgil on a strip of lead and hung this on the neck of a slave to prevent his running away. The lead served to weigh down the slave so that his walking was supposedly hindered and he could not run far. This principle of sympathy and antipathy is an integral part of magic and is quite independent of animism.

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<sup>5)</sup> *I.c.*, p. 424.

<sup>6)</sup> R. R. Marett, "Pre-animistic Religion", in *Folk-Lore*, 1900, pp. 162-182, reprinted in *The Threshold of Religion*, 1909.



Another argument against animism as the explanation of all magic is that the spirits themselves are subject to the power of magic, which would be hard to account for if they were the originators of that power. Frazer held that such practices are not much more than silly superstitious beliefs and that they are conscious or unconscious deceptions. Let us analyse some cases in order to see whether they were really without validity to the people that used them.

In the south of France, in Switzerland and Spain, and in several other countries, caves have been discovered the walls of which were painted on by people living in the Stone Age. Most of the pictures represent animals and scenes of hunting. Some of the animals appear to be wounded by spears and arrows in their sides. Although there is a possibility that they are merely drawn for the sake of drawing or as objective illustrations of hunting and hunted animals, there is every likelihood that they served a magical purpose. In that case they represent the animals that were to be hunted and the way in which they would be killed. By making a picture of a wounded animal the artist not only represented an imaginary occurrence, but he also created an actual fact: he himself, together with his fellow-hunters, could see that the animal had already been hit and killed. The incongruity in time was of no significance compared with the vividness of the picture they had before them. Besides, such incongruities occurred in other human experiences, such as second sight. Even if the phenomenon of second sight was then as rare an occurrence as it is with us, and there are indications that in primitive communities it is more frequent than in highly civilised, materialistic ones, the fact was so striking that it was bound to be remembered a long time afterwards. And once it had been accepted as a fact, the element of time and the apparent incongruity between past, present and future was no longer an obstacle. The imagination of any given hunter was presumably not strong enough to create the conviction of some killing taking place, so the imaginative creation of such happenings was strengthened by an objective picture which the hunter could see. As soon as something had assumed an external form it existed, and the representation of an animal caught or killed was identical with the real objective fact<sup>7)</sup>.

If the above interpretation of the Stone-Age pictures is right, we

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<sup>7)</sup> Cf. on this problem G. v. d. Leeuw, "Die sog. 'epische Einleitung' der Zauberformeln"; in *Zsf. f. Religionspsychologie*, VI, 1933, pp. 161-180.

find an identical process in modern Africa. Before a negro goes out hunting he draws a picture of the animal that he will be hunting in the sand and at the same time he draws a circle round about it. The latter represents a wall or fence which the animal is unable to cross. It is caught in a narrow spot so that it cannot escape from the spear or the arrow that will be thrown or shot at it.

This magic is not mere superstition or humbug, for it gives the hunter the assurance of success that is necessary to calm his nerves and make his shot swift, strong and straight. Many modern battles, too, have been won by morale.

A form of magic that is spread all over the world is that in which a man is killed by means of an effigy. The effigy is made to represent a certain individual by working into it some object that belonged to the person or his nearest property, such as a hair, a piece of nail, a fragment of his clothes, his name, and so on. After this has been done the effigy is hung up over a fire, so that it will be slowly burned; or it is put in running water, so that it will slowly crumble and fall to pieces; or nails are driven into it to damage and destroy it. The underlying idea is always that the intended victim will be hurt and tortured, and will eventually wither, pine away and die just as the effigy is burning and falling to pieces. Once the effigy is made and the manipulations of the magician are set going, nothing can save the victim. His doom is certain, his fate is sealed. The nails, the fire and the water have the same effect on the body of the victim as they have on the image. The effigy stands for the person both figuratively and literally.

There is nothing animistic in this form of magic and it is based on the principle that like influences like, and that a thing that has once had contact with another thing remains irrevocably connected with it. Its effect is probably due to suggestion and autosuggestion. The victim may be warned by a word or an ominous look of the sorcerer, or by some form of telepathy and second sight. As the receptivity of simple folk is heightened by the general atmosphere of magic incidents surrounding them on all sides and by their own impotence to ward off invisible dangers, they cooperate themselves in producing the expected result. It is not possible to explain all magic by means of suggestion but we can account for a good many facts in this way. The slave who feels a piece of lead about his neck is continually reminded of the spell laid on him, he does not even attempt to run away; and the charm is effective, it is fruitful and true.

Nearly all Frazer's theoretical expositions have met with severe criticism, but his collection of material from all over the world is very valuable. The material is arranged according to the purpose of the various practices, so that we get a descriptive survey of weather magic, hunting magic, magic against theft, magic against diseases, etc. There is no order as to time, place, people or culture, and it is left to the reader to form his own opinion about the comparative value of the instances, which range from America to Asia, from Africa to Australia and Europe; from the Australian aborigines to Scots Highlanders; from the present day to the time of the building of the pyramids. In this way Frazer succeeds in making clear the external and accidental agreement as well as the internal and essential unity. His compilation reveals a second difficulty inherent in an attempt to formulate a definition of magic, namely the number of widely different forms in which magic appears: magic may be performed by means of actions, words, looks and objects; it may be performed by a man, a spirit or a god; it may serve a good or bad purpose; it may be active or passive.

The performance of certain actions without any accompanying words in order to produce certain results is comparatively rare, and yet I am inclined to believe that it is the oldest and most original form of magic. My reasons for this opinion are first that the use of magic words without accompanying actions is rarer still in practice, secondly that there is less divergence between the magic actions found in various times and far distant countries than between the magic formulas, and thirdly that magic always serves a definite purpose and that doing something is the most natural and the easiest way to realise that purpose. Another direct means to attain one's end is to express a command in words, and this form is actually met with in charms, but if the command is given to a man there is nothing magical about it, and if the command is given to a spirit we touch upon animism. Furthermore words are generally employed to strengthen, not to create, the power that brings about the magical effect. In conformity with this we find that the words are intensified in their turn by the form in which they are pronounced: the rhythm and tone in which they are sung; in fact the form has become so important that the word *song* has come to denote the magical practice in all the Indo-European languages and in a great many outside this group. It is, however, difficult to give conclusive evidence of the priority of magic actions, and the use of words cannot have been much younger, for normally

we find that words, actions and objects occur side by side, explaining and intensifying one another. Words act directly on the minds of the people that have to be influenced and they receive an additional power from the personality of the magician. On the other hand, actions and objects are more lasting, their physical impression remains active long after the magician has left, they often represent not only the means by which something is effected but the actual result.

An argument in favour of the precedence of words seems to be that the magical act is called song, charm, incantation, amongst a great many peoples. This is probably due to the desire of the magician to keep his knowledge and his power to himself. The magic actions he performed could be seen by everybody and the objects might be felt and seen and imitated by everyone, but the words remained a secret, for the singing of the charms usually consists in murmuring them in a low voice and the slightest omission was presumed to invalidate them. That is why the power of the magic rite came to be ascribed to the incantatory formula, and why the knowledge of charms was specially attributed to the gods, who as spirits could only apply words. The Germanic peoples believed that charms originated from Woden, *galdrs fadir*, the father of charms<sup>8)</sup>. When the art of inscribing and reading runes had been mastered, this knowledge too was supposed to emanate from Woden<sup>9)</sup>: For nine nights Odinn hung on the tree called Yggdrasil, i.e., the steed of the terrible one. He had been wounded by a spear, had sacrificed himself to Odinn, himself to himself. Neither food nor drink was offered him; weeping he looked down until he spied the runes, when he was loosened at once.

This mythological story proves that the Germanic gods, at least, were as much subject to magic as more earthly creatures. The same thing is told of the Indian gods, witness a saying current in India: 'The whole universe is subject to the gods; the gods are subject to the spells; the spells to the Brahmans; therefore the Brahmans are our gods'<sup>10)</sup>. Only among those tribes that have preserved a comparatively clear idea of the High God do we find that the High God is the creator and originator of everything, magic included, but we never hear that he himself resorts to magic.

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<sup>8)</sup> Edda, *Baldrs Draumar*, 3. Cf. *Ynglinga Saga*, ch. VII, which speaks of all the gods as *galdra smidir*, charm-smiths.

<sup>9)</sup> *Hávamál*, 138-139.

<sup>10)</sup> Quoted by Frazer, *The Magic Art I*, p. 226.

For practical purposes magic may be classified under two heads: good or white magic and bad or black magic. Good or white magic is allowed and even promoted by primitive societies, whereas bad or black magic is condemned and, if necessary or possible, punished. Magic always having a practical aim it is never exercised for the mere sake of doing something, such as singing, dancing, making conversation for the joy of the thing or the comfort they bring with them. Magic is directed to an end, to achieving something, and the end may be good or bad. As the actions performed or the words spoken by a magician bear no proportion to the result obtained by the actions or words, the confidence of the magician will tend to pass into conceit, into a sense of unassailable power, and the temptation to make this power felt by the man that tries to cross him is very great. Money too is an incentive to harm another person, either to force him to pay a certain sum in order to be saved, or because a third man pays the magician to hurt a personal enemy. A third reason for practising black magic is when the tribe is at war with a neighbouring one, in which case black magic is hardly to be distinguished from white. Distinct from the harm done to other members of the community is the danger to the magician of destroying his own ethical values. His superior power may lead him to extort money from those around him, it may lead him to put himself on a higher plane and to try and seek contact with evil powers, one form of which is found in the wide-spread belief in the nocturnal bacchanalia of witches and wizards. The magician is inclined to regard his own powers as equal to those of the gods, so that we frequently see an opposition between magic and religion.

The distinction between passive and active magic is of little theoretical importance. It is related to the distinction between white and black magic in as far as passive magic serves as a defence against evil influences. From a practical point of view it has a little more importance because we find that passive magic is mainly practised in animistic cultures, whereas it is much rarer in other cultures. The defence against outside influences may be active in form, when an evil influence is not only warded off before it has time to strike but is also attacked and driven off. Amulets serve a passive purpose in guarding a man from danger and disease, they are active in assisting to heal a wound or cure a headache, and in bringing about good luck. Old English medicine contains plenty of emetics to drive out spirits and devils, which fact is in accordance with the highly animistic nature of Germanic religion.

We have two methods at our disposal in our attempts to define the nature of magic. We can work along psychological lines and try to reconstruct the general human background from which magic springs and against which it operates, that is, we can argue from the general to the particular, from the abstract to the concrete. Psychology is able to furnish us with various possibilities. We can also work along historical lines and try to reconstruct the actual background as it appears to us from what we know about the way of living of primitive man, from his housing, clothing, ornaments and tools, and about his way of thinking, his religion, art, language and magical practices. The socio-historical method drawn up and elaborated by Graebner has done much to enable us to distinguish relative stages of primitiveness and to determine the most primitive peoples in existence at the present time. The historical method allows us to argue about actual facts instead of hypothetical cases. Both methods, the psychological and the historical, have to be applied at the same time if we want to reach any stage of probability, for the stage of certainty still remains a pious wish. Still the gain due to the researches of Graebner and his followers, notably W. Schmidt, is considerable.

Magic as a general idea is among the oldest conceptions of mankind and if we wish to understand it, we must first understand the way of thinking of primitive man. There are some, and Lévy-Brühl was their leader, who are of opinion that primitive man thought differently from modern man, namely pre-logically. Towards the end of his life Lévy-Brühl could not maintain his theory, and on the strength of the arguments brought forward in favour of a logical way of thinking he withdrew his former opinion. If primitive man was really different from us it would be impossible for us to understand the origin of religion, of magic, of culture in general. We agree with Schmidt<sup>11)</sup> that the use of tools, and we might add of human language, is a decisive argument in favour of the conception of causality and of primitive logic. What is different indeed is the technique of logic and the unconscious influence of man's feelings on his reasoning. The technique of logic was perfected by Greek thinkers and it has become one of the main assets in assuring the superiority of West-European civilisation over parts of the world that had not acquired this technique. We have learned that our thinking is sharpest and clearest when our emotions keep out

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<sup>11)</sup> P. W. Schmidt, *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee* I, 1926<sup>2</sup>, p. 490.

of the way, we try to judge intellectually, objectively. Primitive man had not learned this lesson and the sway of his emotions was at least as powerful an element in judging a case as was his intellect. The consequences of his emotional reasoning were that he looked at a thing as a whole, as part of everything around him. A man was as much a member of a community as he was a private individual, a drop of water was as much part of the rain or the river as it was a particular item. Life was not restricted to man but was extended to everything around him, to animals, plants, trees, stones and water, to the sun and the moon, to thunder and lightning. This conception received its highest development in animism, but it was part of man's thinking before animism started.

The relation of things that resembled each other was also very close, so much so that an action directed against one object was felt somehow to affect other objects like it. Conversely, if one wanted to hurt a whole class, any part might be chosen as representative of the class. The idea of similarity or resemblance may expand and develop into an idea of identity. Magic operates through the belief that it is possible to create similarity, resemblance and identity. In modern art symbolism works with the same ideas, for underneath it is the magical notion that there is more in the symbol than meets the eye.

In defining magic we have to bear in mind the practical side of magic, that is, the way in which it operates, and the theoretical side, that is, the notions, conceptions and beliefs that are the basis and origin of magical practices. We define magic as the art of employing an impersonal power that operates in such a way as cannot be perceived by the physical senses and that is carried into effect by means of a traditional ritual.

The underlying idea of magic is that of power, force or strength. Primitive man does not distinguish between ordinary, normal, natural power and extraordinary, abnormal, supernatural or preternatural, magical, spritual or even divine power. As Graebner<sup>12)</sup> says: 'The Australian aborigines do not regard the natural as supernatural, but the supernatural as natural'. A medicine man has not two functions but one function; he does not apply two methods but one method. Curing a patient by magic or by natural means is one and the same thing in the mind of a witch-doctor; he cures a sick man and there is the end of it. Applying poultices, ad-

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<sup>12)</sup> Fr. Graebner, *Das Weltbild der Primitiven*, Munchen, 1924, p. 16.

ministering drinks, letting blood and singing charms are accidental circumstances.

The classical term among students of ethnology, comparative religion and magic is *mana*, a word of Polynesian origin. According to Tregear<sup>13)</sup> the meaning is: 'supernatural power; divine authority; having qualities which ordinary persons do not possess'. Later investigations have shown that *mana* denotes every power and is not restricted to supernatural or divine power, as was already implied by the second half of Tregear's definition, for power as such is only noticed when it is not in the possession of all. *Mana* is attributed to every person or object that is somehow distinguished from other persons or objects: a stone with a curious appearance contains *mana*, for it is distinct from other stones; a chief possesses *mana*, for he is distinct from other men. By analogy every object touched by a chief is filled with *mana* and becomes taboo.

In Old English *cræft* is employed to denote the same things: it is power, force, strength; cunning, knowledge, ability and skill; prescription and remedy. It is used in more than twenty-five compounds: it is *bealu-cræft*, *dry-cræft*, *dwol-cræft*, *gealdor-cræft*, *leoðu-cræft*, all indicating some aspect of magic; but it is also *æ-cræft*, 'knowledge of laws'; *gub-cræft*, 'warlike power'; *læce-cræft*, 'the art of medicine, medical recipe'; *hyge-cræft*, 'knowledge, wisdom'.

A second element of magic is that the power operates along lines that cannot be followed through the physical senses. The magic effect is characterised by the insensorial, indirect and mysterious connection with its cause. As a magic act always has a purpose and aims at a special end, we might speak of magical causality in contradistinction to normal causality. That the causal connection is always felt by primitive man appears from the fact that when he witnesses a magic practice he does not doubt for a moment but the effect will follow: and again, when he unexpectedly meets with a piece of bad luck, he will always attribute it to the activity of a witch or an evil spirit. The effect of magical causality is as certain as that of normal, but its sphere of operation is wider, less restricted. Some instances may help to analyse and explain the difference between normal and magic causality.

A member of a primitive tribe has had a quarrel. He may at-

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<sup>13)</sup> E. Tregear, *The Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, s.v. *mana*; cited by Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, London, 1909, p. 121.



tempt to kill his adversary by knocking him on the head with a club, or by shooting a poisoned arrow at him. His success will depend on his strength and on his ability at handling clubs and shooting arrows, while his opponent may dexterously avoid the blow or the shot. The natural, normal, logical effect of the blow or the shot may be prevented by visible or invisible circumstances. But this does not destroy for the primitive man the connection between cause and effect. He may also follow a different line of action; he may have recourse to magic. He sings a charm, in which he pronounces the name of his enemy, on an arrow and murmuring some more spells he shoots the arrow into a coppice, so that he cannot follow its course and nobody is likely to find it. He is perfectly convinced that by this act he will fatally injure his enemy, that is to say, he believes in the causal relations between the action performed and the result expected. Here, too, success will to his mind depend on his ability to perform all rites and on the power he possesses, whereas any failure will be due to his having omitted some detail, to the fact that he may, temporarily or permanently, have lost his power, or because his action was neutralized by another magician. Here, too, failure has little or no influence on the belief in magic as such, although the career of a particular magician may have come to an end. Indeed, occasional failures may strengthen the belief in magic in as far as they tend to deepen the emotional atmosphere of wonder and expectancy which is so important for the operation of suggestion and hypnosis.

Distinguishing between the normal and the magical causality does not mean that there is a contrast, an opposition, an incongruity in the practical application of the two. Both in theory and in practice they must be used side by side, as compliments to each other. We often see that the two methods overlap and it is frequently impossible to separate them, the more so as magical practices largely rely on tradition and are liable to lose certain elements while retaining others. Thus the original form and function is often obscured. That is why magical practices assume an atmosphere of mystery, of incomprehensibility, not only to outsiders but to the magicians themselves. Originally, however, all magical practices were simple and straightforward, and though later on unintelligible elements were added on purpose, in order to enhance the atmosphere of mystery and to bewilder onlookers, a comparative and close study of magic will reveal that many details are only apparently mysterious because they no longer occur in their normal and full con-

text. Medicine is pre-eminently a magical science, and we need not be astonished to find that medicine-man has always been synonymous with magician. An Anglo-Saxon prescription against headache is in these words:

Against an old headache. Take pennyroyal, boil in oil or in butter, rub the temples with it and above the eyes, moving on to them from the head. Though his mind be turned, he is hale.

Leechbook III, 1.

I do not know in how far pennyroyal has a natural effect on a man's headache, but rubbing the eyes, temples and forehead with oil or melted butter no doubt has a natural sedative influence. All the rest has magic significance:

1. An old, i.e., persistent, headache must have had some abnormal cause in the opinion of the Anglo-Saxon.

2. The O.E. name of pennyroyal is *dweorgedwostle*, which is a compound with *dweorh*, 'dwarf'. It is immaterial whether the name arose from a supposed connection with dwarfs, caused by the form of its leaves, some occurrence in mythological history, for which compare charm No. 9, or a similarity in sound of its first element and afterwards perverted to dwarf by popular etymology; or whether its natural influence was strong enough to make primitive people believe that a spirit was living in the herb.

3. Rubbing the temples and forehead with oil or butter is perfectly natural, but the instruction to do so in a certain direction is magical. The O.E. text has *on ufan þæt heafod*, which may mean 'from the head downwards' or 'on top of the head'. If the second is meant, the rubbing takes place on the temples, the forehead and on top of the head, in which case we have the magical number three.

4. The verb *oncyrran* in the O.E. text sometimes has the meaning of 'turning, perverting by magic', a meaning it is likely to have here too: 'Though his mind is turned by magic, he is hale!'

5. The obvious employment of suggestion in the phrase 'he is hale' is typical of magic and of medicine.

Suchlike analyses are a help to a better understanding of magic itself and its penetration into, and absorption of, everyday actions and thoughts, but we must not be blind to their theoretical nature. It is more than doubtful if primitive man, whether magician or not, ever argued along these lines. To him the whole prescription was an inseparable unity, in which the rubbing with oil or butter

could no more be omitted than all the other directions, though they may seem superfluous to us.

The third element in magic is the existence of a special ritual. Just as there is a distinction between normal and magical causality, so there is also a difference between normal and magical actions, ordinary and magical words, secular and magical objects. It is here that Frazer's 'laws of thought' come in:

"If we analyse the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two: first that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed. The former principle may be called the Law of Similarity, the latter the Law of Contact or Contagion. From the first of these principles, namely the Law of Similarity, the magician infers that he can produce any effect he desires merely by imitating it: from the second he infers that whatever he does to a material object will affect equally the person with whom the object was once in contact, whether it formed part of his body or not. Charms based on the Law of Similarity may be called Homoeopathic or Imitative Magic. Charms based on the Law of Contact or Contagion may be called Contagious Magic" <sup>14</sup>).

This analysis is right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It does not account for the abstract idea of magic and it does not describe the whole ritual. It says nothing of the magical exigencies of time; place; abstinence from food (fasting), from sexual intercourse (chastity and virginity), from speech (silence); of the importance of right and left; of the elements of mystery; etc. See chapter IV.

The magic ritual is so varied and complicate because it was the means by which the magician got a certain amount of power under his control, by which he was able to transmit this power to the spot where he needed it. As magic is principally a practical concern, the magician cannot do without a ritual, and so we may say that the ritual is an integral part of magic. This explains why the seemingly most important feature, the incantatory formula, came to stand for the magical practice as such: *carmen*, *incantatio* in Latin;  $\epsilon\pi\omega\delta\eta$  in Greek; *brahman* in Sanskrit; *orenda* among the Huron Indians; *leod*, *sang*, *gealdor* among the Anglo-Saxons.

The threefold purpose of the magic ritual, getting hold of the

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<sup>14</sup>) Frazer, *l.c.* p. 52.

power, transmitting it to the spot where it is required and utilising it, is not always clearly distinguished and realised as such by the magician; this is not necessary either, for the main thing is to get hold of the power and the rest will naturally follow. It may be useful to give a longer illustration from Anglo-Saxon magic to bring out the part played by the ritual. Our example is taken from the Lacnunga 12.

For a good bone-salve that is efficient against headache and against weakness of all limbs are necessary: rue, radish and dock, iris, feverfew, vervain, carline thistle, celandine, beetroot and betony, hound's tongue and ale-hoof, elecampane, a root of Macedonian parsley, crowfoot and burdock, dwarf elder and lambs-creas, hillwort, hazel, quitch, woodruff and a sprout of crosswort, wild caper, spearwort, waybread and wormwood, lupine and stitchwort, hedge clivers and hop, yarrow and cuckoo sorrel, henbane and broad-leek.

Take equal quantities of all these herbs, put them in a mortar, pound them all together and add ivy berries.

And take bark of ashtree and twigs of willow and bark of oak and bark of myrtle and bark of crabtree and bark of sallow and leaves of woodbine. All these should be taken near the ground and on the east side of the trees. Cut all the pieces of bark together into small parts, and boil them in holy water, until they are very soft. Then put them in a mortar along with the herbs and pound all together.

Then take the fat of a hart and the fat of a he-goat and old mulberry wine and the fat of a bull and the fat of a boar and the fat of a ram. Melt them all together and pour out (in the form of) a circle.

Then you must collect all the bones you can gather together and pound the bones with the back of an axe. And boil and skim off the grease, work to a circle.

Then take old butter and boil the herbs and the pieces of bark, put everything together. When it is boiled once put it down.

Then scrape all the fat into a pan, as much as (the

quantity of) salve you wish to have and you can reduce to a tarry substance. Set it over a fire, let it soak lightly, do not boil too strongly, until it is enough. Strain through a cloth, set it over a fire again.

Then take nine cloves of hallowed garlic, pound them in wine, wring through a cloth. Shave the herb cicely (myrrh?) into it and (add) holy baptismal (water and) wax and brown <sup>15)</sup> storax and white incense. Then pour into the salve till there be the amount of three eggshells full.

Then take old soap and the marrow of an old ox and the marrow of an eagle. Then add the tarry substance and mix with a stick of wood of the trembling poplar until it is brown.

Then sing over it *Benedictus dominus deus meus* and the other *Benedictus dominus deus Israel* and *Magnificat* and *Credo in unum* and the prayer *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*.

Wherever the sore may be, smear the salve first of all on the head.

A bone-salve is likely to be used against broken bones, but there is little or no indication as to how the bones were broken. The injury may have been inflicted by an axe. Leechbook I, xxviii mentions one wound-salve 'if a man is wounded with iron', and another 'if a man is hit with a tree or with a stone'. At the same time the present salve is efficient against headache and against weakness of any limbs. Among the thirty-five herbs mentioned there is also *lidwyr*, 'dwarf elder', which may have been inserted because O.E. *lid* and *lim* both mean 'limb', so it is a matter of sympathetic magic. Radish, beetroot and a root of Macedonian parsley may have the antipathetic function of drawing the pain out of the head, just as they draw the main strength of the plants into the roots. *Springwyr*, 'wild caper', and *cwice*, 'quitch', will be instrumental in reviving, quickening, the patient's cheerfulness. Feverfew, Lat. *febrifuga*, will drive away the fever. All the other herbs are repeatedly employed in magical and semi-magical prescriptions throughout the Lacnunga and the Leechbook. It is sometimes prescribed to take larger quantities of particular herbs but here equal quan-

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<sup>15)</sup> The MS. reading *brimne* is presumably a misspelling for *brunne*. My attention was called to this by Professor H. Jost of Basel University.

tities are taken of all of them. They are pounded together to combine their respective powers, to utilize their collective efficacy. Ivy berries may have been added on the assumption that just as ivy sucks out the juice from trees, so its berries may draw out the spirits of infection and fever from the bones of the patient.

The next ingredients are pieces of bark gathered from various trees, and taken 'near the ground and on the east side'. Here the trees are biggest and 'strongest', and the rays of the rising sun have been absorbed by the bark, thus adding their healing power to that of the trees. Six trees are selected: the ashtree, the willow, the oak, the myrtle, the crabtree and the sallow or water-willow.

The ashtree furnished the material for spears, so much so that the word ash came to represent these objects. A spear is a weapon for the attack, and if an ash could kill a man, it could also destroy or chase away a disease-spirit. Spearwort, one of the herbs mentioned, probably has the same purpose.

The willow and the sallow have an exceedingly strong life-force. No matter how often they are polled they always send out fresh shoots. This led among other things to the practice that a willow leaf was a remedy against a bald head (Leechbook I, LXXXVI) : just as the willow shoots up again from a bare trunk, so will the hair from a bald head. Besides the noun *welig* became associated in O.E. with the adjective *welig*, 'rich, wealthy, luxuriant' (Cf. Dutch *welig*), and a man who is rich is generally powerful, just as O.E. *rice* means both potent and opulent.

The oak was the holy tree of the Germanic peoples and it will hardly be necessary to point out the power it had on that account.

Myrtle, O.E. *wir*, partly derived its power from its foreign associations, as it is not indigenous to northern regions, and partly from its verbal associations with O.E. *wir*, 'wire, ornament made of (gold or silver) wire'.

The crabtree was invested with mythological powers against poisonous infections, as we know from the Nine Herbs Charm (No. 9).

Besides the pieces of bark some leaves of woodbine are put in, which shrub is well known for its fragrant flowers, it is strong smelling, i.e., strong. The pieces of bark themselves may simply stand for the trees, as *pars pro toto*, or they may have a special function in healing a broken head, where the bones of the skull stand in the same relation to the brain as the bark to the tree. By adding the pieces of bark to the herbs in the mortar their power is joined to that of the herbs.

The third group of ingredients is the fat of a hart, a he-goat, a bull, a boar and a ram. These are all male animals and they are no doubt chosen because a male animal is stronger than one of the other sex, so it is again a question of power, strength. In between these kinds of fat old mulberry wine is mentioned. It is a foreign drink, for the mulberry tree is not indigenous in England and an old wine is presumably a 'strong' drink. Its place in the list may be a mistake, but it may also have been inserted there by design to indicate that it must be thoroughly mixed with the fat.

The wine and the fat are melted together and poured out in the form of a circle. This circle serves to intensify the power of the herbs by the addition of its own power, and at the same time it prevented evil forces from influencing the contents of the mortar, as they were unable to reach the mortar through the magic circle of fat.

At this moment we have reached the fourth and main group of the ingredients of a bone-salve, namely bones: 'Collect all the bones that you can gather together and pound the bones with the back of an axe. And boil and skim off the grease, work to a circle'. As there were no public slaughterhouses in Anglo-Saxon times, bones must have been lying freely about the huts and houses. An entry in the Chronicle (1012) tells us that a band of drunken soldiers pelted a bishop with bones and that one of them killed him with the back of an axe. Such an event may have led to the back of an axe being used to pound the bones, though an axe is a useful instrument for the purpose in any case. Compare the prescription in the Leechbook I, XLVI, 1: 'Against adderbite, wash a black snake in holy water, and drink the water'. So the thing that was instrumental to the hurt must also be instrumental to the cure. The powder of the bones is boiled and the grease, that is, the impure elements that rise to the surface, is skimmed off. After that a second circle is formed within or outside the first.

Next the herbs and the pieces of bark are boiled in old butter. The word salve originally meant melted butter or oil<sup>16)</sup>, and therefore we continually meet with the expression 'boil in butter', both in the Leechbook and the Lacnunga. In the Holy Salve (Charm No. 19) the butter must be churned of a 'cow of one colour, either completely red or white and without spots'. Thus the natural function of butter in salves gains a preternatural significance because of

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<sup>16)</sup> Franck-v. Wijk, *Etym. Woordenboek d. Nederl. Taal*, s.v. *zalf*.

the power assigned to such a rare and holy(?) animal. Old, the adjective qualifying butter, increases the power inherent in the butter, for old butter is rank, strong-smelling, 'strong'. In Dutch and German 'strong butter' is the normal expression in this sense. Although the word butter occurs in all West-Germanic dialects it is not of Germanic origin and derived from Lat. *butyrum*, Gr. βούτυρον, which in turn may be derived from a Scythian form<sup>17</sup>). The original term is preserved in Old High German *ancho* and *chuo-smero*. In O.E. *smeru* always means fat, but originally there was a close association between *smeru*, *butere* and *sealf*. They are in fact synonymous. Consequently the lines 'then scrape all the fat into a pan, as much as the quantity of salve you wish to have' are very old and explain themselves. A salve must not dry too quickly, therefore butter and fat are employed and it must be spread on thickly: 'and reduce to a tarry substance'. Impure and harsh elements are removed by boiling the fat lightly and straining it through a cloth. The natural action of boiling the fat assumes a mysterious ritualistic importance because the butter was 'boiled once' and the fat must be 'soaked lightly, not boiled too strongly' and afterwards 'set over a fire again'. Only an experienced medicine-man knew how to prepare a good salve!

Towards the end some attempts are made to christianise the salve. Hallowed garlic is probably a mistake, and the adjective should qualify wine. The first part of O.E. *garleac* means 'spear, shaft'. The name of the plant is derived from the form of its leaves, but once it was called thus it came to be used against wounds inflicted by spears. A 'good' bone-salve must be effective against injuries caused by bones, axes and spears! Next myrrh, brown storax and white incense are added. O.E. *myrra* stands for 'myrrh' and for a herb: cicely; the scribe seems to have mixed up the two. 'Brown' storax and 'white' incense may have a mystifying function, as the boiling of the butter and the fat; a few lines further on we find the instruction to stir the salve until it is brown, and the colour of curdled blood is also brown. Holy baptismal water has a power of its own on account of its religious associations. So has wax (candles), but wax is not a Christian addition. It is often mentioned in salves, for it is good in producing a thick, tarry substance. It has the magical function of gluing the bones together and healing a 'broken' head. Compare the use of wax in the charms against theft,

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<sup>17</sup>) *l.c.*, s.v. *boter*.



No. 11-15. The amount of three eggshells-full contains the number three, the magical number *par excellence*.

The last batch of ingredients are old soap, which has the purpose of cleaning the wound and preventing infections, and the marrow of an old ox and an eagle. The animals are notable for their strength, and their marrow must help in healing the bones. Compare Leechbook I xxxviii: 'If a man's limb is cut off, a finger or a foot or a hand, if the marrow is out (i.e., visible), take boiled sheeps' marrow, lay it on the other marrow, bind it on exceedingly well for a night'. Marrow, O.E. *mearg*, O.S. *marg*, Prim. Germ. *mazga*, is etymologically the same word as Old Bulgarian *mozgu*, 'brains', Avestian *mazga*<sup>18)</sup>, and as there are several indications that the salve was primarily intended for a broken head or for headache, the use of 'marrow' is another argument that this prescription is very old and dates back to Indo-European times. The 'brains' of an ox were taken because an ox has enormous strength in its head.

All the compounds of the salve and their respective powers are thoroughly mixed together by means of a stick of *cwicbeam*. The magic significance is obvious from the fact that a special kind of wood is required for the stick, and that a trembling poplar is selected, because its trembling faculty assists in mixing the salve. In the Holy Salve the stick is prepared in a special way: 'Take a stick, cut (one end) into four bristles and write these names in front: Mathews, Marcus, Lucas, Iohannes'. That the same thing was done here appears from the mention of the four evangelists. The incision of a cross to get four bristles is not Christian, for the cross is an element in the worship of the sun-god.

The brown colour of the salve may have been associated, as we have just said, with the brown colour of curdled blood. On the other hand there is a mystifying contrast in it with the 'black salve' which is smeared on against penetrating worms (Leechbook III, xxxviii) and the green salve applied against erysipelas (Lacnunga 4; Cf. No. 66).

Finally some Christian hymns are sung over the salve. *Benedictus dominus deus meus* is Psalm 143 (Vulgate); it praises the strength and the power of God, because He had delivered David from the hands of his enemies and had given bounty and wealth to the people. *Benedictus dominus deus Israel* (Luke I, 68-79) is a

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<sup>18)</sup> *l.c.*, s.v. *merg*.

hymn sung by Zacharias after the Lord had shown His power by loosening his tongue. *Magnificat* (Luke I, 46-55) is the hymn sung by the Virgin Mary in answer to the greetings of Elisabeth. *Credo in unum deum* is taken from the liturgy of the Mass. The names *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John* are usually recited when four articles are mentioned for some reason or other.

To sum up then, there is magical significance in the application of several herbs, in the bark of the trees, in the fat of male animals, in the circles, in the bones, in the marrow, in holy baptismal water and wax, in myrrh, storax and incense, in the numbers three and nine, in soap, in the stick, and finally in the singing of Christian hymns, which no doubt replaced earlier pagan incantations, and in the names of the four evangelists. Not a single magic element shows any trace of animism.

The collection of all the ingredients that go into the making of this good bone-salve must have taken a considerable length of time, and the Anglo-Saxons watching the painstaking and patient preparations must have been impressed by the knowledge, the power of this 'craftsman', by his *læce-cræft* and *gealdor-cræft*, his medical and magic skill. An outsider could see that bones were being collected for the bone-salve and yet he could not make a salve himself because he lacked the knowledge required by the magic ritual and did not possess the necessary confidence of the magician. The attitude of the magician towards magic is characterised by confidence, by superiority over the material he is working with; he is master of the forces he avails himself of; he arranges and orders and, in animism, threatens:

I stood under linden-wood, under a light shield,  
where the mighty women betrayed their power,  
and screaming they sent forth their spears.  
I will send them back another,  
a flying arrow from in front against them.  
Out little spear, if you are in here!

If it be the shot of Aesir, or the shot of elves,  
or the shot of hags, I will help you now.  
This as your remedy for the shot of Aesir, this for the  
shot of elves,  
this for the shot of hags, I will help you.

Charm No. 2, ll. 7-12; 23-26.

The attitude of the magician towards religion, i.e., towards a Supreme Being conceived as the originator and regulator of all, is different. Then he acknowledges his inferiority, and instead of commanding and menacing he prays and beseeches. Two striking illustrations are to be found in No. 8, in the hymns to the Sun and to Mother Earth. The opening lines of the hymn to the Sun are:

Eastwards I stand, for favours I pray.  
I pray the great lord, I pray the mighty prince,  
I pray the holy guardian of the heavenly kingdom.  
Earth I pray and sky.

That this is not a mere Christian interpolation appears from lines 40-41 of the same charm:

Then turn three times with the course of the sun, then  
stretch yourself along the ground and say the litany  
there.

The litany, a series of invocations to God and a list of names of saints, is of course a Christian addition, but stretching oneself along the ground and bowing before the sun is not, as may also be seen from No. 13.

Black magic sometimes affords a striking contrast in the attitude towards the Highest Being, for it recognizes no higher force and stresses its own power by mockingly perverting religious ritual. Instead of moving about with the course of the sun, it reverses the action and turns about against the sun (*withershins*, Icelandic *andsælis*); the Our Father is said beginning with the end; the sign of the cross is made the other way about; etc. This form of black magic is the negation of the power of the Supreme Being and as such it is prohibited by religion. It owes its origin to the destruction of the ethical values of the sorcerer and is the outcome of personal conceit and spite. Ordinarily we may speak of the difference between magic and religion, of the juxtaposition of the two, not of antithesis and enmity, for then we should also have an antithesis between religion and medicine because magic and medicine, the magician and the medicine-man are inseparably linked together among primitive peoples.

CHAPTER IV  
STRUCTURE AND ATMOSPHERE  
OF THE RITUAL



*Introduction*

The main principles of magic are, as we have seen, the idea of an impersonal power or force and that of the insensorial transmission of this power to the place where it must operate. In practice these two ideas are realised with countless variations, some of which may be grouped together. The magic practice shows how the magician attempts to get hold of a certain quantity of power, while at the same time he is thinking of its immediate or ultimate application. The ritual enables the magician to handle power and obtain a definite result.

The ritual shows a number of, what might be called, secondary characteristics of magic. The influence of animism is exceedingly strong in Anglo-Saxon magic and Frazer's laws of similarity and contact often provide a simple solution for the transmission of power. Then there is the conception of sacredness in the injunction to abstain from common food, from sexual intercourse, from everyday speech and actions; the objects used in magic must not be used for ordinary purposes and the words must be sung, not spoken in the ordinary tone. Another important point is the element of mystery surrounding magic, frequently developing into the creation of mystifying circumstances. Next we find special instructions as to time, place and so on. Though we may distinguish between such characteristics in theory, they form an inseparable unity in practice. The successful application of a complicated ritual demands close and detailed study, in other words it necessitates a professional practitioner.

§ 1. *Animistic Elements*

Animism, or the belief in the existence and activity of spirits, plays an important part in Anglo-Saxon magic. All sorts of phe-

nomena are ascribed to the visible or invisible intervention of good or evil spirits. The outward form of the spirits is immaterial; they may appear in the shape of huge monsters and in that of small insects, flies or bees; they may also be visualised in human shape, though on a reduced scale: elves and dwarfs, or they may be recognized by their exceptional beauty or ugliness.

Swarming bees are addressed as *sigewif*, 'victorious women', they are supposed to be possessed of human intelligence:

Settle, victorious women, sink down to earth.  
You must never fly wild to the wood.  
Be as mindful of my welfare  
as every man is of food and home.                      No. 1, ll. 8-11.

Most bees are female animals, so there is nothing strange in their being addressed as women, but in the following instance the disease-spirits, riding through the air and looking for victims, are also considered female creatures. Later on in the same text there is a reference to male and female beings:

Loud they were, lo loud, when they rode over the  
mound,  
they were fierce when they rode over the land.  
I stood under the linden, under a light shield,  
where the mighty women betrayed their power,  
and screaming they sent forth their darts.  
If it be the shot of Aesir, or the shot of elves,  
or the shot of hags, I will help you now.  
No. 2, ll. 3-4; 7-9; 23-24.

This is the only time that the Aesir are mentioned in O.E., and from the fact that they are coupled with elves and hags we may infer that among the Anglo-Saxons at any rate they had gradually lost the regard in which they were once held by the Germanic peoples, as is evident from a number of proper names whose first element consists of the word *os*: *Oswold*, *Osbeorn*, *Oslaf*, *Oslac*. The hag can scarcely be regarded as a spirit, though some qualities of spirits seem to have been attributed to her in the opening lines of the charm.

The principal representatives of the Anglo-Saxon spirit world are the elves. In the charm texts they always stand for evil forces

and certain diseases are specially ascribed to their influence: charms are sung against the waterelf-disease (No. 5); against elf-sickness or elf-disease (No. 17); against the shot of elves (No. 1; 22; 47); and special drinks (No. 18) and salves are prepared. In O.E. *ælf* is the masculine, *ælf*e the feminine form. The elves were not necessarily evil and they would seem to have also distributed favours. O.E. *ælfsciene* means 'bright as an elf', and the proper names *Ælfred*, *Ælfric*, *Ælfwine* testify to their helpfulness and excellence. Etymologically the word is not clear either. It is connected by some with Lat. *albus*, 'white', Gr.  $\alpha\lambda\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ , 'white spot', Sanskr. *ribhu*, 'shining', which point to good spirits; and by others with Indo-European \**lbh-*, \**lehb-*, \**lobh-*, a verb stem meaning 'to cheat, to be cunning', which points to evil spirits<sup>1)</sup>.

Another race of spirits are the dwarfs. They are disease-spirits in No. 7 and 44. In No. 7 a spider is hung on the patient's neck as a cure against the malady. In folk-lore dwarfs may be evil or good creatures.

The belief in the presence of spirits generated the practice of driving away the disease-spirit and healing the sufferer in an indirect way:

If a man is insane, take the skin of a tortoise, make a whip of it, and beat the man with it. He will soon be well. (A later hand ironically added: Amen.)

Leechbook III, xl.

A pleasanter remedy was to take an emetic, which is recommended in the next section of the Leechbook (III, xli).

When Christianity had spread in England the elves and dwarfs changed into devils:

Against one possessed by a devil: Put in holy water and in ale bishopwort, water-agrimony, agrimony, alexander, cockle; give him to drink.

Leechbook III, lxvii.

A number of magic practices are evidently based on the conception of animism. The disease-spirit was supposed to dwell in the blood of the patient and by drawing out some of the blood the disease-spirit was drawn out:

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<sup>1)</sup> See R. Jente, *Die mythologischen Ausdrücke im alteng. Wortschatz*. Heidelberg, 1921, § 112.

Against eruption: Scarify the neck after sunset, silently pour the blood into running water, spit three times after it, and say: Take this disease and depart with it.

No. 6, ll. 5-7.

For the bursting of erysipelas. Let (the person) sit in cold water, until it has become dead. Then pull him up and cut four incisions round the pocks and let run (the pus) as long as it likes.

Lacnunga 57; cf. Leechbook I, xxxix.

Against a swelling (of erysipelas). Take first a stick of hazel or elder wood, inscribe your name on it, cut three incisions in (the erysipelatos spot), fill the name with the blood. Throw it across your shoulder or between your thighs into running water and stand over the man. Cut the incisions and do all that in silence.

Leechbook I, xxxix.

Whose name is inscribed on the stick and whose blood fills the name? The second person singular may seem to indicate the medical man who performs the operation, the more so as the text says: 'Stand over the man', but the ordinary spoken language, on which our text is based is not always consistent because so much only becomes clear from the actual context. A great many prescriptions from the Leechbook and the Lacnunga are apparently addressed to the sufferer himself and not to the doctor. There is nothing strange in this as there were not many doctors in Anglo-Saxon times and sick people had to help themselves. Here 'your name' probably refers to the patient and 'across your shoulder or between your thighs' to the man who performs the magic cure, that is, either the patient or the doctor. 'Stand over the man' indicates that in the present case the action was performed by a doctor. Throwing the stick across one's shoulder signifies that one no longer knows where the stick and the disease-spirit are. Conversely, the spirit no longer knows where his victim is, and to make perfectly sure the stick is carried away by running water. Throwing the stick between one's thighs had the same function. The stick and the spirit went through a gate which was closed afterwards so that they could not enter again. At the same time the act of standing over the patient expresses that the medicine-man has power over the spirit and over

the patient. By exercising his magic power he frightens away the disease-spirit and protects and cures the patient.

It was also possible to smoke out the disease-spirit:

Then put live coal in a chafing dish and lay the herbs on them. Smoke the man with those herbs before nine a.m. and at night. No. 17, ll. 7-8.

And when he will go to rest, let him have live coals in there (that is, in the house where he sleeps). Put incense and enchanter's nightshade on the coals, and smoke him with it so that he sweats, and smoke the whole house. No. 17, ll. 41-43; cf. No. 23, 24.

Frequently charms, or parts of charms, were uttered to drive out the spirit:

Wen, wen, little wen,  
here you shall not build, nor have any habitation,  
but you shall go north, hence to the neighbouring hill.

No. 4, ll. 1-3.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, drive out every attack of mountain spirits from your servant N., by the imposition of this writing, from the head, the brains, the forehead, the tongue, from under the tongue, from the upper and lower part of the throat, from the teeth, the eyes, the nose, the ears, the hands, the neck, the arms, the heart, the soul, the knees, the hips, the feet, the joints and all limbs outside and inside. Amen. No. 17, ll. 65-71.

Fly, devil, Christ pursues you.

When Christ is born the pain will go.

No. 41; cf. No. 27, 28, 36, 48, 51, 52, 64, 71.

I do not think that we can speak of animism in such cases as the following:

Against snake bite. Take agrimony, make one ring round about the bite, it (the poison) will not pass any further.... Take the wax from your ear and smear it about (the bite). No. 30, ll. 3-5.



Here there is no personification of the disease. The disease is only vaguely attributed to some poisonous influence, which is hemmed in by the magic circle made by means of the herb or the wax. See § 13. It is not certain either that No. 6 has to be explained along animistic lines, for scarifying the neck of a patient and, in general, bleeding him gives a feeling of relief and a sense of being cured without the patient having recourse to the belief in spirits.

## § 2. *Similarity*

The method by which a magician attempts to attain his ends frequently assumes the form of some sort of comparison, either in actions or in words. Two things are in some way brought together, so that what happens to one of them will happen also to the other. The magic act is symbolical and the comparison need not be expressed in full; the symbolism is clear to every insider, and outsiders need not understand.

The comparison is expressed in full in No. 4:

May you be consumed as coal upon the hearth,  
may you shrink as dung upon a wall,  
and may you dry up as water in a pail.  
May you become as small as a linseed grain,  
and much smaller than the hipbone of an itchmite,  
and may you become so small that you become nothing.

So, too, in No. 13 & 14:

Bethlehem is the name of the town where Christ was  
born.  
It is well known throughout the world.  
So may this act (i.e., this theft) become known among  
men.

In No. 15 a curse is invoked on the thief that had stolen some cattle:

May he quite perish, as wood is consumed by fire,  
may he be as fragile as a thistle,  
he who plans to drive away these cattle,  
or to carry off these goods.

In the charm *Wid Ymbe* (No. 1) the magician begins by performing a symbolical act. He throws some earth into the air and

puts his right foot on it: Just as the earth flies into the air and is caught by him, so the bees will be caught by him when they swarm. — Earth is heavy and as the earth does not rise but comes down immediately, so the bees will not rise high but will come down soon.

No. 11 contains a warning to thieves:

The Jews hanged Christ, they were severely punished  
for it.  
They treated him in the most evil manner, grievously  
they paid for it.  
They concealed it to their own great harm, because  
they were not able to keep it hidden.

The unexpressed part of the comparison is that the thieves will be punished, they will pay for what they cannot keep hidden.

Sometimes a mythological story is related, as in No. 9, ll. 1-6:

Remember, Mugwort, what you made known,  
What you arranged at the Great Proclamation.  
You were called Una, the oldest of herbs,  
you have power against three and against thirty,  
you have power against poison and against infection,  
you have power against the loathsome foe roving  
through the land.

As mugwort exhibited her power on a well-known occasion, so she will show her might now. The Nine Herbs Charm tells some such fact for each herb, and even Woden, the Germanic god of wisdom and charms, is mentioned (ll. 41-43):

A worm came crawling, it killed nothing.  
For Woden took nine glory twigs,  
he smote then the adder that it flew apart into nine  
parts.

Once upon a time Woden performed a spectacular feat: he destroyed a poisonous adder; the narration of this event repeats the achievement and makes the poison ineffective in the present case: Just as the poison was destroyed by Woden, so it will be destroyed here. The Seven Sleepers, whose power enabled them to sleep in Mount Celion for three hundred years, will grant a long and healthy sleep to a sufferer from fever on the invocation of their names (No. 7; 36; 37; 38; 39; 40). By the invocation of the Seven Sleepers

a point of contact is established between what they had achieved before and what they are expected to do now. The Middle Ages abound in such stories. St. Laurence was martyred by being bound on a red-hot gridiron, so St. Laurence was called upon against burns: The fire could not hurt him, therefore he was more powerful than fire and he can help those who invoke his name. St. Nicasius suffered from pocks, so he is invoked against pocks:

St. Cassius (Nicasius) had the smallpox and he prayed the Lord that whoever would carry his name with him, would not catch this disease.

Appendix, No. 8 & 9.

It is told of St. Blasius that he once miraculously healed a child that had a thorn in its throat and his help is frequently invoked against a sore throat (See Appendix, No. 10 & 11). St. Veronica wiped Christ's face on His way to Calvary and her name is repeatedly mentioned in charms to stanch bleeding (No. 58; 59; 60), so often in fact that her very name became a word of power (No. 17, l. 61).

No. 56 is constructed on the punning significance of the word stand: The blood running from the nose will stand or stop, as we stand in awe of the Lord.

No. 45 repeats the words of Christ 'Lazare veni foras' to bring about quick parturition.

In pronouncing a comparison the magician supposes the two elements to be similar or hopes to make them similar. The idea that two objects are connected with each other may be based on a similarity in sound, meaning, form, colour and so on. We have seen that for the preparation of the good bone salve it was necessary to collect all the bones one can find, pound them with the back of an axe and mix them with other ingredients. When the compound is smeared on, the broken head can absorb the power that is in the bones. The external likeness of the two sorts of bones makes it easy for them to become one entity. This application of the idea of similarity appears to have been exceedingly popular in Anglo-Saxon magic:

Against headache a dog's head is burnt to ashes and laid on.

Leechbook I, 1.

Against the same ashes from a hart's horn are taken, mixed with vinegar and juice of roses and bound on the cheek.

Leechbook I, 1.

Goat's dung is applied against swellings.

Leechbook I, xxvi; I, xxxi.

If a man cannot retain his water, the bladder of a gelded pig is burnt to ashes and put in wine. Or he must eat the roasted bladder of a goat; or the boiled bladder of a ram.

Leechbook I, xxxvii.

If a man's limb is cut off, so that the marrow comes out, boiled sheep's marrow should be laid on the wound.

Leechbook I, xxxviii.

A black snake is washed in holy water and the water is then given to drink as a remedy against snake bite.

Leechbook I, xlv.

If a man intends to fight with an enemy, let him boil sand-martins in wine and eat them, or boil spring water. (To obtain swiftness and agility and make one 'seethe' with rage and fighting spirit).

Leechbook, I lxxxv.

Against swollen eyes. Catch a live crab, put out its eyes and put it back alive into the water, and put the eyes on the neck of the man who needs them. He will soon be well.

Leechbook III, n.

Against tearing, or running, eyes, take honey tear, that is, honey dripping from the comb.

Leechbook III, n.

Against a swelling. Take a root of lily, a sprout of elder, and a leaf of garlic; cut them very small and pound them very well. And put them in a thick cloth and bind on. (Just as the swellings of these plants are cut up and pounded, so the swelling of the patient is made to disappear).

Lacnunga 9.

Dry beans, boiled without salt and mixed with honey, are laid on hard tumours. (Just as the dry or hard beans are softened by boiling them, so the tumours are softened).  
Leechbook I, xxxi.

A willow leaf and dead bees avail against baldness. (Willows will grow no matter how often they are polled, and bees are hairy insects).  
Leechbook I, lxxxvii.

Conversely, ants' eggs are applied to prevent the hair from growing. (Because the eggs are bald).  
Leechbook I, lxxxvii.

Goose fat is good against ear-ache. (Because geese have sharp ears?).  
Leechbook I, iii.

Against a bad cold, take a nettle, boil in oil, smear and rub your body with it; the cold will disappear. (The Dutch name for the stinging nettle is 'burning' nettle).  
Leechbook I, lxxxix.

Against the bite of a dog. Pound ribwort, lay on the wound; boil rue in butter, heal the wound with it. If the sinews are cut through, take earth-worms, pound them well, lay on until they, i.e., the sinews, are whole. (Because earth-worms somewhat resemble sinews?).  
Leechbook III, xxxiv.

*Springwyrte* (wild caper) is used *wid springe*, i.e., against an ulcer or pustule. (The exact reasoning is not quite clear; springwort must not assist in something springing up but it must prevent the ulcer from springing up or coming out. In Leechbook I, xxxix springwort is applied against *onfealle*, i.e., a swelling; so the meaning is the same though the punning character has been lost. This antipathetic function of the principle of similarity is by no means exceptional in magic).  
Leechbook I, xxxiii.

If cattle die, groundsel, springwort, the lower part of venomloather (cockspur grass) and clivers is put in holy water and poured into their mouths. (The wild caper will make them live and caper about; venom-

loather is added in case they have been poisoned and the holy water serves to drive away evil spirits).

Lacnunga 78.

Wenwort is an ingredient of a good wen-salve.

Leechbook III, xxxi; I, LVIII.

Neckwort (*healswyr*t, i.e., daffodil) and boarthroat (*eoforþrote*, i.e., carline thistle) is effective against erysipelas in the neck (*healsoman*). Lacnunga 4.

Pellitory (*dolhrune*) is used in a wound salve (*dolh-sealf*).

Leechbook I, xxxviii.

Adderwort and venomloather (*attorlade*) are applied against the poisonous bite of an adder.

Leechbook I, XLV.

Lithwort serves against pain in the limbs (*lidwyr*t *wið lipwærce*).

Leechbook I, LXI.

Apple's juice is good against the oily matter between the joints (*æpples seaw wiþ lip-seawe*).

Leechbook I, LXI.

Against a broken head. Take bonewort (*banwyr*t, i.e., violet?) and cockspur grass (*attorlade*) and pellitory (*dolhrune*) and wild parsley (*wudumerce*) and water-betony (*brunwyr*t) and betony (*betonice*), work up all the herbs into a drink and mix with it the small burdock (*clive*) and centaury and waybread, most of all betony. And if the brains come out, take the yolk of an egg and mix a little bit with honey and fill the wound and bandage it with oakum and leave it then. And again spit on the wound every three days. And if the healthy skin should have a red ring about the wound, know then that you cannot heal it. (It is easy to see why *banwyr*t, *attorlade* and *dolhrune* are used; *brunwyr*t is applied several times in connection with wounds, e.g., Leechbook I, xxxviii, perhaps on account of its colour. Compare the good Bone-salve: add brown storax and mix the salve until it is brown. *Clife* must make the bones cleave together again and so must the oakum).

Leechbook I, I.

G. v. d. Leeuw has attempted to reconstruct the way of thinking behind such magical reasoning: The borderlines between the various phenomena and the things are vague and hazy in the world of primitive man. There are no fixed barriers between himself and the outside world, nor between the various creatures in that world. If we keep this in mind, the enormous significance of the symbol, the similitude, of imitative and homoeopathic magic will become clear. For the symbol, the similitude is one and the same with what it represents, or rather, it does not represent the other, it is the other<sup>2</sup>).

That is exactly what we find in animism and in magic. Magic goes one step further, however, in as far as it not only accepts similarity where it finds it, but even endeavours to create that similarity; in this way the magician obtains power, he sees new ways of wielding his power and of subjecting to himself the outside world.

### § 3. *Blood*

Blood is a necessary element to a man's life, it is a life-force. If one loses much blood, one dies. Blood pervades the whole body; wherever the body is hurt blood will flow. The magician who has power over the blood, who can prevent a man from bleeding too much, is regarded with awe.

Once a disease has got into the blood, it will spread through the whole body. We have already seen in § 1 that the disease-spirit was supposed to dwell in the blood and that the sickness was cured by drawing out the spirit. Sometimes the incisions were made on the spot affected, as in the instances for the bursting of erysipelas and the one against a swelling. So also in Leechbook I, LXVIII:

In case a hunting spider, that is the stronger, bites a man, cut three incisions near it in the direction away from the bite. Let the blood run on to a green hazel stick, throw it away across a road, then nothing evil will happen.

It is not stated that the incisions were made by means of a hazel stick, though this is quite likely. In the following case we do not know which was the particular spot:

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<sup>2</sup>) G. v. d. Leeuw, *De primitieve Mensch en de Religie*, Groningen, 1937, pp. 38 ff.

Against flying venom. Cut four incisions on the four sides with an oaken stick. Make the stick bloody, throw it away. Charm No. 25.

In the charm against eruption of the skin (No. 6) the neck is scarified and the blood poured into running water. Against elf-shot (No. 22) a cross is inscribed on the forehead of the horse, so that the blood flows from it; another on the back and more on all the limbs within reach.

#### § 4. *Spitting*

In the magic of all peoples we hear of the importance attached to saliva. In Anglo-Saxon medicine too we repeatedly come across the instruction to spit. Its exact function is not always easy to discern but every one suffering from thirst could realise the importance of saliva for the body. Just as blood it is a life-force. Animals lick their wounds to make them heal.

The medicine-man spits three times after pouring blood into running water, probably to throw up a barrier and prevent the spirit from returning and harming the patient again. No. 6.

A woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must take the milk of a cow of one colour in her hand, sip up a little of it, and then go to running water and spit the milk into it. And then with the same hand she must take a mouthful of water and swallow it. No. 10.

In preparing the Holy Salve the medicine-man spits into it. No. 19.

Against pain in the joints the doctor sings some charm nine times and spits on the sick spot. No. 42.

Against a penetrating worm the charmer sings an Irish charm many times and smears his spittle on the wound. No. 73

Against a broken head a number of herbs are worked up into a herbal drink and every three days the medicine-man spits on the wound. Leechbook I, 1.



If a wound festers, the remedy is to chew clubmoss and yarrow and to put the poultice on the wound.

Leechbook I, xxxviii.

Vervain chewed in the mouth, wrung through a cloth and put on the eyes is a wonderful (!) remedy against some eye disease (*Wid æsmælum*).

Leechbook I, ii.

Against the same complaint, as also against every pain of the eyes the doctor chews wild teazle and then he wrings the juice through a purple cloth on the eyes at night, when the patient will rest, and in the morning he lays on the white of an egg.

Leechbook III, xlvi.

### § 5. *Breath*

Breathing is a necessary function of living creatures and its magic power is clearly expressed in No. 31, a charm against poison in which some Latin prayers are sung over a drink:

These prayers must be sung three times each on this drink and the man's breath must be wholly on the liquid as long as he sings the charm. If the patient is inwardly quite swollen up, so that he is unable to take the liquid, it must be sung into his mouth.

By keeping his mouth close to the person or the object that was to be charmed the magician could be certain of establishing the right contact. The Nine Herbs Charm (No. 9) ends with the injunction:

Sing this charm three times on each of the herbs before you prepare them, and likewise on the apple. And sing the same charm into the mouth of the man and into both his ears and on the wound before you apply the salve.

No. 7, too, is sung into the ears:

Then the charm that is mentioned hereafter must be sung, first into the left ear, then into the right ear, then over the crown of the man's head.

No. 28 says:

And let the drink be in the room where the patient is, and always before he drinks it, sing three times over the drink: *Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac.*

In the early Middle Ages the magic power of a written text was not to be disregarded, but the Anglo-Saxon commentary to the Celestial Letter recorded in No. 34 gives the instruction that the text should be sung:

If the evil is internal, sing it over water, give him to drink. He will soon be better. If it is external, sing it on fresh butter and anoint the body with it. He will soon recover.

Leechbook III, xxxix has these descriptions of the preparation and application of an ointment against a penetrating worm:

Take gall of a pig and gall of a fish and gall of a crab and gall of a hare, mingle them together, smear the wound with the mixture, blow the juice on the wound by means of a reed. Then pound a leaf of buckthorn, lay on the wound.

Work up a bath for the same. Take bark of aspen and bark of myrtle and bark of the trembling poplar and bark of sloethorn and bark of myrtle (thus the MS.) and bark of birch. Pound all the pieces of bark, boil in whey of cheese, wash and bathe the limb, which contains the worm, with this. And after the bath dry (the limb) and smear with the salve and blow the salve on the wound and apply the leaf of buckthorn. Do so three times a day in summer and twice in winter.

In the Nine Herbs Charms (No. 9, ll. 61-63) the magician exclaims:

May all the weeds spring up from their roots,  
the seas slip apart, all salt water,  
when I blow this poison from you.

### § 6. *Excrements*

The explanation of the use of human or animal excrements might be sought in its fertilising activity, so important in agricultural so-

cieties. But manure had by no means the importance we are apt to ascribe to it, because primitive man did not need a fertiliser. There was generally so much land that the simplest method to insure a good crop was to take another field and let the first lie fallow. The explanation should primarily be sought in the fact that primitive man had no use for excrements in everyday life, so when they were applied for some reason or other there was something odd, something out of the common about them, in other words, the use of excrements assumed a ritualistic function, based on mystery and wonder. Their very repulsiveness lent them power, just as old and ugly women were taken for witches.

Bathe with hot cow's urine.

No. 73.

If sinews shrink and also against the swelling, take goat's dung, mix with vinegar, daub on, it soon heals.

Leechbook I, xxvi.

Against a swelling, take goat's dung boiled in sharp vinegar and apply. (The form of goat's dung itself has a magic power).

Leechbook I, xxxi.

Against a swelling in the neck. Mingle together meal of barley and clear pitch and wax and oil, boil, add the urine of a boy or a child (a girl?) to the concoction, lay on the swelling.

Leechbook I, iv.

Against deafness. Take the gall of a ram, together with its urine after a night's fasting, mingle with butter, pour into the ear.

Leechbook I, iii.

Goose dung is one of the ingredients of a wound salve.

Leechbook I, xxxviii.

Against the bite of a spider. Take a hen's egg, cut it up raw into ale and fresh sheep's dung, so that he does not know (!), give him to drink a good bowlful.

Leechbook III, xxxv.

If you cannot stop the bleeding of a wound, take the fresh excrements of a horse, dry in the sun, pound to a very small powder, lay the powder very thickly on a linen cloth, bandage the wound with it.

Leechbook III, lii.

(Against erysipelas). Heat dung of a calf or of an old ox and apply. Lacnunga 58

Against pain in the joints. Take dung of a pigeon and of a goat, dry very well and rub to a powder, mix with honey and with butter, smear the joints with it.

Leechbook III, xxiv

Against warts. Take the water of a dog and the blood of a mouse, mix together, smear the warts with this; they will soon disappear. Leechbook III, xxv

### § 7. *Mystification*

The magical atmosphere relies to a large extent on the sentiments of wonder and awe it excites in the spectator, on the feeling of smallness and impotence in the heart of the outsider. The magician is looked up to because he knows how to deal with extraordinary incidents, preternatural phenomena. Only an insider knows all the facts of the magic performance, and in order to keep his advantage all sorts of trivial details are added that derive their significance exclusively from being part of a rite. The origin and explanation of such details is difficult to trace. Even if they had some original significance, the meaning may have got lost in the course of the years, and we may be sure that in many cases details were only added to bewilder the on-looker.

#### *Water*

If water was used there was nearly always some modification:

And have an immaculate person silently fetch half a jar of running water. No. 18

Wormwood, boiled in water in a new kettle.

Leechbook I, III

Against tertian fever, drink betony in warm water. Against quartan fever, drink juice of waybread twice in sweet water before the fever attacks him. Against quotidian fever, drink a pennyworth of powder of betony in cold water. Leechbook I, LXII

Boil in water sweetened honey.

Leechbook I, xxxix; Lacnunga 77

Rain-water and sea-water are prescribed in Leechbook I, ii. Most often in our sources it was holy water:

Dip them three times into hallowed baptismal water.

No. 17

Against poison. Put betony and the small 'venom-loather' in holy water; drink the water and the herbs.

Leechbook I, XLV

If an adder bites a man, wash the black snake in holy water, give to drink.

Leechbook I, XLV

The mention of holy water is particularly frequent towards the end of Book I of the Leechbook, throughout the third Book, and in the Lacnunga.

### *Butter*

Throughout the Leechbook and the Lacnunga we meet with the phrase 'Boil in butter', which may be a mechanical repetition in a number of cases but which regains its original importance by a study of the context in which it occurs and of its etymology and synonyms. In preparing a salve herbs were boiled and pounded to dust so that they could be smeared on the spot where they were required. In this way their medicinal virtue was brought to bear on the disease. Now in order to preserve their virtue, and also in order to preserve the salve, herbs were boiled in butter and fat. As we have seen the words butter, fat and salve were originally synonymous, but in Old English this meaning of salve was of course forgotten and salve became restricted to its medicinal function. The magic effect of the butter partly lay in its contrast with water, the normal substance to boil things in. Next it was enhanced by adding details:

Boil in cow butter. Leechbook I, I

Take fresh cow butter. Lacnunga 16

Then take clean butter. Lacnunga 6

Then take old butter. Lacnunga 12

Add salted butter. Leechbook II, LXV

And thus you make the butter for the holy salve: churn the butter from milk of a cow of one colour, she must be completely red or white and without spots; and if you have not butter enough, wash it very clean and mix other butter with it.

No. 19

On a Friday churn butter which is milked from a cow of one colour or from a hind, and it must not be mixed with water.

No. 79

### *Fat*

Fat of a hart and fat of a he-goat and fat of a bull and fat of a boar and fat of a ram are ingredients of the bone-salve, Lacnunga 12. Fat of a hart is also used in Lacnunga 2 and in Leechbook I, XLVII; fat of a sheep in Leechbook I, LVIII and Lacnunga 59; fat of a cow or an ox in Lacnunga 59; old fat of a pig in Lacnunga 68 and Leechbook I, IV; of a bear in Leechbook I, IV; of a horse in Leechbook I, LIV; of a fox in Lacnunga 2; of a goose in Leechbook II, XXXVII; of a ram or a buck in Leechbook III, XXXI; of a fish in Leechbook I, LXXXVIII; fat of all riverfish melted in the sun, in Leechbook I, II.

### *Marrow*

Marrow has a distinctly magic function in Leechbook I, XXXVIII:

If a man's limb is cut off, a finger or a foot or a hand, if the marrow shows, take boiled marrow of a sheep, lay it on the other marrow, bandage it strongly for a night.

In the other instances the notion of similarity is absent and there is only the intention to mystify the patient. Marrow of an old ox and of an eagle are mentioned in Lacnunga 12; marrow of a hart in Lacnunga 2; of a roe in Lacnunga 2.

### *Milk*

The use of milk in Anglo-Saxon medicine is very common. The following instances are typical:

Boil in milk. Leechbook I, LVII; Lacnunga 18

Mix with cow-milk. Leechbook I, III; II, XXV

Boil three times in several kinds of milk.

No. 17; No. 26; Leechbook I, II

Rub into goat-milk.

Leechbook I, VII

Boil in goat-milk. Leechbook I, XXXIX; Lacnunga 63

Take three cupfuls of cool goat-milk. Lacnunga 59

Mix with goat-milk.

Leechbook II, IX

Warm ewe-milk is drunk against stomach-ache.

Leechbook II, IX

If a man is too lecherous, boil water-agrimony in Welsh ale, let him drink it after a night's fasting. If a man is not lustful enough, boil the same herb in milk, then you will make him lecherous. Boil in ewe-milk water-agrimony, alexander, and a herb called 'forne-tes folm', then it will be as pleases him best.

Leechbook I, LXX

Hind-milk is employed as an ingredient of an eye-salve.

Lacnunga 2; id. 13.

The idea of the unusual comes in strongest with mother-milk:

Against mistiness of the eyes take a cupful of juice of celandine and another of juice of fennel, a third of juice of wormwood, and two cupfuls of honey-tear, mix together, and then put it in the eyes with a feather in the morning and when it is midday and again in the evening. Afterwards when it has dried, take milk of a woman who has a child, and put it on the eyes against the sharpness of the salve.

Leechbook I, II

Against paralysis (O.E. *lyftadl*). Take celandine, dry, work up to a powder, mix the powder with the milk of a woman who has brought forth a boy, wring through a purple cloth and smear the sound cheek with this and drip cautiously into the ear.

Leechbook III, XLVII

Against ear-ache. Heat juice of celandine and

mother-milk in a shell (an oyster-shell), and drip into the ears. Leechbook III, III

### *Oil*

The use of oils is frequent: Lacnunga 4; Lacnunga 5; id. 58; and so on. Oil of extreme unction is prescribed in Leechbook II, LXV:

Against nostalgia. Boil wormwood, as dry or as green as you may have it, in *oleo infirmorum*, till the third part is boiled up, and smear all the body with this at a fire. And a priest shall perform this cure, if you have one.

### *Ale*

The application of ale, with and without additional prescriptions, is very frequent:

Boil in ale.	Leechbook III, xxvii
Good ale.	Lacnunga 41
Clear ale.	Lacnunga 19
Good clear ale.	Lacnunga 40
Sweetened ale.	Lacnunga 27
New ale.	Leechbook I, LI
Old ale.	Leechbook II, LXV
Welsh or foreign ale.	Leechbook II, LXV
Two kinds of brown ale.	Leechbook I, XLVII
Sour ale.	Lacnunga 20
One half holy water, one half clear ale.	Leechbook II, LIII
Beer.	Lacnunga 13
Strong beer.	Leechbook III, XII
Light beer or clear ale well sweetened or sweetened wine.	Lacnunga 18



## *Wine*

Put in wine.	Lacnunga 59
Sweetened wine.	Lacnunga 2; id. 26
Old wine.	Lacnunga 65
Mulberry wine.	Lacnunga 12; Leechbook I, XLVIII
<i>Cæren</i> (a sweet wine).	Leechbook II, LV

To purge the stomach some boil nettle in water and in wine and in oil, some apply the green twigs of the red nettle, some boil beet or dock in sweetened wine and give that to take, and if the illness grows worse and the sick man has the strength, then they boil stronger herbs for him and add some pepper.

Leechbook II, xxv

Hallowed wine.	No. 18
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## *Mead*

Add clear old wine or very good mead.

Leechbook II, LIII

## *Vinegar*

For a head-salve and an eye-salve. Rub aloes in vinegar, smear the head with it and put in the eyes.

Lacnunga 1

Against heartburn. Rub pennyroyal in vinegar and water, give to drink. Soon the pain will disappear.

Leechbook III, LXIX

In the first instance there may be an animistic element: the sharp, biting effect of vinegar must drive away the disease-spirit. In the second there is the notion of similarity: the sharp sour taste of vinegar is employed against the sharp sour taste produced by heartburn.

## *Wax*

Mix with wax.	Leechbook III, xrv
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If a horse is elf-shot, or other cattle, take dock-seed

and Irish (O.E. *scyttisc*) wax, have a priest sing twelve Masses over them, and add holy water, and then give to the horse or to the cattle, whichever it is. Have the herbs always with you. Lacnunga 60

### *Honey*

Boil in honey. Lacnunga 25; Leechbook III, xiv

Boil in honey and butter, two parts of honey and a third part of butter. Leechbook III, xiii

Honey of humble bees. Leechbook I, ii; Lacnunga 2

Honey of wild bees. Leechbook III, ii

Soak in honey of humble bees or in down-honey (O.E. *dunhunig*), i.e., honey gathered on downs.

Lacnunga 4

### *Whey*

Boil in whey of cheese. Leechbook III, xxxix

### *Sweat*

Against eye-ache. Take red hove, boil it in sour sweat or in sour ale, and bathe the eyes in this bath, the oftener the better. Leechbook I, ii

Against the bite of a spider smear sweat on iron. (This is the entire prescription and as the immediate context does not help us, one cannot help wondering: What comes next? Probably some incisions were made with the knife, as in Leechbook I, lxxviii: Against the bite of a hunting spider, cut five incisions, one on the bite and four round it, throw (the blood?) with the stick across a cart-road in silence). Leechbook II, lxxv

### *Utensils and Preparations*

The drinks and ointments were prepared in all sorts of vessels. If a special vessel is mentioned the brass vessel appears to be the commonest (*æren fæt* or *arfæt*):

Work an eye-salve against a wen. Take equal quan-

tities of two kinds of garlic (O.E. *cropleac* and *garleac*), pound them well together, take equal quantities of wine and gall of a bull, mix with the garlic, then put all this in a brass vessel, let it stand for nine nights in the vessel, wring through a cloth and purify well, put in a horn, and at night put it with a feather in the eye. It is an excellent remedy. Leechbook I, II

In the same chapter of the Leechbook (I, II) we find mention of a copper vessel; a brass or copper vessel; an *ampulla*; a brass *ampulla*; an earthenware vessel (O.E. *crocca*). Leechbook I, III speaks of a glass vessel, and also of a 'new kettle', with the sacred, ritualistic connotation of not having served any other purpose.

For heating or boiling purposes the medicine-man made use of a hearth; a fire; coal, i.e., charcoal (O.E. *gled*); ashes, all of which occur in Leechbook I, II.

The significance of such variations is brought out by the following instances:

Bathing in water heated by hot iron is good against erysipelas. Lacnunga 59; Leechbook I, xxxix

Heat wine with a red-hot iron. Leechbook II, xxxiii

The boiling might take place three times, Leechbook III, lxii; once, Lacnunga 12; a long time, Leechbook I, viii; strongly, Leechbook I, lx; a little bit, Leechbook I, viii.

### *Completeness and Variation*

The habit of multiplying and varying details also served to bewilder the outsider:

Take the fat of all river-fish. Leechbook I, II

Take bark of the trembling poplar and of aspen and apple, maple, elder, willow, sallow, myrtle, wych-elm, oak, sloethorn, birch, olive-tree, goat-willow, most of ash and part of every tree you can get, except hawthorn and alder. (The putting aside of alder is rather odd, for its bark is frequently applied in our sources; the only explanation I can suggest is the mystifying effect). Leechbook I, xxxvi.

Take oil and honey and yeast and milk of all the cattle on the land, and part of every tree growing on the land, except hard trees, and part of every well-known herb, except burdock only.

No. 8.

The Holy Salve (No. 19) names as many as fifty-seven herbs, the bone-salve (Lacnunga 12), discussed in chapter III, is content with thirty-five herbs but adds a great many ingredients of a different nature. Instances of mere variation abound :

A drink against pneumonia. Boil horehound in wine or in beer, sweeten a little with honey, give to drink hot after a night's fasting and then have him lie on the right side for a good while after the drink and make him stretch out the right arm as strongly as possible.

Lacnunga 26.

If a woman cannot make water, take the seed of nasturtium, boil in water, give to drink.

If a man cannot make water, pound lovage and bark of elder and oleastrum, that is, wild olive-tree, mix with sour clear ale, give to drink.

Leechbook I, xxxvii.

Against pain in the neck. Boil the lower part of nettle in fat of an ox and in butter. Then against pain in the neck you must smear the thigh; if he has pain in the thigh, smear the neck with the salve.

Leechbook III, vii.

If a man or if cattle drink a worm. If it is of the male kind, sing this charm which is written hereafter in the right ear, if it is of the female kind, sing in the left ear.

No. 73.

The tendency to astonish by uncommon and absurd details has gone to extremes in No. 81:

Against the bite of an adder. If he obtains and eats bark which comes from Paradise, no poison can hurt him. — Then he that wrote this book remarked that it was difficult to get.

## § 8. *Running water*

Running water is endowed with special qualities, over and above the mystifying element we have mentioned in the preceding section. The water from a stream is clearer and fresher than that of a pool, and its murmuring sound evokes the impression that it is alive, active and quickening, that nymphs and elves are living in the water, while a stagnant pool makes the impression of being dead and oppressive. However this may be, running water is powerful in Anglo-Saxon magic:

I alone know a running stream,  
and the nine adders beware of it.      No. 9, ll. 59-60.

A stream sullied by something thrown into the water will be clear and pure again a bit further on. Therefore running water is employed to clear a person of a disease-spirit:

Scarify the neck after sunset, silently pour the blood  
into running water, spit three times after it, then say:  
Take this disease and depart with it.      No. 6, ll. 5-7.

The spirit is carried away and the patient is cured. The reason of the cure may partly be sought in the adjective 'running': the water runs away with the disease.

The interpretation of the function of running water in the next instance is doubtful:

The woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must take the milk of a cow of one colour in her hand, sip up a little in her mouth, and then go to running water and spit the milk into it. And with the same hand she must take a mouthful of water and swallow it. Let her then say these words:

Everywhere I carried with me this great powerful  
strong one, strong because of this great food; such a  
one I want to have and go home with.

When she goes to the stream she must not look  
round, nor again when she goes away from there, and  
let her go into another house than the one which she  
started from, and there take food.      No. 10, ll. 20-29.

The milk of a cow of one colour may be a sacrifice to the spirit

of the brook, in return for which she receives strength and food by sipping a mouthful of water. This explanation seems to be borne out by the second line of the incantatory formula: 'strong because of this strong food'. It is also possible that the spirit who harasses her and who prevents her from feeding her child well, is enticed to go into the milk and is subsequently expectorated into the running water, which will deal further with the evil one. This explanation finds some confirmation in the injunction not to look round when she goes to and from the stream, for the same or another spirit might take possession of her again if contact was established through her looking at an object or at the running water where an elf was residing. Probably the two explanations must be combined. Magic is a practical concern and a change of method means nothing if only it leads to success.

Running water is drunk in the Holy Drink (No. 18) and its power is enhanced by accompanying precepts:

And order an immaculate person silently to fetch half a jar of running water against the current.

In No. 21 the water must be scooped up 'moving with the current':

Let a girl go to a spring that runs due east, and let her draw a cupful of water moving with the current.

Butter and fat are the characteristic ingredients of a salve, but in No. 20 the magician has managed to bring in the purifying effect of running water:

Put the herbs in a vessel, set them under the altar, sing nine Masses over them, boil them in butter and sheep's fat, add a good quantity of holy salt, strain them through a cloth, throw the herbs into running water.

Herbs are usually pounded and worked up entirely into the salve. As only their essential power is extracted, the remains of the plants present a ritualistic problem, for nothing must be left over. The remains are destroyed by throwing them into running water. At the same time contact is established between the purifying water and the person who has to be freed of the elf, because the herbs are partly in the water and partly in the salve.

The fresh and cooling effect of running water is noticeable in two remedies against erysipelas, which disease gives a burning feeling on the spot affected:

Against erysipelas of horse and man sing this thrice nine times in the evening and in the morning, with the man on the top of his head, with the horse in the left ear, in running water, and turn the head against the stream.

No. 67.

Turning the head against the stream probably has the same function as not looking round: the disease flows away with the running water and is not able to return through the eyes.

Against an (erysipelalous) swelling. First take a stick of hazel or elder wood, inscribe your name on it, cut three incisions on (the erysipelalous spot), fill the name with your blood, throw it over your shoulder or between your thighs into running water. Cut the incisions and do all this in silence.

Leechbook I, xxxix; Lacnunga 59.

The main function of the running water in this instance is to carry away the disease.

### § 9. *Iron*

Iron manifestly takes its power from the fact that the material was better and scarcer than wood or stone for making tools, and secondly from the mysterious way in which it was originally found: in meteoric stones. It needed a specialist and a skilled labourer to obtain the iron from the ore and to harden it. Indeed we find that many primitive peoples regard their blacksmiths as magicians, at any rate as a group of people differing from other craftsmen. Among the Germanic tribes Wayland stands out as the smith *par excellence*. The figure of this wondrous smith — the Germanic Vulcanus (Hephaistos) — symbolizing at first the marvels of metal working as they impressed the people of the Stone Age, was made the subject of heroic legend, which spread from North Germany to Scandinavia and England<sup>3)</sup>. Wayland is not mentioned by name in our charm texts but there is a reference to smiths in No. 1:

A smith was sitting, forging a little knife (l. 13).

Six smiths were sitting making war-spears (l. 16).

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<sup>3)</sup> Fr. Klaeber, *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, Boston, 1928<sup>2</sup>, p. 141.

The knife seems to have been the principal tool of the medicine-man:

Then take the knife and dip it into the liquid.

No. 1, l. 29.

And thrust your knife into the herb. Leave it sticking there, go away. Go back to that spot just as night and day divide . . . . Then go in silence and if you meet something dreadful or a man, do not speak any word to them, until you come to the herb which you marked on the previous evening . . . . Dig up the herb, leave the knife sticking in it. Go back to church as quickly as possible, and lay it under the altar with the knife. Let it lie until the sun has risen.

No. 17B.

The magic knife differed from an ordinary one:

If a horse is elf-shot, take that knife of which the handle is made from the fallow horn of an ox, and let there be three brass nails on it . . . . And write these words on the horn of the knife:

Benedicite omnia opera domini dominum. No. 22.

The medicine-man had a knife to make incisions and to bleed a patient, but the magic texts supply various instances when the original device of using a stick or a chip of wood is preserved, for example the last instance of the preceding section. The use of a knife in gathering herbs is the exception rather than the rule. Generally we are emphatically told that iron must not be used:

Dig up waybread without iron. Leechbook III, 1.

Ironhard taken without any iron. Lacnunga 4.

If a man's seat is suffering from piles, then take three or four roots of the greater burdock, and heat them in hot embers so that they start smoking and then draw one from the hearth and pound and work it up to a little cake and apply it to the seat as hot as you can bear. When the cake cools, then work up more and keep still for a day or two. When you do this, it is a proved remedy, do not dig up the root with iron and do not wash it with water but wipe it clean with a cloth; and put a very thin cloth between the seat and the cake.

Lacnunga 44.



The normal way of digging up herbs and vegetables was to use a spade and it looks at first sight as if the instruction not to use iron is merely a ritualistic device differentiating it from the non-ritualistic activity of gathering carrots. However, iron came in rather late in the history of man and of magic, and I believe that the phrase 'Dig it up without iron' is a reminder of the magician not to use any tools except his hand, or to use a special tool. See § 10 on the gathering of medicinal herbs.

Once a sword is mentioned:

And inscribe a cross about him on four sides with  
a sword. No. 17B

The magic power of iron is manifest in the following instances:

Against erysipelas. Heat cold water with iron and repeatedly bathe in it.

Leechbook I, xxxix; Lacnunga 59.

Heat wine with a red-hot iron. Leechbook II, xxxii.

Against a swollen spleen and against costiveness. Cool off a red-hot iron, when it has just been drawn out of a fire, in wine or in vinegar, give that to drink.

Leechbook II, xlv.

Against the bite of a spider smear sweat on iron.

Leechbook II, xlv.

### § 10. *Herbs*

The belief in the magic qualities of herbs must be very old for it is spread all over the world. The medicinal effect of many herbs cannot be doubted and was apt to be generalised. On the other hand in the history of magic we come across a great many plants the magic power of which was not due to any intrinsic chemical substance but to outward accidental circumstances, such as the form and the colour of their leaves and flowers, to their names, to the places where they were found. Beans when still in the pods look like swellings and dry beans are applied against hard swellings. Enchanter's nightshade grows in shady moist places, which were found to be unhealthy; as the plant flourished there, its power was considered to be greater than that of the elves, who were taken

to be responsible for the bad influence of such places. It was called *ælfþone* and employed to nullify the enchantment of evil spirits. When the daffodil was first introduced into England by the Romans the flower was called *healswyrð*, neckwort, from its long stem or neck, and the similarity in appearance and name led to its being used against diseases of the neck. The bristles of carline thistle were as hard and long as those of a boar. The plant was named *eoforþrote*, boarthroat, and used against diseases of the throat. Celandine, *cyleþenie*, has yellow flowers and when the stem is broken off a yellow juice comes out, thus marking it for an excellent remedy against jaundice. Viper's bugloss, *haransprecel*, is a plant preferring sandy, sunny patches of ground, where adders and lizards like to bask in the sun, and its flowers show a rich variety of blue, purple and red tints, the typically magic colours (See § 20), on one and the same stalk. Consequently it is employed against poison and the bite of adders. All these are popular plants in Anglo-Saxon medicine.

The magic qualities of herbs are increased by additional details:

Ivy growing on a stone.	Leechbook III, xxx.
Ivy growing on the earth.	Leechbook III, xxxi.
Ivy growing on a stone on the earth.	Lacnunga 41.
Lichen growing on a hazel-tree.	Leechbook I, xxxviii.
Lichen growing on a sloethorn.	Leechbook I, lxxviii.
Lichen growing on a birch.	Leechbook II, li.
Lichen growing on a church.	Leechbook I, lxxiii.
Lichen growing on a crucifix.	Leechbook I, lxxiii.
Lichen from a hallowed crucifix.	Leechbook III, lxii.
Brooklime is the name of a herb; it grows near a brook; work it up in the morning when it is covered with dew.	Leechbook I, xxxviii.
Viper's bugloss on old land.	Leechbook I, xxxviii.
Groundsel, that which grows on highways.	Leechbook I, xxxviii.
Groundsel which grows on the earth.	Leechbook I, li.

Groundsel, that which grows on houses. Lacnunga 68.

The red nettle which grows through the house. No. 2.

A bramble both ends of which are in the earth, take  
the newer root. No. 26.

Garden cress which grows spontaneously without  
being sown. Leechbook I, 1.

Mistletoe of the oak. Leechbook I, xxxvi.

Generally speaking no significance can be attached to the number of herbs worked up in poultices, salves and drinks. Two or three times when the number is exceedingly large, the names are arranged in alliterative groups, as, e.g., in the bone-salve (Lacnunga 12) and the Holy Salve (No. 19). The alliteration, however, is nothing but a mnemo-technical device and cannot be compared with the alliterative form of Anglo-Saxon poetry<sup>4</sup>). The number of herbs has a magic purpose in the Nine Herbs Charm (No. 9) and in some other cases:

A head-salve: sulphur and swail's apple (? O.E. *swegles æppel*), myrrh and every kind of incense, nine herbs in English: pennyroyal, blackberry, lupine, bishop's wort, fennel, hairy waybread, viper's bugloss, harewort, dwarf elder; equal quantities of all these, *oleum infirmorum*, holy water, holy salt, other oil. Smear yourself with this from above (? O.E. *ufan*) when you pound them. Leechbook II, lxxv.

If milk has turned sour, bind together waybread and cockle and cress, lay them on the milk-pail and do not set the vessel down on the earth for seven days.

Leechbook III, lxxx.

The efficacy of herbs was greatly strengthened by singing charms over them and by performing magic actions during the time when they were gathered, when they were worked into salves and drinks and when they were administered to the patient. The Nine Herbs Charm is a unique instance of such charms among the Germanic peoples. There must have been many of the kind and the custom

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4) Cf. our article on "An Anglo-Saxon Prescription from the Lacnunga", in *English Studies*, XXVIII, 1947, pp. 33-41.

must have been widely spread, otherwise it would not have been necessary for the church to issue special laws prohibiting the practice: 'It is not allowed to no Christian man.... that he gathers herbs with no charm, except with the Our Father and with the Creed, or with some prayer that pertains to God' <sup>5)</sup>). The church eventually succeeded in abolishing the singing of Germanic heathen charms and except the Nine Herbs Charm, which shows but superficial Christianisation, no Germanic herbal charm has come down to us. Sometimes we are told that some charm which contains nothing relating to the gathering of herbs is also sung over the plants, e.g., No. 5, and the Nine Herbs Charm is followed by the direction: 'Sing this charm three times on each of the herbs before you prepare them and likewise on the apple. And sing the same charm into the mouth of the man and into both his ears, and on the wound before you apply the salve'. In this way the charmer ensures contact between the magic power and the object on which the power has to operate. The Anglo-Saxon translation of the Herbarium Apulei XCIII proves the importance of establishing contact:

Against snake-bite. Take this same herb, which we called ebulum (wallwort) and before you cut it up, hold it in your hand and say thrice nine times *Omnes malas bestias canto*, that is in our language *Charm and overcome all wild beasts*. Then cut it up with a sharp knife into three portions. And when you are doing this, think of the man you wish to heal. And when you go from there, do not look about. Then take the herb, pound it and lay it on the cut. It will soon be healed.

The *Omnes malas bestias canto* is represented in a Christian form in the following instances:

If the worm is turned downwards, or the bleeding fig (piles), dig up a shoot of celandine root, and take it with your two hands upwards and sing nine times the Our Father over it. At the ninth, at *libera nos a malo*, pull it up and take of the sprout and of others that are there one small cupful. And drink it then and bathe him at a warm fire. He will soon be well.

Lacnunga 47.

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<sup>5)</sup> *Poenitentiale Pseudo-Ecgberti*, edited by J. Raith, *Die a.e. Version des Haligar'schen Bussbuches*, Bibliothek d. ags. Prosa, vol. XIII, p. 30.

A drink against the 'dry' disease. Dig round water-dock, sing three times the Our Father, pull it up when you say *set libera nos a malo*. (Water-dock against the 'dry' disease).  
Leechbook I, XLVII.

In a 'light drink' against madness the effect seems partly to be based on the method of gathering the herbs:

Lupine, bishop's wort, enchanter's nightshade, elecampane, garlic, water-agrimony, radish, burdock. Collect the herbs when day and night divide. First sing the litany and the Creed and an Our Father in church, go to the herbs, while singing the same charm (*sic!*), go round them three times before you take them, and go to church again, sing XII Masses over the herbs when you have poured (water or some other liquid) over them.  
Leechbook III, LXVIII.

The Herbarium cannot be regarded as representative of Anglo-Saxon magic, but it was well known to the Anglo-Saxons and very popular throughout the Middle Ages. Some of its stories have survived in folk-lore up to the present day:

This herb, which is called mandragoras (mandrake) is powerful and famous of appearance and it is efficacious. You must gather it in this way. When you come to it, then you will know it by this that it shines like a lamp at night. When you first see its head, then at once make an inscription on its head lest it should escape from you. Its power is so great and so famous that it will immediately escape from an unclean man when he comes to it. So, as we said before, inscribe it with iron, and thus you must dig it up that you do not touch it with iron, but you must eagerly dig up the earth with an ivory staff. And when you see its hands and its feet then tie it up. Then take the other end (of the rope) and tie it to the neck of a hungry dog. Next throw meat before him, so that it is out of his reach unless he jerks up the herb with him. Of this herb it is said that it has so great a power that whatever thing pulls it up will soon be deceived in like manner. Therefore as soon as you see it jerked up and it

is in your power, then at once take it, twist it and wring the juice out of its leaves into a glass pitcher.

Herbarium CXXXII.

The power of herbs is clear from a great many prescriptions in which herbs are the only or the main ingredients, and from texts such as these:

If a man is (sexually) constrained by means of herbs, give him springwort to eat and let him drink holy water.

Against being constrained by means of herbs. If he has with him Irish wax, [and] the small 'venomloather', or drinks them in boiled ale, nobody will be able to constrain him with herbs. Leechbook I, XLV.

### § 11. *Trees*

Though in magic practice the trees cannot compete in number with the herbs, still their use is by no means rare. One of the difficulties seems to have been the practical one of getting hold of the power and applying it where it is wanted. Trees are big, they cannot be hidden and it would soon be known if a magician cut down a tree. In order to preserve secrecy the magician only took a small part of a tree, namely a leaf, a twig or a piece of bark.

In all some twenty-nine trees are mentioned in the prescriptions and charms of the Leechbook and the Lacnunga:

Elder, ash, oak, blackthorn, elm, trembling poplar, hazel, apple-tree, holly, alder, willow, sallow, myrtle, crab-tree, aspen, thorn, nut-tree, woodbine, maple-tree, birch, hawthorn, black alder, spindle-tree, wych-elm, olive-tree, wild olive-tree, goat-willow, vine, mistletoe.

The most popular method of working up the power of a tree in an ointment or a drink was to take a piece of bark and pound it to a powder. The bark was gathered near the base, Leechbook I, xxxii; near the earth, Leechbook I, XLIV; in the earth, Lacnunga 43; on the east side, Lacnunga 12; on the north side, Leechbook I, Lrv.

A fine instance of the whole process is provided by the bone-salve, Lacnunga 4, or by this:

Against the disease that is called shingles (O.E. *circul-adl*). Take bark of the trembling poplar and of aspen, and apple-tree, maple-tree, elder, willow, sallow, myrtle, wych-elm, oak, blackthorn, birch, olive-tree, goat-willow; of ash there must be most, and part of every tree one can get except hawthorn and alder; of all those trees most that are mentioned here. And also gale and butcher's broom, houseleek, elecampane, radish, dwarf elder, the great nettle, wormwood, lesser centaury. Then take a kettle of ten ambers (a measure), put the third part of the pieces of bark and the herbs in it. Boil strongly in mashwort if you have this. If you have not got this, boil strongly in water. Then take out the pieces of bark and put new ones in the same liquid. Do so three times, then wring a hot drink clean and then add a measure of butter to it hot and stir together. Let it stand for two or three days. Then take the butter out and then take catkins of gale and a cluster of ivy-berries, tansy and betony, elecampane, radish, bonewort, basil, pound them together, boil in the butter. Then take the butter out from the herbs as far as is possible. Then take barley meal and burnt salt, then prepare it in the butter and then stir strongly away from the fire, and add pepper. Then first eat the preparation after a night's fasting. Thereafter drink the potion and no other liquid for ten nights, for thirty if possible. Then take mistletoe of the oak, pound it small and dry it and rub it to a mealy powder, then weigh it off against a penny, put that in the best wine. Drink this for nine days and do not eat new cheese nor fresh goose, nor fresh eel, nor fresh pork, nor anything that comes from mulberry wine, nor fish without shells, nor web-footed fowls. If he eats anything of this, let it be salted and let him drink no beer and be moderate in the way of wine and ale. If a man follows this prescription, then he will be hale.

Leechbook I, xxxvi.

**Exceptional is this application:**

Against deafness of the ears. Take a green ash stick, lay it over a fire, then take the juice which comes out

of it, put it in wool, wring it into the ear and stop up the ear with the same wool. Leechbook I, III.

### § 12. *Animals*

Animals are often mentioned and the magician generally thinks of some particular quality, such as speed, fierceness, sharpness of sight and so forth:

Under the wolf's paw, under the eagle's feather,  
under the eagle's claw, ever may you wither.

No. 4, ll. 6-7.

Here a spider wight came in.  
He had his web (to trap you) in his hand.  
He said that you were his steed,  
he laid his cords on your neck.

No. 7, ll. 9-12.

Against stomach-ache. When you see a dung-beetle throw up earth, catch it between your two hands, together with the heap.

No. 29.

If a man intends to fight with an enemy, let him boil sand-martins in wine and eat them.

Leechbook I, LXXXV.

Frequently small animals or parts of big animals are applied in the same way as herbs and pieces of trees:

Against erysipelas. Take shavings of a hart, shaved off from the skin by means of a pumice stone and moisten them with vinegar and smear with this.

Leechbook I, XXXIX.

Against erysipelas. A salve. Burn the left jaw of a wolf and the teeth apart, mix with honey and smear with that, and lay on fresh cheese. Mix the rest with milk, drink nine draughts on three mornings.

Leechbook I, XXXIX.

Against synovia, dwarf elder, burn and pound a dog's head, and a baked apple. Mix all this together, lay on.

Leechbook I, LXI.



The magic effect of the last prescription lies in the application of three ingredients, in the similarity in the name of the herb and the disease (O.E. *lipwyr̄t wip̄ lipseawe*), and in the function of fire (a burnt head and a baked apple) against a liquid (synovia or juice in the joints).

Dead bees are burnt to ashes and laid on against baldness (because bees are hairy animals).

Leechbook I, LXXXVII.

This is the best eye-salve. Take honey of humble bees and fat of a fox and marrow of a roe, mix together, lay on.

Lacnunga 2.

### § 13. *Circle*

A circle has no beginning and no end. Anything enclosed within its boundaries is shut off from the rest of the world. What lies within a circle cannot get out, nor can it be reached from the outside:

Against the bite of an adder. Take waybread and agrimony and adderwort, rub them into wine and give them to drink, and compound a salve of the same herbs. And take the agrimony, make one ring round about the bite, then it (the poison) will not pass any further. And bind the herbs on the wound. No. 30.

Dig round about water-dock, sing three Our Fathers, pull it up when you say *sed libera nos a malo*.

Leechbook I, XLVII.

Against an unknown swelling. Sing three Our Fathers on your leechfinger, and write around the sore. No. 41.

Against erysipelas. Take a green stick and make the man sit down on the floor in the middle of the house and make a stroke round about him. No. 66.

In the first three instances the meaning is that the evil or good forces are kept together in a small space, so that the good forces are all the more powerful and the evil forces may be attacked and

destroyed. In the fourth example (No. 66) the meaning is different. The attack on the disease-spirit is executed by means of the green stick and the circle has the function of preventing the spirit from returning to the patient, who is cured by the charm-formula and by the symbolic act of applying a green stick, i.e., a representative of freshness and coolness against the hot burning sensation of erysipelas.

Concentric attacks against a disease are made from all sides at once, thus resembling the circle to a certain extent:

Against sudden death of swine . . . Take lupine, betony and hassock, cleavers, viper's bugloss, sing four Masses over them. Drive the cattle to the fold, hang the herbs on the four sides and on the door, burn them adding incense and let the smoke go over them.

No. 24.

And also inscribe a cross about him on four sides with a sword.

No. 17B.

Against flying venom. Cut four incisions on the four sides with an oaken stick.

No. 25.

Against erysipelas. Make four incisions round about the pocks and let it (the pus) run as long as it likes to.

Lacnunga 57.

Against the bite of a spider. Cut five incisions, one on the bite and four round about it. Throw (the blood) with the stick in silence across a cart-road.

Leechbook I, LXVIII.

The quadrangle, represented by four or five marks, has the same function as the circle. Five marks take the form of the cross and both the cross and the circle stand for the sun. Three marks too may have the same function as the circle for they may represent a triangle, i.e., enclosed space:

Against a hunting spider, that is the stronger, biting a man. Cut three incisions near it away from the bite, let the blood run on a green hazel stick, then throw it across a road. Then no evil will happen.

Leechbook I, LXVIII.

The incisions themselves have the natural function of extracting the poison, and one incision may be sufficient:

Cut one incision on the wound, pound sanicle (O.E. *læcewyrht* !), lay on. No harm will come to him.

Leechbook I, LXVIII.

#### § 14. *Time*

The best time to practise magic appears to be early in the morning and at nightfall, that is, at dawn and at sunset, which point to the influence of the cult of the sun (See Chapter I). In a number of cases the original significance of this cult has been lost and the references to morning and night seem to have become mere elements of mystification:

Scarify the neck after sunset. No. 6.

Do so in the course of nine mornings and nine nights. No. 17C.

Sing this thrice nine times in the morning and in the evening. No. 67.

Dig up waybread without iron before sunrise. Leechbook I, i.

Sing this against the tooth-ache when the sun is set. No. 65.

Give to drink at three times, at nine a.m., at midday, at three p.m. No. 27.

Put in the eyes in the morning and when it is midday and again in the evening. Leechbook I, ii.

Two days of the week are specially mentioned, namely Wednesday and Friday:

Go on Wednesday evening (O.E. *þunres æfen*), when the sun is set, to a spot where you know that elecampane grows . . . . Go back to the spot just as day and night divide . . . . Go back to church as quickly as possible and lay it under the altar. Let it lie until the sun has risen. No. 17A.

On a Friday churn butter milked from a cow of one colour or from a hind, and it must not be mixed with water. No. 79.

Summer and winter are contrasted for mystifying purposes:

Do so three times a day in summer and twice in winter. Leechbook III, xxxix.

The Herbarium is full of prescriptions about the exact time when herbs should be gathered:

Against liver complaint. Gather this same herb (vervain) on midsummer's day. Herbarium IV.

Adderwort must be gathered in April. Herbarium VI.

Beewort must be gathered in August. Herbarium VII.

Dragons must be gathered in July. Herbarium XVI.

Knotgrass must be gathered in summer. Herbarium XIX.

If a man is choice in eating (O.E. *cis*?) you may unbind him. Take five plants of lion foot, without tools. Boil them in water while the moon is on the wane and wash him with it. And lead him out of the house in the early part of the night, and purify him with the herb called aristolachia, and when he goes out let him not look behind. Then you may unbind him from the infirmity. Herbarium VIII.

Just as the moon is waning, i.e., decreasing or diminishing, so the disease will decrease or diminish and finally disappear entirely.

Time may also denote a period, and Charm No. 29 states that the power to cure a man of stomach-ache will be kept for twelve months. A similar stretch of time is mentioned in a 'most noble remedy' to keep the body in good health:

Take myrrh and white incense and savine and sage and murex, and let there be most of incense and of myrrh, and have the others weighed and let there be

equal quantities of those, and pound them to a powder together in a mortar. Put them under the altar at Christmastide and have three Masses sung over them on three days: at midwinter, on St. Stephen's day and on (the feast-day of) St. John the evangelist (that is on December 25, 26, 27). And take them in wine after a night's fasting during three days, and keep and preserve whatever may be left of the powder. It avails against sudden illnesses, against fever and against tertian fever and against poison and against infection. Writings also say that whoever applies this remedy may keep himself free from all danger of diseases for twelve months.

Leechbook II, LXV.

We find very few indications about the duration of the charm practices themselves. In No. 8 it is clear that the whole action lasted for a full day, but the preparations had also taken some time, probably several days. In the prescription just given it is expressly stated that the Masses are said on three successive days. How long did it take to say twelve Masses (Lacnunga 60)? Even in a monastery this must have taken several days. The same uncertainty is met with in the gathering of herbs. If a man had to have thirty or more herbs, he must have spent several days collecting them, though in most cases the medicine-man must have done so by and by and then stored them at home in expectation of their possible use. But this was not always possible, for sometimes some charm had to be sung against a certain disease, and the same charm had to be sung while gathering the necessary herbs (No. 17B). The preparation of the Holy Salve (Lacnunga 12) must have taken a considerable length of time. We may infer that on the whole the practice of magic was a full-time job.

### § 15. *Right and Left*

In general the left hand or left side is mentioned a little more than the right in Anglo-Saxon sources. Left seems to have had a special function in black magic. In white magic the magician turns about with the course of the sun because he needs its favourable influence, but in black magic the evil-doer stresses his rebellion against, and his independence of the sun-god by turning about against the normal course of the sun, that is, by turning left, by

doing things with his left hand and so forth. That is why left frequently assumes the sense of evil, as for example in Lat. *sinister*, and that new words are used for its normal meaning<sup>6)</sup>. However, left has not always its sinister meaning and it is often employed in a mystifying function, so simply as a contrast to right, as is shown by the instances in which left and right occur side by side:

Take earth, throw it with your right hand under your right foot. No. 1.

Then the charm that is mentioned hereafter must be sung, first into the left ear, then into the right ear, then over the crown of the man's head. No. 7.

And sing the same charm into the mouth of the man and into both his ears, and on the wound before you apply the charm. No. 9, ll. 71-72.

Then take the left ear and pierce it in silence. No. 22.

Against dysentery. A bramble both ends of which are in the earth, take the newer root, dig it up, and cut nine chips on your left hand. No. 26.

Write this on wax that has never been used for any purpose, and bind it under her right foot. No. 45.

If a horse or a human being is suffering from erysipelas, sing this thrice nine times in the evening and in the morning, with the man on top of his head, with the horse in the left ear, in running water and turn the head against the stream. No. 67.

If a man or a beast has drunk a worm, if it is of the male kind, sing this charm which is written hereafter into the right ear, if it is of the female kind, sing it into the left ear. No. 73.

When somebody steals anything from you, write this in silence and put it in your left shoe under your heel, then you will soon find out about it. No. 86.

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<sup>6)</sup> Cf. Jan de Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* II, Berlin 1937, pp. 37 ff., who adds that in sacrificing to the gods of the underworld the left hand was used.

Against pain in your right side work up rosemary and radish and white clover into a poultice and a drink.

Against pain in your left side pound woodruff in vinegar and work up into a paste, bind on the side.

Leechbook I, xxi.

Against haemorrhoids, take the bunchy lady's smock for a bathing and burn the left cheek of a wolf for a salve, and the teeth separately, mingle with this, and lay on new cheese, mix the latter with milk. Sip nine draughts on three mornings. Leechbook I, xxxix.

If a woman cannot beget children. Bind the lower part of henbane or twelve grains of coriander seed upon the left thigh, up against the matrix, and that shall give a boy or a girl.

Leechbook, xxxvii.

A drink against lung-disease. Boil horehound in wine or in ale, sweeten a little with honey, give to drink hot after a night's fasting. And then make him lie on the right side for a good while after the drink, and make him stretch out the right arm as strongly as he possibly can. (There is a punning significance in *swid*, strong, and *swidra*, right: *þænne þone swidran earm swa he swidast mæge*).

Lacnunga 26.

## § 16. *Virginity*

The significance of virginity and cleanness is based on the fact that the magic practice is a sort of religious ritual, that it is felt to be a sacred performance and that both the performer and the objects used must stand apart from ordinary people and things in everyday life:

Write this in wax that has never been used for any purpose and bind it under her right foot. No. 45.

The magician himself must be sacred and as a matter of fact we find that, if not actually a priest, he has at any rate something of the status of a priest. During his magic activities he must keep himself clean and undefiled:

The herb ricinus is used to avert hail and lightning and to calm storms: *Herba ricinus precor ut adsis meis incantationibus, et avertas grandines, fulgora et omnes tempestates, per nomen omnipotentis dei qui te iussit nasci.* And you must be clean when you gather this herb.  
Herbarium CLXXVI.

As virginity is characteristic of the adolescent boy and girl we find that such young people have a special function in magic. There is a fine instance in the Herbarium which also deserves to be quoted because it is the origin of the last instance but one of § 15:

In order that a woman quickly brings forth her child take coriander seed, eleven grains or thirteen, and knit them with a thread on a clean linen cloth. Then let a person take them that is still virginal, either a boy or a girl, and hold it near her left thigh near the matrix, and as soon as the parturition has taken place, put away the medicine, lest part of the internal organs should follow after it.  
Herbarium CIV.

The meaning of this passage is probably that if a boy performed the action, a boy-child would be born, and if a girl did so, a girl-child, so we have the factor of similarity. The number of coriander seeds may have had the same function. In the corresponding passage of the Leechbook the sex of the child seems to depend on the use of different herbs. The sex of the child desired also accounts for the fact that a boy appears in our last instance. It is the only case in which I have come across a boy in my reading. In all other cases virgins, maids and girls are mentioned, for it is only with women that the state of virginity can be definitely ascertained. Sometimes the maiden has to be naked, which stresses the sacredness of the magic act, for her virginity needs no other protection than her ritualistic function. It is perhaps due to the influence of Christianity that the naked maiden is not found in Anglo-Saxon sources. We have three instances in which a virgin makes her appearance in Anglo-Saxon magic:

And let a virgin go to him and hang it on his neck.  
No. 7.

Let a virgin go to a spring that runs due east and let her draw a cupful of water moving with the current.  
No. 21.



And bid an immaculate person (*unmælnē mon*) silently fetch half a jar of running water against the current. No. 18.

The parallelism with the second example points to the fact that the immaculate person is a virgin. Besides *unmæle* is the adjective specially applied in O.E. to the Immaculate Virgin Mary. *Mann* in the sense of woman occurs several times in the charms (See No. 10). The adjective *unmæle* is found in its literal sense in the Holy Salve (No. 19):

And thus you must make the butter for the Holy Salve: churn the butter from the milk of a cow of one colour, she must be completely red or white and without spots (*unmæle*).

Spotless, unblemished, unsullied, chaste and virginal are related in meaning, and this conception may well be the explanation of the other cases where the milk must be of a cow of one colour (See § 3), though the rarity of such cows also lends them a touch of mystery. See further §§ 17 & 18.

### § 17. *Silence*

To some extent silence has the same function as virginity. The meaning of silence is not that nothing is said, for charms are sung, but that every word assumes its full meaning in the ritual and that no unnecessary words or trivial remarks must mar the steady flow of the magic performance. Silence denotes the abstinence from secular words. The ritual starts with some significant act and any interruption of a non-ritualistic character is sure to spoil everything. The words are fixed and they are pronounced or sung in a ritualistic tone; they are different from everyday language, they are sacred:

Scarify the neck after sunset, silently pour the blood into running water, spit three times after it, then say:  
Take this disease and depart with it.  
Go back to the house by an open road and go each way in silence. No. 6.

Our sources expressly stress the importance of abstaining from non-ritualistic words:

As soon as your goods are lost, then you must say first of all, before you say anything else, etc. No. 14.

Then go in silence and if you meet something dreadful or a man, do not speak any word to them, until you have come to the herb which you had marked on the previous evening. No. 17B.

This last charm is against Elf-sickness and it is clear that the elf is supposed to do his utmost to hinder the medicine-man in his attempts to help the patient. At the same time we hear that any casual remark to some person encountered on the road would invalidate the charm.

The injunction to keep silent occurs over and over again in the charm texts and a few more instances will illustrate the sacred function of silence:

And bid an immaculate person silently fetch half a jar of running water against the current. No. 18.

Then take the left ear and pierce it in silence.

No. 22.

Afterwards you must write this in silence and silently put the words on the left breast, and you must not go indoors with the writing, nor carry it in. And you must also put this on in silence. No. 33.

When somebody steals anything from you, write this in silence and put it in your left shoe under your heel, then you will soon find out about it. No. 86.

Against dysentery. Take half a poor (not greasy) cheese, add four slices of English honey, boil in a pan until it becomes brown. Then take a handful of bark of young oak and bring it home in silence and never into the house of the patient. Scrape off the green outside. Boil the juicy chips in cow milk, sweeten the drink with three slices of honey, then take it with the cheese. After the drink you must abstain from ale for seven days and you must drink milk that has not turned sour. Leechbook II, LXV.

## § 18. *Fasting*

Fasting, or abstinence from non-magical food, is in the same category as virginity, or abstinence from unclean, non-magical actions, and silence, or abstinence from non-magical words. Fasting, too, stresses the significance of the magic act and its distinction from everyday activity. The end of fasting marks the end of the ritual:

When she goes to the stream, she must not look round, nor again when she goes from there, and let her go into another house than the one from which she started and there take food. No. 10.

Fasting is repeatedly mentioned in the two medical treatises that provide the greater part of our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon magic. In the majority of cases the injunction to fast for a night may be quite normal and natural, as a prescription will be absorbed better by the blood if the patient has not taken other food. In conjunction with this we find that the patient must fast for some time, not the medicine-man:

Against getting drunk. Take a roasted pig's lung after a night's fasting; always take five slices.

Leechbook I, LXXX.

Take in wine after a night's fasting.

Leechbook II, LXV.

Give to drink after a night's fasting. Lacnunga 26.

## § 19. *Numbers*

The only number that may be said to have had magic significance as such in Anglo-Saxon magic is three. The explanation of this specific importance is not obvious, for it is found all over the world and its age hinders rather than promotes any definite solution of the problem. Are we to put its origin at ten, fifteen or fifty thousand years ago? It is with some hesitation that we put forward the following suggestions.

Three seems to have been the first plural number, for two is not regarded as such in several languages, which have a separate form for the dual. The unity of man and woman reaches its completion

with the coming of the third being, the child. A human body mainly consists of the trunk flanked by the arms; if a man is standing somewhere he can see and grasp in front of him, to the right and to the left. Three is an important element in the technical and metrical structure of works of art. A day is naturally divided into morning, afternoon and evening. To a simple-minded creature the earth consists of land, water and sky (air); it is inhabited by men, animals and things. In Germanic mythology the world is divided into three parts, Heaven above, the middle earth and the underworld. Man usually sees three generations of his own family.

The number three is applied in all sorts of ways: three different ingredients constitute the remedy; a drink or salve is applied three times a day, or for three days; charms are sung three times; three different charms are sung; three Masses are said; three times the magician must spit; three times he must worship the sun; he must boil the ingredients three times; etc. In fact no magic device is so frequent as the number three:

This is the noblest eye-salve. Take humble-bee honey and fat of a fox and marrow of a roe. Mingle together. Lacnunga 2.

Against haemorrhoids. Have somebody take a big millstone and heat it and lay it under the man; and take dwarf elder and brooklime and mugwort and lay them upon and under the stone; put cold water on it and make the vapour go over the man as hot as he can stand. Lacnunga 48.

This must be done against chilblains and if the skin of a man's feet becomes cold (dead?). Take the lower part of meadow-sweet and lady's smock and bark of oak. Pound them all to a powder, mix with honey, heal with that. Leechbook I, xxx.

Give to drink at three times: at nine a.m., at mid-day, at three p.m. No. 27.

For a purging of the stomach some boil nettle in water and in wine and in oil. Leechbook II, xxv.

Scarify the neck after sunset, silently pour the blood into running water, spit three times after it. No. 6.

Then the charm that is mentioned hereafter must be sung, first into the left ear, then into the right ear, then over the crown of the man's head.... And do so for three days. No. 7.

Let it (holy water) drip three times on the bottom of the sods. .... Then turn three times with the turning of the sun.... Sing then *Benedicite* with arms outstretched and *Magnificat* and *Our Father* three times. Erce, Erce, Erce, mother of earth.

No. 8, ll. 9-10; 43; 45-46; 54.

The woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must go to the grave of a dead man, step three times over the grave and say these words three times.

No. 10, ll. 1-3.

If they are other animals, sing it on the footprints, and light three candles and let the wax drip three times into the footprints. No. 11.

And worship then three times to the east and say three times.... No. 13 & 14.

Have three Masses sung over them.... And sing the Litany and the Creed and the Lord's prayer.... Drop a little hallowed water on them three times. No. 17A.

Boil them three times in several kinds of milk. Pour holy water on them three times. No. 17B.

Eat three slices (of bread) with enchanter's nightshade. No. 17C.

Write three crosses with the oil of extreme unction. No. 17D.

Fractions and multiplications of three, especially nine, are very frequent too:

Boil it down to a third part. Leechbook I, XLVII.

Against oppression in the breast. Thus the remedy must be made that one takes one cup of purified honey and half a cup of clean melted lard (i.e., two parts of honey and one part of lard) and mix the honey

and the lard together, and boil it until it is as thick as pottage, because it will grow clearer on account of the lard; and one must dry beans and grind them afterwards and add of them to the measure of honey, and pepper it afterwards at one's pleasure.

Lacnunga 116.

Nine were Noththe's sisters. No. 3.

The Nine Herbs Charm. No. 9.

A head-salve. Sulphur and swail's apple, myrrh and every kind of incense, nine herbs in English: pennyroyal, blackberry, lupine, bishop's weed, fennel, hairy waybread, viper's bugloss, harewort, dwarf elder.

Leechbook II, LXV.

Do so for nine mornings, more if you are in need of it.

Lacnunga 62.

If a man's stomach has become sour or swollen, take two handfuls of leaves of holly, cut them up very small, boil in various kinds of milk until they are tender. Select them bit by bit. Then eat six slices, three in the morning and three in the evening, and after his food. Do so for nine days, longer if he is in need of it.

Leechbook III, LXIX.

And then turn to the east and bow humbly nine times.

No. 8.

Do so for nine mornings and nine nights. He will soon be better.

No. 17C.

Sing this nine times and spit on it and breathe on it.

No. 19, l. 28.

Sing nine Masses over them.

No. 20.

Sing three times *Miserere mei deus*, and nine times the Our Father.

No. 26.

Take nine wafers and write on them in this way: *Jesus Christus*. And sing the Our Father over them nine times, and give to eat three on the first day, three on the second day and three on the third day.

No. 36.

Against an elf and against an unknown possession, rub myrrh into wine and an equal quantity of white incense, and shave a little of the agate stone into the wine. Drink it after a night's fasting on three mornings or nine or twelve. Leechbook II, LXV.

If black blains trouble a man, then take coarse salt, burn the quantity of an egg in a linen cloth, then pound the salt very small, then take the yolk of three eggs, beat it well together, and lay it on for six days. Then take asparagus and groundsel and a cabbage leaf and old fat, pound all this together and lay it on for three days. Then take yarrow and groundsel and a bramble leaf and clear lard, pound them together and lay on. He will soon be well. Until he is healed no liquid must touch him but that of the herbs themselves. Lacnunga 54.

Sing this thrice nine times. No. 67.

Add twenty-seven grains of pepper. Lacnunga 65.

You were called Una, the oldest of herbs,  
you have power against three and against thirty,  
you have power against poison and against infection,  
you have power against the loathsome foe roving  
through the land. No. 9, ll. 3-6.

(Against swollen eyes). The man who puts part of the fat of a fox on his eyes for thirty days, he will be cured for ever. Leechbook III, II.

A number which is frequent in oriental magic is seven. Although the number occurs a few times in our sources, all the instances seem to be of classical or oriental origin:

The Seven Sleepers are mentioned in several charms. No. 7; 30; etc.

Sing seven Masses over the herbs.

Leechbook I, LXIII.

Do so for seven days.

Lacnunga 68.

The number four is repeatedly used in Anglo-Saxon sources to denote the four cardinal points, or for the purpose of confining

and localising a disease. It is sometimes expanded into five; see § 13.

Take then at night before daybreak four sods from four sides of the land and mark how they stood before . . . . And have a priest sing four Masses over them.

No. 8, ll. 4-5; 16-17.

And also inscribe a cross about him on four sides with a sword.

No. 17B.

Cut four incisions on the four sides with an oaken stick. Make the stick bloody, throw it away.

No. 25.

Make five crosses of hassock, set them on four sides of the cattle and one in the middle.

No. 23.

Drive the cattle to the fold, hang the herbs on the four sides and on the door.

No. 24.

The mystifying function of numbers is evident in the following instances:

Against jaundice. Take the lower part of elecampane. See to it that you have (it ready) on the first day when you take it for the first time. In the morning take three slices and three at night, and they must be cut up into honey; and the second morning four slices and four at night; and the third morning five slices and five at night; and the fourth morning six and six at night.

Leechbook II, lxv.

Against lung-disease. (Take) black ivy berries, first three a day, five on the morrow, seven on the third day, then nine, then eleven, then thirteen, then fifteen, then seventeen, then nineteen, then twenty-one. Give them to drink in wine in this manner day after day.

Leechbook II, li.

Take eighty-five libcorns (purgative grains), nine pepper seeds and fifteen grains of saxifrage.

Lacnunga 18.

Pound forty libcorns.

Lacnunga 19.

Pound eighty libcorns.

Lacnunga 21.



Use forty libcorns and seventeen pepper seeds.

Lacnunga 22.

Occasionally the number remains vague:

Sing this many times.

No. 5.

Sing it frequently on the wound.

No. 73.

### § 20. *Colour*

The Nine Herbs Charm mentions nine colours in enumerating the poisons against which it is effective:

Now these nine herbs have power against nine evil spirits,  
against nine poisons and against nine infections:

Against the red poison, against the foul poison,  
against the white poison, against the purple poison,  
against the yellow poison, against the green poison,  
against the black poison, against the blue poison,  
against the brown poison, against the crimson poison.

No. 9, ll. 45-51.

The magic significance of this passage lies rather in the enumeration as such than in the power of any particular colour. The meaning is that the herbs are powerful against all poisons, whatever their colour. In other cases we find that colours possess a magic force which is based on the idea of similarity or antithesis. Compare our analysis of No. 66. Among the medical prescriptions there is a green salve (Lacnunga 4) and a black salve (Leechbook III, xxxix). Among the ingredients of the bone-salve (Lacnunga 12) are brown storax and white incense and the whole concoction is thoroughly mixed until it is brown; the brown colour may help to staunch the blood flowing from the wound, as it is the colour of clotted blood.

Still there are some colours that appear to have a special magic function. They are those ranging from blue to red. The Dutch and German words for magic, *toverij* and *Zauber* respectively, are derived from a Germanic word denoting red or vermilion, O.E. *teafor*. In our sources we repeatedly meet with the adjective *hæwen*, 'blue, purple':

Work up a salve against head-ache and against pain

in the joints and against eye-ache and against wens and against the dry disease (O.E. *þeor*): Take elecampane and radish, wormwood and bishop's wort, and garlic (MS: *cropleac*, *garleac* and *holleac*), equal quantities of all, pound them, boil them in butter, and (add) celandine and red nettle, put in a brass vessel, leave (the compound) in it until it is purplish. Wring through a cloth, smear the head with it and the limbs where the pain is.

Lacnunga 23.

Against a broken head. Take woodruff and wild parsley and hove, and boil in butter and wring through a purple cloth. Put it on the head and the bones will go out.

Leechbook I, 1.

Against every pain of the eyes. Chew wild teazle, wring the juice through a purple woollen cloth into the eyes at night when he will go to sleep; and in the morning put the white of an egg on them.

Leechbook III, XLVI.

Wring through a purple cloth.

Leechbook III, XLVII; III, LX.

Once the combination *linhæwenne clað* occurs (Lacnunga 2), which may mean a flax-coloured cloth, or, more probable, a purple-coloured linen cloth.

Besides *hæwen* we find *read*, red:

Against head-ache. Take the lower part of crosswort, put it in a red bandage, bind up the head with it.

Leechbook III, 1.

Against the same. Dig up waybread without iron before sunrise. Bind the root about the head by means of a wet red bandage. He will soon be well.

Leechbook III, 1.

Against a lunatic. Take this herb (clovewort), tie it with a red thread about the man's neck, when the moon is waning, in the month of April or early in October.

Herbarium X.

*Baso*, the colour mentioned last in the enumeration of the Nine Herbs Charms, p. 102, is also found in the compound *besoreadian*:

*Besoreada þa rinda ealle utan* — paint all the pieces of bark a purple-red colour on the outside.

Leechbook I, XLVII.

Viper's bugloss is a herb whose colours show all the shades from red to blue, and its popularity in magic and medicine may also be partly due to this singularity.

### § 21. *The Magician*

The success of magic will largely depend on the personality and force of the magician and only to a small extent on the technical knowledge which we have attempted to indicate in the preceding sections. No amount of knowledge will make a man into a magician and the smallest smattering will do, if he is born with certain personal qualities. The individual who wishes to act as a magician must probably possess certain psychic powers which may be developed by study and practice but which cannot be acquired by intellectual gifts and a studious disposition. The nature of these psychic powers does not fall within the scope of this work because all evidence is lacking in the sources of knowledge that have come down to us. The same thing may be said of the position of the magician among the Anglo-Saxons. With the advent of Christianity the original religion was destroyed as well as everything else that savoured of the pagan cults of Woden and other gods, and a number of facts can only be inferred indirectly. We can be pretty certain that the magician who performed the practices of field-blessing described in No. 8 was a pagan priest, and we can be equally certain that Christian priests also partook in magic practices:

Against madness. Bishop's wort, lupine, violet, poly-pody, cockle, water-agrimony. When day and night divide, then sing in church the litany, that is, the names of the saints and an Our Father. Go with that song (i.e., singing that charm) until you get to the herbs and go round them three times and after you take them, go back to church with the same song and sing twelve Masses over them and over all the drink which is applied against the disease, in honour of the twelve Apostles.

Leechbook I, LXIII.

At other times we find the phrase 'have three Masses said over them' (Leechbook III, LXII), which seems to imply that the medicine-man was a layman.

In the margin of fol. 136a of MS. Harley 585 there is a little drawing representing the head of a man in profile, with large piercing eyes, a long flowing beard and a close-fitting cap with a big knob in front. It is quite possible that the knob was some glittering object, the purpose of which was to hypnotise his patient<sup>7</sup>). The charm alongside (No. 73) is of Irish origin and the figure may have been copied together with the words, so we are not sure that Anglo-Saxon magicians dressed up in this way.

The magician is convinced of the success of his magic. The phrase *Him bið sona sel*, He will soon be better, is repeated over and over again throughout the Leechbook and the Lacnunga. The same assurance is to be found in the charm formulas, which employ the first person singular:

I catch it under my foot, I have found it. No. 1.

I stood under linden-wood, under a light shield,  
where the mighty women betrayed their power,  
and screaming they sent forth their spears.

I will send them back another,  
a flying arrow from in front against them.

.....

If it be the shot of Aesir, or the shot of elves,  
or the shot of hags, I will help you now.

This as your remedy for the shot of Aesir, this for the  
shot of elves;

this for the shot of hags, I will help you.

No. 2, ll. 7-11; 23-26.

I have bound on the wounds the best of war-bandages,  
that the wounds may neither burn nor burst. No. 5.

I alone know a running stream,  
and the nine adders beware of it. No. 9, ll. 59-60.

There is evidence that both men and women practised the art of magic:

Lo, earth has power against all creatures,

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<sup>7</sup>) Cf. *Handwörterbuch d. deutschen Aberglaubens* I, p. 1165.

and against malice and against ungratefulness,  
and against the mighty tongue of man. No. 1.

Now I pray the Sovereign Who created this world  
that no woman may be so eloquent, and no man so  
powerful  
that they can upset the words thus spoken.

No. 8, ll. 67-69.

I stood under a linden-wood, under a light shield,  
where the mighty women betrayed their power.

No. 2, ll. 7-8.

Make a salve against the race of elves and against  
spirits walking about at night and against women with  
whom the devil has sexual intercourse. No. 20.

Against every evil witch and against possession by  
elves write this in Greek letters. No. 32.

From the material at our disposal, mainly based on the Leech-book and the Lacnunga, we must conclude that white magic was principally practised by men, who in some cases employed girls (See § 16), whereas black magic was generally ascribed to the malicious minds of hags and witches.

About the social position of the magician who was not at the same time a priest or a medical practitioner, we have no evidence whatsoever.

CHAPTER V  
BORROWING OR TRADITION



A difficult problem presenting itself to us in connection with the charms and the magical practices found in O.E. manuscripts is in how far they are borrowed from the classics and from Christian sources and in how far they go back to Germanic customs and practices. The greater part of our material comes from manuscripts in which not only classical influences are recognisable but which often give literal translations of whole passages from classical authors. This is especially the case with the magical practices and charms scattered throughout the Leechbook and the Lacnunga; to a less extent it is true also of the charms noted down in the margins, on the fly-leaves and in open spaces of manuscripts that contain an O.E. text. Before attempting to prove that a given text is Anglo-Saxon, classical or Christian, we shall have first to show that an Anglo-Saxon tradition existed in England. After that we can pass on to drawing up certain criteria that can help us in distinguishing between Anglo-Saxon and classical tradition. Christian influences seem much easier to detect though occasionally we are confronted with some knotty problems.

The existence of magic in Anglo-Saxon England can be inferred in general from the fact that not a single people has been discovered that does not use magic in some form or other. Consequently it would be very odd indeed if the Anglo-Saxons had not known and practised it. Magic was known and practised by other Germanic tribes. In Old High German a few texts exist that are Germanic in form, structure and contents, but the finest description of the application and efficacy of magic among Germanic peoples is to be found in the sagas of Iceland. We see in these historical tales, which were written down some centuries after the events but which preserve the oral tradition of the original eyewitnesses, what useful and good effects were obtained but also what wretched and disastrous results were caused by magic.

The sagas are unsurpassed as documents of the magical beliefs of a people. Every one of them is full of the most unexpected descriptions. They deal with life in all its aspects, without attempting to embellish or romanticise it. Nearly all of them contain references to magical practices, and black magic, conspicuously absent in Anglo-Saxon sources, is represented in many forms. If we want to know how magic was performed among the Germanic peoples we must go to the O.E. charms, but if we want to know what it could achieve, what was its place in their life and way of thinking, we must read the sagas. The Icelanders strove to preserve the freedom and independence of their forefathers, they were strongly conscious of their ancestral traditions and they had more than an average talent for telling a good story. In particular they knew how to create the desired atmosphere. It is an atmosphere in which everything may happen, in which good luck and bad luck can be felt approaching a long time beforehand, in which people gifted with telepathy and second sight are far from exceptional, in which the spirits of the living and the dead make their power felt. The wrecking of a ship by magic is just as real, just as normal to them as the wrecking of a ship by a gale. Not all the events told in the sagas can be accepted as facts, of course, but there are many instances that ring true, however much they may baffle our attempts at an explanation.

It is often tempting to illustrate an O.E. term by the corresponding Old Icelandic term and practical example, and we have sometimes yielded to the temptation, though we realise that the value of such proofs is a delicate matter, because of the length of time during which the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians were separated. In the way of detailed and positive proofs they are of little help, in the way of general information they are certainly valuable, for the Eddic poems and the prose tales reflect the religious and magical beliefs of the North Germanic tribes, and it is not too much to say that they differ little in essential points from those of the Germanic peoples in general. A second point about which O.E. sources say little or nothing is the relation between magic and the gods of Valhalla. There are numerous places in the sagas and especially in the Eddic poems where this relation is touched upon, but with the exception of the Nine Herbs Charm, which mentions Woden by name, the O.E. sources are silent.

A saga that is of particular interest to us is the Grettir saga. It goes back considerably into pagan times and the parallels with

Beowulf are too remarkable to be accidental. The mentality of the audience listening to the story of Grettir or to that of Beowulf must have been the same, and it is another argument for the Christian and monkish origin of the Beowulf poem that the magical atmosphere scarcely comes to the front, with the exception of the passage about Grendel's mother, where the traditional element is very strong, and where the parallelism with the Grettir saga is obvious.

The original unity existing between the Anglo-Saxons and other Germanic tribes makes it pretty certain that they all used the same charms. Owing to the scarcity of material there is no exact parallel between any O.E., O.H.G., O.S., or O.N. charm. Except for the Christian charms, made up and spread about by missionaries, and the pagan Latin charms used and spread by Roman soldiers, we find no parallels written down before 1200. Patient research, however, has brought to light some parallels<sup>1)</sup>. The following charm has been recorded in several districts in England:

Our Lord rade,  
his foal's foot slade;  
down he lighted,  
his foal's foot righted:  
bone to bone  
sinew to sinew  
blood to blood  
flesh to flesh,  
heal in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Leaving out of account a few minor differences the same charm is found in England, Scotland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Esthonia, Finland and Hungary. The existing modern versions go back to a Germanic charm, which reads as follows in O.H.G.:

Phol ende Wuodan vuorun zi holza;  
du wart demo Balderes volon sin vuoz birenkit;  
thu biguolon Sinthgunt, Sunna ero suister,  
thu biguolon Frija, Volla ero suister,  
thu biguolon Wuodan, so he wola conda,  
sose benrenki, sose blutrenki, sose lidirenki:

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<sup>1)</sup> Cf. A. Kuhn, "Indische und Germanische Segensprüche", in *Kuhn's Zeitschrift*, XIII, 1867, pp. 49-80; 113-157. See further O. Ebermann, "Blut- und Wundsegen", *Palaestra* XXIV, Berlin, 1903.



ben zi bena, bluot zi bluoda,  
lid zi geliden, sose gelimida sin.

(Phol and Woden rode to the wood; then Balder's horse sprained its leg. Then Sinthgunt sang over it and Sunna her sister, then Frija sang over it and Volla her sister, then Woden sang over it, as he well knew how, over this bone-sprain, this blood-sprain, this limb-sprain: bone to bone, blood to blood, limb to limb, such as they belong together).

A comparison between the second Merseburg charm, as the O.H.G. text is called, and later Christian versions provides interesting characteristics as to the gradual development and modification of certain charm texts. First an external difference of form: the English text has end-rhyme, the O.H.G. text has alliteration. Secondly we see how the Germanic gods, Woden and Balder, together with the accompanying women, have been replaced by the Lord, and in other versions by Christ and Peter, Peter and Paul, Peter and Mary, Christ and Mary, and so on. The differences can be explained by the gradual development of the poetic form and the change of religion. It is noteworthy that the particular relation between Woden and Balder is to some extent retained in the relation between Christ and Peter, and that the female figures linger on in the person of the Virgin Mary. The original unity is manifested in the magic formula that brings about the cure. This formula, based on the idea of similarity, is the nucleus of the charm.

A. Kuhn was the first scholar to compare the charm with a text from the Atharva-Veda IV, 12:

Charm with the plant arundhati for the cure of fractures.

1. Rohani art thou, causing to heal, the broken bone thou causest to heal; cause this here to heal, o arundhati!
2. That bone of thine, which injured and burst, exists in thy person, Dhâtar shall kindly knit together again, joint with joint!
3. Thy marrow shall unite with marrow, and thy joint (unite) with joint; the part of thy flesh that has fallen off, and thy bone shall grow together again!
4. Thy marrow shall be joined together with marrow,

- thy skin grow together with skin! Thy blood, thy bone shall grow, thy flesh grow together with flesh!
5. Fit together hair with hair, and fit together skin with skin! Thy blood, thy bone shall grow: what is cut join thou together, O plant.
  6. Do thou here rise up, go forth, run forth, (as) a chariot with sound wheels, firm felloe, and strong nave; stand upright firmly!
  7. If he has been injured by falling into a pit, or if a stone was cast and hurt him, may he (Dhâtar the fashioner) fit him together, joint to joint, as the wagoner (Ribhu) the parts of a chariot<sup>2)</sup>.

Though it is often difficult, not to say impossible, to date Vedic literature, we can say that the above charm text must have been made about 500 B.C., so that it is about 1300 years older than the text we have in the second Merseburg Charm, to which we have to add another 1000 years for the English charm. It is apparent that details have changed during such a long period, but the atmosphere, the structure of the various charm texts show little or no change. Bloomfield<sup>3)</sup> does not believe in a common origin: "Any kind of genetic connection between the Hindu and the Germanic charm is none too certain, since the situation may have suggested the same expressions independently. Yet as a strongly marked line in the folk-psychological character of the peoples in question, the parallels are extremely valuable and instructive". It is a fact, indeed, that we sometimes find surprising parallels in magic, without our being able to state any outward connection. In the present case, however, there was a connection. There are positive proofs that an Indo-European linguistic unity existed, comprising both the Germanic and the Aryan peoples, which, even if we reject the unity of race, admits the possibility of a common origin of the charm, without settling the question, which of the two, the Vedic or the Germanic version, is the most original.

When we put them side by side, we see again a difference of form: the Vedic charm has neither rhyme nor alliteration as a poetic embellishment, but it is composed in rhythmical prose, the normal poetic expression of Vedic literature. At the same time its

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<sup>2)</sup> Translation by M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*. In the series: *The Sacred Books of the East*, XLII, edited by Max Müller. Oxford, 1892, p. 19.

<sup>3)</sup> *I.c.*, p. 386.

wording is carefully chosen. The plant *arundhati* contains a pun on *arus*, 'wound', and *rohani* means 'causing to heal', so it may be compared with O.E. *læcewyr*t, 'leechwort'. As a whole the Indian text is more extensive and also fuller. The same copious style is met with in the other charms of the Atharva-Veda, which points to a revision of the texts by one person or a group of persons working together. Secondly we see that instead of the Germanic gods Woden and Balder, we meet the Indian gods Dhâtar the creator and Ribhu the fashioner, with the corresponding difference of a wagon instead of Balder's foal.

More striking than the external differences are the internal correspondences: as the wheel of a wagon or the foot of a horse breaks and is healed by a mighty god with the help of a magic formula, so the fracture or spraining of a leg will be cured with the help of the same formula and by the intervention of a god. To ensure that the healing will be complete everything involved is enumerated: marrow to marrow, bone to bone, blood to blood, vein to vein, flesh to flesh, skin to skin, hair to hair, limb to limb. The enumeration of these parts is not always complete in each separate charm. The oral tradition of the charm among people that were not professional bards, neither perhaps professional magicians, caused details to be lost or changed; the variation of the poetic form caused details to be altered or rearranged. The use of alliteration caused the words bone and blood to be grouped together, and also the Germanic words for skin and hair, O.E. *hyd* and *hær*. In various versions we get various sets. The Merseburg Charm mentions four, so does the English charm given above. The Vedic charm has seven: bone, joint, marrow, flesh, skin, blood and hair. No Germanic version has the same fulness, and only when we take them as a group do we find the complete agreement, because of the ever-changing combinations.

The Vedic charm was the oldest to be written down, but this does not mean that it is the original one, or that it most closely resembles the original form. The indications of revision plead against this hypothesis. We cannot decide from our present knowledge what the original charm was like or how far it dates back into pre-historic times. Magic is one of the earliest achievements of mankind, but its general origin is a different matter from the origin of some particular formula. The fact that we can trace the history of this charm across a period of at least 2400 years might raise great expectations, but we have to acknowledge that the case is exceptional; let us be grateful for this one piece of good luck.

I am convinced that there is a direct relation between the Vedic and the Germanic versions of this charm, and that there is more than a parallel of folk-psychological character. Its object, its structure, its method of treatment, its wording on essential points and its atmosphere are exactly alike in both cases, whereas the differences between the Sanskrit charm and the Second Merseburg Charm are not greater than those between the latter and the following one, used in Devonshire, in which case there are sufficient intermediary forms to establish the connection:

For a sprain.

As our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was riding into Jerusalem, His horse tripped and sprained his leg. Our blessed Lord and Saviour blessed it and said:

Bone to bone and vein to vein,

O vein turn to thy rest again!

N.N. so shall thine in the name, etc.

It need not surprise us that the Anglo-Saxons had no general denomination for magic<sup>4</sup>). The Romans had not got it, neither had the Greeks at first. The Anglo-Saxon expressions mainly refer to the way in which the magic actions were performed, rather than to magic in general. The commonest O.E. word is Anglian *galdor*, West Saxon *gealdor*. Occasionally we find O.E. *galung*. They are derived from O.E. *galan*, to sing, so their meaning is song, magic song, charm. In Germanic dialects we find O.S. *galdar*, O.H.G. *gal-dar*, *galstar*, *kalstar*, O.N. *galdr*. To indicate a magician or any person singing charm songs we have O.E. *galere*, *gealdorgalere*, *wyrm-galere*, *wyrt-galere*. Practising charms is called O.E. *galan*, *galan*, *begalan*, *gegalan*, *ongalan*, all meaning to sing, to charm.

Not so frequent as *gealdor* is O.E. *leod*, song, charm. It is uncertain whether the compound *leod-rune* refers to the action or to the acting person. The O.E. compounds *hel-rune*, witch, and *burg-rune*, fury, witch, point to the person. The only time it occurs in an Anglo-Saxon charm (No. 32) it may mean either. In Lagamon it occurs four times in the sense of charm.

Synonymous with *galan* and *gealdor* are O.E. *singan*, to sing, to charm; *besingan*, to sing, to charm, and *onsang*, charm.

O.E. *spell* means narrative, tale, discourse, message, and only

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<sup>4</sup>) See R. Jente, *Die mythologischen Ausdrücke im altenglischen Wortschatz*. (Anglistische Forschungen 56), Heidelberg, 1921.

in early M.E. did its meaning change into magical story, enchantment.

General, abstract denominations in O.E. for magic are compounds with *-cræft*: *scin-cræft*, *lybb-cræft*, *wicce-cræft*, *deofol-cræft*, *gealdor-cræft*, *dry-cræft*; or with *-lac*: *scin-lac*, *lyb-lac*.

The first element of *scin-cræft* is related to O.H.G. *geskin*, Dutch *verschijning*, and to the verb O.E. *scinan*, N.E. to shine. Its meaning is apparition, phantom, ghost, devil. It is uncertain whether we have a long or a short vowel. The etymology points to a long vowel, the form *scinn* with double *n* to a short one. The occasional occurrence of an accent makes the long vowel more likely. It is possible that the shortening took place in the compound. Side by side with *scin-cræft* we find *scin-lac*. The latter element of this compound means dance, game, fight. The magical connotation of *scin* probably arose from flames appearing in decaying trees or in marshy districts and caused by the phosphorescent effects of the rotting process. The flame and the light produced in this way flares up in continually varying spots, thus creating the impression of dancing spirits. In Germany and Holland it gave rise to the belief in the 'Feuermann, vuurman', i.e., fireman, who is sometimes regarded as a variation of the werwolf.

The existence of a detailed terminology about various aspects of magic proves its existence as a living thing among the Anglo-Saxons, because the majority of the terms are Germanic and they are not borrowed or translated from Latin or Greek.

The information contained in the ecclesiastical and secular laws of the Anglo-Saxons is on the whole rather vague. There are a great many prohibitions of magic and magic practices, but these practices are neither described nor differentiated. "The various kinds of magic are difficult to distinguish from the laws; expressions are accumulated, partly as a stylistic emphasis in homiletic form", says Liebermann <sup>5)</sup>. In Exodus XXII, 17 Moses decreed: "Do not let magicians live", which is expanded in Alfred's Introduction, 30 to: "The women that are accustomed to receive charmers and magicians and wizards, do not let them live". All the laws against magic scattered throughout the editions of Liebermann and Thorpe were collected and arranged by Grendon <sup>6)</sup>, together with a number of Christian admonitions and ecclesiastical prohibitions. In the late O.E. period all heathendom was strictly forbidden: "Heathen-

<sup>5)</sup> F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* II, p. 742.

<sup>6)</sup> Grendon, pp. 140-142.

dom is the worshipping of idols, that is, of heathen gods and the sun and the moon, fire or water, springs or stones or trees of any kind, or occupying oneself with witchcraft or committing murder in any way, or sacrificing (to heathen gods), or the throwing of lots, or soothsaying or the striving after suchlike delusions" (Cnut II, 5) <sup>7)</sup>. Christian influence is perceptible in wording and contents, and many practices prohibited by Christian laws were not only permitted in pagan times but were considered natural, useful and obligatory. Pagan customs and superstitions lingered on; they were too deeply rooted in the minds of the people to be exterminated in one or two generations. Only gradually did the teaching and preaching of the church meet with the desired success. By the end of the O.E. period and the beginning of the M.E. period nearly all pagan charms had disappeared or they had been christianised and were then recognised as permissible means to get rid of diseases of man and beast, and to keep free of all calamities.

The Christian elements are always recognisable by some well-defined characteristics: the invocation of the Trinity and of saints, objects and prayers used in the liturgy of the church and, to a certain extent, the use of Latin or Greek. In many cases the sign of the cross is definitely Christian, but in a number of cases we cannot be certain at all, especially when it is accompanied by pagan reminiscences. The problem we have to deal with in this context is whether the Christian elements are mere additions or whether they are pagan elements preserved in a Christian garb. It is impossible to give a general answer to this question, and each case has to be examined by itself. The later our source the more chance there is of additions and substitutions, not only of parts but of whole charms. Still, Christianity did not succeed in changing the magical atmosphere, which in many cases was more potent to impress the public at large than any Christian elements. An Anglo-Saxon expedient to ward off the evil consequences of flying venom, i.e., of infectious diseases runs:

*Against flying venom.*

Cut four incisions in four parts of the body with an oaken stick. Dip the stick into the blood, throw it away and sing this three times:

+ Matheus me ducat + Marcus me conservet + Lucas me liberet + Iohannes me adiuvet semper. Amen.

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<sup>7)</sup> Liebermann, *l.c.* I, p. 312.

Contere Deus omnem malum et nequitiam, per virtutem patris et filii et spiritus sancti.

Sanctifica me Emmanuel Iesus Christus, libera me ab omnibus insidiis inimici.

Benedictio domini super caput meum: Potens Deus in omni tempore. Amen.

Charm No. 25.

The charm begins by giving some instructions in O.E. that are quite pagan. By means of a special stick (it must be an oaken one) four incisions are made in order to draw blood. The number four refers to the four regions, North, South, East and West, and to the cross as a symbol of the sun (See Ch. III, § 13, and our discussion of Charm No. 8). Blood is regarded as a life-force, and in this particular case as the seat of the disease. Therefore a little of it is drawn off, caught upon the stick, and then thrown away that the disease-spirit cannot return to the patient. Then a certain formula follows which seems to be fully Christian, but which is not quite so, as may be inferred from the Latin language, which lends a touch of mystery to the charm, and from the contents. First of all the four evangelists are invoked, while the sign of the cross is made each time their names are pronounced. The latter element stands in direct relation to the worship of the sun as represented by a cross. The incisions themselves may have been cut in the form of a cross, and the coincidence of four incisions and four evangelists is not accidental. Here we have a case of substitution. The next part, the invocation of the Trinity, is a Christian addition but it does not destroy the magical atmosphere. To a people newly converted to Christianity the mystery of the Trinity represented a kind of magical factor, for a magic action had usually to be repeated three times to be effective, and the incomprehensible mystery of three persons in one God heightened the magical rather than the religious atmosphere. Next there follows the invocation of Christ, and the charm ends by stressing the fact that God is mighty at all times, which is a statement of power directed to the disease-spirit, not a supplication to an outside force. It may be compared with a line from the Bee-charm (No. 1): "Lo, earth is potent against all creatures". In spite of the Christian substitutions and additions the charm is pagan in structure, both as a whole and in parts; it is pagan in outward form and inner atmosphere, in an added, magical significance given to almost every action and every word.

The task of separating Christian and pagan elements is compa-

ratively easy to carry out, because both have marked characteristics that have little in common with each other. It is infinitely more difficult to separate pagan Germanic elements from pagan classical elements.

In analysing the charm against flying venom we were able to differentiate between magic and religion, between paganism and Christianity. In dealing with the problem of differentiating between Anglo-Saxon tradition and classical borrowing we have no such characteristics to go by: in either case we meet with magic and paganism. By paganism I understand the absence of Christian influences, and taken as such there are differences between the worshipping of Woden and of Jupiter or Zeus. Still, if the names of Germanic or classical deities are not mentioned it is practically impossible to detect any difference in the material we are working on. The use of names of Germanic or non-Germanic deities, then, is a criterion to establish the origin of the charm in which they occur. Its evidence is nearly always conclusive, for in the instances where Germanic deities were replaced by other names we meet Christian Saints or Christ Himself, as was shown by the charm against a sprain or a broken leg. Whenever substitutions take place, living names are put in, i.e., names that are powerful because they are part of a living religion. It does not make sense to replace a name in whose power nobody any longer believes by another name in whose power nobody believes either. It is different when a whole charm is taken over; then the name simply forms a part of the mystery of the charm, it is an unknown or little-known word that heightens its effectiveness because of the possibilities of power surrounding this unknown spirit. We cannot expect the names of Woden and other Germanic gods to be used after the belief in their power or even their existence had disappeared.

In a paper on *Early English Magic and Medicine* Singer<sup>8)</sup> mentioned four characteristic elements to distinguish native Teutonic magic and medicine from imported elements of classical, ecclesiastical or Salernitan origin: the doctrine of specific venoms, the doctrine of the nines, the doctrine of the worm, as the cause of the disease, and lastly the doctrine of the elf-shot. With the exception perhaps of the last, however, we can hardly speak of distinguishing characteristics because the same elements occur in classical magic

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<sup>8)</sup> Ch. Singer, "Early English Magic and Medicine", in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, IX, 1920, pp. 1-34.



as well, as was admitted by Singer: "We call such material 'Native Teutonic' but it might more fitly be termed Indo-Germanic, since the doctrines are to be found among all Indo-Germanic peoples and are encountered even in the Vedas. Yet when we meet these four doctrines in passages of English origin without classical or Celtic elements, and especially when combined with references to Nordic gods or customs the material may with reasonable certainty be regarded as having been brought by the Anglo-Saxon tribes from their continental homes". The problem remains: how do we know the passages are of English origin? The reference to Nordic gods is a criterion, the one to Nordic customs is not.

The best and most conclusive criterion at our disposal to prove the Anglo-Saxon origin of a particular charm is the form of the charm itself. If we find a well-developed vernacular formula whose contents do not point to a foreign source, we can be certain that it is a true Germanic charm.

We must not expect the strict, disciplined form of the alliterative long line of Anglo-Saxon poetry. The latter is the cultivated and polished product of a class of experienced, trained poets, who had studied its technique and were steeped in its tradition. That such a tradition and technique existed appears from a poem like *Beowulf*, which adheres throughout to a definite verse structure, and from the poetical vocabulary, which differs in many points from the ordinary colloquial usage. The number of words marked poetical in any vocabulary or dictionary that differentiates between prose and poetry is surprisingly large. Even if we leave out many compounds whose separate elements were used in prose, there remain many words and compounds that belong to a literary, poetical tradition of long and wide-spread standing.

The charms, too, are essentially subject to tradition, but it is a tradition different in aim, in form, in treatment, and in the class of people practising it. It is different in aim, because it does not want to please by the story it tells or the words and sounds it uses; it is different in form, because the words are only a part of its means to attain the effect desired; it is different in treatment, because it is invocative or imperative rather than narrative or lyrical, though the latter elements are not entirely lacking, and it addresses spirits rather than human beings; it is different in the class of people practising it, because the magician and the bard have different professions and traditions. In the cases where we cannot speak of professional magicians the charms were applied by all sorts of

people, and in the cases where we do find signs of professional magicians, namely the medicine-men, they primarily had to have other qualities than those of the poet.

The difficulties in composing a charm in verse were not negligible. First, the maker was not a professional poet, secondly he had a definite subject before him, in which he could neither change the general contents nor small details without a chance of endangering its magic efficacy. So he had to retain the original words as much as possible, for they had the same ritual significance as every other ceremonial action, and every direction of time, place, silence, colour and so on.

Still we see that new charms are made and old ones gradually change, especially the wording of the verse formulas. The reason is that there existed a magical tradition, strong enough to give birth to new combinations of old and proven details. Absolutely new factors were only introduced into Anglo-Saxon magic by the acceptance and assimilation of Christian prayers and of objects and actions that derived their power from the fact that they belonged to religious ritual. Varying for each separate case the verse formulas formed the most individual and distinguishing part of the magical ceremony. Consequently an excellent memory was demanded to remember every word of every formula. Several times two charms that resembled each other a little were mixed up<sup>9)</sup>; lines, whole passages indeed, were misplaced, left out or changed into incomprehensible doggerel. All sorts of variations came into existence, and when it was noticed that the form no longer agreed with the poetical exigencies of alliteration and stress that had become normal in secular poetry, attempts were made to adjust the poetical form of the verse. As there was no authority of a closed class of magicians to see to an able, expert carrying out of the necessary changes throughout the material, these attempts were bound to be haphazard and amateurish.

All details of a charm must be distinguishable from ordinary, everyday elements, so the formula always strives after a manner of expression distinct from the loose style of colloquial speech; still, except for the Bee Charm (No. 1), there is not a single example where the alliteration is regular throughout the charm. Some lines may be better than others, but nowhere do we find the rules of a poem like *Beowulf* as regards the structure of the line,

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<sup>9)</sup> See Charm No. 2, and Ebermann's essay mentioned above.

the number of syllables and the place of the stave. All modern endeavours to change or to insert words to make the line alliterative, go against the facts actually found in the body of Anglo-Saxon charm-lore, and they have to be rejected *a priori*, unless the line is completely unintelligible and an emendation has to be made anyway.

Ettmüller<sup>10)</sup> changes l. 4 of Charm No. 2 from:

wæran *anmode* þa hy ofer *land* ridan.

into:

wæran *anmode* þa hy ofer *eard* ridan.

Holthausen<sup>11)</sup> suggests for the same line:

wæran *leoht-mode* þa hy ofer land ridan,

thus destroying the sense of the line in the context.

Grattan<sup>12)</sup> changes l. 20 of Charm No. 7 from:

ðæt næfre þis dæm adlegan *derian* ne moste

into:

ðæt næfre þis dæm adlegan *eglian* ne moste.

The list can be expanded with many more instances, especially from Holthausen's contributions. Some of the emendations would have pleased the inexperienced Anglo-Saxon poet, but mostly they are of too hypothetical a nature or too unnecessary to be convincing.

Because of the crude form generally found in charms I take Charm No. 6 to be original, though the formula consists of only one line or two short lines:

Hafa þu þas unhæle and gewit aweg mid.

The first sixteen charms of Part II possess formulas that definitely prove the Anglo-Saxon origin of their contents apart from Christian additions and changes which can easily be recognised by their difference in form and atmosphere. After accepting the Anglo-Saxon origin of a charm as a whole, we are justified in considering its details to be Germanic. These details appear to be so

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<sup>10)</sup> Ettmüller, *Engla and Seazna Scopas and Boceras*, Guedlinburg, 1850, p. 302.

<sup>11)</sup> Holthausen II, p. 30.

<sup>12)</sup> Grattan, "Three A.-S. charms from the Lacnunga", in *M.L.R.*, XXII (1927), p. 4.

rich and varied that we can assume Anglo-Saxon magic to have had a fully developed ritual. It would be wrong, therefore, to be overcautious in accepting the Anglo-Saxon origin of any particular aspect. I do not mean by this that we must begin by assuming Anglo-Saxon origin, but I do mean that we must not begin by assuming classical origin. The evidence has to be carefully balanced, and a detailed investigation often shows that the balance is in favour of a charm being Germanic (Compare our discussion of No. 17). The presence of alliteration, however imperfect, in the line just given favours its Germanic origin, and all the accompanying details frequently occur in true Anglo-Saxon charms. On the other hand there is nothing in the accompanying details to deny the possibility of a classical origin. Greek, Roman and Germanic magic goes back to one Indo-European source, and though we may succeed in establishing the existence of an Anglo-Saxon tradition, this tradition need not differ from that of Italy and Greece.

Proofs of the foreign origin of a charm are to be found in its wording, and when we find the text in a classical work. There is just a chance that the same charm was preserved both by the Greek or Latin and by the Germanic peoples, as in the case of the charm for a broken leg by the Indian and the Germanic peoples, but the chance of a formula and all accompanying practices being preserved unchanged is very small, and may be neglected for practical purposes. We find agreement in the way of details, such as the number three, silence, excrements, plants, colours, and so forth; we do not find parallel charms. If some charm or practice is recorded by Marcellus or Alexander of Tralles, it may still be of Teutonic origin, because they both spent part of their life among Teutonic tribes, and they were influenced by Teutonic superstitions. As an argument for the Germanic origin of some particular charm such reasoning is of small worth; it only serves to check our inclination to call classical everything that appears in the Leechbook and the Lacnunga.

An unsatisfactory criterion lies in the names of plants and the superstitions surrounding them. In his dissertation on the O.E. names of plants Hoops<sup>13)</sup> says: "The traces preserved of this plant superstition do not present a uniform picture. But one half of it is Germanic, whereas another, large part goes back to Graeco-Latin

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<sup>13)</sup> J. Hoops, *Über die altenglischen Pflanzennamen*, Freiburg i.B., 1889, p. 44.

origin. If the superstitious belief clings to a plant that was imported to Northern Europe, or that, if it really was at home in the North, has only come down to us in a foreign name, we can put it *a priori* with more or less certainty in the latter category. But otherwise, too, many conceptions that show a Germanic stamp at first sight, prove to be foreign imports on a closer inspection". As an example he takes betony, a plant which was used a great deal in medicine. In the days of the Roman Empire a special monograph was written about it, which was afterwards incorporated in the Herbarium Apulei. Betony was effective against no less than forty-seven diseases and temptations, which number was reduced to twenty-nine in the Anglo-Saxon copy. The list is an interesting confirmation of the close connection between magic and medicine. The table of contents of the Anglo-Saxon translation<sup>14)</sup> gives it like this :

*Name of the plant betonica, that is, bishop's wort*

1. Against monstrous nocturnal visitors and dreadful visions and dreams.
2. Against a broken skull.
3. Against eye trouble.
4. Against ear trouble.
5. Against bad sight.
6. Against watery eyes.
7. Against strong nose-bleeding.
8. Against toothache.
9. Against pain in one's sides.
10. Against pain in one's loins.
11. Against stomach-ache.
12. Against costiveness.
13. Against spitting blood.
14. Against becoming drunk.
15. Against carbuncles.
16. Against an internal fracture.
17. Against getting tired by riding or walking.
18. If a man is indisposed or sick.
19. For the easy digestion of food.
20. If a man cannot retain his food.
21. For pain in the inwards or if he is swollen.
22. Against poison.

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<sup>14)</sup> Cockayne, *l.c.* I, p. 5.

23. Against the bite of a snake.
24. Against the same.
25. Against the bite of a mad dog.
26. Against a sore throat or any other part of his neck.
27. Against pain in the loins or if his thighs ache.
28. Against hot fever.
29. Against foot disease.

The medicinal prescription opening the list is thus elaborated in the text <sup>15)</sup>:

This plant, which is called betony, is produced in meadows and in clean downlands, and in shady places. It is effective both for a man's soul and for his body: it protects him against monstrous nocturnal visitors and against dreadful visions and dreams; and the plant is very medicinal, and thus you must gather it: in the month of August without using iron. And when you have taken it, shake off the earth till nothing clings on it any more, and then you must dry it in the shade very thoroughly, and pound to a powder the whole of it, also the root. Use it afterwards when you need it.

There is nothing in the whole passage that looks like Christian influence; it is absolutely pagan. Grimm <sup>16)</sup> thought it was Germanic, but it occurs almost word for word in the Latin Herbarium Apulei, of which the Anglo-Saxon text is a free version. The title of the work should have warned Grimm that the chances were great that this particular passage was a borrowing, but otherwise his mistake is natural. If we did not possess the Latin original it might be regarded as a typical instance of Anglo-Saxon herb-gathering, for the above way of gathering medicinal herbs, with all the accompanying prescriptions and prohibitions, had also to be observed by the Anglo-Saxons. Hoops was of opinion that if a plant was imported into Northern Europe by the Romans, the superstition attached to it was also imported. In the majority of cases this is no doubt true, though it is possible that some superstition shifted from one plant to another. But I do not agree with Hoops

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<sup>15)</sup> Cockayne, *l.c.*, I, p. 71.

<sup>16)</sup> J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, Gütersloh, 1875-1878, III, p. 355.

when he adds that we also have to do with Graeco-Latin plant-superstition when the plant has only come down to us in a Graeco-Latin name, even when it was at home in the North. The names of plants were not fixed in Anglo-Saxon times. One name was often used for two or more plants, and one plant was often indicated by two or more names. The misunderstanding caused by this uncertainty, and the danger involved in the use of the wrong plant, induced doctors to retain the Greek or Latin name they found in the writings of the classical authors they studied. Their daily use of the Latin name made it more familiar to them than the equivalent in the vernacular, so that they kept the Latin word in speaking or in writing English. Besides it sounded more learned and added to their reputation of being good doctors, as everybody could hear that they knew more than ordinary people. This theoretical argument is strengthened by the fact that repeatedly both names, the vernacular and the foreign, are used side by side:

Lat. *agrimonia* — O.E. *agrimonie*; *garcliffe*.

Lat. *febrifuga* — O.E. *feverfuge*; *smerowyr*.

Lat. *pollegium* — O.E. *polleie*; *dweorgedwostle*.

Lat. *helenium* — O.E. *elene*; *sperewyrt*.

Whenever the Latin name is the only one known in the manuscripts we need not conclude that it was the only one known to the Anglo-Saxons, for in all the cases just mentioned the Latin word is far more frequent than the corresponding Anglo-Saxon name. I cannot believe that a plant like mint growing throughout Western and Northern Europe was only imported into England after the establishment of the rule of Rome, nor that every medicinal and superstitious use of it was taken over from the Romans, and by them from the Greeks, merely because mint is the only name by which it is known, and this name happens to be derived from Lat. *menta*, in its turn derived from Gr.  $\mu\lambda\theta\eta$ . The Anglo-Saxons already knew several varieties: O.E. *mint*, *brocmin*, *fenmint*, *horsmint*, *swartmint*. Another such plant is camomile, known and applied all over Europe. Its older Germanic name is only known locally at present, but the Anglo-Saxons called it *mægde*. Sometimes the Latin name was not replaced by the vernacular word but was 'translated' into O.E.:

Lat. *quinquefolia* — O.E. *fifleaf*.

Lat. *herba matrum* — O.E. *moderwyr*.

O.E. *fifleaf* may have been original, for the Greeks also knew a plant *χαϊρέφυλλον*, 'hand-leaf', thus called after the typical form of the leaf. The name was adopted in Latin and, from Latin, in English: chervil. O.E. *moderwyr*t is a literal translation from the Latin, its original name is O.E. *mucgwyr*t. The Latin name is another word for *artemisia*, named after Artemis, the Greek goddess of love and consequently of childbirth. The plant was considered to be good for easing and promoting delivery. This superstition seems to be specially classical, for I have not been able to discover the corresponding use of O.E. *mucgwyr*t. In the Nine Herbs Charm the plant is said to be effective against poison, and it is frequently used in medicine, together with all sorts of plants, for various purposes. Taken as a whole we cannot say that the superstitious use of a plant was borrowed when the name of the plant was borrowed. This only holds good when the superstition was directly connected with the name of the plant, as in *moderwyr*t, but it is not true for all superstitious beliefs of the plant.

To conclude we may say that there are six charms that show neither classical nor Christian influences, with ten more that show superficial Christian influence. The other sixty or so given in Part Two have only retained details to link them with Anglo-Saxon tradition, together with their general atmosphere, their object and their usage.

The literary value of the charms is very small. Yet they are attractive and often attain to an aesthetic beauty by the force of their imagery, by their simple, genuine sentiment, and by the feeling of suspense evoked by their structure, their ritual and their aim.

Ivar Lindquist has made an attempt to reconstruct the original common Germanic verse form of the charms<sup>17</sup>). According to him it was in stanza form and resembled the *Ljóðahátt*. As it is mainly preserved in charms, he calls it the 'galderform'. Its characteristics are the repetition of the beginning, the repetition of the end, the

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<sup>17</sup>) Ivar Lindquist, "Galdrar. De gamla germanska trollsängernas stil undersökt i samband med en svensk runinskrift från folkvandringstiden." In *Göteborgs Högskolas Arsskrift*, Vol. 29, 1923. I only know Lindquist's essay from a short extract by Magoun in *Englische Studien*, LXXII, 1937, pp. 1-6, so I cannot definitely decide about the cogency of Lindquist's arguments, but from what we find in Anglo-Saxon charms his contention is not convincing.



repetition or contact of the thought and the repetition of the initial sounds, i.e., alliteration:

ðis ðe to bote esa gescotes, ðis ðe to bote ylfa gescotes,  
ðis ðe to bote hægtessan gescotes, (ic ðin wille helpan).

Charm No. 2

Bidde ic þone mæran drihten, bidde ic þone miclan  
drihten, bidde ic þone haligan, heofonrices weard.

Charm No. 13

My objection against this attempt is that too many instances must be reconstructed by omitting or inserting passages:

Gif ðu wære on fell scote, oððe wære on flæsc scoten,  
oððe wære on blod scoten,  
oððe wære on lif scoten, næfre ne sy ðin lif atæsed.

Charm No. 2

J. Grimm and most later editors restored the verse by expanding the second line, Lindquist wants to omit it, whereas Magoun prefers to take the third line for a later addition. Instead of giving more certainty about the original text, this method very often tends to decrease it. The repetition of words, ideas and sounds is a characteristic common to all primitive and non-primitive literature and it naturally occurs in Germanic poetry, but if a galderform had existed we should have found more instances than those adduced by Lindquist and Magoun.

After the Anglo-Saxon charm texts had been made accessible to the general public by the work of Cockayne they gradually received more attention from students of Old English. In 1904 J. F. Payne<sup>18)</sup> proposed the following arrangement of Anglo-Saxon magic:

1. Prayers, invocations, or other verbal formulae addressed to the herbs; and special observances used when gathering them or other natural remedies.
2. Prayers and mystical words repeated over the patient, or written and applied to some part of his body as an amulet with or without material remedies.

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<sup>18)</sup> J. F. Payne, *English Medicine in the Anglo-Saxon times*, Oxford, 1904, pp. 114-115.

3. Direct conjurations or exorcisms addressed to diseases as if they were evil spirits.
4. Narrative charms, that is, anecdotes relating to sacred or legendary personages, who suffered or did something analogous to what the patient is suffering from.
5. Material magic; that is, the attribution of magical powers to certain objects, such as plants or parts of animals, stones and engraved gems; none of these objects being taken or used medicinally, but applied to some part of the patient's body as amulets or periapts.
6. Transference of disease by a verbal formula or a ceremony to some animal or material object, or in some way to the outside world.

Payne did not put his classification to the test, for he did not edit the charms. If he had done so his classification would have failed in practice. The numbers 2, 3, 4, 6 overlap and one charm might often be classified under two or three heads. The Nine Herbs Charm, e.g., falls under 1 and 2, as appears from the last lines: 'Sing this charm on each of the herbs three times, before you work them up, and so do on the apple. And sing the charm into the mouth of the man before you apply the salve'. The charm Against a Dwarf (No. 7) falls under 2, 3, 4, and perhaps under 5 and 6. When we consider his classification from the point of view of a theoretical description it is excellent, for it analyses the various ways in which magic was applied, and it makes valuable distinctions such as those between object or material magic and word magic, between animistic and non-animistic beliefs.

With a few changes Grendon<sup>19)</sup> took over Payne's classification, so that the same practical objections hold good against his arrangement. He left out the narrative charms as a separate group, so that he distinguishes five groups:

- A. Exorcisms of diseases or disease spirits (Payne 3).
- B. Herbal charms (Payne 1).
- C. Charms for transferring disease (Payne 6).
- D. Amulet charms (Payne 5).
- E. Charm remedies (Payne 2?).

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<sup>19)</sup> F. Grendon, "Anglo-Saxon Charms," in *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XXII, 1909, pp. 105-237.

It is not quite clear why he made a special subdivision of the E group, for the A, B, C, and D groups are also 'charm remedies', so E has no separate right to existence. Another objection is that he placed two versions of the same charm, namely, A 8 and B 6 in his edition, under two different headings.

Grendon's aim was to publish a complete and separate edition of the Anglo-Saxon charms: "No complete and separate edition of the Anglo-Saxon charms has yet been published, nor has any interpretative work been issued which covers the field; but texts of all the known charms have been printed, and many of the poetical incantations have been singly and minutely treated from a linguistic as well as from a literary point of view. The present publication aims to furnish a detailed treatment of the subject. All the Anglo-Saxon metrical incantations are presented in the text, as well as all prose charms with vernacular or gibberish formulas; while exorcisms with Christian liturgical formulas, and Old English recipes involving charm practices, are represented by typical specimens". Grendon's edition appeared in 1909, and, as he says, many of the poetical incantations had only been treated from a linguistic and literary point of view, whereas the accompanying practices and the underlying magical beliefs were disregarded. The consequence was that the discussions often made too much of details and too little of the structure of the complete charms. Grendon is not entirely free of this charge either, though in his discussion of the general characteristics of spells he makes a number of useful observations<sup>20)</sup>. In his edition of the charm texts he gave few emendations and explanations of his own but he made an excellent choice from those of preceding editors, and his translations are nearly always an improvement on those by Cockayne.

In an edition of all the charms some classification is necessary. It is possible to arrange them according to their form: they are in prose, in alliterative verse or in a mixture of the two; in Old English, in a foreign tongue or in a mixture of the two. We can take their contents into consideration, and then they can be divided into a pagan and a Christian group and a mixture of the two; we can divide them into word magic and material magic and a mixture of the two. We can also arrange them according to the purpose they serve, as was done by the Anglo-Saxons themselves. None of these arrangements is quite satisfactory because the divi-

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<sup>20)</sup> *l.c.*, pp. 110-123.

ding lines cannot be fixed and most charms would fall into two or more groups. The arrangement as to purpose fails because various charms serve one purpose, and one charm often serves various purposes. In the present work, the first complete edition after Grendon, we make no subdivisions or groups but take them as a body, only numbering them from one to eighty-six. We start with those that may be regarded as of true Germanic origin, free from classical or Christian influences. Then follow those that show incidental foreign influences, and finally those that were borrowed from non-Germanic sources or were made up on the model of the original charms. The advantage of this method is that it enables us to trace the gradual change that came over Anglo-Saxon magic on account of the new religion embraced by the Anglo-Saxons and the growing intensity of their contact with other peoples. At the same time we can see that magic did not lose its influence and its field of operation; it did not die out when Woden and his Valhalla vanished into the dusk, it merely changed its outward appearance and lived on as before. The change was entirely due to Christianity and seems to have been completed towards 1200.

In the Appendix we print one pagan Latin prayer to the goddess of earth and some Christian prayers that betray close affinity with a number of charm texts and that may have been used under similar circumstances.



## PART II

## No. 1. WIÞ YMBE.

Nim eorþan, oferweorp mid þinre swiþran handa under þinum swiþran fet and cwed<sup>1)</sup>:

Fo ic under fot, funde ic hit.  
 Hwæt, eorðe mæg wið ealra wihta gehwilce,  
 5 and wið andan and wið æminde,  
 and wið þa micelan mannes tungan.

And siððon<sup>2)</sup> forweorp ofer grot þonne hi swirman, and cwed:

Sitte ge, sigewif, sigað to eorþan.  
 Næfre ge wilde to wuda fleogan.  
 10 Beo ge swa gemindige mines godes,  
 swa bið manna gehwilec metes and eþeles.

MS. C.C.C.C. 41, p. 182 (11th century).

*Wid Ymbe* is one of the finest A.S. charms that have come down to us. In spite of its comparative brevity it gives an attractive picture of the simplicity and faith of the Germanic people. Although there are several difficulties as regards interpretation and form of details, it is simple and straightforward compared with most other charms, and its completeness is striking. It surpasses every other Germanic charm of contemporary or later date in artistic beauty of structure and treatment. It is fully pagan, in fact the only pagan bee charm in Germanic countries.

Its outward form consists of two verse passages, both of them preceded by a few words in prose. The verse form is the normal alliterative verse of A.S. poetry, with the stave on the first stress in the second half-line and one or two alliterating words in the first half-line. However, it does not attain the finished form of other A.S. poems, and if we try to scan its lines we shall see that several of them do not conform to the number of syllables also demanded by strict A.S. poetry. On the other hand it is far more regular than any other charm. The alliteration in l. 4 falls on *eorðe* and *ealra*, and *gehwilce* does not alliterate with *hwæt*, a word that generally falls outside the metrical line and never alliterates. *Hwæt* represents the initial chord struck on the harp, and it serves to call the attention of the audience. In this charm it forms part of the line,

1) MS. cwet.      2) MS. wið on.

## FOR A SWARM OF BEES

Take earth, throw it with your right hand under your right foot and say:

I catch it under my foot, I have found it.  
Lo, earth has power against all creatures,  
and against malice and against ungratefulness,  
and against the mighty tongue of man.

And afterwards throw sand over them when they swarm and say:

Settle, victorious women, sink down to earth.  
You must never fly wild to the wood.  
Be as mindful of my welfare  
as every man is of food and home.

even though it does not alliterate, thus testifying to the difference and irregularity of the verse form of charms.

The title, together with the contents, fully explains the meaning and purpose of the charm. It is meant to make a swarm of bees come down in the neighbourhood of the bee-keeper, and to prevent them from flying away too far and getting lost. Grendon's<sup>3)</sup> supposition that it was used to prevent their swarming at all is wrong, as the swarming of bees is a good thing in itself and is necessary to increase the number of hives and the production of honey. Honey was in great demand among the Anglo-Saxons, indeed it was the only sweetening stuff they possessed. It was required as the principal ingredient of mead, and it is repeatedly mentioned in medical prescriptions throughout the Leechbook and the Lacnunga: sweeten with honey. In medicine it has a natural function when it is used against cough and against pain in the eyes: Against cough take honey tear, i.e., the purest part of honey, which drips from the comb (Lacn. 3). Its medicinal force is often enhanced by the magical device of taking an exceptional kind of honey: *doran hunig* or honey of humble-bees (Leechbook I, 11), English honey (Lcb. II, lxxv), honey of wild bees (Lcb. III, 11), *dunhunig* or honey gathered on downs (Lacn. 4). The Leechbook I, 11 prescribes against mistiness of the eyes: "Take celandine juice or blossoms, mix it

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<sup>3)</sup> Grendon, p. 169, note 1.



with honey of humble-bees, put it in a brass vessel, heat it skilfully on glowing coals until it is boiled. It is a good remedy against dimness of the eyes." The use of humble-bee honey, of a brass vessel, and the heating over glowing coals instead of over an ordinary fire, together with the adverb *listum*, 'skilfully, craftily, cunningly', belong to the sphere of magic.

Bee-culture goes back a long way into prehistoric times. The words connected with it, *beo hunig*, *hyf*, *ymbe*, are of Germanic origin. The oldest historical evidence dates from the fourth century B.C., when Pythias of Massilia, a Greek merchant, mentions the culture of bees by Germanic tribes.

In folk-lore bees are credited with more than animal intelligence. Their way of living in communities, their cooperation in gathering and storing honey, their instincts about the weather have attracted the particular interest of man, and no animals have evoked so many superstitious practices as bees<sup>4</sup>). The Anglo-Saxons too practised magical rites with bees, as is shown by this text and by another one (No. 85).

In structure the charm *Wið ymbe* also consists of two parts, following its metrical form. The charmer begins by taking some earth in his right hand, throwing it up into the air and putting his right foot on it when it descends. In how far the original meaning of *swiðra*, 'stronger', was felt is difficult to say, and it is even more difficult to decide whether it was felt by the magician who made up the charm. Yet we may say that *swiþra* has a magical flavour, if only from the fact of the right hand being mentioned at all. The action of throwing up earth by the right hand and catching it under the right foot is not an ordinary one, and it is entirely magical. It is intensified by the words that accompany it:

Fo ic under fot, funde ic hit.  
 Hwæt eorðe mæg wið ealra wihta gehwilce,  
 and wið andan and wið æminde,  
 and wið þa micelan mannes tungan.

Cockayne<sup>5</sup>) combines *funde ic hit* with the next line and translates: 'I am trying what earth avails for everything in the world.' This translation is certainly wrong, for a magician who would start his performance by saying that he is going to try and see what he can achieve would lose all authority. Magic partly relies for its

<sup>4</sup>) See the article on bees in *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*.

<sup>5</sup>) Cockayne I, p. 385.

success on the suggestion of power emanating from the magician, so a statement that he will attempt to obtain a result would mean immediate failure. The objection that he is not concerned with human beings but with animals does not hold good, because spirits are living in the bees, and they have to be treated as human beings, possessing intelligence and feeling, helping or hurting man, differing only in size and appearance. They are addressed as *sigewif*, 'victorious women' (l. 9), and in the last two lines of the charm they are requested to act as human beings, mindful of the welfare of their families and farms. *Funde* may be the past tense of *findan*, 'to find, succeed in finding, procure', or it may be the present tense of *fundian*, 'to strive for, endeavour to find, hasten to, go with the object of reaching a person or place'. In the latter case it must be a Northern form, as otherwise it would be *fundie*<sup>6)</sup>. In either case the meaning will be that the charmer has succeeded in finding, has reached *it*. By *it* we have to understand the earth that was thrown by the right hand under the right foot, i.e., earth endowed with magic power. The words explicitly state that the action is not accidental but intentional, and that the power resulting from it is not to be ignored. As the next line says, earth is powerful, and by putting his foot on earth the magician is even more powerful because he is master of that earth.

The word *æminde* in line 3 occurs only here in O.E. literature. The A.S.D., Supplement, gives 'want of care ?, neglect' as its possible meaning, showing by its note of interrogation that its author is not certain about it. *Æmind* consists of the prefix *æ-* (un-, not, without) and the root *mind* or *mynd*, which we also find in the second part of the formula: *Beo ge swa gemindige mines godes*. Sweet's<sup>7)</sup> translation 'forgetfulness' suits the meaning of the charm, which is directed against bees flying away and getting lost. The loss may arise on account of ill-will from the bees, of mere forgetfulness or wantonness, or of ungratefulness, i.e., forgetting the cares of the bee-keeper in feeding them and protecting them from cold in winter. Ungratefulness is to be preferred in connection with *andan*, 'malice', and the next line.

Meiszner<sup>8)</sup> has written a long article on *þa micelan mannes tungan* in l. 6. He tried to show that by this phrase is meant the tongue of a physically big man, i.e., a bear. Owing to its title, "Die

<sup>6)</sup> Cf. Sievers-Brunner, *Altenglische Grammatik*, 1942, § 412, Anm. 4.

<sup>7)</sup> Sweet, *A. S. Reader*, Glossary s.v. *æminde*.

<sup>8)</sup> *Anglia* XL, 1916, pp. 375-393.

Zunge des groszen Mannes", the article had remained unnoticed by students of charms until 1937, when Magoun<sup>9)</sup> rejected this interpretation. Meiszner contended that *micel* always refers to physical size in O.E., but, as Magoun observed, the A.S.D. quotes several passages where it has the meaning 'great'. More arguments can be put forward than the one adduced by Magoun. In the first place, *micel* and *mann* are stressed by the alliteration, so that both the defining and the defined word would be stressed. If we take man in the sense of magician, there is little difference between the tongue of a mighty man and the mighty tongue of man. Secondly, magical practices and formulas are hardly ever directed against visible, tangible dangers, such as bears and other wild animals, but always against invisible, shadowy menaces, such as, here, malice, ungratefulness and the unknown danger of charms pronounced by an enemy (Cf. No. 8, ll. 70-71).

In the first part of the charm the magician has stated his knowledge of the magic that is in earth and he has shown that he himself has control of that power by the action he has performed and the words he has uttered. In the second half of the charm he applies his power when the moment of swarming comes. The text has *wid on* at this point, which has no meaning. I have changed it into *siddon*, 'afterwards'. Although the charm forms a unity, some time may elapse between its various parts. What is necessary is that the charmer feels the connection and mentally combines the parts. As the swarming of bees is noticeable beforehand by a buzzing sound in the hive the charmer knows when it is time to make ready and the interval need not be long. Again he starts by performing an action, which is subsequently strengthened by the second charm-formula. At the moment when the queen and her followers rise into the air the magician takes a handful of sand and throws it over them, thus surrounding them with a magic ring or wall they are powerless to cross. They are forced to stay within the circle of sand and to come down in the neighbourhood. This time sand is used instead of a clod of earth because sand divides into a great many small grains, so that each bee is caught, as it were, in a separate circle. At the same time the height to which the earth is thrown up indicates the height beyond which the bees cannot rise from the ground, and the action serves a double purpose: the bees cannot fly away too far and they cannot settle too high on a tree, where it is impossible to reach them.

<sup>9)</sup> Magoun II, p. 22.

For the rest sand is as much part of the earth as clay or any other kind of soil. In Flanders the bee-keeper takes sand and throws it into the swarm to break its impetus in flying from the hive and make the queen come down in the neighbourhood<sup>10)</sup>. Some of the sand thrown over the bees by the Anglo-Saxon bee-keeper must have touched the swarm and disturbed its flight, so that the action, which had a magical significance to the charmer, had a perfectly natural influence on the bees. In Visbeck in Germany this result is obtained by a different magical practice: In feeding his bees before sunrise on Maundy Thursday the bee-keeper mixes a little earth, thrown up in the preceding night by a mole, with the honey given to the bees. After that no bees will fly away during the following year, and when they swarm they will settle near the earth<sup>11)</sup>. Notable in all instances is the use of earth to keep them low and near.

The accompanying words complete and explain the magical enchantment:

Sitte ge, sigewif, sigað to eordan.  
 Næfre ge wilde to wuda fleogan.  
 Beo ge swa gemindige mines godes,  
 swa bið manna gehwiltc metes and eþeles.

It is not clear why the bees are addressed as *sigewif*, 'victorious women'. Grimm<sup>12)</sup>, who only speaks about the latter half of the charm, used the Latin word *Bellonae* to express the meaning, and he added that O.E. *sigewif*, O.H.G. *siguwip*, O.N. *sigrwif* are general designations of wise women. From wise women to valkyries was only a short step, hence the idea arose in Germany that the second part of the charm was a displaced battle-song, in some way or other mixed up with the bee charm<sup>13)</sup>. There can be no question, however, of displacement. The second formula fits in completely with the rest of the charm. The invitation to settle down on the earth and not to become wild or fly away to the woods (l. 8-9), the friendly way in which they are addressed and which is normal between keeper and bees (l. 11-12), everything is in accordance with the purpose of the charm, whereas it is difficult to deduce a battle-song from the four lines, the more so as the supposition is

<sup>10)</sup> This information was given me by Professor Bellon of Nymegen University.

<sup>11)</sup> *Handwörterbuch d. deutschen Aberglaubens* I, p. 1241.

<sup>12)</sup> *Deutsche Mythologie* I, p. 358.

<sup>13)</sup> E. H. Meyer, *Mythologie der Germanen*, Straszburg, 1903, p. 270.

based on another hypothesis, namely the identity of *sigewif* and valkyries, for which no proof is given. Grendon<sup>14)</sup> thinks that the appellation is used with the idea of mollifying or conciliating the rebellious spirits of the bees. He compares *sigewif* with *ancillae dei*, as they are called in a Latin charm, and hazards a guess that they were servants of Woden. No mention is ever made of bees having any connection with Woden, whereas the *ancillae dei* are called by that name because they supply the wax for candles used in the ritual of the church. Furthermore, the charm in which the term occurs is highly christianised. Probably *sigewif* is merely a coaxing way of calling the bees, comparable, as Stopford Brooke<sup>15)</sup> suggested, to the flattering endearment of the nursery song 'Ladybird, Ladybird, fly away home'. After stating in the beginning that he has power to force them the magician can afford to be friendly and courteous.

Grammatically these four lines are interesting because they present three forms for the imperative plural: *sitte*, *beo*; *sigad*; *fleogan*. *Sigad* represents the normal O.E. form; in *sitte* and *beo* the final consonant is omitted in the inverted form before the personal pronoun *ge*; *fleogan* may be an imperative form with the ending *-an* in negative sentences<sup>16)</sup>, though it may also be a scribal error for *fleogad* due to the parallels:

eordan — fleogan  
godes — epeles

Compare the earlier error *cwet* and the preceding *fet*. Grimm<sup>17)</sup> emended *wilde* to *wille*.

For comparison with the A.S. charm I give a few O.H.G. and Latin texts:

Krist imbi ist uze.  
Nu fliuc du vihu minaz  
fridufrono in munt  
hera heim zi commone<sup>18)</sup>.

(Christ, the swarm is out. Now fly, my dear animals, in holy peace and protection, to come home again here).

<sup>14)</sup> Grendon, p. 217.

<sup>15)</sup> Stopford Brooke, *History of Early English Literature*, 1892, I, p. 215.

<sup>16)</sup> Cf. Sievers-Brunner, *l.c.* § 362, 3.

<sup>17)</sup> Grimm, *l.c.* I, p. 358.

<sup>18)</sup> Kögel, II, p. 154.

Ne apes recedant de vase, scribe in lamina plumbea haec nomina et pone ad vas ubi exeunt:

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti.

Ancillae dei, quae facitis opera dei, adjuro vos apes, apiculae fideles, deum timete, silvas non tangite, (a me non) fugite, fugam non tendite.

Abraham vos detineat, Ysaac vos detineat, Joseph te praeveniat.

Adjuro te per virginem dei genitricem Mariam et adjuro te per sanctum Joseph, ut illo loco sedeas ubi tibi praecipio.

Apes, adjuro vos per patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum ut non habeatis licentiam fugere filium hominis.

Pater noster et Credo in deum<sup>19</sup>).

(That the bees do not fly away from the hive write in a sheet of lead and put on the hive where they get out: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Servants of God, who do the work of God, I adjure you bees, faithful little bees, fear God, do not go to the woods, do not fly from me, do not turn to flight. May Abraham detain you, may Ysaac detain you, may Joseph (Jacob) prevent you. I adjure you by the virgin Mary and I adjure you by the holy Joseph that you settle on that spot which I prescribe to you. Bees, I adjure you by the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost that you have not the impudence to fly from the son of man. Our father and the Creed).

The later origin of this charm is manifested by the fact that it must not be pronounced but inscribed on a sheet of lead and hung on the hive. Interesting to note is the parallel *silvas non tangite, a me non fugite* and the line *Næfre ge wilde to wuda fleogan*. Instead of the purely magical means of a circle of earth, the three Jewish patriarchs Abraham, Ysaac and Joseph (Jacob) are called upon to obtain the result, together with the virgin Mary, Joseph and the Holy Trinity. Magical elements are the use of writing and the use of lead, a heavy material to weigh them down and keep them low.

Benedictio ad apes.

Elion, elion, arguet nun non erit nun abia abia, qui

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<sup>19</sup>) Schöntal, *Analecta Graecensia*, cited by Kögel, II, p. 156.

facis cram punicam. Adjuro te per patrem et filium  
et spiritum sanctum ut hominem non effugiatis.

Item.

Quando apes se elevant et fugiant festina contra  
eas, et stricto pugillo ita ut pollex in pugillo teneatur  
ita fac crucem et dic versum, Domine dominus noster,  
et hoc fac ter<sup>20</sup>).

(Charm for bees. Elion, elion, arguet nun non erit nun abia abia,  
who do I shall soon punish. I adjure you by the Father and the Son  
and the Holy Ghost not to fly from man. For the same. When the  
bees rise into the air and fly away, hurry towards them and with  
the fist clinched in such manner that you keep the thumb in your

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## No. 2. WIP FÆRSTICE

Feferfuige and seo reade netele ðe þurh ærn inwyxd and weg-  
brade, wyll in buteran.

Hlude wæran hy, la hlude, ða hy ofer þone hlæw ridan,

wæran annode ða hy ofer land ridan.

5 Scyld ðu ðe nu, þu ðysne nið genesan mote.

Ut lytel spere, gif her inne sie.

Stod under linde, under leohtum scylde,

þær ða mihtigan wif hyra mægen beræddon

and hy gyllende garas sændan.

10 Ic him oðerne eft wille sændan,

fleogende flanne forane togeanes.

Ut lytel spere, gif hit her inne sy.

Sæt smið sloh seax lytel

.... iserna wund swiðe.

15 Ut lytel spere, gif here inne sy.

Syx smiðas sætan | wælspera worhtan |

Ut spere, næs in spere |

Gif her inne sy isenes dæl |

hægtessan geweorc, hit sceal | gemyltan.

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<sup>20</sup>) Cited by Zupitza, *Anglia* I, 1878, p. 194.

fist make the sign of the cross and say the psalm The Lord is my Lord, and do so three times).

The term *benedictio* for *carmen*, *incantatio* was often used in the Middle Ages to denote a charm in the form of a Christian prayer or blessing. It has been preserved in the German *Segen*. In the above benediction the pagan elements are easily discernible: a meaningless gibberish, and the odd way in which the sign of the cross is made, namely by keeping the thumb in the fist. The abuse of ritual or liturgical actions and prayers was a frequent device in medieval black magic, so that it is improbable that we have an original pagan action here, but it is equally improbable that it is already a case of black magic, because there is no deformation of Christian prayers or liturgical actions.

### AGAINST RHEUMATISM

Boil feverfew and the red nettle that grows through [the wall of] a house and plantain in butter.

Loud they were, lo loud, when they rode over the  
mound,  
 they were fierce when they rode over the land.  
 Shield yourself now that you may survive their ill-  
will.

Out little spear, if you are in here!  
 I stood under linden-wood, under a light shield,  
 where the mighty women betrayed their power,  
 and screaming they sent forth their spears.  
 I will send them back another,  
 a flying arrow from in front against them.  
 Out little spear, if you are in here!  
 A smith was sitting, forging a little knife,

.....

Out little spear, if you are in here!  
 Six smiths were sitting, making war-spears.  
 Out spear, not in, spear!  
 If there is a particle of iron in here,  
 the work of hags, it shall melt!



20

Gif ðu wære on fell scoten | oððe wære on flæsc scoten |  
 oððe wære on blod scoten | [oððe wære on ban  
 scoten] <sup>1)</sup>,  
 oððe wære on lið scoten | næfre ne sy ðin lif atæsed.  
 Gif hit wære esa gescot, oððe hit wære ylfa gescot,  
 oððe hit wære hægtessan gescot, nu ic wille ðin  
 helpan.

25

þis ðe to bote esa gescotes, ðis ðe to bote ylfa gescotes,  
 ðis ðe to bote hægtessan gescotes, ic ðin wille helpan.  
 Fleoh þær on fyrgen-heafde.  
 Hal wes tu<sup>2)</sup>. Helpe ðin drihten.

Nim þonne þæt seax, ado on wætan.

*M.S. Harley 585, ff. 175a, b, 176a (11th century).*

The general purpose and meaning of this charm are comparatively clear. It serves as a cure for a stinging pain, suddenly felt by the victim and supposedly caused by 'mighty women', hags, elves and gods. The exact meaning of *færstice* is less clear. Cockayne<sup>3)</sup>, Grendon<sup>4)</sup> and Sweet<sup>5)</sup> translate it by 'sudden stitch'. The belief that diseases may be caused by the shots of evil spirits is spread all over the world. It is met with in several OE. charms and as a name for certain painful diseases it is found in several Germanic countries: Eng. *elfstone*, Scots *elf-flint*, *elf-arrow*, *elf-bolt*, Norw. *alfpil*, Swed. *aelfquarn*, Germ. *Alpschosz*, *Hechsenschusz*. All these expressions agree in as far as they are all applied to painful nervous twinges, coming on without apparent cause and disappearing in the same way. In Germany the word *Geschosz* is used for a headache, a toothache, for general rheumatic affections and gout<sup>6)</sup>. From the wording of the charm (ll. 20-22) we can infer that rheumatic pains affecting various parts of the body are meant.

Metrically the charm falls into two parts. One part (ll. 3-19; 27-28) is made up of loosely alliterative, irregular lines, possibly divided into four or five stanzas, and the other part (ll. 20-26) consists of fairly regular long lines. The explanation is that two different charms were probably mixed up, apparently caused by

1) Not in MS.

2) MS. fled þr̄ on fyrgenhæfde halwes tu.

3) Cockayne III, p. 53. 4) Grendon, p. 165.

5) Sweet, *A. S. Reader*, Glossary.

6) *Handwörterbuch d. deutschen Aberglaubens* III, p. 756.

Whether you have been shot in the skin, or shot in the  
 flesh,  
 or shot in the blood, [or shot in the bone],  
 or shot in a limb, may your life never be endangered.  
 If it be the shot of Aesir, or the shot of elves,  
 or the shot of hags, I will help you now.  
 This as your remedy for the shot of Aesir, this for the  
 shot of elves,  
 this for the shot of hags, I will help you.  
 Fly to the mountain head.  
 Be whole. May the Lord help you.

Then take the knife and dip it into the liquid.

the identical expressions *Hægtessan geweorc* in l. 19 and *hægtessan gescot* in l. 24.

In ll. 16-22 a number of strokes are added by a later hand<sup>7)</sup>, which may have served to mark the verse lines, as the charm was written down as prose by the scribe of the manuscript. Anyhow they have not much value as is seen from the stroke after *sceal* (l. 19) where it occurs in the middle of a line.

Of more importance to the metrical structure is a kind of burden: *Ut lytel spere, gif her inne sy* in ll. 6; 12; 15, and *Ut spere næs in spere* in l. 17. They are more important, however, for the meaning of the charm than for its external form, for I doubt if we can deduce an original structure in stanzas from them. The present form of the charm leaves much to be desired in this respect, but the irregularity of occurrence of this burden does not allow us to make a suggestion as to the original metrical form.

Ll. 13-14 are certainly corrupt: l. 13 has an accumulation of alliterating *s* sounds, and l. 14 is incomplete and obscure. Any attempt to reconstruct this passage is doomed to failure as we do not know how much has been omitted.

The directions to the exorcist at the beginning and the end (ll. 1-2; 29) are not younger than the charm formula<sup>8)</sup>. A comparative study of magic shows that the actions performed in magic are at least as old as the words that are spoken. Among all primitive

<sup>7)</sup> Cockayne III, p. 52 note 3, thinks they are of the same hand as the rest. He leaves out the stroke after *sceal*.

<sup>8)</sup> Cf. Horn, *l.c.*, p. 98.

peoples actions are performed and words spoken, and not until the time that magic is declining and its practice largely disappears are the words given by themselves. Before that time we may meet with magical actions only but never with words only. The text of the Second Merseburg Charm (cf. p. 109) is given without any directions to the magician, but the version in the Atharva-Veda is accompanied by certain directions: At dawn when the stars fade the patient must be sprinkled with a decoction of the laksha-plant, then he is given to drink a mixture of ghee and milk, and finally he is anointed with it<sup>9)</sup>. The charm *Wid færstice* would be easier to understand if the magical procedure of curing a patient suffering from rheumatic affections had been given fully, instead of partly, by only preserving the words that are uttered.

In the Bee Charm the magician had to take measures against a natural evil, viz., against a swarm rising too high or flying too far away. This might be owing to ill-will or ungratefulness on the part of the bees, and the 'mighty tongue of man' was added to take everything into account. The 'victorious women' were the bees themselves and the term does not refer to spirits. In this charm the animistic idea of spirits dominates the whole structure and atmosphere. A belief in spirits provided primitive man with an easy solution of the problem that confronted him in innumerable phenomena. Bad luck, illness, death and many other calamities were caused by spirits flying through the air, filling the world that surrounded him on all sides, while at the same time they remained imperceptible to normal human senses; and they could act at will so that man was powerless against them. In this emergency he had recourse to magic and to religion: magic provided him with a means to neutralise the effects produced by the invisible workers of evil, and religion provided him with gods and other good spirits that were as invisible as the beings by whom he was attacked, that dwelt on the same plane and could resist and defeat them with their own weapons. These two elements were amalgamated into the belief that the gods were the originators and teachers of magic. In magical practices the belief in the assistance of the gods gave rise to mythological stories relating how once upon a time a god came upon a similar difficulty, and how he overcame it by reciting a formula, which is then pronounced by the magician and which cannot fail to produce the same result. We saw a fine example of

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<sup>9)</sup> Bloomfield, *l.c.*, p. 385.

it in the Second Merseburg Charm, where Woden healed the broken leg of Balder's horse. The magical formula is the primary cause of the healing and the mention of the god serves to make the formula doubly effective.

Something of the same structure is found here. The 'sudden stitch' is supposed to be caused by witches, elves or *Aesir*, and certain mythological figures, probably well-known to the charmer though not mentioned by name in the text (ll. 13; 16), are referred to and invoked to render assistance. They have forged the knife and the fighting spears that are used to drive out the pain.

The first thing necessary for the magician is to be sure of the cause of the pain, so he begins by telling the patient and the spirits that he knows all about it. It is not a mythological person that has watched the spirits and beaten them on their own ground. No, he himself has heard and seen them<sup>10</sup>). He heard them when they rode through the air, when they cried out in fierce voices. He repeats this fact to impress them:

Loud they were, yes loud, when they rode over the mound (l. 3)

Their fierceness is stressed by their connection with a burial-mound. *Hlæw* is not just an ordinary hill or mound. In most OE. texts it has the meaning of 'grave, burial-mound' and the other Germanic dialects all show the same meaning: Goth. *hlaiw* - grave; OS., OHG. *hleō* - grave, burial-mound; ON. *hlaiwa* - grave (runic inscription, 6th century)<sup>11</sup>). Black magic was often practised in graveyards, and evil power was to be gained from contact with the dead. The magician warns the patient to shield himself in order to survive their malice (l. 5). He is not afraid of them and he exploits the power springing from his hearing them in pronouncing the exorcismal formula: Out little spear, if you are in here (l. 6). Then he goes on to state that he has not only heard them. He has also seen them. Under cover of a linden shield he witnessed how the mighty women betrayed their own power of sending out spears. They are now deprived of their power because somebody has seen them. Their secret is out and the defence is found:

I will send them back another,  
a flying arrow from in front against them (ll. 10-11).

He need not use stealthy methods; on the contrary, he will face

<sup>10</sup>) Cf. Skemp, *MLR* VI, 1911, p. 290.

<sup>11</sup>) Feist, *Etym. Wörterbuch d. Got. Sprache*<sup>2</sup>, Halle, 1923, s.v. *hlaiw*.

them and send an arrow back! He can do so, because he has seen what weapons are employed by his adversaries and because he knows his adversaries. He is not afraid of women and their darts, and confidently he repeats the formula: Out little spear, if you are in here. He is well-armed and his own weapons have preternatural powers. A smith has forged a knife for him, and six smiths have wrought war-spears for him (ll. 13-16). At this point one or more lines are missing. The name of the smith is not given, but it is not difficult to guess who is meant. There is only one smith in Germanic mythology gifted with preternatural powers, namely Weyland, and it is a safe guess that he is meant here. The six smiths of l. 16 remain mysterious. The *Völundrkvida* mentions three, Völundr, Slagfiðr and Egil. The number six may have been caused by the alliteration: *syr smidas sætan*.

There must have been some connection between the knife mentioned in l. 13 and the knife actually used in l. 29. There are several indications that the A.S. medical man always had a knife with him, *læcesear*, and that it was used for magical purposes. Sometimes it had to have special qualities to be effective:

If a horse is elf-shot, then take the knife of which the haft is made of horn of a fallow cow or ox and on which there are three brass nails (charm No. 22).

At other times it was used, as here, to strengthen the magical force of a plant or a salve:

Go on Wednesday evening when the sun is set to a spot where you know that elecampane grows, stick your knife into the plant, make it stick fast, go away (charm No. 17).

Both here and in No. 22 and in No. 17 a knife is used against diseases supposed to be caused by elves. Was it the material iron as such that was effective? Perhaps, for it is fairly certain that in the earliest days it was first found in meteoric stones, in which case its heavenly origin went a long way. It may also be partly due to the special hardening process it had to undergo before it was made into a knife or a spearpoint.

What do the wounds of l. 14 refer to? To the blows of the smith on the knife or to the wounds inflicted by the knife on the mighty

women? Kögel<sup>12)</sup> emends the line to *isern awund swiðe*, 'iron good at inflicting wounds'. Holshausen<sup>13)</sup> reads:

Sæt smið [ana], sloh seax lytel  
[weard] iserna, wund[rum] swiðe.

The addition of *ana* is unnecessary and for *weard* no more is to be said than that it alliterates with *wund*. The emendation of this passage is a risky business, as neither the context nor the metre afford any help. It is different in l. 21, for which Grimm<sup>14)</sup> supplied the second half-line: *oððe wære on ban scoten*. Context, metre, alliteration and comparative material were of considerable help, and later editors have accepted the emendation as most happy<sup>15)</sup>.

The help of the smiths and the knife and spears could not fail to be effective, so with increasing stress the magician pronounces the exorcismal formula:

Out, little spear, if you are in here.  
Out spear, not in, spear.  
If there is a particle of iron in here,  
the work of hags, it shall melt (ll. 15; 17-19).

From l. 20 onwards the rhythm and the structure of the charm change and we get a fairly straightforward formula. Whether the victim is hit in the skin, the flesh, the blood or in a limb, his life will no more be endangered, albeit he was shot at by a god, an elf or a hag, for against all of them the magician knows a defence and 'he will come to the rescue'. Whereas so far we had only heard of mighty women (l. 6) or hags (l. 19), the charm now speaks of hags, elves and *es*. In Icelandic the word *Aesir* applies to all gods, to Woden and to Tyr. The Gothic historian Jordanes (Cap. 13) calls them *anses id est semidei*, and among the Anglo-Saxons they also seem to have occupied an inferior position, because they are coupled with elves and hags:

Gif hit wære esa gescot, oððe hit wære ylfa gescot,  
oððe hit wære hægtessan gescot, nu ic wille ðin  
helpan.  
(ll. 23-24).

<sup>12)</sup> Kögel I, p. 93.

<sup>13)</sup> *Anglia Beiblatt* XXXI, 1920, p. 30.

<sup>14)</sup> Grimm, *l.c.* II, p. 1039.

<sup>15)</sup> Cf. about this line I. Lindquist, who prefers to leave out the entire line.

Then the metre changes again abruptly and the MS. has: *fled þ̄r on fyrgen hæfde halwes tu*. The difficulty is that there is not a single word of which we can be certain, so that the imagination is free to think out possible or probable emendations:

- Grimm<sup>16)</sup>: Fleo þær on fyrgen, seo þone flan sceat.  
Hal westu. Helpe ðin drihten.
- Cockayne<sup>17)</sup>: Fled þ̄or on fyrgen hæfde  
halwes tu helpe ðin drihten.  
'Fled Thor to the mountain.  
Hallows he had two. May the Lord help thee!'
- Grendon<sup>18)</sup>: Fleoh þær on fyrgen, seo þa flane sende!  
Heafde hal westu! Helpe ðin drihten!  
'Yonder to the mountain flee hag, who sent the  
dart!  
Be hale in head! Help thee the Lord!'
- Sweet<sup>19)</sup>: Fleo on fyrgenheafde  
Hal wes-tu! helpe ðin drihten.
- Skemp<sup>20)</sup>: Fleoh þær flan on fyrgenheafde!  
Hal wes tu! Helpe ðin drihten.
- A.S.D.<sup>21)</sup>: Flet þ̄or on fyrgen hæfde  
'Thor had a dwelling on the mountain'.
- Holthausen<sup>22)</sup>: Fleoh on fyrgen-stream, þær þu fridu hæfdest  
Heafde hal wes tu. Helpe ðin drihten.
- Grattan<sup>23)</sup>: Fleah þær on fyrgenholt: fyrst ne hæfde.  
Hal wes tu nu. Helpe ðin drihten.

The emendation to þ̄or is most uncertain. Thor is never mentioned in Charms, nor does his name occur in any other text as having any connection with magic, and the translations of Cockayne and the A.S.D. are as obscure as the manuscript reading. The meaning of the last lines and of the charm as a whole may become clearer from a comparison with similar charms and magical practices in other countries. In Australia we find the belief that diseases are caused by the arrows of invisible enemies, and the

<sup>16)</sup> Grimm, *l.c.* II, p. 1039.

<sup>17)</sup> Cockayne III, pp. 52-53.

<sup>18)</sup> Grendon, pp. 166-167.

<sup>19)</sup> Sweet, *A. S. Reader* ), p. 105.

<sup>20)</sup> Skemp, *M.L.R.* VI, 1911, p. 291.

<sup>21)</sup> A.S.D. I, s. v. *fyrgen*.

<sup>22)</sup> Holthausen, *Anglia Beibl.* XXXI, 1920, p. 117.

<sup>23)</sup> Grattan, *M.L.R.* XXII, 1927, p. 2.

cure is effected by sucking out a real or imaginary arrow-head. In various parts of the world people believe that a disease can pass from the patient into a spear or an arrow, which is then thrown or shot away, if possible into an uninhabited spot where nobody can be harmed by it. The Saxons in Germany had a charm against worms in which this device is employed.

Contra vermes.

Gang ut nesso mid nigun nessiklinon, ut fana themo  
marge an that ben, fan themo bene an that flesg, ut  
fan demo flesge an thia hud, ut fan theria hud an thesa  
strala. Druhtin werthe so<sup>24</sup>).

(Go out worm with your nine little ones, out from the marrow to the bone, from the bone to the flesh, out from the flesh to the skin, out from the skin to this arrow. Lord, may it happen thus). Gradually the cause of the disease, taken for a spirit and treated as such, is removed from inside the body to the skin and thence to an arrow. The accompanying magical actions were not written down, as everybody knew what they were. *Strile*, i.e., arrow, is used as a name for a stinging pain in the head, the ears, the teeth and so on among the Czechs<sup>25</sup>). The same idea may be the explanation of ll. 27-28. An arrow or a spear is conjured out of the body of the patient (Out, little spear, if you are in here) and shot to a mountain top, where the spirit cannot find its way back. Another possibility is that the various parts of the body — skin, flesh, blood and limb — are touched by a specially prepared spear or knife, which is thrown away afterwards. Skemp<sup>26</sup>) suggested that the knife served to stroke the salve on the wound or the painful region. At the same time slight incisions may have been made to draw blood and to get at the spirit that had taken possession of the patient. If conditions were made unpleasant for him he would prefer to go away (See No. 22; 23; etc.).

*Helpe din drihten* in l. 28 is a later, Christian, addition, suggested by *nu ic wille din helpan* in l. 24, and *ic din wille helpan* in l. 26, from which it differs in atmosphere. 'May the Lord help you' is a prayer which does not fit in with the boasting promise of the magician.

<sup>24</sup>) Müllenhof-Scherer, *Denkmäler* I, p. 17.

<sup>25</sup>) W. Horn, in *Probleme d. Eng. Spr. u. Kultur*, Festschrift für J. Hoops, Heidelberg, 1925, p. 98.      <sup>26</sup>) Skemp, *l.c.*, p. 292.



By the liquid in l. 29 is meant the mixture of butter and herbs of ll. 1-2. The magical properties of red nettle are strengthened because it must be a plant 'that grows through the wall of the house'. Such directions are frequently met with in the Leechbook and the Lacnunga: Groundsel which grows on the earth (Lcb. I,

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No. 3. WI|> CYRNEL<sup>1)</sup>

Neogone wæran Nodþæs sweoster.

|> a wurdon þa nygone to VIII

and þa VIII to VII

and þa VII to VI

5 and þa VI to V

and þa V to IIII

and þa IIII to III

and þa III to II

10 and þa II to I

and þa I to nanum.

|>is þe lib be cyrneles<sup>2)</sup> and scrofelles<sup>3)</sup> and weormes<sup>4)</sup> and æghwylces yfeles.

Sing *Benedicite* nygon siþum.

*MS. B.M. Harley 585, f. 182a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

*Cyrnel* literally means a kernel or grain and figuratively it stands for some concretion in the flesh, a swelling or a tumour. At a time when most diseases were ascribed to spirits it goes without saying that such swellings were taken for the dwellings of evil beings. In the case in hand nine spirits are supposed to have taken up their abode in the sore spot, and the charm undertakes to cure the patient by gradually reducing the number of spirits. The method employed is a favourite one in magic. One by one the spirits are driven out until ultimately none of them remains: the nine become eight and the eight seven and the seven six, and so on. The monotonous repetition of the same formula gives it an intensity and a weight that leaves no room for embellishments. Alliteration

<sup>1)</sup> MS. neogone wæran wið cyrnæl no þæs sweoster.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. cyrn nel es.      <sup>3)</sup> MS. scrofellef.      <sup>4)</sup> MS. weormē|>.

LI); Wenwort which grows on old land (Lcb. II, LI); Ivy which grows on a stone (Lcb. III, xxx); Ivy leaf which grows on earth (Lcb. III, xxxi); Ivy which grows on a stone on the earth (Lacn. 42); Plantain which is open to the east (Lacn. 46).

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### AGAINST A FURUNCLE

Nine were Noththe's sisters.  
 Then the nine became eight  
 and the eight became seven  
 and the seven became six  
 and the six became five  
 and the five became four  
 and the four became three  
 and the three became two  
 and the two became one  
 and the one became none.

This will be a remedy for you against a furuncle and scrofula and worms and every kind of evil.

Sing *Benedicite* nine times.

is entirely absent, for *neogone* and *Nodþæs* in l. 1 can hardly be said to alliterate and seem to have come together only accidentally.

Marcellus, the 4th-cent. Bordeaux physician, whose work on medicine was the source of many passages in the Leechbook, has a charm against swollen glands<sup>5)</sup> which strongly resembles the Anglo-Saxon one:

Glandulas mane carminabis si dies minuetur, si nox ad vesperam, et digito medicinali ac pollice continens eas dices:

Novem glandulae sorores  
 octo glandulae sorores  
 septem glandulae sorores  
 sex glandulae sorores

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<sup>5)</sup> Marcellus, *De Medicamentis* XV, 102, cited by Stemplinger III, p. 46, referred to by Grendon, p. 218.

quinque glandulae sorores  
quattuor glandulae sorores  
tres glandulae sorores  
duo glandulae sorores  
una glandula soror.  
Novem fiunt glandulae  
octo fiunt glandulae  
septem fiunt glandulae  
sex fiunt glandulae  
quinque fiunt glandulae  
quattuor fiunt glandulae  
tres fiunt glandulae  
duo fiunt glandulae  
una fit glandula  
nulla fit glandula.

(You shall sing on the swollen glands in the morning when the day is shortening, and towards evening when the night is shortening, and holding them between your healing finger, i.e., the fourth finger, and the thumb you shall say: The nine swollen glands are sisters, etc. The swollen glands become nine in number, etc.)

The resemblance in idea, wording and purpose between the two charms is striking: both serve against swellings, both are counting out charms, both use the word 'sister'. And yet I do not think that the A-S. Charm is borrowed from Marcellus. Marcellus was born and lived in Gaul at about 400 A.D., when the greater part of the country had been overrun by Germanic invaders, and *De Medicamentis* is not only based on the works of Greek and Roman physicians but also on the popular traditions and superstitions of the common people, that is to say, the earlier Celtic inhabitants and the Germanic invaders. If the A.-S. charm was borrowed from Marcellus the resemblance would have been even more striking, and I am certain that such a typical magical device as the similarity between the decreasing length of the day or the night and the decreasing power of the disease spirit would not have been omitted. Both charms are probably based on oral tradition. The occurrence of the name of Noththe of whom nothing is known except that the form looks entirely Germanic, is a strong argument in favour of the Germanic origin of the charm.

The number nine may be the usual magical number, without further significance, or it may refer to that form of tumour which

is called furuncle in modern English, and *negenooq*, *Neunauge* in Dutch and German, from the nine eyes or heads that are supposed to show in it. The Latin version partly confirms our supposition for it is only possible to hold all nine of them between the healing finger and the thumb, when the swellings occur together in a small area.

The method of counting out the disease is likewise employed in a charm against fever (No. 64), which says that the formula must be repeated nine times on the first day, eight times on the second day, and so on until the ninth day, after which the fever has disappeared. As pneumonia, e.g., takes nine days to reach its crisis, the magician must have gained much glory when the patient recovered.

The method remained no less popular when writing came to be used as a magical possibility. The magic word *Abracadabra* was sometimes written down in this way <sup>6)</sup>:

abracadabra  
 abracadabr  
 abracadab  
 abracada  
 abracad  
 abraca  
 abrac  
 abra  
 abr  
 ab  
 a

The following, written on a blank piece of paper, enveloped in linen and bound on the patient, serves against a flow of blood <sup>7)</sup>:

icucuma  
 cucuma  
 ucuma  
 cuma  
 uma  
 ma  
 a

The A.-S. charm is good against kernels, scrofular glands, worms

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<sup>6)</sup> Stemplinger III, p. 87.      <sup>7)</sup> id., p. 88.

and every kind of evil. When pustules are squeezed out they often have the form of little worms. In Franconia they say against worms <sup>8)</sup>):

Lord Peter is lying in the grave, nine worms he has with him, eight worms he has with him, etc., one worm he has with him, no worm he has with him.

No. 4. [WI] > WENNUM].

Wenne, Wenne, Wenchichenne,  
 her ne scealt þu timbrien, ne nenne tun habben,  
 as þu scealt norþ <sup>1)</sup> heonene to þan nihgan berhge,  
 þer þu havest ermig enne broþer.  
 5 He þe sceal legge leaf et heafde.  
 Under fot wolves <sup>2)</sup>, under veþer earnes,  
 under earnes clea, a þu geweornie.  
 Clinge þu alswa col on heorþe,  
 scring þu alswa scern <sup>3)</sup> awage,  
 10 and weorne alswa weter on ambre <sup>4)</sup>.  
 Swa litel þu gewurþe alswa linsetcorn,  
 and miccli lesse alswa anes handwurmes hupeban,  
 and alswa litel þu gewurþe þet þu nawiht gewurþe.

*MS. B.M. Regius 4 A XIV, f. 106b (12th century).*

This text is preserved in a later transmission than most charms, the handwriting apparently belonging to the 12th century, and the spelling shows a mixture of traditional and late forms. The spelling of the text and the sounds represented by the spelling point to a time when Old English was on its way to Middle English, so that Zupitza's date of "at least 1150" is more correct than the one given by the British Museum catalogue, which puts the MS. in the 10th century, and this charm, which is in a later hand, in the 11th.

As to the spelling of vowels <sup>5)</sup>): OE *ǣ* = a (*habben, ac, þan, and*);

No. 3. <sup>8)</sup> id., id.

No. 4. <sup>1)</sup> MS. *nort.*      <sup>2)</sup> MS. *uolmes.*

<sup>3)</sup> MS. *scesne.*      <sup>4)</sup> MS. *ambre.*

<sup>5)</sup> Cp. Zupitza, *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und Litteratur*, XXXI, 1887, pp. 51-52; Magoun II, p. 21.

The combination of worms and the grave is natural, and it is tempting to think of an original identity, with Noththe replaced by St. Peter under Christian influence. The *Benedicite* at the end shows that Christianisation has set in in the A.-S. charm.

A slightly different method was employed in the OS. charm given on p. 149 where the disease was gradually removed from the body to an arrow.

[AGAINST WENS]

Wen, wen, little wen,  
 here you shall not build, nor have any habitation,  
 but you shall go north, hence to the neighbouring hill,  
 where you wretch have a brother.  
 He shall lay a leaf on your head:  
 Under the wolf's paw, under the eagle's feather,  
 under the eagle's claw, ever may you wither.  
 May you be consumed as coal upon the hearth,  
 may you shrink as dung upon a wall,  
 and may you dry up as water in a pail.  
 May you become as small as a linseed grain,  
 and much smaller then the hipbone of an itchmite,  
 and may you become so small that you become nothing.

OE  $\bar{a}$  = a (*ā, alswā, āwāge*);  $\text{æ}$  = e (*nenne, enne, weter, þet*);  $\bar{æ}$  = e (*þēr, lēsse*); y = u (*hupeban, handwurmes*).

Consonants: OE f = f, u (*fof, ueþer*); the w sound is represented by the runic symbol  $\mathfrak{W}$ , except in the first line, where we find W, and perhaps in *uolmes* in l. 6; the assibilated k sound is written ch (*wenchichenne*).

The endings are usually weakened: *timbrien, habben, broþer, heonene* but *nihgan*.

On the whole the spelling points to a Southern source (*nenne, þet, hupeban, ueþer*), but some OE spellings have been preserved ( $\mathfrak{P}$ , *fof, alswā*), and the scribe is not consistent at all, as appears from the following pairs: *berhge-geweornie*; *ermig-earnnes*; *geweornie-weorne*; *weorne-gewurþe*; *clinge-scring*.

In three instances a letter is inserted above the line: the second h of *wenchichenne*; the r of *timbrien*; and the h of *heonene*, so that it is doubtful whether the h belongs to the following *eonene* or to the preceding *nort*.

In four instances a double acute is used: on the second syllable of *nihgan* (l. 3) and *alswa* (l. 9): on the first syllable of *scesne* (l. 9); and the last syllable of *awage* (l. 9).

The general meaning and purpose of the charm are simple and straightforward. It serves as a cure against wens, and in order to make them disappear a threat is uttered against the disease spirit, and a number of comparisons that stress the annihilation of some object are chanted, so that finally nothing of the wen will remain.

Although there is alliteration in several lines, there is no metrical regularity, and the poetic and magic force of the charm lies not so much in the repetition of certain sounds as in the repetition of parallel ideas:

her ne scealt þu timbrien, ne nenne tun habben,  
ac þu scealt norþ heonene.... (ll. 2-3).

under fot wolues, under ueþer earnes,  
under earnes clea.... (ll. 6-7).

clinge þu alswa col on heorþe,  
scring þu alswa scern awage,  
and weorne alswa weter on ambre (ll. 8-10).

swa litel þu gewurþe alswa linsetcorn,  
and miccli lesse alswa anes handwurmes hupeban,  
and alswa litel þu gewurþe þet þu nawiht gewurþe.  
(ll. 11-13].

It is striking that all four passages repeat the same idea in a triple form and that the only passage that does not show this form is obscure (ll. 4-5). Whenever it was easy to add alliteration as a poetic touch it was done (*timbrien* — *tun habben*; *fot wolues* — *ueþer earnes*; *clinge* — *col*; *scring* — *scern*; *weorme* — *weter*; *litel* — *linsetcorn*), but the magician did not bother very much about it, for in the last and decisive line of the charm there is no alliteration.

The charmer begins by addressing the wen. The third time he employs the diminutive 'wen chicken', that is, little wen, to impress it with the fact that he is the master, that its power is insignificant

compared with his and that it will soon be at an end. The owner of a 'mighty' tongue (No. 1), the 'mighty' man or woman (No. 2) scorns the power of a chicken or a spirit (l. 1). He goes on at once to tell the wen that it cannot stay in the patient any longer (l. 2); it must stop its activity and leave for a hill where it will meet a brother (ll. 3-4). In the preceding charm Noththe was supposed to have nine sisters, by which term we have to understand the outward appearance of the disease spirit, that is to say, the tumours and swollen glands. The explanation of the brother in the present charm is not so simple, for in the next line the brother is supposed to help in driving away the spirit. We are probably justified in assuming some lacuna, for, as I have just remarked, the structure in triplet-form is interrupted at this point. A parallel case may be the activity of the sister in Charm No. 9. The brother and the sister are probably amulets in the form of the disease or disease spirit and they are employed on the strength of the law of sympathy and antipathy: like favours like, or like destroys like. Thus we find that the sounds of wind and rain are imitated to produce wind and rain; tobacco clouds are blown into the air to cause the formation of rainclouds. On the other hand a scarab or a snake is worn as a protection against the bite of such creatures. The Anglo-Saxon applied the eyes taken from a live crab against swollen eyes (Leechbook III, 11); a dog's head burnt to ashes was good against headache (Leechbook I, 1, 6). The amulet which is applied here consists of a leaf containing objects taken from a wolf and an eagle (ll. 5-7). Another possible explanation of lines 6-7 is that the sick spot is stroked with an eagle's feather and claw and the paw of a wolf. In either case the idea is that by the attacks of these wild and ferocious animals the spirit is chased away or destroyed, and that gradually the effects of the disease will diminish and finally disappear entirely (ll. 8-13). The first explanation is more likely because it accounts for the leaf put on the tumour. It is not essential that the amulet should contain the whole paw and claw; a small part is sufficient to represent the beast and the bird.

The threat of the magician that the disease spirit will wither is elaborated in a number of fine comparisons: as a piece of coal burns to dust in the hearth, as dung shrinks up on a wall (is washed away by the rain?), as water evaporates in a pail. It will become as small as a linseedcorn, as the hipbone of a handworm<sup>6)</sup> until it eventually sinks into nothingness.

<sup>6)</sup> Magoun II, p. 21 suggests 'itchmite'.



A few words of the text, namely *wenchichenne* (l. 1), *uolmes* (l. 6), *scesne awage* (l. 9), present difficulties. Magoun <sup>7)</sup> proposes to break up *wenchichenne* into *wende ic heonene*: wen, wen, I send you away. The difficulty is the assibilation of the second k sound, if the word is to mean chicken. The Domesday Book, which dates from 1086, has a few examples of assibilation: Cicchenai (Chickney in Essex); Cicherelle (Chickerell in Dorsetshire), so that the meaning wen-chicken conforms best with the form of the manuscript. I have not been able, however, to find another instance of a diminutive ending in 'chicken'. This explanation was first suggested by Zupitza <sup>8)</sup>.

W. de Gray Birch <sup>9)</sup> and Zupitza retain the MS. reading *uolmes* and translate it by 'footsole, fuszhände'. What does this mean in

No. 5. [WI|> WÆTERÆLF-ADLE]

Gif mon biþ on wæterælf-adle þonne beoþ him þa handnæglas wonne and þa eagan tearige and wile locian niþer. Do him þis to læcedome: eoforþrote, cassuc, fone niopoweard, eowberge, elehtre, eolone, merscmealwan crop, fen minte, dile, lilie, attorlaþe, polleie, marubie, docce, ellen, fel terre, wermod, streawbergean leaf, con-  
5 solde. Ofgeot mid ealaþ, do halig wæter to.

Sing þis gealdor ofer þriwa:

10 Ic benne <sup>1)</sup> awrat betest beadowræda,  
swa benne ne burnon, ne burston;  
ne fundian, ne feologan, ne hoppettan,  
ne wunde weacsan <sup>2)</sup>, ne dolh diopian.  
Ac him self healde hale wæge.  
Ne ace þe þon ma þe eorþan on eare ace.

Sing þis manegum siþum:

15 Eorþe þe onbere eallum hire mihtum and mægenum.  
þas gealdor mon mæg singan on wunde.

*MS. B.M. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 125 a, b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

No. 4. <sup>7)</sup> *idem, l.c.*      <sup>8)</sup> Zupitza, *l.c.*

<sup>9)</sup> W. de Gray Birch, "On two A.-S. Manuscripts in the British Museum." In: *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*. 2nd Series, XI, 1878, p. 485.      No. 5. <sup>1)</sup> MS. binne.      <sup>2)</sup> MS. ne wund waco sian.

the context? Birch's second suggestion *wolves* is satisfactory.

*Scesne* does not exist in OE., so that we have to change the MS. reading. Zupitza's suggestion *scern* is acceptable, though it does not remove all difficulties in connection with *awage*. OE. *awæge* would have become *awege* in our text, so that we come to 'dung on a wall', perhaps in the sense of a man's or a dog's water drying quickly on a wall.

From l. 5 we may infer that the wen was on the head. Lacnunga 114 gives a remedy for wens at the heart (No. 43), which is interesting from its accompanying magical actions. The disease seems to have been frequent for there were two plants in Anglo-Saxon times that bore the name of wenwort, though there is little certainty what plants are actually meant<sup>10</sup>).

[AGAINST THE WATER-ELF DISEASE] (CHICKEN-POX).

If anybody has the water-elf disease, then the nails of his hands will be livid and his eyes watery and he will want to look down. Apply this as a medicine for him: Carline thistle, hassock, the lower part of iris, yew-berry, lupine, elecampane, a head of marsh-mallow, fen-mint, dill, lily, the cock's spur grass, pennyroyal, horehound, dock, elder, earthgall, wormwood, strawberry leaves, comfrey. Soak them in ale, add holy water.

Sing this charm over them three times:

I have bound on the wounds the best of war-bandages,  
that the wounds may neither burn nor burst;  
may they go no further, nor spread, nor jump about,  
may the wounds not increase, nor the sores deepen.  
For I myself protect him with health-giving water.  
Then it will pain you no more than it pains the earth  
in your ear.

Sing this many times:

May the earth destroy you with all her might and main.

These charms can be sung on a wound.

<sup>10</sup>) Cp. Leechbook I, LVIII, 2, and Cockayne, Glossary, s.v. *wenwyr*.

At the end of the third book of the Leechbook a number of prescriptions are given against the attacks of elves, of nocturnal walkers (nightmares?), of the devil and of those with whom the devil has sexual intercourse (Leechbook III, LXI ff.). The means of defence consist of Masses, litanies, prayers and other Christian observances (see No. 17). Along with them the older heathen practices were preserved of which this charm is an example.

The symptoms by which possession by a water-elf in a man may be diagnosed are the pale, colourless appearance of his fingernails, his watery, tearful eyes, and the fact that he usually looks down — thus a general listlessness of body and mind. The remedy is a concoction made up of nineteen herbs, soaked in beer and holy water. The holy water is the only Christian addition in driving away the devils and evil spirits. Of these nineteen herbs only five have been mentioned in the preceding remedies (see No. 17): hassock, lupine, elecampane, dill and wormwood. Altogether the names of fifty-two different plants occur in the various drinks and salves against elves and devils. On the whole they do not seem to have been chosen arbitrarily, although their magical virtues are not very apparent. *Felierre* or earthgall, marsh-mallow and fen-mint, may have symbolic significance in connection with a water-elf. If so we must note that all three words, *felierre*, *mealwe* and *minte*, are of Latin or Greek origin. *Consolde* is from the Latin *consolida*, i.e., a plant 'to make solid'; iris and dock are frequently found in or near ditches and ponds.

The verse form of the incantations is very irregular and the composer seems to have only aimed at some syllables beginning with the same consonants, though the irregularity may be partly due to the bad state of the text transmitted to us. The alliteration is not part of the verse-line as a whole and it is mainly limited to alliterative pairs: *burnon - burston*; *fundian - feologan*; *wunde - weacsan*; *dolh - diopian*; *mihtum - mægenum*.

The exact meaning of *wæterælf-adl* is not clear. A possible explanation is that 'water-elf disease' is another name for chicken-pox, called 'waterpokken' in Dutch and 'Wasserpocken' in German. The symptoms might serve to distinguish them from other pocks. The way in which chicken-pox appear and disappear may well have given rise to the belief that a mischievous elf was playing his tricks. Its symptoms are a burning feeling on the affected spots, and when the sores burst a liquid runs out and infects other parts of the body (Cf. ll. 9-11). Pox or pocks is related to words denoting

goblins, imps, demons: OE. *puceġ*, Icel. *puki*, Shakespearean *Puck*, and the liquid suggests a 'water' elf. As chicken-pox occur all over the body we get the direction:

Sing this many times (l. 14).

The main formula (ll. 8-13) presents many difficulties, and only l. 9 is comparatively clear, so that it will be best to go over them almost word by word.

Line 8: *binne*. Mistake for *benne*.

*awrat*. Does the *t* stand for *d* and is it the past tense of *awridan* or of *awritan*? Toller<sup>3)</sup> translates: 'I have written out the best troop for fighting disease'. Cockayne's suggestion<sup>4)</sup> is to be preferred: 'I have wreathed round the wounds the best of healing wreaths'.

*beadowræda*. The compound occurs only here. *Wræd* means 'bandage' and *beado* is 'battle, war', most frequently used in compounds. The idea is that the bandages make war on the wounds.

Line 10: *fundian*. Cockayne has: 'nor find their way further'; Grendon<sup>5)</sup>: 'nor grow worse'; Toller<sup>6)</sup>: 'nor strike inwards?'. In several instances *fundian* stands for *fandian* (see A.S.D.), and they approach each other in the sense of 'to endeavour to find, to explore, to seek', which is a likely meaning in this line.

*feologan*. Only here. Cockayne: 'turn foul and fallow'; Grendon: 'putrify'; Toller<sup>7)</sup>: 'to become many (? *fela*) or to become fallow (? *fealu*)'. In connection with what I have just said about the meaning of *wæterælf-adl* I prefer Toller's suggestion 'to become many, to increase, to spread'.

Line 11: *ne wund waco sian*. Cockayne: 'nor be wicked wounds'; Grendon: 'nor be filthy wounds'; Toller<sup>8)</sup>: 'that the sores may not run'; Grimm<sup>9)</sup> emends to *ne wund waxian*. Unless the misspelling is obvious the MS. reading should be adhered to whenever possible, but I believe that here we have a case where it is necessary to change it. *Sian* being a plural, the subject must also be a plural and *wund* is a singular, so there is something to be said for a compound *wund-wacu* (Toller). If, however, *wund-wacu* is to mean 'wound-weakness' and *wacu* belongs to *wac*, the form should have been *wæcu*, because feminine abstract nouns derived from adjectives

<sup>3)</sup> A.S.D., II, s. v. *beadowræd*.

<sup>7)</sup> *ibid.*, s. v. *feologan*.

<sup>4)</sup> Cockayne, II, p. 351.

<sup>8)</sup> *ibid.*, I, s. v. *wund-wacu*.

<sup>5)</sup> Grendon, p. 195.

<sup>9)</sup> Grimm, *l.c.* II, p. 1193.

<sup>6)</sup> A.S.D., II, s. v. *fundian*.

tives were originally *ī*-stems<sup>10</sup>). The meaning 'wicked, filthy' for *wacu* is derived from the preceding lines, and *wund* should have been emended to *wunde*, but if we have to guess from the context it is better to take it as a parallel to the following expression. The loss of the ending *-e* of *wunde* might be explained by the same parallel. I think that Grimm's emendation was the right one, though we have to make a few alterations: *ne wunde weacsan, ne dolh diopian*.

Line 12: *ac him self healde hale wæge*. The subject is *ic*, the same as in l. 8, and *self* belongs to the subject or to *him*.

There is no need to make a compound of *hale wæge*. It is an instrumental: 'with health-giving water', i.e., water drawn from a river or a spring in a specific way and as such having special virtue: Tell a chaste person to fetch half a jar of running water in silence against the current (No. 18); Let a virgin go to a spring that runs due east and let her draw a cup full of water moving with the current (No. 21). Such water was to purify the liquid running from the sores.

The intransitive use of *healden* occurs a few times in OE. with the meaning 'to hold one's ground before an adversary, not to give way'.

*Him* may refer to the the elf: 'I will stand my ground against him with healing water', or to the patient: 'I will hold out for him with healing water'.

Line 13: *Eare* may either be the accusative of *ear*, 'ear', or the dative of *ear*, 'ocean, sea'. Both cases are possible after *on*.

*Eorþan* may be the earth in general, as a contrast to *ear*, 'sea', or it may be earth used in driving away a water-elf. Cockayne has: 'Let it ache thee no more, than ear in earth (in the grave) acheth'. Grendon: 'Then it will pain you no more than it pains the land by the sea', and in his notes<sup>11</sup>) he adds: "The line is obscure. The sea, like running water, was regarded as a purifying agent. The meaning may then be, 'If the sufferer keep the sacred spring-water, he will be as safe from disease demons as is the land in the sea'". Magoun<sup>12</sup>) suggests that it is some poultice made up of earth and water and laid on the ear. There is much to be said for this. Earth by itself is a power and when it is mixed with 'healing water' it must gain in power. Some earth may have been put in the ear of

<sup>10</sup>) Wright, *An OE. Grammar*, § 382.

<sup>11</sup>) Grendon, p. 229.

<sup>12</sup>) Magoun II, p. 29.

the patient, the more so as the ear is an opening of the body, so that it would be easier for the magical power of the earth to enter the patient and operate on the spirit. It implies the comparison: as this earth cannot be hurt by a water-elf, so the patient will not be hurt or feel pain any more.

Summing up ll. 8-13, we see how the magician has bound up the wounds (l. 8) in order to prevent them from burning or bursting (l. 9), from going further, from spreading and jumping about, i.e., disappearing in one place and reappearing in another (l. 10), from increasing or deepening (l. 11). He himself will hold out for him, will protect him with healing water (l. 12) and with earth, so that the pain abates and stops (l. 13).

After singing a charm against the working of the elf in general, a second charm, specially invoking the power of earth, is pronounced many times, i.e., on each separate wound to weaken and destroy them altogether. This second incantation is a typically magical device against a water-elf: May earth weaken you with all her might and main. It is natural in magic that earth should be applied and invoked against a water-elf.

As wounds are mentioned by several names in the formula (*benn, wund, dolh*) the same charms could be sung on any wound. Charms did not need as many points of contact as we find here to be applied against various diseases.

The main formula may be compared with the following Middle English wound charm<sup>13</sup>).

I conjure þe wounde blywe,  
 by þe vertu of þe woundes fywe  
 of ihesu cryst, hoþe god and man  
 wyþ rygt he us from helle wonne,  
 and be þe papes of Seynt Marye  
 clene mayde wyþ oute folye,  
 þat þe wounde ne ake, ne swelle,  
 ne rancle, ne festre, ne blede;  
 ne more ne dede þe woundes gode  
 of Ihesu, whan he heng on þe rode.  
 Out fro the grounde upward ever dol;  
 In þe name of the Fader of mygtes most  
 of the Sone and of þe Holy Gost.

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<sup>13</sup>) Fr. Heinrich, *Ein mittelenglisches Medizinbuch*, Halle, 1896.

## No. 6. WIÐ BLÆCE.

Genim gose smero and niþewearde elenan and haran-sprecel, biscoopwyrþ and hegrifan; þa feower wyrta cnuwa tosomme wel, awring, do þær on ealdre sapan cucler fulne. Gif þu hæbbe lytel eles, meng wiþ swiþe and on niht alyþre.

Ssearpa þone sweoran ofer sunnan setlgange, geot swigende þæt  
5 blod on yrnende wæter, spiw þriwa æfter, cwep þonne:

Hafa þu þas unhæle, and gewit aweg mid.

Gange eft on clænne weg to huse and gehwæþerne gang swigende.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 28b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

*Blæce* is an itching skin disease, an eruption. It may be connected with *blæc* and *blæcan*, 'pale, to bleach, to whiten', as the A.S.D. suggests, and also with Dutch *blaken*, 'to be on fire, to glow', sometimes used of fever, so that it may be said of any eruption, red or white.

The incantatory formula is only a minor part of the method of healing, and it consists of one long line divided into two half-lines, each with its own alliteration:

*hafa - unhæle; gewit - āweg.*

The charm as a whole is interesting because it gives a picture of Anglo-Saxon medical treatments. One half of the treatment may be called natural (ll. 1-4): goose-fat, four plants, a little oil and a spoonful of old soap are pounded together and wrung through a cloth, and the mixture is lathered on at night as an external remedy against the eruption of the skin. Even so it might be asked why goose-fat is used instead of any fat and why the soap must be old. The latter half of the charm is entirely magical (ll. 5-8). Instead of trying to cure the visible effects of the disease, it attacks the invisible cause, and to the Anglo-Saxon the cause was a spirit operating in the patient. It is supposed to dwell in the blood, so the magician will effect the recovery of his client if he succeeds in ridding him of it. To that purpose he makes some incisions in the neck of the victim after sunset, catches the blood and pours it in silence into running water. Then he spits after it three times and then says:

Take this disease and depart with it.

## AGAINST ERUPTION OF THE SKIN.

Take goose-fat, and the lower part of elecampane and viper's bugloss, bishop's wort and cleavers, pound the four herbs together well, squeeze them out, add a spoonful of old soap to it. If you have a little oil, mix it with it thoroughly and lather it on at night.

Scarify the neck after sunset, silently pour the blood into running water, spit three times after it, then say:

Take this disease, and depart with it.

Go back to the house by an open road and go each way in silence.

The formula proves that the disease spirit was thought to have its abode in the blood, and if the place and contents of the formula have a meaning the running water must cause the disease spirit to be taken to another region, where it cannot harm its former victim any longer: take it and depart with it. The running water is a means of conveyance, and it is not employed as a healing power, contrary to its usage in No. 5; 9; 10; etc. The object of carrying off the disease spirit was generally attained by other methods. In a charm against infectious diseases (No. 23) four incisions are made on four sides of the patient with a pointed oaken stick. Some of the blood is caught on the stick, which is subsequently thrown away. The Leechbook has the following remedy in case a hunting spider bites a man: Cut three incisions near it in a direction away from it, let the blood run on to a green hazel stick, throw it away across a road, then no evil thing will happen (Leechbook I, LXVIII). The animal proves that the latter example was borrowed from a classical source, so that the practice was known to several Indo-Germanic peoples. It is not always so easy to extract the exact significance of the blood or the running water, for after the advent of Christianity magic frequently degenerated into fossilised actions and practices that were no longer understood by the people themselves.

After pouring the blood into the running water the magician spits three times after it. This may have been a mere sign of contempt for the power of the spirit but in magic spittle has a positive power and so has the number three. I incline to the belief that the



spittle served as a barrier to the spirit because the power inherent in the spittle and in the threefold repetition of the action would prevent the latter from returning along the way it is now driven off. Therefore the spittle floats off behind the blood.

When the medicine-man has disposed of the blood and the spirit in this way, he goes back to the patient to continue the treatment and lather on the external remedy he had prepared beforehand. For whereas the incisions had to be made after sunset (l. 5) the external treatment had to be done at night (l. 4). That the action was not yet finished appears from the last line of the charm, which says that the magician must return by an open road and that he must go each way in silence. Keeping silence is an indication that

### No. 7. WI|> DWEORH.

Man sceal niman VII lytle oflætan swylce man mid ofrað and wittan þas naman on ælcra oflætan: Maximianus, Malchus, Johannes, Martimianus, Dionisius, Constantinus, Serafion.

þænne eft þæt galdor þæt her æfter cweð man sceal singan,  
5 ærest on þæt wynstre eare, þænne on þæt swiðre eare, þænne ufan<sup>1)</sup> þæs mannes moldan.

And ga þænne an mædenman to and ho hit on his sweoran.

And do man swa þry dagas. Him bið sona sel.

10 Her com ingangan in spider<sup>2)</sup> wiht.  
Hæfde him his haman on handa.  
Cwæð þæt þu his hængest wære,  
legde<sup>3)</sup> þe his teage an<sup>4)</sup> sweoran.  
Ongunnan him of þæm lande lipan.  
15 Sona swa hy of þæm lande coman,  
þa ongunnan him ðah þa colian.  
þa com ingangan deores sweostar.  
þa geændode heo and aðas swor  
ðæt næfre þis ðæm adlegan derian ne moste,  
20 ne þæm þe þis galdor begytan mihte,  
oððe þe þis galdor ongalan cupe.  
Amen, fiat<sup>5)</sup>.

*MS. B.M. Harl. 585, f. 167 a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

<sup>1)</sup> MS. hufan.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. lege.

<sup>5)</sup> MS. fiað.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. spiden.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. teageun.

a magical ritual is being performed (see Ch. IV, § 17) and uttering unnecessary words would break the enchantment. He must go back by an open road because another evil spirit might make use of the fact that all attention is now focussed on one particular spirit, and jump on to him and from him to the patient who is being treated by him. For by driving out the original spirit room is made for another and the patient is still weak and helpless. The last line also shows that there is no break, no dividing line between the natural and the preternatural elements, that both serve their own purpose, but that they mutually assist and support each other to achieve the desired end, which is the recovery of the patient.

#### AGAINST A DWARF.

One must take seven little wafers, such as are used in worship, and write these names on each wafer: Maximianus, Malchus, Johannes, Martimianus, Dionisius, Constantinus, Serafion.

Then the charm that is mentioned hereafter must be sung, first into the left ear, then into the right ear, then over the crown of the man's head.

And then let a virgin go to him and hang it on his neck.

And do so for three days. He will soon be better.

Here a spider-wight came in.  
 He had his web (to trap you) in his hand.  
 He said that you were his steed,  
 he laid his cords on your neck.  
 They began to set off from the land.  
 As soon as they came from the land,  
 then they began to cool, however.  
 Then the sister of the beast came in.  
 She put an end to it, and she swore oaths  
 that this should never hurt the sick man,  
 nor him who could obtain this charm,  
 or knew how to sing this charm.  
 Amen. Fiat.

There is little certainty as to the disease meant by the title. Possession by a dwarf may mean anything. Cockayne<sup>6)</sup> translates it by 'a warty eruption', by misreading weorh for dweorh; Wülker<sup>7)</sup> suggests a tumour; Grendon<sup>8)</sup> some paroxysmal disease; Skemp<sup>9)</sup> agreed with Grendon; Grattan<sup>10)</sup> called it 'the nightmare charm', which explanation was rejected by Magoun<sup>11)</sup>, who suggests it is against fever.

Plants often receive their names from the diseases against which they are effective and a plant called *dweorge dwostle* "is effective against tertian fever, cramp, pain in the milt and pain in the loins, against belly-ache, tommy-ache, seasickness, stones in the bladder and against worms; it is helpful with a dead child in a woman's matrix." Unfortunately this passage is taken from the Herbarium XCIV, therefore it is based on a Latin or Greek original and does not shed much light on an Anglo-Saxon charm. The Latin name of the plant is *pulegium*, i.e., pennyroyal, and in Lacnunga 88 it serves against sudden dumbness of a woman: 'If a woman suddenly turns dumb, take pennyroyal, pound it to dust, wrap it up in wool and lay it under the woman. She will soon be better'. The Herbarium XCIV has a slightly different version: 'This remedy one must apply for a man (woman?) who suddenly turns dumb. Take *dworge dwostle, hoc est pollegia*, and put it in vinegar. Then take a linen cloth and wrap the pennyroyal in it and then put it under his nose and he will soon be able to speak'. Sudden dumbness can only be caused by spirits or dwarfs, compare the sudden stitch of No. 2.

The Christian introduction to the charm (ll. 1-3) may help. The Seven Sleepers are also mentioned in No. 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40, where they are invoked against fever, all evils, illness, fever and fever respectively. No. 38 indicates that the recovery will arise from a sound healing sleep. Three of them are against fever, and at an early date people must have noticed that the temperature is lowest in the morning, especially when the patient has had a quiet night. Often enough a fever has left off completely after a sound sleep. L. 15 states that 'they began to cool', which may apply to a fever.

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<sup>6)</sup> Cockayne, III, p. 43.

<sup>7)</sup> Wülker, *Bibliothek d. ags. Poesie*, I, 2, p. 326, note.

<sup>8)</sup> Grendon, p. 215.

<sup>10)</sup> Grattan, *l. c.*, p. 4.

<sup>11)</sup> Magoun II, p. 20.

So Magoun's suggestion, though not certain, is the most likely.

The incantatory formula consists of twelve lines and only a few show some irregular alliteration, so that all efforts at reconstruction based on the absence or presence of alliteration must be rejected.

The interpretation of the charm hinges on the meaning of *spiden wiht*. Grattan changes the MS. reading into *inwriden wiht*, 'a creature all swathed', but Cockayne's emendation *spider wiht* is accepted by everybody else. The word *spider*, though common in ME., does not occur in any other OE. text. This is not a reason, however, to reject it, for *dweorh* only occurs in two charms, here and in No. 44, and in a few glosses, and a word like *sweorman* 'to swarm' only occurs in the bee-charm (No. 1). The misspelling *n* for *r* is not exceptional in OE. manuscripts and is due to the form of the Anglo-Saxon letters.

The spider is a benevolent spirit that has come in to help in driving out the disease spirit. To that purpose he uses his web to bridle the dwarf (ll. 9-10). The disease spirit is addressed and told that it is going to be used for the spider's steed, and that it will be harnessed. So it will have to obey the spider (ll. 11-12). They set off from the land and immediately they, i.e., the disease spirit and the spider, began to cool and the fever began to leave off (ll. 13-15). At the same time a sister of the beast, i.e., another spider came in and she completed the cure and declared on oath that neither the patient nor any other person would be troubled with this particular disease if they knew how to obtain and recite the charm (ll. 16-20).

In l. 15 *ðah* has been omitted or changed by all previous editors. In the manuscript it stands above the line between *him* and *þacolian*. The word *ðah* introduces the change which is coming and which is described in detail in the following lines. Cockayne erroneously put it between *þa* and *colian*. Schlutter<sup>12)</sup> emends the line to:

þo ongann an him þæt hap acolian.  
Then the heat with him began to cool.

He is supported by Skemp, who also suggests reading l. 16 after l. 12 to explain the change from the singular to the plural in l. 13. Schlutter's interpretation does not differ from mine, so the emen-

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<sup>12)</sup> Schlutter, *Anglia*, XXX, 1907, p. 257.

dation is not necessary, and Skemp himself admits that he cannot explain the *deores sweostar*.

The use of a spider as a cure against a dwarf is not so odd if we look at the etymology of the word 'dwarf'. In Sanskrit the adjective *dhvaras* means deceitful, and the noun a demoniacal being; Gr. σέρφος < τέρφος denotes a gnat, and if this latter meaning is not a typically Greek development it would not only explain the present charm but also the popular belief that spiders bring good luck.

The whole charm is in the past tense, except *lege* in l. 12, which as an imperative does not fit in at all and has to be changed. Schlutter, followed by Grendon, changed *lege þe* into *legeþ he*. I prefer, with Skemp and Grattan, to use the past tense *legde*.

Skemp and Grattan think that the *spiden wiht* and the dwarf are identical and that the dwarf bridles and mounts the victim and drives him out over the sea. Grattan reads the text as follows:

Her com ingangan inwriðen wiht  
 hæfde him his haman on handa, cwæð þæt þu his  
 hæncgest wære.  
 Legde þe his teage on sweoran; ongunnan him of  
 þæm lande liþan.  
 Sona swa hy of þæm lande coman þa ongunnan him  
 þa leomu colian.  
 |>a com ingangan eares sweostar.  
 |>a geændade heo and aðas swor,  
 ðæt næfre þis ðæm adlegan eglan ne moste,  
 ne þæm þe þis galdor begytan mihte,  
 oððe þe þis galdor ongalan cuþe.

According to Grattan *Ear* (l. 5 of this version) stands for earth, ON. *aurr*, and by the sister of earth Eastre, the goddess of dawn is meant. The entire interpretation sounds forced for there are too many emendations that hang quite in the air: *inwriðen*, *leomu*, and especially *eares*.

I agree with Grendon, as against Grattan and Skemp, that the dwarf is ridden by the spider. Grendon rightly remarks that "the spider cure is a common one in folk-lore and that spiders were hung around the neck, the arm, etc., irrespective of the seat of the disease". The neck may be chosen because it is specially mentioned in l. 12.

The charm formula must be sung three times, first in the left

ear, then in the right ear and then over the sick man's skull (ll. 4-6). As right and left are both mentioned they seem to have no particular magical significance, and only the fact of its being done three times remains, whereas the place where it has to be done seems accidental. The place has little connection with the seat of the disease in Lacnunga 77, which prescribes the boiling of wormwood and horehound in wine or sweetened water and laying them on the navel as a cure for lice. Likewise in a written charm against dysentery (No. 35) which is hung on the neck of the patient. As fever, however, is most clearly noticeable in the head, the three spots are chosen in the head. If a man is dangerously ill with jaundice the Leechbook II, LXV prescribes the making of three crosses, one on the tongue, the second on the head, the third on the breast. No doubt the breast is chosen as the place where jaundice is most noticeable, and the tongue because the throat is usually affected. See also No. 22.

Next a virgin must go and hang it on his neck (l. 7) (cf. No. 40). Skemp says that the charm is worn as an amulet as well as sung over the patient. This can hardly be true for both elements in this line, hanging something on a man's neck and having it done by a virgin, are old, older than the art of writing, which is only employed in Christianised and in borrowed charms, so after the time of learning the art. Grendon supposes the *it* to refer to the *spider wiht* of l. 9, but the question is not so simple. The incantation refers to two spiders, the one in l. 9 and the other one, the sister of the beast, l. 16. Besides there are the seven wafers with the names of the Seven Sleepers on them (ll. 1-3). I take it that two spiders are bound up in a pouch or bag and that the bag is hung on the neck of the patient. Such practices were known to the Anglo-Saxons:

If a mare rides a man, take lupine and garlic and betony and incense, bind them in a fawn-skin. Let the man have the herbs on his person and let him go indoors with them (Leechbook I, LXIV).

Against a swelling. Catch a fox, cut off his tusk while he is alive, let him run away. Tie it up in a fawn-skin. Have it on you (Leechbook, I, xxxix).

Charm No. 4 seems to show the same practice, although it is less clear because the accompanying actions are not described, but ll. 6-7 point to the use of amulets.

The legend of the Seven Sleepers is originally oriental. During a

persecution of the Christian faith by the Emperor Decius, in the middle of the third century, seven brothers refused to forswear their faith and they voluntarily retired to a cave in mount Celion near Ephesus in Asia Minor. The Emperor became so angry with them that he gave orders to build a wall in the entrance of the cave and bury them alive. Two hundred years afterwards they appeared again during the reign of Theodosius the Second in order to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The names of the Seven Sleepers, of the mountain where they slept and the duration of their sleep vary considerably. Gregory of Tours relates a story that was supposed to have taken place in France, so at the end of the sixth century the legend was known in Western Europe<sup>13</sup>).

The legend could not fail to be employed in magic and the num-

#### No. 8. [ÆCER-BOT].

Her ys seo bot hu ðu meahþ þine æceras betan, gif hi nellap wel wexan oþþe þær hwilc ungedefe þing ongedon bið on dry oððe on lyblace.

Genim þonne on niht ær hyt dagige feower tyrf on feower healfa  
5 þæs landes and gemearca hu hy ær stodon.

Nim þonne ele and hunig and beorman and ælces feos meolc þe on þæm lande sy, and ælces treowcynnes dæl þe on þæm lande sy gewexen, butan heardan beaman, and ælcra namcupre wyrte dæl, butan glappan anon, and do þonne halig-wæter ðæron, and drype  
10 þonne þriwa on þone staðol þara turfa.

And cweþe ðonne ðas word:

*Crescite, waxe, et multiplicamini, and gemænigfealda, et replete, and gefylle, terram<sup>1)</sup>, þas eorðan. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti sitis<sup>2)</sup> benedicti.*

15 And pater noster swa oft swa þæt oðer.

And bere siþþan ða turf to circean, and mæssepreost asinge feower mæssan ofer þan turfon, and wende man þæt grene to ðan weofode. And siþþan gebringe man þa turf þær hi ær wæron ær sunnan setlgange.

No. 7. <sup>13</sup>) A. Fortescue, in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. Ephesus, (1909); A. Allgeier, in *Lex. f. Theol. und Kirche*, IX, (1937), s.v. Siebenschläfer.

No. 8. <sup>1)</sup> MS. terre. <sup>2)</sup> MS. sit.

ber of charms in which the Seven Sleepers occur (No. 7; 36; 37; 38; 39; 40) testifies to their popularity.

The seven wafers were probably eaten, as is the case in No. 36, which charm also accounts for the combination of sacramental wafers and the Seven Sleepers. In that charm nine wafers are inscribed with the name of Christ. On the first day three wafers are eaten, on the second day three, on the third day three. At the same time an incantation is uttered in which the Seven Sleepers are invoked. The two different elements must have got mixed up and the result is seen in this charm. L. 8 may be another reminiscence of No. 36, for what has to be done for three days? The charm may be repeated on three successive days, but what about the wafers and the spiders?

For the part played by virgins in magic see Ch. III, § 16.

#### [FIELD CEREMONIES].

Here is the remedy by which you can improve your fields, if they will not grow properly, or if any harm has been done to them by sorcery or witchcraft.

Take then at night before daybreak four sods from four sides of the land and mark how they stood before.

Then take oil and honey and yeast and milk of all the cattle that are on the land, and part of every kind of tree growing on the land, except hard trees, and part of every well-known herb, except burdock only, and pour holy water on them, and then let it drip three times on the bottom of the sods.

And then say these words:

*Crescite, grow, et multiplicamini, and multiply, et replete, and fill, terram, the earth. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti sitis benedicti.*

And Our Father as often as the other.

And afterwards carry the sods to church and have a priest sing four Masses over the sods, and turn the green sides to the altar. And afterwards take the sods back to where they stood before, before the setting of the sun.



20 And hæbbe him gæworht of cwicbeame feower cristes mælo and awrite on ælcon ende: Matheus and Marcus, Lucas and Johannes. Lege þæt cristes mæl on þone pyt neopewardne.

Cwede ðonne:

25 Crux Matheus. Crux Marcus. Crux Lucas, Crux Sanctus Johannes.

Nim ðonne þa turf and sete þær ufon on. And cwede ðonne nigon siþon þas word: *Crescite*, and swa oft pater noster.

And wende þe þonne eastweard and onlut nigon siðon eadmodlice, and cwæð þonne þas word:

30 Eastweard ic stande, arena ic me bidde.  
Bidde ic ðone mæran domine, bidde ðone miclan drihten,  
bidde ic þone haligan heofonrices weard.  
Eorðan ic bidde and upheofon,  
and ða soþan Sancta Marian,  
35 and heofones meajt and heah reced,  
þæt ic mote þis gealdor mid gife drihtnes  
toðum ontynan, þurh trumne geþanc  
aweccan þas wæstmas us to woruldnytte,  
gefyllan<sup>3)</sup> þas foldan mid fæste geleafan,  
40 wlitigigan þas wancgturf, swa se witiga cwæð  
þæt se hæfde are on eorþrice,  
se þe ælmyssan dælde domlice drihtnes þances.

Wende þe þonne III sunganges, astrece þonne on andlang and arim þær letanias. And cwæð þonne *Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus* oþ  
45 ende. Sing þonne *Benedicite* aþenedon earmon, and *Magnificat* and pater noster III. And bebood hit Criste and Sancta Marian, and þære halgan rode to lofe and to weorþinga, and þam to<sup>4)</sup> are þe þæt land age and eallon þam þe him underðeodde synt.

þonne þæt eall sie gedon, þonne nime man uncuþ sæd æt ælmes-  
50 mannum and selle him twa swylc swylce man æt him nime. And gegaderie ealle his sulhgeteogo togædere, borige þonne on þam beame stor and finol and gehalgode sapan and gehalgod sealt.

Nim þonne þæt sæd, sete on þæs sules bodig. Cwæð þonne:

<sup>3)</sup> MS. gefylle.

<sup>4)</sup> to not in MS

And he must have four crosses made of 'quickbeam' (aspen-wood) and let him write on the end of each: Mattheus and Marcus, Lucas and Johannes. Lay the cross at the bottom of the pit (made by cutting away the sods).

Say then:

Cru<sup>x</sup> Matheus. Cru<sup>x</sup> Marcus. Cru<sup>x</sup> Lucas. Cru<sup>x</sup> Sanctus Johannes.

Then take the sods and lay them on the crosses. And say then nine times these words: *Crescite* and as often the Our Father.

And then turn to the east and bow humbly nine times, and say then these words:

Eastwards I stand, for favours I pray.  
I pray the great Lord, I pray the mighty prince,

I pray the holy Guardian of the heavenly kingdom.  
Earth I pray and sky,  
and the true holy Mary,  
and heaven's might and high hall,  
that by the grace of the Lord

I may pronounce this charm, by my firm will  
raise up these crops to our wordly benefit,  
fill this earth by firm faith,  
make beautiful these grasslands; as the prophet said  
that he would have favours on earth  
who dealt out alms judicially, according to the will of  
the Lord.

Then turn three times with the course of the sun, then stretch yourself along the ground and say the litany there. And say then *Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus* to the end. Sing then *Benedicite* with arms outstretched and *Magnificat* and Our Father three times. And commend it (the land) to Christ and Holy Mary, and to the Holy Rood in praise and worship, and to the benefit of the owner of the land and all those who are subject to him.

When all this is done, then take unknown seed from beggars and give them twice as much as you take from them. And collect all the ploughing implements together, bore a hole in the plough-tail and put incense and fennel and hallowed soap and hallowed salt in it.

Then take the seed and place it on the body of the plough. Say then:

55 Erce, Erce, Erce, eorþan modor,  
 geunne þe se alwalda, ecce drihten  
 æcera wexendra and wridendra,  
 eacniendra and elniendra,  
 sceafta scira herse-wæstma <sup>5)</sup>,  
 and þæra <sup>6)</sup> bradan bere-wæstma,  
 60 and þæra <sup>6)</sup> hwitan hwæte-wæstma,  
 and ealra eorþan wæstma.  
 Geunne him ece drihten  
 and his halige þe on heofonum <sup>7)</sup> synt  
 þæt hys yrþ si gefriþod wið ealra feonda gehwæne,  
 65 and heo si geborgen wið ealra bealwa gehwylc  
 þara lyblaca geond land sawen.  
 Nu ic bidde ðone waldend se ðe ðas woruld gesceop  
 þæt ne sy nan to þæs cwidol wif, ne to þæs cræftig man  
 þæt awendan ne mæge word <sup>8)</sup> þus gecwedene.

70 onne man þa sulh forð drife and þa forman furh onsceote,  
 cwed ðonne:

Hal wes þu, folde, fira modor,  
 beo þu growende on Godes fæþme,  
 fodre gefylled firum to nytte.

75 Nim þonne ælces cynnes melo and abacæ man innewerdre <sup>9)</sup>  
 handa bradnæ hlaf, and gecned hine mid meolce and mid halig-  
 wætere, and lege under þa forman furh.

Cweþe þonne:

80 Ful æcer fodres fira cinne  
 beorht blowende, þu gebletsod weorþ  
 þæs haligan noman, þe ðas heofon gesceop  
 and þas eorþan þe we on lifiaþ.  
 Se God se þas grundas geworhte  
 geunne us growende gife,  
 85 þæt us corna gehwylc cume to nytte.

Cwed þonne III *Crescite. In nomine patris sitis* <sup>10)</sup> *benedicti,*  
*Amen.* And pater noster þriwa.

*MS. B.M. Cotton Caligula A VII, ff. 176a-178a (12th century).*

<sup>5)</sup> MS. sceafta hense scire wæstma.    <sup>6)</sup> MS. þære.    <sup>7)</sup> MS. eofonum.

<sup>8)</sup> MS. woruld with *l* erased: worud.

<sup>9)</sup> MS. innewerdne.    <sup>10)</sup> MS. sit.

Erce, Erce, Erce, mother of earth,  
may the omnipotent eternal Lord grant you  
fields growing and thriving,  
flourishing and bountiful,  
bright shafts of millet-crops,  
and of broad barley-crops,  
and of white wheat-crops,  
and of all the crops of the earth.  
May the eternal Lord grant him,  
and his saints who are in heaven,  
that his produce may be safe against every foe,  
and secure against every harm  
from witchcraft sown throughout the land.  
Now I pray the Sovereign Who created this world  
that no woman may be so eloquent, and no man so  
powerful  
that they can upset the words thus spoken.

When you drive forth the plough and cut the first furrow, say  
then:

Hail to thee, earth, mother of men,  
may you be fruitful under God's protection,  
filled with food for the benefit of men.

Then take flour of every kind and have a loaf baked as big as the  
palm of your hand, and knead it with milk and with holy water,  
and lay it under the first furrow.

Say then:

Field full of food for the race of man  
brightly blooming, be thou blessed  
in the holy name of Him Who created heaven  
and the earth on which we live.  
The God Who made this earth  
grant us the gift of fertility  
that each grain may be profitable to us.

Then say three times: *Crescite. In nomine patris sitis benedicti,  
Amen.* And Our Father three times.

This text is unique as a specimen of Anglo-Saxon agricultural rites. Though Christian influences, in the form of texts from the Old and the New Testaments, of Masses, holy names and holy objects, have penetrated everywhere, the old heathen practices and formulas have kept their ground and are recognisable throughout. As it lies before us the old pagan elements maintain the upper hand over the new Christian religious substitutions, several of which are chosen because they hardly differ in spirit from the magical atmosphere. The application of the sign of the cross is a religious Christian element, but when crosses have to be made of some special kind of wood, 'quickbeam', to quicken, enliven and further the growth of a piece of land, and when its four arms have to be covered with the names of the four evangelists, a usage never found in ecclesiastical ritual, when moreover four crosses have to be laid at the four sides of the land, the entire practice decidedly smells of magic, with a little superficial Christian colouring.

The pagan elements, however, do not consist of magic pure and simple. The text does not only tell us something of magic, it also reveals something of an older religion, for the words that are spoken are hymns rather than charms. Lines 30-42 constitute a hymn to the sun and lines 54-69 constitute a hymn to mother earth. They have been christianised to a considerable extent but the main idea remains intact and is even perceivable at a superficial reading. As a matter of fact the two other verse parts of the text are not charms either. All of them invoke the help and the blessing of some deified being or of the Christian God and His saints. In a real charm there is no question of invoking somebody's help, of praying for something, but of exercising one's own power, of giving orders. There are many elements that are magical in origin and atmosphere, but the ritual as a whole is of a religious nature. The introductory paragraph implies the operation of magical forces, 'if any harm has been done to them by sorcery or witchcraft', and there can be little doubt that the entire ceremony was regarded as being different from every day activities. We must not forget, however, that the difference between religion and magic is none too clear in theory and often non-existent in practice. The Anglo-Saxon did not feel any pangs of conscience when saying a charm and only when the purpose was harmful did he disapprove of magic. Witchcraft, sorcery and suchlike 'black' magic was wrong because it was against the community in general and nobody could feel secure, but it was permissible when applied against a hostile tribe.

In later ages a number of laws were proclaimed against magical practices and heathen customs in order to destroy them altogether, though there is also Pope Gregory's advice to St. Augustine to keep the heathen temples intact that by resorting to familiar places they might learn about Christianity<sup>11)</sup>. This advice might easily be applied to such customs as the blessing of fields, the more so as the old pagan spring festival of Easter was accepted by the Christian church in a different form. Officially all heathenism was prohibited and by heathenism was understood 'the worshipping of devils, of heathen gods and the sun and the moon, fire or stream, wells or stones or any kind of tree<sup>12)</sup>'. In the present instance the connection between a good crop and the sun is so close that it would not do to remove the passage about the sun, and a compromise was found in its christianisation.

The entire ceremonies covered a whole day. They commenced before daybreak (l. 4) and they had to be finished before the setting of the sun (l. 19). In all probability they were of an official nature, as may be concluded from lines 47-48, which state that the prayers are said 'in honour of him who owns the land and of all those who are subject to him'. We may assume that this was also the case before the christianisation had taken place, for the hymn to the sun and the hymn to the earth will not have differed very much in spirit from what has been transmitted to us in this text, and a religious hymn is not often sung in private but usually by a community or for the community. The public character of the rites is also brought out by lines 49-50: 'take unknown seed from beggars and give them twice as much as you take from them'. No doubt beggars were found everywhere, but they had to be present at a particular spot and at a special time. Besides the text uses the plural and the beggars had to possess some unknown seed, so we can safely infer that they knew when and where they had to go and what they had to take with them. It is quite possible, although this is a mere guess, that the ceremonies formed part of a series of spring festivities to celebrate the end of winter and the re-birth of the sun.

Numerous as are the references to sun-worship in the pre-Christian era, this is the only place where we have an actual indication of certain ceremonies that took place and of the prayers accom-

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<sup>11)</sup> St. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* I, 30, ed. Plummer, I, p. 65.

<sup>12)</sup> *Laws of Canute*, sec. 5, cited by Grendon, p. 141.

panying them. Any change in them was due to Christianity, and as we know the Christian prayers and ceremonies it is possible to tell fairly accurately when and where we find alterations. After subtracting the Christian elements we retain the original. It may not be complete but at any rate it is genuine.

Passing on then to a close examination of the text we come right at the beginning across a statement that the procedure served as a remedy for improving the fields if they will not grow properly and that secondly it was good against any harm done to them by sorcery or witchcraft. This statement serves as a heading for there is no title attached to it. Cockayne called it 'A charm for bewitched land', which only takes the sorcery and witchcraft into account and leaves out its main function. Grendon named it *Æcerbot* and I have retained the Anglo-Saxon word though it is somewhat neutral in meaning.

The text consists of two parts. In the first (ll. 1-48) we have the ceremonies in honour of the sun god and bearing in general on the grassland. In the second (ll. 49-87) follow the ceremonies in honour of Mother Earth, who is specially invoked to bless and fructify the arable land.

The preparations began when it was still dark. 'At night, before daybreak' four sods are taken from four sides of the land. The four sides stand for the entire area. It is necessary to mark the sods that they may be put back in their proper places afterwards. Success in ritual depends on exact reproduction of detail and strict conformity to tradition.

Then oil, honey, yeast, milk of all the cattle that feed on the land, parts of every sort of tree that grows on the land, except hard trees, and parts of every sort of herb except burdock only, are taken; holy water is added and allowed to drip through the objects mentioned onto the bottom of the sods. Holy water is the only Christian addition and its function was probably taken by dew in the original<sup>13</sup>). Completeness is one of the characteristics of magic, and it is not easy to explain the exception of hard trees and of burdock. The hard trees, i.e., the oak and the beech, were sacred in themselves, and it may not have been necessary to bless them. Burdock may have been excepted on account of its peculiar qualities. Its seed balls stick in people's clothes as if they are mischie-

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<sup>13</sup>) According to P. D. Chantepie, *The Religion of the Teutons*, Boston, 1902, p. 128, holy water was a church substitution for dew. Quoted by Grendon, p. 155, note 2.

vous spirits. The translation 'burdock' for OE. *glappe*, though accepted by most editors, is, however, not quite certain.

Three times the sods are sprinkled with water, while a formula is pronounced that is entirely Christian: a verse from Genesis, the invocation of the Trinity and the Our Father. The Our Father is said as often as the other, that is, three times.

Next the sods are carried to church and a priest must sing four Masses over them, while the green sides are turned to the altar. The number of Masses is explained by the number of the sods, but the fact that the green sides must be turned to the altar gives us a hint of the earlier ceremony. The sods were taken to a temple where the sun was worshipped, and they were placed in such a spot that the first rays of the rising sun fell on them. It must have been a temple that was built in such a way that the rays of the rising sun could fall through a narrow opening on to the sods and only on to them, else its specific power would have to be divided and would thus weaken. Although the midday sun is not mentioned directly, I believe that its rays too had to fall on the sods, for immediately afterwards the text says that the sods must be returned before the setting of the sun. Another christianisation is the inscription of the names of the four evangelists on the arms of the crosses and their utterance over the pits made by cutting away the sods. The crosses are laid in the pits and the sods are put on top of them. At the same time the *Crescite* formula is repeated nine times. The power of the sun is thus transferred to the land.

The introduction of the four evangelists is not conspicuous in connection with four sides of the land, four quarters of the heavens, four sods, four Masses and four crosses. But why are they inscribed on the arms of the crosses? And why are the crosses buried? It would be more in accordance with Christian tradition to stick only one arm into the ground and let them be seen by man and spirit. The four evangelists appear in similar circumstances in a 13th-century Latin text in MS. 385 of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, p. 301:

Pater noster ter dicatur in grangia cum carmine isto.  
 Sanctus Karicius servus Dei ab infantia sua a domibus  
 matris sue per virtutem Sancte Trinitatis crucis omnes  
 mures et ratones effugavit, et per intercessionem  
 S. Karicii omnes mures et ratones fugiant a grangia  
 ista.



+ Christus vincit + Christus imperat + J. C. filius Dei hunc locum defendat ab omnibus muribus et rato-nibus et ab omnibus malis. Amen.

Accepe  $\text{III}$  lapides de creta et scribe super  $\text{III}$  lapides nomina  $\text{III}$  Evangelistarum Matheus Marcus Lucas Johannes, scribe super Johannem alpha et o et sic scribe super alios; et pone  $\text{III}$  lapides super  $\text{III}$  angulos domus grangie, cum tribus pater, ave Maria.

Against rats and mice.

Say Our Father three times in the barn, together with this charm:

St. Karicius, servant of God, from his infancy has driven out all rats and mice from the home of his mother by virtue of the Holy Trinity and the Cross; and through the intercession of St. Karicius all rats and mice will be expelled from this barn.

+ Christ conquers + Christ dominates + Jesus Christ, Son of God, will defend this spot against all rats and mice and against all calamities. Amen.

And take four chalk stones and write on the four stones the names of the four evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; write over John alpha and omega, and thus write over the others; and put the four stones at the four corners of the barn.

Say three times the Our Father and Hail Mary.

It is quite natural that inscriptions should be put on stones and there is nothing strange in their burial, but with crosses it is different. The only instance I know of crosses being buried is in church-yards, when the cross follows the corpse into the grave as a symbol of the victory of the soul over the body. I think it likely that it was a Christian substitution for what was originally a heathen custom. The crosses represent the fructifying power of the sun and of the four cardinal points, that is, the winds that bring rain.

Now the main proceedings follow, namely the adoration of the sun and a prayer that the sun-god may bless and fructify the land. The magician or priest turns to the east, nine times he humbly bows down to the earth and then he says a prayer which is christianised to such an extent that it is well nigh impossible to say what is old and what is new. In his translation Stopford Brooke <sup>14)</sup> printed in italics the lines he thought to be old:

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<sup>14)</sup> Stopford Brooke, p. 216.

*To the East I stand, for the gifts of use I bid me;  
 So I pray the mighty One, so I pray the mickle Lord,  
 So I pray the Holy One, Ward of Heaven's kingdom.  
 Earth I also pray and the Heavens above  
 And the sacred sooth Maria,  
 And the might of Heaven and its high-built Hall,  
 That I may this magic spell, by the favours of the Lord,  
 Open from my teeth through a thought firm-grasped;  
 Waken up the swelling crops, for our worldly need;  
 Fill the fielded earth by my fast belief.  
 Prank the turfed plains with fairness, as the Prophet  
 quoth  
 That he had on earth his honour whoso had praise-  
 worthily,  
 By the grace of God, given out his alms.*

Lindquist<sup>15)</sup> thinks that the entire second and third lines of this hymn are old because they represent the so-called 'galdarform', and personally I take the second half of the seventh line to be old; but little gain to a better understanding of the charm as a whole is to be expected from a detailed discussion, for too much depends on hypothesis and too little on facts. The passages about Mary and about the prophet can be put aside at once as Christian additions, and some others, notably the first and the fourth lines, are old, whereas the rest is doubtful if we take individual lines. The main idea at all events is original.

After uttering this hymn the magician turns about three times in the same direction as the sun (l. 43). Turning about with the sun showed one's respect for the god and one's acceptance of him as the master and director of all things. It called down the god's favour on the suppliant as is also shown by the only other occurrence of the word *sunganges* in OE. literature in a prescription of the Leechbook I, xlvi:

Let the patient stand eastward in the middle of the morning and commend himself earnestly to God and cross himself; let him turn about with the course of the sun, and let him stand for some time before he takes a rest.

The opposite is not mentioned in OE., but it frequently occurs in

<sup>15)</sup> See p. 125.

Icelandic literature, where *andsælis* denotes an action done in preparation of an act of sorcery or witchcraft.

Then the magician prostrates himself on the earth to transmit his own fertility to the fields. This intrinsically magic significance was probably forgotten and the action merely taken for a humbling before the divine being, the more so as it was accompanied by a number of Christian prayers. While prostrated on the earth the performer of the ritual sings the litany. One of the oldest litanies in the Christian church is the Litany of the Saints. From the sixth century onwards it was sung in France during solemn processions for warding off public calamities and invoking God's blessing on the fruits of the fields. In 816 the ceremony was introduced in Rome by Pope Leo III and soon after it became a general observance throughout the church. It is still observed on the three Rogation Days preceding Ascension Day and in Roman Catholic countries processions pass through the fields singing the litany to call down God's blessing for a good harvest. Our text dating from the twelfth century it is fairly certain that the Litany of the Saints is meant in l. 44. The litany is followed by the Tersanctus. Shook<sup>16)</sup> also observed the appropriateness of these and the two following prayers and he says: "The four liturgical prayers cited in ll. 44-46 are evidently not selected at random but with an eye to the purpose of the charm, which is to assure good crops. The Tersanctus is evidently to be sung because it includes the *pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua; the Benedicite*<sup>17)</sup> (the song of the three youths in the furnace of Babylon because it calls upon *universa germinantia in terra* to bless the Lord; the *Magnificat* because of its *esurientes implevit bonis*; and the *Pater Noster* because of its petition *panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie*. All these prayers praise God because He has rained plenty on the land and ask Him, as it were, to add to His praises by increasing crops which glorify Him". These prayers are said with outstretched arms and the land is commended to Christ and Holy Mary, and because a man has the appearance of a cross when he stretches out his arms it is done 'in praise and worship of the Holy Rood'. By God's grace it may be a benefit to the owner of the land and of all who are subject to him. With this the former part of the charm bearing on grassland ends.

The second part of the charm bears on arable land. Consequently

<sup>16)</sup> L. K. Shook, *M.L.N.*, LX, 1940, p. 140.

<sup>17)</sup> Contained in the Book of Daniel, but omitted by the Authorised Version.

the goddess Mother Earth takes the place of the Sun. There is no question of contrast or rivalry between the two. The transition is indicated by the words: When all this is done, then take unknown seed from beggars and give them twice as much as you take from them (ll. 49-50). The unknown seed is an offering to Mother Earth and its value is enhanced by the magical flavour of its mysteriousness. Giving more than one has received will incite Mother Earth to do the same. All the ploughing implements are collected and a hole is bored in the ploughtail in which incense, fennel, hallowed soap and hallowed salt are put. Incense and fennel are burned as an offering to a higher being, holy salt, too, is frequent in ritual sacrifice, but the application of holy soap is an element which, as far as I know, occurs nowhere else. Sometimes soap or 'old' soap is employed in medical prescriptions, e.g., against skin disease (No. 6), or as an ingredient of a salve (No. 9). Here the reason for its use is obscure. The unknown seed is placed on the body of the plough and then we get the hymn to Mother Earth. The word *Erce* in the opening line has remained as mysterious to us as it probably was to the Anglo-Saxon who sang it. The second half-line does not make things clearer, for who is the mother of earth? The form *Erce* is impossible in Old English, so we have to think of a loanword. It may be Celtic because the beginning of the charm also mentioned the Celtic loanword *dry* for magic. There may also be some connection with Ceres, who is the mother of Proserpine, the goddess of agriculture. The text has been tampered with in more than one place, for the fifth line of the hymn, too, is incomprehensible as it stands, though the context is of considerable help. With Grendon I have adopted Schlutter's<sup>18)</sup> emendation. The *Erce* formula is specially sung against the evil influences of black magic, and the Christian elements in it (ll. 55; 62-63; 67) can be lifted out without damage to the remaining part. The second half of the formula prays that the produce may not be spoilt by any foe, that it may be secure from any harm done to it by sorcery, that no woman may be so cunning in charms and no man so powerful in magic that they can pervert or invalidate the words thus spoken.

Then the plough is driven forth and the first furrow cut, during which a prayer is said to Earth, the mother of men, that the land may be filled with benefits for these men. As a further offering to Mother Earth a small loaf of bread about as large as the palm of a

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<sup>18)</sup> *Anglia*, XXX, 1907, p. 126.

hand is laid in the first furrow and again a charm is uttered. The loaf is a reminder of what is expected of Mother Earth and of what will be offered to her, when she yields good crops. The proceedings end with the same prayer they began with, namely the threefold singing of the *Crescite* formula and the Our Father.

The poetical power of the man who was responsible for the Christianisation of the charm was small. He repeats the same ideas over and over again:

No. 9. [NIGON WYRTA GALDOR]

Gemyne ðu, mucgwyr̥t, hwæt þu ameldodest,  
hwæt þu renadest æt Regenmelde.

5 Una þu hattest yldost wyrta,  
ðu miht wiþ III ond wið XXX,  
þu miht wiþ attre ond wið onflyge,  
þu miht wiþ þa laþan ðe geond lond færð.

10 ✘ Ond þu, wegbrade, wurta modor,  
eastan openo <sup>1)</sup>, innan mihtigu.  
Ofer ðe <sup>2)</sup> cræte curran, ofer ðe <sup>2)</sup> cwene reodan,  
ofer ðe <sup>2)</sup> bryde bryodedon, ofer ðe <sup>2)</sup> fearras fnærdon.  
Eallum þu þon wiðstode ond wiðstunedest.  
Swa ðu wiðstonde attre ond onflyge,  
ond þæm laþan þe geond lond fereð.

15 Stune hætte þeos wyr̥t, heo on stane geweox,  
stond heo wið attre, stunað heo wærce.  
Stiðe heo hatte, wiðstunað heo attre,  
wreced heo wraðan, weorped ut attor.

20 ✘ þ is is seo wyr̥t, seo wiþ wyr̥m gefeaht,  
þeos mæg wið attre, heo mæg wið onflyge,  
heo mæg wið þa laþan ðe geond lond fereþ.

Fleoh þu nu, attorlaðe, seo læsse ða maran,  
seo mare þa læssan, oddæt him beigra bot sy.

1) MS. opone. 2) MS. ðy.

May the omnipotent eternal Lord grant you (l. 55).

May the eternal Lord grant you (l. 62).

Now I pray the Sovereign Who created this world  
(l. 67).

In the holy name of Him Who created the heaven  
and the earth on which we live (ll. 81-82).

May the God Who made this earth grant you (l. 83).

[THE NINE HERBS CHARM].

Remember, Mugwort, what you made known,  
What you arranged at the Great Proclamation.  
You were called Una, the oldest of herbs,  
you have power against three and against thirty,  
you have power against poison and against infection,  
you have power against the loathsome foe roving  
through the land.

And you, Plantain, mother of herbs,  
open from the east, mighty inside.  
Over you chariots creaked, over you queens rode,  
over you brides cried out, over you bulls snorted.  
You withstood all of them, you dashed against them.  
May you likewise withstand poison and infection,  
and the loathsome foe roving through the land.

'Stune' is the name of this herb, it grew on a stone,  
it stands up against poison, it dashes against pain.  
Unyielding it is called, it dashes against poison,  
it drives out the hostile one, it casts out poison.  
This is the herb that fought against the snake,  
it has power against poison, it has power against  
infection,  
it has power against the loathsome foe roving through  
the land.

Put to flight now, Venom-loather, the greater poisons,  
though you are the lesser,  
you the mightier, conquer the lesser poisons, until he  
is cured of both.

25 Gemyne þu, mægðe, hwæt þu ameldodest,  
hwæt ðu geændadest æt Alorforda,  
þæt næfre for gefloge feorh ne gesealde  
syþðan him mon mægðan to mete gegyrede.

✘ |þis is seo wyrt ðe wergulu hatte.  
|þas onsænde seolh ofer sæs hryge,  
30 ondan attres oþres to bote.  
Stond heo wið wærce, stunað heo wið attre,  
seo mæg wið III ond wið XXX,  
wið feondes hond ond wið frea-bregde <sup>3)</sup>,  
wið malscrunge minra wihta.

35 |þær geændade æppel ond attor  
þæt heo næfre ne wolde on hus bugan.

✘ Fille ond finule, fela mihtigu twa.  
|þa wyrte gesceop witig drihten,  
halig on heofonum þa he hongode;  
40 sette ond sænde on VII worulde  
earnum ond eadigum eallum to bote.

|þas nigon magon <sup>4)</sup> wið nigon attrum.  
✘ Wyrm com snican, toslat he nan.  
|þa genam Woden VIII wuldortanas,  
sloh ða þa næddran þæt heo on VIII tofleah.

45 ✘ Nu magon þas VIII wyrta wið nygon wuldorgeflo-  
genum,  
wið VIII attrum ond wið nygon onflygnum:  
Wið ðy readan attre, wið ðy <sup>5)</sup> runlan attre,  
wið ðy hwitan attre, wið ðy hæwenan <sup>6)</sup> attre,  
50 wið ðy geolwan attre, wið ðy grenan attre,  
wið ðy wonnan attre, wið ðy wedenan attre,  
wið ðy brunan attre, wið ðy basewan attre,  
Wið wyrmegeblæd, wið wætergeblæd,  
wið þornegeblæd, wið þystelgeblæd <sup>7)</sup>,  
wið ysgeblæd, wið attorgeblæd.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. wið feondes hond ond wið æs hond wið frea begde.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. ongan. <sup>5)</sup> MS. ða.

<sup>6)</sup> MS. wedenan. Cf. l. 50. <sup>7)</sup> MS. |þysgeblæd.

Remember, Camomile, what you made known,  
 what you accomplished at Alorford,  
 that never a man should lose his life from infection,  
 after Camomile was prepared for his food.

This is the herb that is called 'Wergulu'.  
 A seal sent it across the sea-ridge,  
 a vexation to poison, a help to others.  
 It stands against pain, it dashes against poison,  
 it has power against three and against thirty,  
 against the hand of a fiend and against mighty devices,  
 against the spell of mean creatures.

There the Apple accomplished it against poison  
 that she (the loathsome serpent) would never dwell in  
 the house.

Chervil and Fennel, two very mighty ones.  
 They were created by the wise Lord,  
 holy in heaven as He hung [on the cross];  
 He set and sent them to the seven worlds,  
 to the wretched and the fortunate, as a help to all.

These nine have power against nine poisons.  
 A worm came crawling, it killed nothing.  
 For Woden took nine glory-twigs,  
 he smote then the adder that it flew apart into nine  
 parts.

Now these nine herbs have power against nine evil  
 spirits,  
 against nine poisons and against nine infections:  
 Against the red poison, against the foul poison,  
 against the white poison, against the purple poison,  
 against the yellow poison, against the green poison,  
 against the black poison, against the blue poison,  
 against the brown poison, against the crimson poison.  
 Against worm-blister, against water-blister,  
 against thorn-blister, against thistle-blister,  
 against ice-blister, against poison-blister.



55

Gif ænig attor cume eastan fleogan,  
 oððe ænig norðan cume, [oððe ænig suþan]  
 oððe ænig westan ofer werðeode.



Crist stod ofer adle<sup>8)</sup> ængancundes.

60

Ic ana wat ea rinnende,  
 ond þa nygon næddran behealdað.  
 Motan ealle weoda nu wyrtum aspringan,  
 sæs toslupan, eal sealtwæter,  
 ðonne is þis attor of ðe geblawe.

Mugcwyr̥t, wegbrade þe eastan open sy, lombescyr̥se, attorlaðan,  
 65 magedan, netelan, wudusuræppel, fille ond finul, ealde sapan,  
 gewyr̥c ða wyr̥ta to duste, mænge wiþ þa sapan ond wiþ þæs æpples  
 gor. Wyr̥c slypan of wætere ond of axsan, genim finol, wyl on  
 þære slyppan, ond beþe mid æggemong<sup>9)</sup>, þonne he þa sealfe  
 onde, ge ær ge æfter.

70 Sing þæt galdor on ælcra þara wyr̥ta III ær he hy wyr̥ce, ond on  
 þone æppel eal swa. Ond singe þon men in þone muð ond in þa  
 earan buta ond on ða wunde þæt ilce galdor, ær he þa sealfe onde.

*MS. Harley 585, ff. 160a-163a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The manuscript text of the Nine Herbs Charm is no more satisfactory than most other charm texts. There are several inconsistencies of spelling: *mucgwyr̥t* (l. 1) — *mugcwyr̥t* (l. 64); *wið þa laþan* (ll. 6 & 20) — *wið þæm laþan* (l. 13); *færð* (l. 6) — *fered* (ll. 13 & 20); *onflyge* (l. 5) — *onflygen* (l. 46); *hætte* (l. 14) — *hatte* (l. 17); *mægðe* (l. 23) — *magede* (l. 65); *galdor* (l. 70) — *gealdor* (l. 72). There are a few scribal errors: *wið feondes hond ond wið þæs hond* (l. 32); *ðy* (ll. 9-10); *þysgeblæd* (l. 53); *wedan* is mentioned twice in the list of colours (ll. 48 & 50). Next there are obvious displacements: l. 41 stands in the MS. after l. 29; ll. 30-33 after l. 40; ll. 42-44 before l. 34. Then there are several obscure passages and last of all there are classical influences and the christianisation of some parts.

The emendations in ll. 32 & 48 are Grattan's; l. 41 is Holthausen's,

<sup>8)</sup> MS. alde.

<sup>9)</sup> aagemogc.

If any poison comes flying from the east,  
 or any from the north, [or any from the south],  
 or any from the west among the people.

Christ stood over diseases of every kind.

I alone know a running stream,  
 and the nine adders beware of it.  
 May all the weeds spring up from their roots,  
 the seas slip apart, all salt water,  
 when I blow this poison from you.

Mugwort, plantain open from the east, lamb's cress, venom-loather, camomile, nettle, crab-apple, chervil and fennel, old soap; pound the herbs to a powder, mix them with the soap and the juice of the apple. Then prepare a paste of water and of ashes, take fennel, boil it with the paste and wash it with a beaten egg when you apply the salve, both before and after.

Sing this charm three times on each of the herbs before you (he) prepare them, and likewise on the apple. And sing the same charm into the mouth of the man and into both his ears, and on the wound, before you (he) apply the salve.

ll. 53, 56, 58, 68 are Cockayne's. This time the reasons for making emendations are so numerous, and on the whole so generally accepted that I could not keep to the MS. readings. Most editors agree that l. 41 has been displaced as l. 30, and the same applies to ll. 30-33, but with the exception of Holthausen they left them where they were because it was not so easy to decide where they should go, and because the shifting of some lines involved the shifting of others. I have even gone further than Holthausen and other editors in placing the passage about Woden after *fille ond finule*, so after the enumeration of all the nine herbs. They do not explain any one herb and say that Woden took nine glory-twigs, which is a reference to the nine herbs. There is one more emendation that has to be accounted for: l. 56. Cockayne noticed that the south was left out in the text. The A.S. copyist afterwards inserted *Cume* of l. 55 at the top of the line between *attor* and *eastan*, and it is difficult to see why it should be left out, as was suggested by Grattan and Holthausen, if he went to the trouble of putting it in. A second reason is

that if we omit the south, another word must fill the gap in the line. Grattan suggests *genægan* and Holthausen prints *neahwian*. Grendon makes one long line:

gif ænig attor cume eastan fleogan oððe ænig nordan  
cume.

Arguments of metre have some value here because the passage in which the difficulty occurs (ll. 47-57) better fulfils the exigencies of rhythm, alliteration and stress than most other lines of the charm. Grattan's main argument for omitting the south was that nine colours of poisons are mentioned and that six blisters plus east, north and west also make nine. I cannot see the weight of this argument as an explanation of the omission of the south because the nine colours and the six blisters plus three poisons are difficult to see as complementary elements. Moreover the omission of the south is so conspicuous that it presents the patient with a serious gap in his defensive armour, one much larger than Achilles' heel. I think that the insertion of the south is the most natural and simplest emendation based on the context. The obscurity of the passage was caused by the technical inability of the Christian editor to express the thought in alliterative verse, a failure which was felt the more as the preceding lines had turned out rather well. Other lines where the alliteration is lacking, or where it occurs in only one half-line are 10, 12, 21, 22, 35, 48. To conclude from this that the charm was drawn up in prose, as Hoops does, is wrong; it was the revisor's intention to write verse, but he lacked the necessary skill.

The text as it lies before us is copied from an earlier one. We can draw this inference from the inconsistencies of spelling mentioned above, from the regular occurrence of *o* before a nasal and from the northern subjunctive of *don* (ll. 68 & 72). But the text to which it goes back was not original either. New elements, both Christian (ll. 36-40; 58) and classical (*fille* and *finule*, i.e., chaerephullon and foeniculum, perhaps *una*), were inserted, though the original heathen Germanic elements are only interrupted by them, and there is no blending of the three. This is the only charm that mentions Woden by name.

No other charm has attracted so much attention as this one: Cockayne, Wülker, Hoops, Bradley, Payne, Grendon, Skemp, Holthausen, Magoun<sup>10)</sup> have contributed critical editions, translations discussions, analyses or notes. The difficulties of detail are indeed

<sup>10)</sup> See bibliography.

numerous and apparently insurmountable, and even the general structure is not fully clear, as the following analysis will show.

The A.S. text mentions no name and the title *Nine Herbs Charm* was given it by Bradley. As all A.S. names of charms are derived from the purpose they serve the title might have been different, but it is too late to change it now. Besides its structure is a little different from most other charms that have been preserved. It is built up on the magical power of nine herbs and serves the purpose of protecting people against the bite of snakes and adders or of neutralizing the effect of their bite. Several other charms to the same end have been preserved as well as numerous prescriptions to dress a wound caused by the bite of a snake (Charms No. 48, 81), thus showing that poisoning was regarded as having some sort of magical connotation and could be opposed most effectually by magical means. The small wound of a bite having such fatal results naturally excited the imagination of primitive folk and made them believe that evil spirits had taken up the appearance of snakes to attack and hurt them. The Leechbook<sup>11)</sup> gives some prescriptions that can only have a magical effect: "If an adder strikes a man, wash the black snake into holy water and give the man to drink." Or: "Against the bite of a snake you must put three pennyweight of betony into three cups of wine and give them the man to drink". "Against the bite of a snake take waybread and agrimony, rub them into wine and give to drink; and work up a salve of the same herbs and then take agrimony and apply it in the form of a ring around the bite, and also bind the herbs over the sore".

In the *Nine Herbs Charm* the magical effect of the herbs is intensified by the narration of their achievements in former times:

Remember, Mugwort, what you made known,  
 what you arranged at the Great Proclamation.  
 You were called Una, the oldest of herbs,  
 you have power against three and against thirty,  
 you have power against poison and against infection,  
 you have power against the loathsome foe that wanders  
 through the land.

Each herb has its own stanza setting forth its virtues, and the one on mugwort can be considered characteristic of all: the story of an outstanding feat is given, followed by the announcement that it is mightier than three, mightier than thirty, which numbers

<sup>11)</sup> *l.c.*, XLV, 1, 3.

stand for a magical group, a strong band of enemies. Consequently it can help this time against poison, infection and the invisible evil thing that roams about the country in search of victims. *Regenmelde* (l. 2) has been explained as a woman's name, a placename and as 'solemn announcement' <sup>12</sup>). Stories of mythological events are beyond time, beyond place, they are built up around some fact or figure and retain their value for all time, for all places. They are just true <sup>13</sup>). In the course of time some such story may have become localised, but the value is based on the event or figure, not on the site. We have the same here. *Regenmeld* may have developed into a place name, as its parallelism to Alorford makes us believe, but its original meaning must have been what its component parts express: the great proclamation or the proclamation of the great, that is, divine or semi-divine, personages. Mugwort had distinguished itself there and it will distinguish itself again in the present circumstances. In what way it had distinguished itself we are not told and there is little likelihood we shall ever know, for our store of minor mythological events and of the lives of minor or major personages of the Germanic Valhalla is regrettably small.

There is evidence to show that the power of each herb was set forth in this way and that the charm consisted of nine parallel passages. The first three stanzas are comparatively intact; they end each time with the assertion that the herb avails against the loathsome foe wandering through the land, and they are good against poison and infection. The parallel wording is too striking to be accidental. Mugwort had distinguished itself at *Regenmeld*; waybread or plantain was overrun and trodden upon by carriages, queens, brides and bulls, and it had held its own against them; 'stune' had withstood the venom of a serpent, it had expelled its evil influence; 'maythen', that is, camomile, had distinguished itself at Alorford, thus restoring the complete parallel with mugwort, though the finishing touch of the loathsome foe is absent; about 'wergulu' we hear that it is specially selected to go out across the sea at the command of a seal, and we get the parallel with mugwort restored in the pronouncement that it could take on as many as three or thirty poisons. The last three herbs are treated differently: the apple, which from the prose passage at the end seems to be original, gets only two lines and the other two herbs have been lost entirely. They are replaced by two imported plants, cher-

<sup>12</sup>) Cf. Magoun II, pp. 28f.

<sup>13</sup>) Cf. G. v. d. Leeuw, *Zs. f. Religionspsychologie* VI, 1933, pp. 161-180.

vil and fennel. The Christian revisor who made up the passage about them realised the mythical value of the story told of each herb and invented a Christian legend that they were specially created by the Lord as He hung on the cross, so that the parallel is there again, though the atmosphere is different: they are not powerful by a virtue of their own but because they were created at a specific moment by Christ, at the very moment namely when He earned God's favour and grace for all men, rich or poor, happy or miserable, by His death.

Crowning the achievements of the herbs Woden himself comes to their assistance against the hostile attack of the evil one. He takes nine glory-twigs, by which are meant nine runes, that is, nine twigs with the initial letters in runes of the plants representing the power inherent in them, and using them as weapons he smites the serpent with them. Thanks to their magical power they pierce its skin and cut it into nine pieces. The connection between Woden and the runes is very close in Germanic mythology. The Icelandic poem of *Hávamál* relates how Óðinn had obtained knowledge of them by sacrificing himself to himself<sup>14</sup>). In this one instance we know the background of some mythological reference. Twigs marked with runes were also used by Germanic tribes in casting lots<sup>15</sup>).

Having thus undeniably proved their worth, the power of the nine herbs is brought to bear on the poison of snakes and on infections that fly about at the present moment. The various kinds of poisons and of infections are enumerated and defined as to colour, outward symptoms, and finally as to the directions from which the poison may fall upon the victim. The omission of the south would be a serious weakening of the effect of the charm, as I observed above. The greatest danger from the poisons and the infections comes from man's ignorance, and now that he knows them he can prepare his defence and pass on to the attack, after the example of Woden. The revisor strengthened this idea by inserting the line about Christ.

After recounting the various powers of the herbs, taken both separately and collectively, the magician proceeds to state that he himself is not without power either. He alone has knowledge of a running stream of which the snakes are afraid. Ll. 61-63 are most obscure. Grendon<sup>16</sup>) has:

All pastures now may spring up with herbs,

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<sup>14</sup>) *Hávamál*, 138 f.   <sup>15</sup>) Tacitus, *Germania*, c. 10.   <sup>16</sup>) Grendon, p. 195.

The seas, all salt water, vanish,  
When I blow this poison from you.

Before him Hoops<sup>17)</sup> had translated:

May all weeds jump from their herbs,  
the seas evaporate, all salt water,  
when I blow this poison from you.

The third line affords a clue. The poison is blown away by the magician and to prevent its return it is necessary for him to appoint a place it can go to. As such he finds the roots of weeds, to which it cannot do much harm and the immensity of the seas, of all salt water which slip apart and destroy it in their vast embrace. With this description of the way in which the poison is definitely disposed of the charm ends.

The prose passage presents no difficulties. In the list of plants *lombescyrse* and *netele* take the place of *stune* and *wergulu* respectively, whereas the order and names of the other plants agree with the order and names of the poetic formula. We are supplied with a few directions for the preparation of the herbs and the singing of the charm. Infections, *onflygan*, were supposed to enter through

No. 10. [WI] > MISBYRDE].

Se wifman se hire cild afedan ne mæg, gange to gewitenes mannes birgenne and stæppe þonne þriwa ofer þa byrgenne, and cweþe þonne þriwa þas word:

5            þis me to bote þære laþan lætbyrde,  
             þis me to bote þære swæran swærthyrde,  
             þis me to bote þære laþan lambyrde.

And þonne þæt wif seo mid bearne and heo to hyre hlaforde on reste ga, þonne cweþe heo:

10            Up ic gonge, ofer þe stæppe  
             mid cwican cilde, nalæs mid cwellendum,  
             mid fulborenum, nalæs mid fægan.

And þonne seo modor gefele þæt þæt bearn si cwic, ga þonne to cyrican, and þonne heo toforan þan weofode cume, cweþe þonne:

<sup>17)</sup> Hoops, *Pflanzennamen*, p. 61.

the ears and the mouth, so that the remedy against them was also sung into the mouth and the ears of the patient; in the case of a wound caused by the bite of a snake the charm was sung on the wound, of course.

The evil spirit roving through the land is conceived to be feminine, as appears from the form *þa* in: *wið þa laþan* (ll. 6, 20), while l. 13 has the masculine from *þæm*. The feminine character is corroborated by *heo* in l. 35.

*Runlan* in l. 47 is obscure. Cockayne translates 'stinking'; Grendon has 'running'; Grattan suggests 'foul', and he points to ON. *hrunoll*. The loss of initial *h* has to be accounted for if we assume a connection. In favour of this Grattan remarks that red venom and foul venom are one and the same, so that we get to the nine poisons required by the preceding line. The A.S. scribe solved the problem by using *wedenan* twice, though it spoils the alliteration, which is restored by Grattan's suggestion of *hæwenan*.

The translation of ll. 21-22 I have taken from Skemp. There were two kinds of 'venom-loather', one of which was called the small one, and this fact has given rise to a pun that was not understood any more by the revisor and which can only be guessed at by us.

#### [AGAINST MISCARRIAGE].

The woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must go to the grave of a dead man, step three times over the grave and say these words three times:

This as my help against the evil late birth,  
this as my help against the grievous dismal birth,  
this as my help against the evil lame birth.

And when the woman is with child and she goes to bed to her lord then she must say:

Up I go, I step over you  
with a live child, not with a dying one,  
with a full-born child, not with a doomed one.

And when the mother feels that the child is alive, she must go to church, and when she comes in front of the altar, then she must say:



Criste, ic sæde, þis gecyþed.

- 15 Se wifmon se hyre bearn afedan ne mæge, genime heo sylf hyre agenes cildes gebyrgenne dæl, wry æfter þonne on blace wulle and bebicge to cepemannum. And cweþe þonne:

Ic hit bebicge, ge hit bebicgan,  
þas sweartan wulle and þysse sorge corn.

- 20 Se man se ne<sup>1)</sup> mæge bearn afedan, nime þonne anes bleos cu meoluc on hyre handæ, and gesupe þonne mid hyre muþe, and gange þonne to yrnendum wætere and spiwe þær in þa meolc. And hlade þonne mid þære ylcan hand þæs wæteres muð fulne and forswelge. Cweþe þonne þas word:

- 25 Gehwer ferde ic me þone mæran maga þihtan,  
mid þysse mæran mete þihtan,  
þone<sup>2)</sup> ic me wille habban and ham gan.

þonne heo to þan broce ga þonne ne beseo heo, no ne eft þonne heo þanan ga, and þonne ga heo in oþer hus oþer heo ut ofeode,  
30 and þær gebyrge metes.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 185 a, b. (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The text as it lies before us shows that the charm is composed of four or five different practices to be performed at different times. The meaning of it partly rests on the meaning of O.E. *afedan*, which is mentioned three times (ll. 1, 15, 20). Cockayne<sup>3)</sup> translated it by 'bring to maturity, bring up', but Grendon<sup>4)</sup> gave 'bring forth', in agreement with his title '*Wid lætbyrde*'. Toller (*Supplement*) also has 'bring forth, produce'. Cockayne was evidently right. The death-rate among new-born babies must have been great in Anglo-Saxon times and the only means an Anglo-Saxon mother had at her disposal was the singing of charms, for the causes of miscarriage and early death could hardly ever be ascertained. Even nowadays superstitious rites in connection with birth and

<sup>1)</sup> MS. þe.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. þonne. Cf. MS. f. 133a, l. 1, where þone should be þonne; f. 144a where þonne should be þone.

<sup>3)</sup> Cockayne, III, p. 67.

<sup>4)</sup> Grendon, p. 207.

I have said that by Christ it is manifested.

The woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must take part of the grave of her own child, wrap it up in black wool and sell it to merchants. And then she must say:

I sell it, you must sell it,  
this black wool and the seeds of this grief.

The woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must take the milk of a cow of one colour in her hand, sip up a little with her mouth, and then go to running water and spit the milk into it. And then with the same hand she must take a mouthful of water and swallow it. Let her then say these words:

Everywhere I carried with me this great powerful  
strong one,  
strong because of this great food;  
such a one I want to have and go home with.

When she goes to the stream she must not look round, nor again when she goes away from there, and let her go into another house than the one from which she started, and there take food.

afterbirth are practised by women who otherwise have no recourse to magic.

That our charm was said after a miscarriage or an early death had actually occurred is shown by l. 16, which states that some part of the grave, that is, some earth from the mound of her child had to be taken, wrapped in black wool and sold.

An analysis of the entire charm gives us the following picture. The woman who cannot bring her child to maturity must go to the grave of a dead man, step three times across the grave and say that she does so to ward off various misfortunes that may happen, or that had happened, at the birth of her child. The birth must be propitious, consequently it must not be slow, it must neither be difficult, painful nor gloomy, it must not have the evil outcome of a lame child (ll. 4-6). Her stepping across the grave signifies that she is victorious, that she is stronger than death. Such a comparison is often expressed in words, but a comparison in actions is no less frequent and was more impressive: 'Clouds of tobacco smoke are

blown into the air to represent rainclouds and produce rain; nails are driven into a doll representing a man to torture and eventually kill him; when a battle is fought between certain negro tribes and their enemies in Africa, the negro-women take brooms and sweep the open spaces between their huts, because the enemies will be swept off the battlefield by the husbands as the dust is swept away by the wives.' Just as a warrior steps over the body of his slain opponent in order to mark and celebrate his victory, so the woman steps across a grave to show that she is stronger than death, for the grave of course means death.

So far the actions are precautions for a happy delivery. After conception, 'when she is with child', she repeats the act of stepping over somebody. This time, however, it is a live person, namely her husband. The text only states that she says so, but there can be no doubt that she put her words into practice, at any rate originally. The similarity of her actions ought to remind any death-spirit of her power and restrain it from harassing her and killing her child: she steps over her husband with a live child, not with a dying one, with one that will be fully formed and brought forth at the proper time, not with a fated one. Thus she makes sure not to miscarry (ll. 7-11).

Now we get a Christian interpolation. After some months, when she feels that the child is alive in her womb, she must go to church, walk in front of the altar and express her thanks to Christ that by His help she is again with child. Christ Himself witnesses and confirms this (ll. 12-14). From the successive stages in which the whole performance unwinds itself it is certain that the Christian elements, the going up to the altar and thanking Christ, have replaced a pagan practice. What the original directions were we do not know, but there is no reason to suppose that they contain much more than going to a sacred spot and thanking some god, for all the directions and formulas of this charm are short and straightforward. In this respect we might think of the North Germanic god Freyr, whose other name Ingunar-Freyr points to a connection with the Inguaeones, to whom the Saxons belonged. Freyr was the god of fertility.

When she has become absolutely certain, after the rites described in ll. 7-11 and 12-14 that she is going to bear another child, she will put away the sorrow and misery she feels about the death of her former child. She goes to the place where it is buried, takes some earth from the grave, wraps it up in black wool and sells it to

merchants with the instruction to sell it again. Her sorrow is represented by the earth of the grave and by the piece of black wool. We have a reminiscence of the black dismal gloomy birth of an ill or dead child in the black wool. Her grief is embodied in an object which is subsequently handed over to somebody who will see to its complete disappearance. For merchants wander about the country, going from one place to the other and there is no possibility whatever that the woman will know where her grief has gone to. She will not be able to recall it, literally or figuratively. Neither will any spirit be able to find its way back and trouble her again. Her grief is gone for she has another child to rejoice in. The mound on the grave of her child was a seed, a reason of sorrow to her, which has vanished now (ll. 15-19).

When the time of bringing forth the child is drawing near, and with it the important problem arises whether she will have sufficient milk to nourish it, she must take a handful of milk from a cow of one colour, sip it up into her mouth, go to running water and spit it into the stream. — Cows of one colour were probably just as rare in Anglo-Saxon England as they are nowadays in Holland, so its infrequency and the difficulty of finding one gave this kind of milk a rarity to be reckoned with as a magical factor. The charm does not specify the hand from which the milk is sipped up, it only gives the direction that with the same hand a mouthful of water must be ladled up and swallowed. Running water has a purifying effect which operates on impure evil spirits, so that they are expelled and must find another dwelling. That is why every precaution is taken that the spirit will not return to the woman from whom it has gone out and when the woman goes back home she goes by another way. She also keeps silent to retain the magical force she has absorbed by her actions and by her contact with milk of one colour and of running water. To avoid contact with wandering spirits she must not look round, for such an unnecessary action would destroy her magical concentration and allow a spirit to harm the child. To lead them all astray she enters another house than the one she went out of.

During these last actions the woman's fasting intensifies the magical effect of her taking specified milk into her mouth and sipping up running water. Therefore her lactation will be plentiful and nourishing. The importance of food as a life-saving factor was realised by the Germanic tribes in the meaning of the primitive Germanic verb \* *nazjan*, which differentiated into: *to save* in O.E.

*nerian*, O.S. *nerian*, OFris. *nera*, Goth. *nasjan*; and *to nourish* in OHG. *nerian*, OIcel. *næra*. The Anglo-Saxon mother is convinced that, when she can properly feed her child, it will grow up into a strong and healthy boy:

Everywhere I carried with me this great powerful  
strong one,  
strong because of this excellent food;  
such a one I want to have and go home with.

The set of magical actions is finished and the magical atmosphere finally broken when she partakes of food in the house of a neighbour.

The table of contents to *Leechbook II*, LX says that a charm for child birth was given in the text. Unfortunately there is a gap in the manuscript and several sections of the *Leechbook*, together with this charm, have got lost: "Remedies against natural obstruction of women and all infirmities of women; if a woman cannot bear a child, or if the child is dead in the woman's womb, or if she cannot bring it forth, place on her girdle the prayers that are mentioned in these leechbooks; and various medicines by which you

No. 11 A. [WI|> |>EOF|>E].

Gyf feoh sy underfangen.

Gyf<sup>1)</sup> hit sy hors, sing on his feteran oppe on his bridele.

Gyf<sup>1)</sup> hit sy oðer feoh, sing on þæt fotspor, and ontend þreo candela and dryp on þæt hofrec<sup>2)</sup> þæt wex þriwa. Ne mæg hit þe  
5 nan mann forhelan.

Gif hit sy innorf, sing þonne on feower healfe þæs huses and æne on middan:

Crux Christi reducat. Crux Christi perfurtum periit,  
inventa est.

10 Abraham tibi semitas, vias, montes concludat, Job et flumina.

Ad<sup>3)</sup> iudicium<sup>4)</sup> ligatum perducatur.

No. 11. <sup>1)</sup> MS. T gif.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. T ofræc.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. T a.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. C, T iudicii.

find out whether the child will be a boy or a girl". MS. Cott. Tiberius A III f. 40b gives some, though they are probably of classical origin:

"Methods to find out whether a pregnant woman will bear a boy or a girl. If she walks slowly and has hollow eyes she will bear a boy; if she walks quickly and has swollen eyes she will bring forth a girl.

Take two flowers, namely a lily and a rose, put them before the pregnant woman and bid her take either. If she chooses the lily she will bear a boy; if she chooses the rose she will bring forth a girl.

Observe how the woman walks. If she touches the ground more with her heels she will bear a boy; if she touches the ground only with her toes she will bring forth a girl.

If the woman's belly is high up she will bear a boy; if it is sunk down she will produce a girl<sup>5)</sup>".

The Leechbook gives the reader a means of influencing the sex of the child:

"On the left thigh, up against the matrix one may bind either the lower part of henbane or twelve grains of coriander seed, and that shall produce either a boy or a girl<sup>6)</sup>".

See Charms No. 45; 63.

#### No. 11 A & B. [AGAINST THEFT]

In case your cattle are stolen.

If it is a horse, sing the charm on its shackles or on its bridle.

If they are other animals, sing it on the footprints, and light three candles and let the wax drip three times into the footprints. Nobody will be able to keep them hidden from you.

If they are household goods, then sing it on the four sides of the house and once in the middle:

*Crux Christi reducat. Crux Christi per furtum periiit, inventa est. Abraham tibi semitas, vias, montes concludat, Job et flumina. Ad iudicium ligatum perducatur.*

The Jews hanged Christ, they were severely punished for it.

No. 10. <sup>5)</sup> Cockayne III, p. 144.

<sup>6)</sup> Leechbook III, xxxvii.

Judeas <sup>5)</sup> Crist ahengon, þæt heom com to wite <sup>6)</sup> swa  
strangan <sup>7)</sup>  
 15 Gedydon him dæda þa wyrrestan, hy þæt drofe on-  
guldon  
 Hælan hit heom to hearme micclum, for þam hi hyt  
forhelan ne mihtan.

*MS. CCCC. 190, f. 130. (11th century) (C).*

*MS. Harl. 438, p. 128 (A.D., 1656, paper transcript of CCCC. 190) (H).*

*MS. Cotton Tiberius A III, f. 106 (11th century) (T).*

No. 11 B.

Gif feoh sy undernumen.

Gif hit sy hors, sing on his feotere oððe on his bridels.

Gif hit sy oðer feoh, sing on þæt hofrec, and ontend dreo candela  
 and dryp on þæt hofrec wæx driwa. Ne mæg hit ðe manna  
 5 forhelan.

Gif hit sy inorf, sing on feower healfa þæs huses and æne on  
 middan:

Crux Christi reducat. Crux Christi per furtum periit,  
 inventa est.

10 Abraham tibi semitas, vias, montes concludat, Job et  
 flumina.

Ad iudicium ligatum perducatur.

Judeas xri Crist ahengon, ðæt him com to wite swa  
strangum.

15 Gedydon heom dæda þa wyrstan, hi þæt drofe for-  
guldon.

Hælon hit him to hearme miclum, and heo hit na for-  
helan ne mihton.

*MS. Textus Roffensis, Rochester Cathedral, f. 95 (12th. century).*

*MS. Cotton Julius C 2, f. 66b. This is a late 17th. century paper MS. of transcripts and on f. 66a it says: Ex textu Roff. Whereas in the Textus Roffensis there is a break after mihton, MS. Julius C 2 goes straight on and copies a legal fragment, which was printed as part of the text by Cockayne and Grendon but which does not belong to it.*

<sup>5)</sup> MS. T Judas.

<sup>6)</sup> MS. T witene.

<sup>7)</sup> MS. T srangan.

They treated him in the most evil manner, grievously they paid for it.

They concealed it to their own great harm, because they were not able to keep it hidden.



## No. 12. [WIþ þEOFþE].

Gif feoh sy undernumen.

Gif hit sy hors, sing þis on his fetera oððe on his bridel.

Gif hit si oder feoh, sing on þæt hofrec and ontend III candella,  
dryp ðriwa þæt weax. Ne mæg hit nan man forhelan.

5 Gif hit sy oþer orf, þonne sing ðu hit on IIII healfa ðin, and sing  
ærest uprihte hit:

And Petur, Pol, Patric, Pilip, Marie, Bricgit, Felic.

In nomine Dei et Chiric.

Qui querit invenit.

*MS. CCC. 41, Cambridge, p. 206 (11th century).*

## No. 13. [WIþ þEOFþE].

Ðis man sceal cwedan donne his ceapa hwilcne man forsto-  
lenne<sup>1)</sup>. Cwyð<sup>2)</sup> ær he ænyg oþer word cweðe:

Bethlem hattæ seo burh ðe Crist on geboren wes.

Seo is gemærsod ofer ealne middangeard.

5 Swa ðeos dæd wyrþe for mannum mære.

Per crucem Christi.

And gebide þe þonne þriwa east and cweð þriwa:

✕ Christi ab oriente reducat.

And in west and cweð:

10 Crux Christi ab occidente reducat.

And in suð and cweð þriwa:

Crux Christi a meridie reducat<sup>3)</sup>).

And in nord and cweð:

Crux Christi abscondita est<sup>4)</sup> et inventa est.

15 Judeas Crist ahengon, gedidon him dæda þa wyrstan.

Hælon þæt hi forhelan ne mihton.

Swa næfre ðeos dæd forholen ne wyrþe.

Per crucem Christi.

*MS. CCC. 41, Cambridge, p. 206 (11th century).*

<sup>1)</sup> MS. forsteolene.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. cyð.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. reducant.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. sunt.

## [AGAINST THEFT].

In case your cattle are stolen.

If it is a horse, sing this on its shackles or on its bridle.

If they are other animals, sing it on the footprints and light three candles, and let the wax drip three times. Nobody will be able to keep it hidden from you.

If they are other goods, then sing it on your four sides, and first of all sing it standing upright:

And Peter, Paul, Patrick, Philip, Mary, Bridget, Felix.  
In the name of God and the church.  
Who seeks will find.

## No. 13 [AGAINST THEFT].

This must be sung by the man who has been robbed of some of his goods. He must say before he speaks any other word:

Bethlehem is the name of the town where Christ was  
born.

It is well known throughout the whole world.  
So may this act become known among men.  
By the cross of Christ.

And worship then three times to the east and say three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the east.

And towards the west and say:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the west.

And towards the south and say three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the south.

And towards the north and say:

The cross of Christ was hidden and it is found.  
The Jews hanged Christ, they treated Him in a most  
evil way.

So may this deed never be concealed.  
By the cross of Christ.

## No. 14 [WIÞ ÞEOFÞE].

Þonne þe mon ærest secge þæt þin ceap sy losod, þonne cweð þu  
ærest ær þu elles hwæt cweþe:

5 Bædleem hatte seo buruh þe Crist on acænned wæs.  
Seo is gemærsod geond ealne middangeard.  
Swa þyos dæd for monnum mære gewurþe,  
þurh þa haligan Cristes rode. Amen.

Gebide þe þonne þriwa east and cweð þonne þriwa:

Crux Christi ab oriente reducað.

Gebide þe þonne þriwa west and cweð þonne þriwa:

10 Crux Christi ab occidente reducat.

Gebide þe þonne þriwa suð and cweð þriwa:

Crux Christi ab austro reducat.

Gebide þonne þriwa norð and cweð þriwa:

15 Crux Christi ab aquilone reducað.  
Crux Christi abscondita est et inventa est.  
Judeas Crist ahengon, dydon dæda þa wyrrestan.  
Hælon þæt hy forhelan ne mihtan.  
Swa þeos dæd nænige þinga ferholen ne wurþe,  
þurh þa haligan Cristes rode. Amen.

*MS. Harley 585, ff. 180b, 181a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

## No. 15. [WIÞ ÞEOFÞE].

Ne forstolen, ne forholen nanuht þæs ðe ic age,  
þe ma ðe mihte Herod urne drihten.

Ic geþohte Sancte Eadelenan  
and ic geþohte Crist on rode ahangen.  
5 Swa ic þence ðis feoh to findanne, næs to oþfeorganne,  
and to witanne, næs to oðwyrceanne,

## No. 14. [AGAINST THEFT].

As soon as somebody tells you that your goods are lost, then you must say first of all, before you say anything else:

Bethlehem is the name of the town where Christ was  
born.

It is well known throughout the whole world.  
So may this deed be known among men,  
Through the holy cross of Christ. Amen.

Then worship three times towards the east and say three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the east.

Then worship three times towards the west and say three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the west.

Then worship three times towards the south and say three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the south.

Then worship three times towards the north and say three times:

The cross of Christ will bring it back from the north.  
The cross of Christ was hidden and it is found.  
The Jews hanged Christ, they treated Him in a most  
evil way.

They concealed what they could not keep hidden.  
So may this deed be concealed in no way,  
through the holy cross of Christ. Amen.

## No. 15. [AGAINST THEFT].

May nothing I own be stolen or concealed,  
any more than Herod could [steal or conceal] our  
Lord.

I thought of St. Helena,  
and I thought of Christ hung on the cross.  
So I think I shall find these cattle and they shall not  
go away far,  
and I shall know where they are, and they shall not  
get lost,

and to lufianne, næs to odlædanne.  
 Garmund, Godes ðegen,  
 find þæt feoh and fere þæt feoh,  
 10 and hafa þæt feoh and heald þæt feoh,  
 and fere ham þæt feoh,  
 þæt ne næfre næbbe landes þæt he hit odlæde,  
 ne foldan þæt he <sup>1)</sup> hit oðferie,  
 ne husa þæt he hit oðhealde <sup>2)</sup>.  
 15 Gif hyt hwa gedo, ne gedige hit him næfre.

Binnan þrym nihtum cunne ic his mihta,  
 his mægen and his mundcræftas <sup>3)</sup>.  
 Eall he weornige swa fyre <sup>4)</sup> wudu weornie,  
 swa bredel seo <sup>5)</sup>, swa þystel,  
 20 se ðe þis feoh oðfergean þence  
 oððe ðis orf oðehtian ðence. Amen.

*MS. CCC. 41, Cambridge, p. 206 (11th century).*

These five charms have so much in common that it is convenient, and to a certain extent obligatory, to analyse them together. They are all against the theft of cattle, of horses and of goods in general. *Inorf* only applies to household goods but *orf*, *feoh* and *ceap* mean animals and goods. With the exception, perhaps, of No. 15 the wording is such that they can safely be regarded as different versions of one and the same charm. All of them are largely christianized and yet the pagan elements are easy to recognize. From the point of view of the incantatory formula No. 15 deserves to come first, but all the others contain elements that are known and practised all over the world and that, therefore, belong to the oldest practices in existence.

Everything that has come into contact with man, or that has his mark on it, remains an integral part of his person for ever: the name by which a man is called is identical with himself; the clothes he has worn, the arms and tools he has used, excrements, nails, hair, not only serve to represent him, they remain an integral part

<sup>1)</sup> he not in MS.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. oð hit healde.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. Cunne ic his mihta his mægen and his mihta and his mundcræftas.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. syer. MS. þeo.

and I shall love them, and they shall not be led away.  
 Garmund, servant of God,  
 find those cattle and bring back those cattle,  
 have those cattle and keep those cattle,  
 and bring home those cattle,  
 that he never has a piece of land to lead them to,  
 nor a district to carry them to,  
 nor buildings to confine them in.  
 If anybody should do so, may it never come off suc-  
 cessfully for him.

Within three days I shall know his might,  
 his force and his protecting powers.  
 May he quite perish, as wood is consumed by fire,  
 may he be as fragile as a thistle,  
 he who plans to drive away these cattle.  
 or to carry off these goods. Amen.

of that man. The same thing is true of his footprints, for they are something personal.

The footprints left by a thief may be identified and betray his individuality, they may be followed and betray his hiding-place, and they may also be subjected to the magical power of charms:

In Japan, if a house has been robbed by night and the burglar's footprints are visible in the morning, the householder will burn mugwort on them, hoping thereby to hurt the robber's feet so that he cannot run far, and the police can easily overtake him <sup>1)</sup>).

In order to recover strayed cattle, the Zulus take the animals' dung and earth from their footprints and place both in the chief's vessel, round which a magic circle is drawn. Then the chief says: "I have now conquered them. Those cattle are now here; I am now sitting upon them. I do not know in what way they will escape" <sup>2)</sup>).

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<sup>1)</sup> J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, I, London 1913<sup>3</sup>, pp. 208f.

<sup>2)</sup> H. Callaway, *The Religious System of the Amazulu*, III, pp. 345f., cited by Frazer, *l.c.*, p. 212.

Mugwort, though one of the most popular herbs in Anglo-Saxon medicine and magic, is not used in the above charms and instead of it we find wax. The candles are probably a Christian innovation, but the material itself is original. Three times burning wax is allowed to drip on the hoof-tracks of the stolen animals with the purpose of laming them, or, which is more likely, of hindering their movements. The idea is that the wax in the footprints of the animals sticks to the hoofs, so that they have difficulty in lifting up their legs. They have to slow down and the owner has a chance of following and overtaking them. At the same time the candles have the symbolical function of lighting up the neighbourhood and enlightening the owner, so that he will know where to look for his lost property and 'nobody will be able to hide it' (Charms No. 13 & 14). *The effect of this magic is heightened by singing a charm-formula.* The exact spot on which it has to be sung differs according to the animals or the objects that are stolen: if it is a horse the charm must be sung on the shackles or on the bridle it had been tied with when it was stolen; if they are beasts that are not tied up while feeding, the charm must be sung on the hoof-tracks; if they are household goods, the charm must be sung at the four sides of the house and inside the house. These directions aim at fixing the objects that were stolen and the spot where they were stolen, for it is necessary to establish contact between the objects and the magical power that is put into operation.

The incantations that are sung vary in the various charms.

Charm 11 expresses the conviction that the holy cross, itself lost for about three hundred years and eventually rediscovered, will bring back the cattle. Abraham will close up the paths, the roads and the mountains, Job will close up the rivers. The thief will not know where to turn to in order to drive away the animals, nor where to hide them for the time being till the search for them has ended. The cross will accomplish that he is found, arrested and brought before the court (ll. 6-9). Three times a threat is pronounced: the Jews hanged Christ and they were severely punished for it; they treated Him in a very bad way and grievously they had to pay for it; they tried to conceal their crime and most evil things came upon them, because they were not able to conceal it (ll. 10-13).

Charm 12 is more religious in atmosphere. It gives the names of a number of saints whose intercession is invoked and recalls to memory the promise of Christ that he who seeks will find (ll. 7-9).

'Sing it first in an upright position' (l. 6) manifests the typical difficulties we meet with in charms, if we want to understand everything. The mysteriousness so frequently exhibited by magical phenomena is due in a great many cases, if not in all, to the fact that their original significance has got lost. A comparative study of magic will often reveal a simple reason for an apparently unintelligible and mysterious instruction. A Middle Dutch charm, which will be given a little further on and which is identical with this Anglo-Saxon one, tells that the owner must stretch himself on the ground, in the form of a cross, towards the four regions. The direction to stand upright has come in as a fifth element because it was wanted in the case of household goods where the charm had to be said at the four sides of the house and once inside the house.

Charms 13 & 14 are slightly different versions of the same charm. Both open with a comparison: this particular theft will be as widely known as is the town of Bethlehem because of the birth of Christ. The whole world knows about Bethlehem, likewise the whole world will hear of this act. After this general statement the magician begins to weave his spell about the stolen cattle or goods. Although clothed in a Christian dress, they have preserved some old heathen practices, for they instruct the magician to turn east, west, south and north and to say a prayer three times in each direction. In what way the rest has to be said is told in a 14th century Ghent manuscript <sup>3)</sup>:

*To find a lost object.*

When you have lost something, you must first say:

The cross of Christ was buried in the earth, and it was found by St. Helena the queen, in the holy service of the miracle. Likewise this lost object N. [here one must name the object] must be found.

Immediately afterwards you must stretch yourself on the earth in the form of a cross, in the direction of the east and with your face turned to the earth. Then you must make the sign of the cross and say:

The cross of Christ must bring back the thief with this stolen object N. from the east.

(The action is repeated to the south, west and north).

While remaining stretched out on the earth you must say:

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<sup>3)</sup> J. v. Dam, "Over Bezweringsformulieren". In: *Handelingen en Mededeelingen v. d. Mij. d. Ned. Letterkunde te Leiden*, 1900/1901, pp. 40f.



I admonish you, earth, by the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and by the holy grave of our Lord, that you must not keep on you the thief with this stolen object N., but you must at once bring back the object before he eats or drinks; you must force him to return at once and bring back this object N.

Then you must inscribe its name on a leaden sheet, cut it diagonally in two, and put one half over the upper door and the other half under the threshold. Afterwards you must see to it that as soon as possible a Mass is said in honour of St. Helena, the queen, of St. Anastace, her husband and of her children.

In Latin it adds 'Probatum est', that is, the charm has been put to the test and has proved its efficacy.

By prostrating himself on the earth the magician acknowledges Earth's power: at the same time he absorbs and conquers that power so that he can use it for his own ends. Here is a strange mixture of religious worship and magical practice, a mixture we have also met with in the charm on the blessing of the fields (No. 8). No other god or goddess is as frequently met with in magic as is Mother Earth. Man walks and sleeps on earth, he is fed and clothed by her, he is protected and preserved by her, he is her master and her slave. The Indo-Germanic conquerors were primarily hunters, the Germanic tribes were primarily farmers, though every now and then they were stirred by nomadic and conquering impulses and they went out to new and unknown territories. These impulses came from outside, from the lure of gold and riches to be found in other countries, they also came from inside, from the restlessness and the energy of their own blood seeking an outlet in fighting and voyaging. Normally, however, they stayed at home and cultivated their lands, so the cult of Mother Earth could hold its own against new gods.

Combined with the worship of Mother Earth is the worship of the Sun. The earth is passive, whereas the sun is active. The influence of the sun will give a good or a bad crop, warmth or cold, a feeling of pleasure or of depression. The magician turns to the four heavens because he does not know where the thief has fled to, but he does so, too, in worship of the Sun, who knows where the thief is hiding and who can throw light on dark matters. The names of the four regions of the earth are directly connected with

the sun, especially east and south (O.E. *sup* from *sun-þ*), and the sun must help to find the thief.

The MDu. charm admonishes earth not to keep the thief with the stolen goods on her, but to make things so unpleasant for him that he will bring back the objects before eating or drinking anything.

A similar method is employed in Charm No. 15 (ll. 12-15), so that there is reason to suppose that this charm contains relics of the incantatory formulas that accompanied the magical actions of the previous charms. Here the magical actions are entirely lacking and we only have the oral formula. Grendon prints the first seven lines as prose, but I have printed them as verse, because they contain alliteration and assonance and because they have the function of an incantation so that they ought to be 'verba concepta'. They do not follow the rules of A-S. verse, but if we stick to the rules all the other lines printed in verse by Grendon fall short too.

The Christianisation of the charm is confined to ll. 1-4 and l. 8. Besides the usual reference to St. Helena and her discovery of the cross we are reminded of the failure of Herod to seize Christ: just as Herod was unable to seize Christ, so no thief will be able to seize and steal any of my goods. *Forstolen* and *forholen* are not merely chosen for the sake of assonance, they retain their full meaning. It will be impossible to seize or carry away any possessions from the man who uses this charm, and if a thief has succeeded so far he will fail in keeping his booty, for he cannot find a place to hide the objects till the danger is over. Christ hanging on the cross is a reminiscence of the action of stretching oneself on the earth in the form of a cross. The significance of the action was forgotten, and we only have the cross, and Christ as its natural association.

After singing the charm the owner is convinced that he will find his cattle and that they will not be driven away too far; he will know where they are and they will not get lost; he will love them, that is, treat them well, and they will not be led away. The parallelism of ll. 5-7 gives us the meaning of *odwyrcean*, *oþfeorgan*, *oðlædan*. The promise to treat his cattle well is an admonition to the animals to try and get back of their own accord. We often see in magic that every resource is exploited, and nothing is too insignificant, for the most trivial detail may have unsuspected magical power.

Next Garmund, a 'servant of God' of whom nothing is known, is

invoked to find the cattle, keep and hold them and finally send them home again; he has to see to it that the thief cannot find a territory to lead them to, nor a region to carry them to, nor a house to keep them in. (Cf. the MDu. charm). If, in spite of everything, the thief succeeds in carrying them off, he will not escape discovery and punishment: within three days everything about him will be known.

The O.E. verb *gedigan* (l. 15), meaning 'to carry through, to escape', is supposed by Cockayne<sup>4)</sup>, Grendon<sup>5)</sup> and Toller<sup>6)</sup> to have the special meaning 'to prosper, to avail' for this occasion only. Its normal intransitive meaning 'to come off successfully, to escape punishment' will carry the sense just as well, especially if we compare No. 11, which says that the Jews were severely punished for what they had done (l. 10).

The MS. reading of ll. 18-19 presents several difficulties, especially l. 19. *Weornian* is always intransitive, so that Grendon's

#### No. 16. [SIÞGEALDOR].

Ic me on þisse gyrdeluce and on Godes helde be-  
beode,

wið þane sara stice<sup>1)</sup>, wið þane sara slege,

wið þane grymma gryre,

wið þane micela egsa þe bid eghwam lað,

5 and wið eal þæt lað þe into land fare.

Sygegealdor ic begale, sigegyrd is me wege,

wordsiges and worcsiges, se me dege.

Ne me mer ne gemyrre, ne me maga ne geswence,

ne me næfre minum feore forht ne gewurþe.

10 Ac gehæle me ælmihtigi and sunu and<sup>2)</sup> frofre gast,

ealles wuldres wyrdig dryhten,

swa swa ic gehyrde heofna scyppende.

Abrame and Isace and swilce men,

Moyse and Iacob and Davit and Iosep,

15 and Evan and Annan and Elizabet,

Saharie and ec Marie, modur Cristes,

No. 15. <sup>4)</sup> Cockayne, I, p. 385. <sup>5)</sup> Grendon, p. 183. <sup>6)</sup> Toller, *A.S.D.*

No. 16. <sup>1)</sup> MS. sice.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. omits *and*.

translation "as fire destroys wood" is dubious. Furthermore it needs the emendation *bremel* for *bredel* and *þeoh* for *þeo* in l. 19: 'as bramble injures thigh'. The best emendation, though not quite satisfactory because of the uncertainty about *bredel*, was proposed by Toller <sup>7)</sup>: *swa bredel seo swa þystel*, 'may he be as fragile as a thistle'. Toller also changed *syer* to *syre*, but I prefer Cockayne's suggestion of *f* for *s*. The two letters resemble each other so much, especially in this text, that there is nothing strange about their being mixed up. I read *swa fyre wudu weornie*, 'as wood is consumed by fire', and we get for ll. 18-19:

May he quite perish, as wood is consumed by fire,  
 May he be as fragile as a thistle,  
 he who thinks of carrying off these cattle,  
 or plans to drive away these beasts.

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#### [JOURNEY-CHARM]

I draw a protecting circle round myself with this rod  
 and commend myself to God's grace,  
 against the sore stitch, against the sore bite,  
 against the fierce horror,  
 against the mighty dread that is hateful to everybody,  
 and against every evil that invades the land.  
 A victory charm I sing, a victory rod I carry,  
 victorious in word, victorious in deed, may this  
 avail me.  
 May no nightmare disturb me, no powerful enemy  
 oppress me,  
 may nothing dreadful ever befall my life.  
 But may the Almighty, the Son and the Holy Ghost,  
 the Lord worthy of all honour,  
 as I have heard, the Creator of heaven, save me.  
 Abraham and Isaac and such men,  
 Moses and Jacob and David and Joseph,  
 and Eve and Anne and Elizabeth,  
 Zacharias and also Mary, the mother of Christ,

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<sup>7)</sup> Toller, *A.S.D., Suppl.*, Additions and Corrections, s. v. *bredel*.

and eac þæ gebroðru Petrus and Paulus,  
and eac þusend þira engla,  
clipige ic me to are wið eallum feondum.  
20 Hi me ferion and friþion and mine fore nerion,  
eal me gehealdon, me <sup>3)</sup> gewealdon,  
worces stirende. Si me wuldres hyht  
hand ofer heafod, haligra rof,

sigerofra sceole <sup>4)</sup>, soðfæstra <sup>5)</sup> engla.  
25 Biddu ealle bliðu mode  
þæt me beo hand ofer heafod,  
Matheus helm, Marcus byrne,  
leoht lifes rof, Locas min swurd,  
30 scearp <sup>6)</sup> and scirecg, scyld Iohannes,  
wuldre gewlitegod, wega Serafhin.  
Ford ic gefare, frind ic gemete,  
eall engla blæd, eadiges lare.

Bidde ic nu sigeres <sup>7)</sup> Godes miltse god  
35 sidfæt godne, smylte and lihte  
wind wereþum. Windas gefran  
circinde wæter. Simbli gehæled <sup>8)</sup>  
wið eallum feondum, freond ic gemete wið,  
þæt ic on þis ælmihtian <sup>9)</sup>, on his frið wunian mote,  
belocen wiþ þa laþan, se me lyfes eht,  
40 on engla blæd <sup>10)</sup> gestapelod,  
and inna halre hand hofna rices blæd,

þa hwile þe ic on þis life wunian mote. Amen.

*MS. CCC. 41, Cambridge, pp. 350-353 (11th century).*

The difficulties presented by the Journey-charm are mostly of a textual nature; they are due to the corrupt state of the text and, to a less degree, to the fact that it is almost impossible to decide

<sup>3)</sup> MS. men.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. sceote.

<sup>5)</sup> MS. soðwæstra.

<sup>6)</sup> MS. scerap.

<sup>7)</sup> MS. sigere.

<sup>8)</sup> MS. gehaleþe.

<sup>9)</sup> MS. ælmihtian.

<sup>10)</sup> MS. engla bla blæd.



Such a number defeats its own purpose. Several irregular forms are doubtless due to the transition from O.E. into M.E., and to the fact that the actual changes were ahead of the spelling.

The magical atmosphere of the charm is restricted to the beginning (ll. 1-9) and the Christianization is almost complete. From the point of view of magic, the charm should be placed further down the list, but I have put it here because it has a fairly well-developed Anglo-Saxon charm formula, which though late, is original. It is a typical instance of the change that has come over magic. The intensity and the emotional depth of the magical atmosphere which we met with in the preceding charms has given way to another emotional atmosphere, namely that of popular religion, and the forces evoked by performing magical actions and pronouncing magical words have been replaced to a large extent by the power of God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Some great figures of the Old and New Testaments are called upon for help, they are not compelled to produce a result. If the man who says this charm is convinced of its success, the reason is no longer that, as a magician, he dominates outside forces by his own qualities, his own mastery, but because the force to which he addresses himself has invited him to pray. In OHG. and OS. we find a number of journey-charms that are fully Christian in wording and atmosphere and, if it had not been for this one, we might be inclined to suppose that this sort of charm was a Christian invention. Some characteristic phrases of the O.E. charm return on the continent. A 14th-century OS. charm<sup>12)</sup> begins: 'Heute ich us ge, min engil mit myr geyn, dry myn waldyn, dry mych behalden', etc. In the Engelberg Charm, printed by Grimm<sup>13)</sup>, St. Michael is N's shield and spear, Our Lady, the Holy Mary, is his coat of mail.

The form of the O.E. charm is even looser than what we have met with so far. Its metrical weakness is only partly due to the inability of the revisor to attain the right form, but the verse-form itself is changing. There is still a great deal of alliteration, but we also find the beginning of rhyme, if only inside a line:

Hi me ferion . . . and mine fore nerion,  
call me gehealdon, me gewældon (ll. 20-21).

Saharie and ec Marie (l. 16).

The alliteration loses its structural character and tends to steri-

<sup>12)</sup> *ZfdA* XXIX, 1885, p. 348.

<sup>13)</sup> Grimm III, p. 494.

lize into short phrases and parallel expressions:

- |                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| wordsiges and worcsiges, se me dege   | (l. 7).  |
| and eac þæ gebroðru Petrus and Paulus | (l. 17). |
| hand ofer heafod                      | (l. 26). |

The charm is sung against various dangers that may befall a traveller: the stich of small insects and the bite of snakes, both the instruments of evil spirits (l. 2). It is effective against horrible apparitions, frightening lonely travellers. It is good 'against the mighty terror that is hateful to everybody and against the evil thing that invades the land' (ll. 4-5). The defence against these dangers was the rod or staff by which the charmer protects himself and the charm he sings. Cockayne ventured the suggestion that *gyrd* stood for a cross. He did not say in what function it was used: whether it only served to bless the traveller before he started on his journey or whether it was a missionary's staff and had a small side-bar to give it the form of a cross. The half-line that follows, 'and I commend myself to God's grace', is an argument in favour of a Christian interpretation. On the other hand, all the evils to be warded off are of secular, pagan, magical character and the verb *belucan* suggests a definitely pagan magical action. The charmer encloses, surrounds himself by a staff. The interpretation is that he inscribes a line in the sand by which he is enclosed, for the line is a magical wall that no insect, snake or evil spirit is able to cross. A parallel is found among primitive tribes who draw a picture of a wild animal in the sand and surround this by a circle to indicate that the animal is already caught, for it cannot cross the magical fence. Here it is just the other way about and the spirit cannot get into the circle. In this pagan part of the charm the magician is not a supplicant, he is a wielder of power and exultantly he exclaims: 'A victory charm I sing, a victory rod I carry, victorious in word, victorious in deed' (ll. 6-7). The Christian invocations that make up the greater part of the charm have caused the subjunctive-optimative forms of the verbs in ll. 8-9: 'May no nightmare disturb me, no powerful enemy oppress me, may nothing dreadful ever befall my life'. All the rest of the charm is in this strain, it is entreating, imploring, it owes its effect to religious convictions: May the Almighty, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the glorious Lord, the Creator of heaven save me. Abraham and Isaac, Moses and Jacob, David and Joseph, Eve, Anne and Elizabeth, Zacharias and Mary, the



'brothers' Peter and Paul, and a thousand angels are invoked to help. Matthew will be his helmet, Mark his coat of mail, Luke his sword and John his shield. Thus armed he can safely undertake the journey, for no fiends will be able to harm him. Being friends with the saints and living in the peace of the Lord, he is secure against the evil one who seeks his life. Compare St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians VI, 13-17: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be

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No. 17. [WIÞ ÆLFADLE OÞE ÆLFSOGOÞAN].

- A Wid ælfadle. Nim bisceopwyr, finul, elehtre, ælfþonan niþo-  
 wearde, and gehalgodes Cristes mæles ragu and stor, do ælcra  
 handfulle. Bebind ealle þa wyrta on claþe, bedyp on font-wætre  
 gehalgodum þriwa.
- 5 Læt singan ofer III mæssan, ane *Omnibus Sanctis*, oþre *Contra  
 Tribulationem*, þridan *Pro Infirmis*.  
 Do þonne gleda an gledfæt and lege þa wyrta on. Gerec þone  
 man mid þam wurtum ær undern and on niht.  
 And sing *Letania* and *Credan* and *Pater Noster*.
- 10 And writ him Cristes mæl on ælcum lime.  
 And nim lytle handfulle þæs ilcan cynnes wyrta, gelice gehal-  
 gode, and wyl on meolce; dryp þriwa gehalgodes wætres on and  
 supe ær his mete.  
 Him bið sona sel.
- 15 B Wid þon ilcan. Gang on þunres æfen, þonne sunne on setle sie,  
 þær þu wite elenan standan.  
 Sing þonne *Benedicite* and *Pater Noster* and *Letanian*.  
 And sting þin seax on þa wyrte. Læt stician þær on, gang þe  
 aweg.
- 20 Gang eft to þonne dæg and niht furþum scade. On þam ilcan  
 uhte gang ærest to ciricean, and þe gesena and Gode þe bebed.

able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

Some emendation is necessary in ll. 33-36. *Windas gefran circinde wæter* is the greatest difficulty. I have accepted Schlutter's interpretation: 'I have heard of winds that keep the sea in a turmoil' <sup>14</sup>). *Circinde* is taken as a *k*-derivation to *cierran*, 'to turn'. As an alternative Skemp <sup>15</sup>) suggests *cercinde*, to O.E. *cercian*, *cearcian*, 'to gnash, to crash': 'I have heard of winds and roaring waters'. Their meaning in the context is the same, they are contrasted with the light and calm wind that is wanted and represent the dangers of a sea-voyage.

[AGAINST ELF-SICKNESS OR ELF-DISEASE].

**A** Against elf-sickness. Take bishop's wort, fennel lupine, the lower part of enchanter's nightshade, and lichen from a hallowed crucifix and incense, take a handful of each. Tie all the herbs in a cloth and dip them three times into hallowed baptismal water.

Have three Masses sung over them, one *Omnibus Sanctis*, the second *Contra Tribulationem*, the third *Pro Infirmis*.

Then put live coals in a chafing dish and lay the herbs on them. Smoke the man with those herbs before 9 a.m. and at night.

And sing the Litany and the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

And inscribe the sign of the cross on each limb.

And take a small handful of herbs of the same sort, hallowed in the same way, and boil them in milk; drop a little hallowed water on them three times and let him take some of it before his food.

He will soon be better.

**B** Against the same. Go on Wednesday evening, when the sun is set, to a spot where you know that elecampane is growing.

Then sing *Benedicite* and *Pater Noster* and the Litany.

And thrust your knife into the herb. Leave it sticking there, go away.

Go back to that spot, just as night and day divide. On that same morning [before daybreak] you must go to church and cross your-

<sup>14</sup>) *Anglia* XXXI, 1907, p. 58.

<sup>15</sup>) *M.L.R.* VI, 1911, p. 296.

Gang þonne swigende and þeah þe hwæthwega egeslices ongean cume oþþe man ne cwep þu him ænig word to, ær þu cume to þære wyrte þe þu on æfen ær gemearcdest.

- 25 Sing þonne *Benedicite* and *Pater Noster* and *Letania*.  
 Adelf þa wyrnt, læt stician þæt seax þær on.  
 Gang eft swa þu rapost mæge to ciricean, and lege under weofod mid þam seaxe. Læt licgan oþ þæt sunne uppe sie.  
 Awæsc sippan, do to drence, and biseopwyrnt and Cristes mæles  
 30 ragu, awyl þriwa on meolcum. Geot þriwa halig wæter on.

Sing on *Pater Noster* and *Credan* and *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, and sing on hine *Letania*. And hine eac ymbwrit mid sweorde on IIII healfa on cruce.

- And drince þone drinc sippan.  
 35 Him biþ sona sel.

C Eft wiþ þon. Lege under weofod þas wyrte, læt gesingan ofer VIII mæssan: recels, halig sealt, III heafod cropleaces, ælfþonan niopewearde, elenan.

- Nim on morgen scenc fulne meoluce. Dryp þriwa haliges wæteres on. Supe swa he hatost mæge, ete mid III snæda ælfþonan.  
 40

And þonne he restan wille, hæbbe gleda þær inne. Lege stor and ælfþonan on þa gleda, and rec hine mid þæt he swæte, and þæt hus geond rec.

And georne þone man gesena.

- 45 And þonne he on reste gange, ete III snæda eolenan and III cropleaces and III sealtas. And hæbbe him scenc fulne ealað. And drype þriwa halig wæter on. Besupe ælce snæd. Gereste hine sippan.

Do þis VIII morgenas and VIII niht.

Him bið sona sel.

- 50 D Gif him biþ ælfsogoða, him beoþ þa eagan geolwe þær hi reade beon sceoldon.

Gif þu þone mon lacnian wille, þænc his gebæra and wite hwilces hades he sie. Gif hit biþ wæpned man and locað up þonne þu hine ærest sceawast, and se andwlita biþ geolwe blac, þone mon þu

self and commend yourself to God. Then go in silence, and if you meet something dreadful or a man, do not speak any word to them, until you come to the herb which you had marked on the previous evening.

Then sing *Benedicite* and *Pater Noster* and a *Litany*.

Dig up the herb, leave the knife sticking in it.

Go back to church as quickly as possible, and lay it under the altar with the knife. Let it lie until the sun has risen.

Wash it afterwards, make it into a drink, together with bishop's wort and lichen from a crucifix, boil them three times in several kinds of milk. Pour holy water on them three times.

Sing on them *Pater Noster* and *Credo* and *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, and sing the *Litany* on him (the patient).

And also inscribe a cross about him on four sides with a sword. And let him drink the draught afterwards.

He will soon be better.

**C** Against the same again. Lay these herbs under the altar, have nine Masses sung over them: incense, holy salt, three head of garlic, the lower part of enchanter's nightshade, elecampane.

In the morning take a cupful of milk. Drop a little holy water on it three times. Let him sup it as hot as he can, and eat three slices (of bread) with enchanter's nightshade with it.

And when he goes to rest, let him have live coals in there (i.e., the room where he sleeps). Put incense and enchanter's nightshade on the coals, and smoke him with it so that he sweats, and smoke the whole house.

And make the sign of the cross reverently on that man.

And when he goes to rest, let him eat three slices (of bread) with elecampane and three with garlic and three with salt. And let him have a cupful of ale. And drop holy water into it three times. Let him swallow every slice. Let him rest afterwards.

Do this on nine mornings and nine nights.

He will soon be better.

**D** If anybody has got elf-disease, his eyes are yellow where they should be red.

If you wish to cure that person, observe his conduct and know of what sex he is. If it is a man and he looks up when you see him for the first time, and his complexion is yellowish pale, then you can

meaht gelacnian æltæwlice, gif he ne biþ þær on to lange. Gif hit  
 biþ wif and locað niþer þonne þu hit ærest sceawast, and hira and-  
 wlita biþ reade wan, þæt þu miht eac gelacnian. Gif hit bið dæg-  
 þerne leng on þonne XII monað and sio onsyn biþ þyslicu, þonne  
 60 meaht þu hine gebetan to hwile, and ne meaht hwæþere æltæwlice  
 gelacnian.

Writ þis gewrit:

Scriptum est rex regum et dominus dominantium.  
 byrnice. beronice. lurlure. iehe. aius. aius. aius. Sanc-  
 65 tus. Sanctus. Sanctus. dominus deus Sabooth. amen.  
 alleluiah.

Sing þis ofer þam drence and þam gewrite:

Deus omnipotens, pater domini nostri Jesu Cristi, per  
 inpositionem huius scriptura expelle a famulo tuo N.  
 70 omnem impetuum castalidum de capite, de capillis,  
 de cerebro, de fronte, de lingua, de sublingua, de gut-  
 tore, de faucibus, de dentibus, de oculis, de naribus,  
 de auribus, de manibus, de collo, de brachiis, de  
 corde, de anima, de genibus, de coxis, de pedibus, de  
 75 conpaginibus omnium membrorum intus et foris.  
 Amen.

Wyrç þonne drenc: fontwæter, rudan, salvian, cassuc, dracon-  
 zan, þa smeþan wegbrædan niþewearde, feferfugian, diles crop,  
 garleaces III clufe, finul, wermod, lufestice, elehtre; ealra emfela.

80 Writ III crucem mid oleum infirmorum, and cweð:

Pax tibi.

Nim þonne þæt gewrit, writ crucem ofer þam drince, and sing  
 þis þær ofer:

Deus omnipotens, pater domini nostri Jesu Cristi, per  
 85 inpositionem hius scriptura et per gustum huius ex-  
 pelle diabolium a famulo tuo N.

And *Credo* and *Pater Noster*.

Wæt þæt gewrit on þam drence and writ crucem mid him on  
 ælcum lime and cweð:

90 Signum crucis Christi conserva te in vitam eternam.  
 Amen.

cure him completely, if he has not been suffering from it too long. If it is a woman and she looks down when you see her for the first time, and her complexion is reddish pale, that you can also cure. If the patient has suffered a day's space longer than a year and his appearance is such, then you can improve his condition for a while, yet you cannot cure him completely.

Write this writing:

Scriptum est rex regum et dominus dominantium.  
byrnice. beronice. lurlure. iehe. aius. aius. aius. Sanctus. Sanctus. Sanctus. Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Amen.  
Alleluiah.

Sing this over the drink and the writing:

Deus omnipotens, pater domini nostri Jesu Christi, per impositionem huius scripturae expelle a famulo tuo N. omnem impetum castalidum de capite, de capillis, de cerebro, de fronte, de lingua, de sublingua, de guttore, de faucibus, de dentibus, de oculis, de naribus, de auribus, de manibus, de collo, de brachiis, de corde, de anima, de genibus, de coxis, de pedibus, de compaginibus omnium membrorum intus et foris.  
Amen.

Then make a drink: baptismal water, rue, sage, hassock, dragon wort, the lower part of the smooth waybread, feverfew, a head of dill, three cloves of garlic, fennel, wormwood, lovage, lupine, equal quantities of each.

Write three crosses with the oil of extreme unction and say:

Pax tibi.

Then take the writing, describe a cross with it over the drink, and sing this over it:

Deus omnipotens, pater domini nostri Jesu Christi, per impositionem huius scripturae et per gustum huius expelle diabolum a famulo tuo N.

And *Credo* and *Pater Noster*.

Wet the writing in the drink and write a cross with it on each limb and say:

Signum crucis Christi conserva te in vitam eternam.  
Amen.

Gif þe ne lyste, hat hine selfne oþþe swa gesubne swa he gesib-  
 host hæbbe, and senige swa he selost cunne.

Þes cræft mæg wiþ ælcra feondes costunge.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, ff. 123b-125a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

The entire charm consists of four parts, marked A, B, C, D, in our text; they are more or less independent, but I have grouped them together because they all serve the same purpose and because they are written down without a break in the manuscript. *Sogoda* is a form that is related to *suht*, which occurs only once, in a passage that appears to be of OS. origin. Both mean 'sickness, disease', and Cockayne's translation 'hiccough', accepted by Grendon and Toller, is none too certain. All of them show strong Christian influence and they are without a vernacular formula. Elves are spirits, and to a newly-converted Anglo-Saxon they are evil spirits, of course, because the good spirits were the angels and the souls of saints in heaven. A remedy against elf-disease consequently needed a religious, Christian stamp. It is not possible in this case to decide in how far the christianisation was a matter of additions and in how far it was a question of replacements.

The lack of a vernacular formula raises the problem of A.-S. tradition or classical borrowing (cf. Ch. V), so that we have to weigh all the arguments that are in favour of A.-S. tradition or that are against it.

1. It is neither definitely Anglo-Saxon, for it has no vernacular formula, nor definitely classical, for it does not occur in a classical medical treatise.

2. Many of the plants occurring in the text are only known by Latin or Greek names, but a Greek name does not prove that the plant did not exist in Italy or Northern Europe, and a Latin name does not prove that the Romans brought the plant to England. The mere name of a herb without any other evidence has not much value as a criterion. Alongside such Latin names as *elene*, *elehtre*, *bisceopwyr*t, *finul* we find Germanic words such as *ragu*, *ælfþone*, *cropleac*, *wermod*.

3. The gathering, preparation and administering of medicinal herbs was accompanied by magical actions and words in Germanic countries, as appears from the *Nine Herbs Charm* and several

If you do not like to do this, tell the man himself or the relative that is nearest related to him to do so, and let him make the sign of the cross as best he can.

This remedy is powerful against every temptation of the fiend.

.....

laws: "It is not allowed . . . to gather herbs with no charm, except the Our Father and the Creed, or with some prayer that pertains to God" <sup>1)</sup>).

4. Nearly every prayer is decidedly Christian in origin, with the exception of ll. 68-76, which contain an enumeration of parts of the body:

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, drive out every attack of mountain-spirits from your servant N., by the imposition of this writing, from the head, the brains, the forehead, the tongue, from under the tongue, from the upper and lower part of the throat, from the teeth, the eyes, the nose, the ears, the hands, the neck, the arms, the heart, the soul, the knees, the hips, the feet, the joints and all limbs outside and inside. Amen.

Such an enumeration is characteristic of magic in general, not only of Celtic magic, as Grendon supposes <sup>2)</sup>). There is nothing typically classical in it, neither in contents nor in form, and it can be made up by every magician. It is possible, however, that the formula was found somewhere in this form, and the mention of the mountain-elves, 'castalides', led to its insertion as a cure for elf-disease.

4. 'Elves' was the general name for spirits among the Germanic peoples. They are either good or bad spirits, they help or hurt. In this charm they are supposed to have caused the disease, so they are regarded as evil spirits. Such a disease is not mentioned in classical sources, which likewise abound in spirits. When the elves refer to spirits mentioned in classical mythology we usually, though not exclusively, find the feminine form *-ælfen*, *-elfen* <sup>3)</sup>):

dunelfen — castalides

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<sup>1)</sup> *Poenitentiale Pseudo-Ecgberti*, ed. by J. Raith in *Bibl. d. ags. Prosa*, vol. XIII, p. 30.    <sup>2)</sup> Grendon, p. 225.    <sup>3)</sup> See A.S.D. s. v. *ælf*, *ælfen*.



feldelfen — moides  
 muntælfen — oreades  
 sæælfen — naiades  
 wuduælfen — dryades  
 wyldeelfen — hamadryades  
 wæterælfen — nympha

6. The use of *ælfbone* against *ælfadl* is typically A-S., and the use of 'lichen from a cross' has superseded 'lichen from a hazel-tree'<sup>4)</sup> or 'lichen from a sloe-thorn'<sup>5)</sup>.

7. The use of steam and steam-baths is typical of classical medicine, but the use of smoke to drive out the disease-spirit seems to be Germanic. Charm No. 41 advises us to apply the smoke of certain herbs against lung-disease of cattle, in combination with five crosses of hassock-grass set up on the four sides of the animals and one in the middle. Charm No. 24 applies it against the sudden death of pigs, also in combination with the four sides:

'Sing four Masses over them, drive them to the fold, hang the herbs on four sides and on the door, burn them, add incense, and let the smoke go over them'.

The reference to the four sides of heaven, with one in the middle, is certainly Anglo-Saxon (cf. No. 8; 11-14), so that we may infer that the use of smoke in combination with the four sides is also Anglo-Saxon.

8. Washing of writings in water, and drinking the water to absorb the power that was in the writing, is of relatively late origin, because the art of writing was learned from the peoples living on the shores of the Mediterranean. There is no reason, however, to assume that the text under discussion was borrowed from a classical author, for the borrowing of the art of writing is much older than the works of Marcellus Empiricus or Alexander of Tralles. The custom is also found among North-Germanic peoples:

Allar vóro af skafnar, þær er vóro á ristnar,  
 ok hverfðar við inn helga miqð,  
 ok sendar á víða vego;  
 þær ro með ásom, þær ro með álfom,  
 sumar með visom vqnom,  
 sumar hafa menzkir menn<sup>6)</sup>.

<sup>4)</sup> Leechbook I, xxxviii, 8.

<sup>5)</sup> Leechbook I, lxxviii.

<sup>6)</sup> *Sigrdrifa* 18.

'All (the runes) were shaved off, that were written on them, and mixed with the mead of salvation, and sent on wide journeys; they are with the gods, they are with the elves, some are with the wise Wanæs, some are with human beings'.

If the Icelanders washed off runes in beer and mead, we may assume that the Anglo-Saxons did so too. Washing off letters and runes in water may have been a further development of washing off plants in water, or of putting some chips of a plant or a branch in water and taking the chips together with the water.

9. Section B contains a detailed description of the way in which the herb elecampane must be gathered and administered: The charmer must go out on Wednesday evening, when the sun has set, so on a fixed day and at a fixed hour. When he comes to the spot where the herb grows, he must stick his knife into the plant and leave it there until the following morning. A number of actions have to be performed on the next day while it is still dark; he must go to church, cross himself and commend himself to God. Then he must go in silence, and even if he meets something dreadful or a man he must not speak a word until he comes to the spot he has marked the day before. Then after saying some prayers he must dig up the herb without removing the knife. Then he must go to church again as quickly as possible, lay the herb under the altar and leave it there until sunrise. Later on he must wash the herb, and make it into a drink, together with bishop's wort and lichen from a crucifix, and boil them all in several kinds of milk. Three times holy water is added. Again some prayers are said and the litany is sung over the patient. After making four crosses on the four sides of the patient by means of a sword, the latter must drink the mixture and he will soon be well.

So far we had only heard that the charmer or the person that executed his orders had to be silent, but now we are told some of the dangers that threaten him and prevent the success of his actions. Silence is necessary to obtain the concentration required by magic and to give an uncommon, ritual significance to every action. A charm is a unity, and everything said or done during its progress is part of that unity and assumes a ritual significance. Its magical atmosphere may be broken by words belonging to another sphere of action, such as the greeting of an acquaintance or the cry of fear at seeing something dreadful. The elf will try to disguise himself as a man or as a phantom in order to elicit some word and break the enchantment. In the charm against miscarriage (No. 10) the

charmer was enjoined to go by an open road, so that the spirit had no chance of surprising him from behind a tree or a bush. The prescription is in accordance with other A.-S. prescriptions of the same sort, and the instruction to make the sign of the cross on the four sides of the patient is only the Christianisation of a pagan A.-S. custom. It has the same function as was expressed by the verb *belucan* in the preceding charm, namely to build up a wall round about the patient which no evil spirit can cross.

The plural *meolcum* (l. 30) stresses another characteristic of magic in distinguishing it from the ordinary. It need not be milk of a cow of one colour, as in No. 10, but it must be milk of various animals, cows, goats and sheep, for instance.

The knife left sticking in *elecampane* delivers up the magical power of iron to the plant. The use of a knife against elves has been met with in No. 2, where it was supposed to have been forged by a mighty smith, thus attaining additional might. Iron as a magical expedient is known all over the world. It obtained its power from the mysterious way in which it first became known to man: as a component element of meteoric stones, strengthened by its incomprehensible quality of magnetism.

Summarising our analysis of the whole charm we see that there is little that points to a classical origin, whereas there are several indications of a decidedly Germanic origin, so that we are justified in assuming the Anglo-Saxon nature of this charm, with the exception possibly of section D. Taking into account the duration of the illness until the moment of the application of the cure is often met with in classical medicine, and all the formulas are of Christian or of pagan Latin origin. Though this section is the longest it is the least important, for it is also poor in magical actions. The

#### No. 18. SE HALGA DRÆNC.

Þis is se halga drænc wið ælsidene and wið eallum feondes costungum. Writ on husldisce:

In principio erat verbum usque non conprehenderunt  
et plura.

Et circumibat Jesus totam Galileam docens usque et  
secuti sunt eum turbe multe.

Deus in nomine tuo usque in finem

A.-S. origin of the rest is borne out by its place in the manuscript, for it occurs towards the end of the third book of the Leechbook, which is comparatively free of written classical tradition, and by the fact that it is immediately followed by the charm against water-elf disease (No. 5), whose A.-S. origin is proved by its vernacular formula.

In the incantatory formula of ll. 63-66 we meet for the first time with words that are completely unintelligible, because the A.-S. charm-singer did not understand the language in which they are written. *Aius*, *aius*, *aius* are evidently Greek and stand for ἄγιος ἄγιος, ἄγιος, but *byrnice*, *beronice*, *lurlure*, *iehe* are less clear. Cockayne is probably right in taking *byrnice*, *beronice* to mean Veronica, the woman who wiped Christ's face with a kerchief and who was rewarded by the image of Christ being imprinted on the kerchief. The repetition of the name shows that the charmer did not know this. Cockayne takes *iehe* to stand for I A O, i. e., Jaweh, but *lurlure* has remained unidentified. Charms No. 64-86 contain formulas that are partly or wholly unintelligible. Such formulas are all of foreign origin. We shall discuss them in connection with No. 64.

Ll. 92-93 say that if the doctor does not like to do it he must order the patient himself or his nearest relative to sing the charms and perform the actions. It is the only time I have ever come across such an injunction. Had ecclesiastical laws begun to have effect and did the doctor feel some qualms of conscience as a priest in using the hallowed oil of extreme unction for worldly purposes in singing secular charms (ll. 68-76) and in applying magical writings?

### THE HOLY DRINK.

This is the holy drink against tricks of elves and against every temptation of the fiend. Write on a paten:

In principio erat verbum usque non comprehenderunt et plura.

Et circumibat Jesus totam Galileam docens usque et secuti sunt eum turbae multae.

Deus in nomine tuo usque in finem.

Deus misereatur nobis usque in finem  
 Domine deus in adiutorium usque in finem.

Nim cristallan and disman and sidewaran and cassuc and finol,  
 10 and nim sester fulne gehalgodes wines.

And hat unmærne mon gefeccean swigende ongean streame  
 healfne sester yrnendes wæteres.

Nim þonne and lege ða wyrta ealle in þæt wæter, and þweah þæt  
 gewrit of ðan husldisce þær in swiðe clæne. Geot þonne þæt gehal-  
 15 gade win ufon on ðæt oþer.

Ber þonne <sup>1)</sup> to ciricean, læt singan mæssan ofer ane *Omnibus*,  
 oþre *Contra Tribulatione*, þridan *Sanctam Marian*.

Sing ðas gebed sealmas:

Miserere mei deus.  
 20 Deus in nomine tuo  
 Deus misereatur nobis.  
 Domine deus.  
 Inclina domine.

And Credo, and Gloria in excelsis deo, and letanias, Pater noster.

25 And bletsa georne in ælmihtiges drihtnes naman, and cwedð:

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti sit bene-  
 dictum.

Bruc syþþan.

*MS. Harley 585, ff. 137ab-138a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

This Holy Drink is a strange mixture of Christian and pagan elements. Christian is the use of the paten, of hallowed wine, and the saying of Masses and of prayers. Pagan is the washing off of writings into the drink and the manner in which water has to be drawn from a stream: it must be done in silence, by an immaculate person, i.e., a virgin, against the current. *Man* in OE. may mean a man or woman, hut there can be no doubt that a woman, a girl, is meant here. The masculine ending of *unmærne* is of no importance as the adjective takes its ending after the gender of the word *man*. *Wifman* is also masculine. *Unmæle* is only used with reference to

<sup>1)</sup> MS. þon.

**Deus misereatur nobis usque in finem.**

**Domine deus in adjutorium usque in finem.**

Take cristallium and tansy and zedoary and hassock and fennel, and take a jar full of hallowed wine.

And order an immaculate person silently to fetch half a jar of running water against the current.

Then take the herbs and lay them all in the water, and carefully wash the writing from the paten into it. Then pour the hallowed wine on top of the rest.

Carry it then to church and have Masses sung over them, one *Omnibus*, another *Contra Tribulationem*, a third in honour of St. Mary.

Sing these precatory charms:

**Miserere mei Deus.**

**Deus in nomine tuo.**

**Deus misereatur nobis.**

**Domine deus.**

**Inclina domine.**

And Credo, and Gloria in excelsis deo, and the litanies, Pater noster.

And diligently bless the drink in the name of the almighty Lord, and say:

**In nomine patris et filii et spritus sancti sit benedictum.**

Use it afterwards.

women and it is the usual adjective in connection with the Virgin Mary. For a discussion of the place of virgins in magic see Chapter IV, § 16.

The only hallowed wine known in the liturgy of the church is that consecrated together with the bread. In the later Middle Ages every detail of the Mass was deformed in the Black Mass, which was part of black magic and was said to blaspheme God and worship the devil. In Anglo-Saxon magic there is no question of blaspheming God, at any rate we have no indication of this, and the bread and the wine helped to chase away evil spirits, but the above custom undoubtedly helped to prepare later excesses.

## No. 19. [SEO HALIGE SEALF].

To haligre sealfe sceal betonican and benedicte, and hindhæleðe and hænep and hindebrer, isenhearde, salfige and safine, bisceopwyr̃t and boðen, finul and fifleafe, healswyr̃t and hune, mucwyr̃t, medewyr̃t and mergelle, agrimonis and æðelferðingwyr̃t, rædic  
 5 and ribbe and seo reade gearuwe, dile, oportanie, dracanse, cassoc and cawlic, cyleðenie and wyrrind, weax, wudurofe and wrættes cið, saturege and sigelhweorfa, brunewyr̃t and rude and berbene, streawberian wise and blæces snegles dust, ealhtre, fanan, merce, pollegian, attorlaðe, haranspicel, wudufille, wermod, eforþrote,  
 10 ænglisc cost, hæwene hnydele, vica pervica, feverfuge, hofe, cymen and lilige, levastica, alehsandrie, petresilige, grundeswylige; þysra feor wyr̃ta man sceal mæst don to, and eallra oðra ælcere efenfela.

And ðus man sceal ða buteran gewyrcean to ðære haligan sealfe:  
 15 æt anes heowes <sup>1)</sup> cy, þæt heo sy eall read oðð hwit and unmæle, mon ða buteran adwere, and gif ðu næbbe buteran genoge, awæsc swiðe clæne, mængc oðre wið. And ða wyr̃ta ealle gescearfa swiðe smale tosomne, and wæter gehalga fonthalgunge, and do ceac innan in ða buteran.

20 Genim þonne ænne sticcan, and gewyr̃c hine feðorbyrste, writ onforan ðas halgan naman:

Matheus, Marcus, Lucas, Iohannes.

Styre þonne mid ðy sticcan ða buteran eal þæt fæt.

Ðu sing ofer ðas sealmas *Beati immaculati* ælcne ðriwa ofer, and  
 25 *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, and *Credo in Deum Patrem*, and letanias arime ofer, þæt is <sup>2)</sup> ðara haligra naman, and *Deus meus et pater et In principio*, and þæt wyr̃mgealdor and þis gealdor singe ofer:

Acre, acre arnem nona ærnem beoðor ærnem nidren  
 acrun cunað ele harassan fidine.

30 Sing ðis nygon siðan, and do ðin spatl on, and blaw on, and lege ða wyr̃ta be ðæm ceace and gehalga hy syððan mæssepreost.

Singe ðas orationes <sup>3)</sup> ofer:

Domine sancte pater omnipotens eterne deus per in-

<sup>1)</sup> MS. heowe.    <sup>2)</sup> MS. his.    <sup>3)</sup> MS. orationis.

## THE HOLY SALVE.

Into the making of a holy salve go betony, benedict and water-agrimony, and hemp and a raspberry plant, ironhard, sage and savine, bishop's wort and rosemary, fennel and cinquefoil, 'neck-wort' and horehound, mugwort, meadowsweet and gentian, agrimony and bird's tongue, radish and hound's tongue and the red yarrow, dill, southernwood, dragonwort, hassock and cabbage, celandine and myrtle bark, wax, woodruff and a sprout of cross-wort, savory and heliotrope, brownwort and rue and vervain, a strawberry stalk and powder of a black snake, lupine, fane, marche, pennyroyal, 'venom-loather', viper's bugloss, wild chervil, wormwood, 'boarthroat', English costmary, the bluish brittanica, periwinkle, feverfew, hove, cummin and lily, lovage, alexander, parsley, groundsel; of these four plants you must take most and of the others in equal quantities.

And thus you must make the butter for the holy salve: churn the butter from milk of a cow of one colour, she must be completely red or white and without spots, and if you have not butter enough, wash it very clean and mix other butter with it. And cut all the herbs together into very small parts, and take water that has been hallowed for baptism, and put the butter in a jug.

Then take a stick, cut [one end] into four bristles and write these holy names in front:

Mattheus, Marcus, Lucas, Johannes.

Then stir the whole vat of butter with that stick.

Then sing these psalms over it three times each: *Beati immaculati . . .* and *Gloria in excelsis Deo* and *Credo in Deum Patrem*, and say the litany over it, that is, a list of those holy names, and *Deus meus et pater, et In principio*, and the worm-charm, and sing this charm over it:

Acre arcree arnem nona ærnem beoðor ærnem nidren  
acrun cunað ele harassan fidine.

Sing this nine times, and spit on it, and breathe on it, and lay the herbs by the jug and have them hallowed afterwards by a priest.

Have these prayers sung over them:

Domine sancte pater omnipotens aeterne deus per



35 positionem manum mearum refugiat inimicus diabolus a capillis, a capite, ab oculis, a naribus, a labis, a linguis, a sublinguis, a collo, a pectore, a pedibus, a calcaneis, ab universis confaginibus membrorum eis, ut non habet postestatem diabolus nec loquendi, nec tacendi, nec dormiendi, nec resurgendi, nec in die, nec in nocte, nec in tangendo, nec in somno, nec in gressu, nec in visu, nec in risu, nec in legendo, sed in nomine domini Jesu Christi, qui nos suo sancto sanguine redemit. Qui cum patre vivit et regnat deus in secula seculorum. Amen.

45 Domine mi, rogo<sup>4)</sup> te pater, te deprecor fili<sup>5)</sup>, obsecro te domine et spiritus sanctus ex totis viribus sancta trinitas, ut deleas<sup>6)</sup> omnia opera diaboli ab isto homine. Invoco sanctam trinitatem in adminiculum<sup>7)</sup> meum, id est patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum, converte domine istius hominis<sup>8)</sup> cogitationes et cor, ut confiteatur<sup>9)</sup> omnia mala sua et omnes iniquitates que habet<sup>10)</sup>, ut veniat omnia bona sua et voluntatem eius. Unde ergo maledicte recognosce sententiam<sup>11)</sup> tuam et da honorem deo et recede ab hoc famulo dei, ut pura mente deserviat consecutus gratiam.

55 Domine sancte pater omnipotens eterne deus, tu fecisti celum et terram et omnes ornatus eorum et omnes sancti spiritus angelorum exercitus<sup>12)</sup>, tu<sup>13)</sup> fecisti solem et lunam et omnia<sup>14)</sup> astra celi, tu fecisti Adam de limo terre et dedisti ei adiutorium Evam, uxorem suam, it est mater virorum, tu domine vivificasti nos super nomen sanctum tuum et liberasti nos a periculis malis super nomen filii Jesu Christi domini nostri, libera domine animam famuli tui N. et redde sanitatem corpori famuli tui N. per nomen sanctum tuum.

65 Domine sancte pater omnipotens eterne deus, rogamus te domine deus noster propter magnam miseri-

4) MS. rigo.

5) MS. filii.

7) MS. adminilum.

6) MS. delas.

8) MS. homines.

9) MS. confiteantur.

10) MS. abet.

11) MS. sentiam.

12) MS. excitus.

13) MS. de

14) MS. omni.

impositionem manuum mearum refugiat inimicus diabolus a capillis, a capite, ab oculis, a naribus, a labiis, a linguis, a sublinguis, a collo, a pectore, a pedibus, a calcaneis, ab universis compaginibus membrorum eis, ut non habeat potestatem diabolus nec loquendi, nec tacendi, nec dormiendi, nec resurgendi, nec in die, nec in nocte, nec in tangendo, nec in somno, nec in gressu, nec in visu, nec in risu, nec in legendo, sed in nomine domini Jesu Christi, qui nos suo sancto sanguine redemit. Qui cum patre vivit et regnat deus in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Domine mi, rogo te pater, te deprecor fili, obsecro te domine et spiritus sanctus ex totis viribus sancta trinitas, ut deleas omnia opera diaboli ab isto homini. Invoco sanctam trinitatem in adminiculum meum, id est patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum, converte domine istius hominis cogitationes et cor, ut confiteatur omnia mala sua et omnes iniquitates quae habet, ut veniat omnia bona sua et voluntatem eius. Unde ergo maledicte recognosce sententiam tuam et da honorem deo et recede ab hoc famulo dei, ut pura mente deserviat consecutus gratiam.

Domine sancte pater omnipotens aeterne deus, tu fecisti coelum et terram et omnes ornatus eorum et omnes sancti spiritus angelorum exercitus, tu fecisti Adam de limo terrae et dedisti ei adiutorium Evam uxorem suam, id est mater virorum, tu domine vivificasti nos super nomen sanctum tuum et liberasti nos a periculis malis super nomen filii Jesu Christi domini nostri, libera domine animam famuli tui N. et redde sanitatem corpori famuli tui N. per nomen sanctum tuum.

Domine sancte pater omnipotens aeterne deus, rogamus te domine deus noster propter magnam miseri-

70 cordiam tuam ut liberēs<sup>15)</sup> famulum tuum, et da honorem nomini tuo<sup>16)</sup> domine in secula seculorum. Amen.

75 Benedictio et sanctificata omnia atque benedicta depulsi atque obsecris vetustate hostis adque pretium facinora sincentoris insidiis salubriter et unis deum versaria solemnitate diversis terre edendis germinibus summamus. Per.

80 Sanctifica domine hunc fructum arborum ut qui ex eo vivimus simus sanctificati. Per.

85 Et circumibat Jesus totam Galileam docens in synagogis eorum et predicans evangelium regni, et sanans omnem languorem et omnem infirmitatem in populo. Sanat te deus pater omnipotens qui te creavit, sanat te fides tua qui te liberavit ab omni periculo. Christe ad vivos.

Deus meus et pater et filius<sup>17)</sup> et spiritus sanctus.

*MS. Harley 585, ff. 146b-151a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

*Halig* or holy, a word that nowadays always has religious associations, is related to *hal*, 'whole and wholesome', and the verb 'to heal'. It is health-giving. Its religious connotation was developed rather early, certainly before the coming of Christianity, and afterwards it became the normal and natural translation of Latin *sanctus* and *sacer*. In how far the frequency of the word *sanctus* in the Latin portion of the charm is due to this fact it is difficult to say. It is obvious that it suggested the saying of Christian prayers and the use of Latin, the language of the Christian liturgy.

The text, as it lies before us, is partly incomplete and partly expanded by additional matter. It is incomplete in as far as it does not clearly state what the purpose of the salve is, nor in what way the salve must be applied.

The magical character of the text is most clearly seen in ll. 14-21, where we are told how the butter for the salve is prepared. The importance of the butter becomes evident when we realize the close connection between *salve* and *butter*. *Sealf* is a Germanic word etymologically related to Gr. ἄλπη, ἄλπις, 'oil-flask', Albanian

<sup>15)</sup> MS. liberas.

<sup>16)</sup> MS. tui.

<sup>17)</sup> MS. filii. All these emendations were suggested by Cockayne.

cordiam tuam ut liberes famulum tuum et da honorem nomini tuo domine in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Benedictio et sanctificata omnia atque benedicta depulsi atque obsectis vetustate hostis adque pretium facinora sencentoris insidiis salubriter et unis deum versaria solemnitate diversis terrae edendis germinibus sumamus. Per.

Sanctifica domine hunc fructum arborum ut qui ex eo vivimus simus sanctificati. Per.

Et circumibat Jesus totam Galileam docens in synagogis eorum et predicans evangelium regni, et sanans omnem languorem et omnem infirmitatem in populo. Sanat te pater omnipotens qui te creavit, sanat te fides tua quae te liberavit ab omni periculo. Christe ad vivos.

Deus meus et pater et filius et spiritus sanctus.

*g'alpe*, 'butter', Sanskrit *sarpis*-, 'melted butter' <sup>18)</sup>. If the butter was to be a health-giving salve, it had to be churned from a cow of one colour, either completely red or white, and without spots. The compromise that other butter might be added, if one had not enough, is no doubt a later concession. Milk of a cow of one colour is found in No. 10.

After preparing the butter fifty-seven herbs are cut up very small and mixed with it. Most of these herbs bear Latin names or are of southern origin. They are arranged in alliterative groups, a fact that has not yet been noticed, but as Latin and OE. names are brought together for this purpose, the use of alliteration seems to be late, else we might have had a number of alliterating OE. plant names, followed by a number of alliterating or non-alliterating Latin names. The fact of the alliteration would have kept the original plant names together. The alliteration may simply have been a mechanical device for remembering all the names, and there is no reason to attach much magical significance to it. *Isenhearde* got its present place in the list because the *s* of the second syllable alliterates with the following *salfige* and *safine*, and the *h* of the

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<sup>18)</sup> Cf. Franck-van Wijk, *s. v.* *zalf*.

third syllable with the preceding *hænep* and *hindebrer*. The first conspicuous break in the alliteration is not so easy to explain: *dile*, *oportanie*, *dracanse*. *Oportane* is a corruption of *aprotane*, whose full name is *Artemisia Abrotanon*. Another herb of the genus *Artemisia* is *mucgwyr*, mentioned in line 3. Now *mucgwyr* stood for several plants, one of which is called *tagantes* (Herb. XII), in its turn a corruption of *tragantes* or *dracunculus*; and *dracunculus* is *dracanse*, the herb that immediately follows in the list and alliterates with *dile*. Other related plants in the list are *fane*, i.e., flower de luce or iris, and *lilige*; *petresilie*, parsley, and *alehsandrie*, alexander or Macedonian parsley, while *merce* may stand for *stanmerce*, another name for parsley; *agrimonis* and *hindhæleþe* or water-agrimony.

*Hæwene hnydele* occurs Herb. XXX as *hæwen hydele*. Botanists may like to compare the ingredients of the holy salve with those of the green salve (Lacn. 4):

Þis is seo grene sealf.

Betonica, rude, lufestice, finol, salvie, ædelferþingwyr, savine, helde, galluces moran, slarie, merce, cearfille, hræmnes fot, mugwyr, organa, melde, quinque folium, valeriane, clate, medewyr, dweorgedwoslan, pipeneale, solsequium, biscupwyr, hæsel, quice, hegeclife, grundeswylie, brocminte and opre mintas, cicena mete, gagem, hegehymele, cost, eorð nafala, hnutbeames leaf, lauberge, cymen, ele, weax.

Of the thirty-six plants or so that are mentioned at least seventeen are used in the holy salve and nearly all of them are of southern origin. But though the green salve is taken from the classics, the holy salve is not. The number of indigenous plants used in preparing it and the magical customs accompanying it are convincing proofs of its Germanic origin. In between the names of plants, on account of the alliteration, wax and the powder of a black snake are also mentioned as ingredients of the salve. Wax is often used in salves and it may have served as a means of binding the various elements together. The function of the black snake is not clear. The herbs are cut up, baptismal water is poured on the chips and everything is put in a jug together with the butter. Then the medicine man takes a stick. He makes two deep incisions into one end of the stick, so that we get four bristles and it is easier to mix the

herb chips thoroughly with the butter. On each bristle the holy name of an evangelist is written, and as the two incisions have the form of a cross, we find here the explanation of the expression *Cruz Mattheus*, etc., which is repeatedly met with in our charms (Cf. No. 8). The names of the evangelists themselves occur nearly always when the number four is mentioned for some reason.

The second part of the text throws over everything a Christian veil, which is not able, however, to hide the magical background. From l. 22 onwards we get Christian psalms and prayers. As the charm is incomplete so far, they probably replace some pagan prayers and customs. The first psalm, *Beati Immaculati* (Vulgate 118), consists of twenty-two stanzas. Each verse of each stanza begins with the same letter in the order of the Hebrew alphabet, and this artificial structure explains its insertion in a charm. *Gloria in excelsis Deo* is taken from the liturgy of the Mass. *Credo in Deum patrem* is the so-called Apostles' Creed, the present form of which dates from the 9th century or earlier. The litany, or list of holy names, is the litany of all saints (Cf. No. 8). *Deus meus* (Vulgate 17) is a psalm sung by David to thank the Lord for his deliverance from the hands of his enemies. It is a beautiful psalm describing the power and majesty of the Lord, so that we have the magical implication that the evil powers trying to harm the patient will tremble and fly away. Just as David was helped in the past so the man who sings this psalm and this charm will be helped. Then an Our Father is said and the beginning of the gospel of St. John.

I agree with Cockayne that the worm charm denotes the one in Lacn. 10, No. 73 of this edition. The gibberish charm that follows has baffled all editors. The words may be Celtic, Hebrew or Arabic. They recur several times in charms and form part of No. 70, 71, 72, 79, and it may help some reader to have them side by side:

Here we have:

acre arcre arnem nona ærnem beoðor ærnem nidren  
acrun cunað ele harassan fidine

No. 70:

....acre earcre arnem nonabiud ær ærnem nidren  
arcum cunad arcum arctua....

No. 71:

....arcre encrcrc erernem Nonabaioth arcum cunat  
arcum arcua....

No. 72:

....Arde et hercleno Abaioth Arcocugtia Arcu Arcua  
fulfura....

The spelling of Nonabaioth and Abaioth with a capital seems to imply that these words were taken as the names of higher beings. That all these charms mutually influenced each other is shown by the repetition of certain Latin phrases and of *Crux Matheus* etc. in 70, 71, 72, where there is no reason to call on the four evangelists. Conversely, they may give a clue to the explanation of the special function of the present charm. No. 70 is good against black ulcers, as is also the case with No. 71 and this may have led to the insertion of the black snake in l. 8 of No. 19. No. 72 is good against whitlow. Their contents point to poison and the bite of snakes. Ll. 33-44 of the present charm indicate that the holy salve was good against possession by evil spirits: *refugiat inimicus diabolus*. The formula also occurred in No. 17 (ll. 68-76), where there is no doubt about its purpose. Ll. 80-85 are referred to in No. 18 (ll. 4-5), which again serves against possession by elves, so that we may assume the same purpose here. If this solution is the right one and a salve was employed as a defence against evil spirits, there may have been some connection with the belief often met with in the Middle Ages that witches smeared a salve over their bodies before they took off on broomsticks. The existence of a holy salve may have led to the belief in, and the application of, an evil salve.

The magical practices of l. 30: 'spit on it and breathe on it' are very old. They are found all over the world and are based on the assumption of life-forces. The charm goes on where it had left off in l. 23: lay the herbs by the jug and have them hallowed by a priest.

No. 20. [SEALF WI|> ÆLFCYNNE].

Wyr̄c sealfe wið ælfcynne and nihtgengan and þam mannum þe deofol mid hæmð. Genim eowohumelan, wermod, bisceopwyr̄t, elehtre, æschrote, beolone, harewyr̄t, haransprecel, hæþbergean wisan, cropleac, garleac, hegerifan corn, gyþrife, finul.

5 Do þas wyr̄ta on an fæt, sete under weofod, sing ofer IX mæssan,

The only Christian elements in ll. 33-44 are the beginning and the end, and it is worth calling attention to l. 38: 'that the devil may have no power' etc., for power is the underlying idea of all magic.

In ll. 45-56 the stress falls on: *Unde ergo maledicte recognosce sententiam tuam et da honorem deo et recede ab hoc famulo dei.* The imperative mood leaves no room for doubt: 'Therefore, evil one, know your sentence and give honour to God and go away from this servant of God'.

In ll. 57-67 we get a magical comparison, parallel to the mythological stories of No. 9: You, Lord, have made Adam and Eve, and the sun, the moon and everything else, therefore You will show Your power again and restore this Your servant to health. — The phrase *mater virorum*, applied to Eve, is a repetition of the same phrase in No. 8, applied to the pagan deity Mother Earth.

In ll. 68-72 there is no magical connotation. The next lines do not make much sense, and then, in the final paragraph we get a verse from the gospel of St. Matthew (IX, 35) with its reference to the power of Christ, 'Who healed every sickness and every infirmity among the people'. Likewise 'the Almighty Father, Who created you, heals you, and your faith, which has liberated you from every danger, heals you'. Again the indicative mood is used expressive of a fact, though in this case it may also be a mistake for the subjunctive *sanet*: 'May the Almighty Father heal you'. As nearly all the Christian prayers in this charm have some magical significance there is a greater probability that the indicative was actually meant.

As a supplement to the preparation and application of this holy salve it is worth comparing 'a good bone salve which will be efficient against headache and weakness of all limbs' (See Ch. III).

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#### [THE ELF-SALVE].

Make a salve against the race of elves and against spirits walking about at night and against women with whom the devil has sexual intercourse. Take the female hop-plant, wormwood, bishop's wort, lupine, vervain, henbane, harewort, viper's bugloss, sprouts of heathberry, leek, garlic, seeds of cleavers, cockle, fennel.

Put the herbs in a vessel, set them under the altar, sing nine



awyl on buteran and on sceapes smerwe, do haliges sealtes fela on, aseoh þurh clað, weorp þa wyrta on yrnende wæter.

Gif men hwilc yfel costung weorþe, oþþe ælf oþþe nihtgengan, smire his andwlitan mid þisse sealfe, and on his eagan do and þær 10 him se lichoma sar sie. And recelsa hine and sena gelome.

His þing biþ sona selre.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 123ab (10th century) (Leechbook).*

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Elves were accused of causing all sorts of diseases, whose external symptoms were only the visible signs of possession by invisible spirits. Consequently two methods were employed to cure a patient. One was to make the symptoms disappear by the natural medical treatment, and another was to make things unpleasant for the elf and by forcing him to go away make the disease disappear. The latter method might be called supernatural, but there is no distinction in the minds of the people who try both methods. Neither is there a dividing line in the prescriptions we find. Spiritual temptations and, say, typhoid fever are ascribed to the same source and the same remedy will be good against both. Salves, drinks and charms are all on the same plane.

This salve is efficient against the race of elves, against evil spirits that roam about at night and against the evil influences and charms of women with whom the devil has sexual intercourse. In my discussion of the preceding charm I put forward a question whether witches smeared their bodies with salves before they flew

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No. 21. [WIÞ WENNUM].

Gif wænnas eglia mæn æt þære heortan, gange mædenman to wylle þe rihte east yrne, and gehlade ane cuppan fulle forð mid ðam streame, and singe þæron Credan and Pater noster.

And geote þonne on oþer fæt, and hlade eft oðre and singe eft Credan and Pater noster. And do swa þæt þu hæbbe þreo.

Do swa nygon dagas. Sona him bið sel.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 189a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

Masses over them, boil them in butter, and in sheep's fat, add a good quantity of holy salt, strain them through a cloth, throw the herbs into running water.

If a man has any evil temptations, or is troubled by elves or nocturnal spirits, smear his face with this salve, and put something on his eyes and where his body may be painful. And smoke him with incense and frequently make the sign of the cross on him.

His condition will soon be better.

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into the air. Here we see another indication that salves were used to ward off witches.

The herbs are put in a vessel, set under the altar and nine Masses are sung over them. So the space of time necessary to make the salve must have been considerable, because it must also have taken some time to gather the herbs. After this they are boiled in butter and sheep's fat. See No. 19 on the importance of butter in a salve. Then all the plants are strained through a cloth and the leaves and twigs that remain in the cloth are thrown into running water.

The third paragraph describes the application of the salve and it adds that the patient is smoked with incense. There is the influence of the Christian liturgy in the use of incense and in the many signs of the cross made on the sufferer, but there is also a pagan element in smoking out the elf. Smoke is employed in several instances to drive out evil spirits. (See No. 17).

The reassuring statement of l. 11 adds a touch of psychology by employing the powers of suggestion.

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#### [AGAINST TUMOURS].

If a man is troubled by tumours near the heart, let a girl go to a spring that runs due east, and let her draw a cupful of water moving with the current, and let her sing on it the Creed and an Our Father.

And let her pour it into another vessel, and draw up another again and sing the Creed and an Our Father again. And do so till you have three cups full.

Do so for nine days. He will soon be better.

Contrary to what we generally find the natural medical means of healing are absent. By these I understand salves or drinks applied to remove the tumour and the pain of the body. In this case it is probably due to the fact that the tumours were near the heart, that is inside, so that it was not possible to lay on a poultice of herbs and other ingredients. Instead the disease spirit is attacked by giving magical water to the patient: it must be drawn by a virgin from a stream that runs due east, and a special ritual has

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No. 22. [WI]þ YLFA GESCOTUM].

Gif hors ofscoten sie, nim þonne þæt seax þe þæt hæfte sie fealo hryþeres horn and sien III ærene næglas on.

Writ þonne þam horse on þam heafde foran Cristes mæl þæt hit blede; writ þonne on þam hricge Cristes mæl and on leopa  
5 gehwilcum þe þu ætfeolan mæge.

Nim þonne þæt winestre eare, þurhsting swigende.

þis þu scealt don: genim ane girde, sleah on þæt bæc, þonne biþ þæt hors hal.

And awrit on þæs seaxes horne þas word:

10                   Benedicite omnia opera domini dominum.

Sy þæt ylfa þe him sie, þis him mæg to bote.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 106a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

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Cockayne <sup>1)</sup> says about *ofscoten*: "Properly 'badly wounded by a shot', but specially used for 'elf-shot', the Scottish term, that is, dangerously distended by greedy devouring of green food". And: "The disease consists in an overdistension of the first stomach, from the swelling up of clover and grass, when eaten with the morning dew on it". He also quotes Carr's Craven Glossary: "When cattle are swollen they are said to be degbowed. I have frequently known a farmer to strike a sharp knife between the ribs and the hips, when the cow felt immediate relief from the escape of air through the orifice, so that the distended carcass instantly collapsed, and the excrements blown with great violence to the roof of the cow house".

<sup>1)</sup> Cockayne, Glossary to vol. II, p. 401.

to be followed in drawing it. The cup with which it is drawn must be moved with the direction of the current and some prayers have to be said before the next cup is taken. It is doubtful whether the movement with the current had any significance except that of contrasting it with the normal way, which was prescribed in No. 18. The stress falls on the methodical way in which everything has to be performed. The numbers three and nine are part of this method.

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[AGAINST ELF-SHOT].

If a horse is elf-shot, take that knife of which the handle is made from the fallow horn of an ox, and let there be three brass nails on it.

Then inscribe a cross on the forehead of the horse, so that blood flows from it; then inscribe a cross on the back of the horse and on all limbs into which you can prick.

Then take the left ear and pierce it in silence.

This you shall do: take a rod, beat the horse on the back, then it is cured.

And write these words on the horn of the knife:

Benedicite omnia opera domini dominum.

Whatever elf has taken possession of it, this will cure him.

The disease is frequent with cattle, and it occurs chiefly in spring and early summer, when the animals are apt to overeat on the green food. The curious nature of the disease led to the assumption of the influence of evil spirits (Cf. l. 11). On the other hand it is highly probable that the real reason was also known, as appears from the remedy quoted by Cockayne, though this remedy belongs to a much later date.

The text only speaks of horses, but the fact that the haft of the knife had to be covered with the fallow horn of a cow or an ox shows that it was originally intended for such animals. Like influences like. OE. *hryðer* is cognate with hart and horn and denotes horned cattle. The Leechbook <sup>2)</sup> gives two other remedies

<sup>2)</sup> Leechbook I, LXXXVIII, 2-3.

for elf-shot which are effective for horses and other cattle:

If a horse or other cattle are elf-shot, take dock seed and Scottish wax, have twelve Masses sung over them, and put holy water on the horse or whatever neat it may be. Have the herbs always with you.

For the same.

Take the eye of a broken needle and sting (the animal) with it behind in the barrel, no harm will come (from the disease).

The parallelism between the function of the needle and the use of the knife in Cockayne's quotation is so striking that we are justified in assuming the same function for the knife in our text. This natural remedy had a better chance of success, if the knife was prepared beforehand by magical ritual, and if the surgical operation was accompanied by magical proceedings. Therefore the haft of the knife must be made of a specified material and there must be three brass nails on it. A Latin inscription on the horn stresses its magic power, while giving it a Christian colouring. The words *Benedicite omnia opera domini dominum* occur in the hymn sung by the three Jewish youths Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago in the burning furnace of King Nabuchodonosor of Babylon (Daniel III, 51-90, Vulgate. Not in Authorized Version).

The medicine-man makes some crosses with the knife, first on the forehead, then on the back and then on other limbs. The magic purpose of this christianized rite was to draw blood. With the

### No. 23. [WI] LUNGENADLE].

Wip lungenadle hriðerum þa wyrte on wordigum: heo bið gelic hundes micgean ðære wyrte, þær wexed blaco bergean eal swa micele swa odre pysbeana; gecnuca, do in halig wæter, do þonne on muð þam hryperum.

Genim þa ylcan wyrte, do in glede, and finol and cassuc and godweb and recels. Bærn eal tosomne on ða healfe ðe se wind sy, læt reocan on ðone ceap.

blood the spirit is drawn out, as appears from No. 6: "Scarify the neck after sunset, silently pour the blood into running water and say: Have this disease and go away with it." At the same time it may have served to make things unpleasant for the spirit, as is certainly the case in the actions that follow. First the left ear is seized and pierced in silence and then the horse is struck on the back with a stick. Compare for this treatment an effective remedy against lunacy<sup>3)</sup>:

In case a man is insane. Take the skin of a porpoise, make a whip of it, and beat the man with it. He will soon be better.

Some reader of the manuscript apparently doubted the effect or disliked the method, for in a different hand we find the ironical addition: Amen.

A colourless Latin charm for the same disease is No. 47.

In the Dutch province of Limburg I have noted down a charm for a cow which is elf-shot (*Du. Voor een koe die opgelopen is*):

You must stroke her back saying:

Poor beast, are you elf-shot? (*Du. Gij arm dier zijt gij bevangen*).

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Make three crosses on her back while saying so, and say the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity and of Contrition; three times the Our Father and then again the Acts in honour of the Trinity.

#### [AGAINST LUNG DISEASE].

Against lung disease of cattle (is effective) the herb of this description: it resembles the herb hound's tongue, black berries grow on it as large as peas; pound it, put it in holy water, and then put it in the mouth of the cattle.

Take the same herb, put it on live coals, together with fennel and hassock and purple cloth and incense. Burn all of them together on the side of the wind, let the smoke go over the cattle.

<sup>3)</sup> Leechbook, III, xl.

Weorc Cristes<sup>1)</sup> mæl of cassuce fifo, sete on feower healfe þæs ceapes and an to middes.

Sing ymb þone ceap: ,

*Benedicam dominum in omni tempore usque in finem.*  
And *Benedicite* and Letanias and *Pater Noster*.

Stred on halig wæter, bærn ymb recels and godeweb.

And geeahlige mon ðone ceap, syle þone teoþan pænig for gode. Læt syþðan heotigean. Do ðus þriwa.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 177a, b. (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The lung disease against which this prescription is supposed to be effective may be pneumonia or consumption. The disease is caused by some elf and the remedy consists in administering an unknown herb and in smoking out the elf. The Christian elements are easy to recognise, but there are also some indications of a relation between the magic actions and a pre-Christian religion. Among the articles burned *godeweb* and *recels* stand out conspicuously. *Recels*, 'fragrant smoke', is a true Germanic word and not a translation of some Latin term, though after the introduction of Christianity it was used as the equivalent of *incensum*, *thus* and *myrrha*. It is connected with Du. *wierook*, Germ. *Weihrauch*, the first element of which is found in OE. *wigbed*, *weofod*, 'altar'. *Recels* is derived from the verb *recan*, 'to reek', which is not found outside the Germanic languages. Its religious function is borne out by *godeweb*, 'divine texture, purple cloth, fine linen'. In OE. it is used to denote, among other things, the altar pall, and the temple veil in Jerusalem<sup>2)</sup>. As purple seems to have been a favourite colour in religious ritual the adjective *godwebben* came to mean 'purple'. The word occurs in OS. *goduwebbi*, OFris. *godwob*, OIcel. *gudvefr*, OHG. *gotaweppi*. In the glossary to the edition of the Eddic poems Neckel<sup>3)</sup> suggested that *gudvefr* was the cloth by which the images of the gods were covered. The third indication is that the articles had to be burnt on the four cardinal points. In my discussion of No. 8 I have already called attention to the close relation between the cardinal points and the worship of the sun-god.

<sup>1)</sup> MS. *criste*.

<sup>2)</sup> See A.S.D. I & II, s. v. *godeweb*.

<sup>3)</sup> G. Neckel, *Edda*, vol. II, *Glossar*, Heidelberg, 1927, s.v. *gudvefr*.

Make five crosses of hassock, set them on four sides of the cattle and one in the middle.

Sing about the cattle:

*Benedicam dominum in omni tempore usque in finem.*  
And *Benedicite* and the Litany and *Pater Noster*.

Sprinkle holy water on them, burn incense and purple cloth round about them.

And have the cattle valued, give the tenth penny to God. Let them grow better. Do so three times.

The instruction to make five crosses of hassock grass and to place them on the four sides of the cattle with one in the middle served to define the spot that had to be blessed. The exact limitation of the spot preserved the full force of the charm and at the same time it prevented the elf from coming back. Therefore the charm words are also sung round about the cattle.

As four tufts of grass with one in the middle make up a cross, we get the christianization of the action in the five crosses. The Latin prayers are psalm 33 (Vulgate), followed by the hymn sung by the three Jewish youths in the furnace of Babylon, the litany of all saints and the Our Father. The use of holy water is not a Christian institution, and holy water was known before in pre-Christian religions, so in our case among the pagan Germanic peoples; it is a Christian substitute for dew. Burning incense and purple cloth round about cattle and sprinkling them with holy water are perfectly similar actions, the first of which is definitely to be regarded as pagan in origin.

This text is the only instance of a monetary payment being exacted for the cure of animals or the recovery of a patient. The tenth penny of the value of the cattle affected must have been a considerable sum, and it looks as if it has the nature of a voluntary offer of thanksgiving to God rather than of a charge for the services of a magician; it is a promise to pay a certain amount if the cattle recover, for it is followed by the instruction to leave the cattle alone for some time that they have a chance of growing well.

The proceedings must be repeated three times.



## No. 24. WIP SWINA FÆR STEORFAN.

Wid swina fær steorfan, do a in heora mete, seoð glidan, syle etan.

Nim eac elehtran, bisceopwyr̃t and cassuc, ðefeporn, hegerifan, haranspricel, sing ofer feower mæssan. Drif on fald, hoh ða wyr̃te on feower healfe and on þan dore, bærn, do recels to, læt yrnan ofer ðone rec.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 178a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The sudden and mysterious death of pigs was, of course, ascribed to elvish influence and the remedy consists in the attempts to drive out the elf by burning six herbs and letting the smoke go over the sick animals. In the preceding charm hassock was singled out, but here no special function is apparently marked out for it. Hassock seems,

## No. 25. WIP FLEOGENDAN ATTRE.

Wid fleogendan attre asleah IIII scarpan on feower healfa mid æcenan brande. Geblodga ðone brand, weorþ on weg.

Sing ðis on III:

5           ✕ Matheus me decað   ✕ Marcus me conservæð  
            ✕ Lucas me liberat   ✕ Iohannes me adiuvat semper.  
            Amen.

Contrive deus omnem malum et nequitiam per virtutem patris et filii et spiritus sancti<sup>1)</sup>.

10           Sanctifica me Emanuhel Iesus Christus, libera me  
            ab omnibus insidiis inimici.

Benedictio domini super caput meum.

Potens deus in omni tempore. Amen.

*MS. Harley 585, ff 174b, 175a (11th century) (Lacnunga)*

The exact nature of the disease is doubtful. Flying venom is generally supposed to stand for infectious disease, but the wording of this charm points to a particular spot as the seat of the disease.

<sup>1)</sup> *sancti* not in MS.

### AGAINST SUDDEN DEATH OF SWINE.

Against sudden death of swine always put this in their food: boil glide, give to eat.

Also take lupine, betony and hassock, buckthorn, cleavers, viper's bugloss, sing four Masses over them. Drive the cattle to the fold, hang the herbs on the four sides and on the door, burn them, adding incense, and let the smoke go over them.

however, to have had some special power, as it is used in several charms against elves (See No. 5, 17, 18, 19; etc.). The herbs were burnt on the four sides, which explains the four Masses, though the four sides themselves point to the worship of the sun. Cf. No. 8, 23.

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### AGAINST FLYING VENOM.

Against flying venom cut four incisions on the four sides with an oaken stick. Make the stick bloody, throw it away.

Sing this three times over it:

✕ Matheus me ducat ✕ Marcus me conservet ✕ Lucas  
me liberet ✕ Iohannes me adiuvet semper. Amen.

Contere deus omnem malum et nequitiam per virtu-  
tem patris et filii et spiritus sancti.

Sanctifica me Emmanuel Jesus Christus, libera me ab  
omnibus insidiis inimici.

Benedictio domini super caput meum.

Potens deus in omni tempore. Amen.

Another difficulty is the explanation of *brand*. Cockayne<sup>2)</sup> merely keeps the word. The A.S.D., Supplement, suggests the emendation *ærenan* for *æcenan* in order to keep the meaning *sword*. The emen-

<sup>2)</sup> l. c. III, p. 53.

dation is unnecessary as the ordinary meaning of the word will do. It is a 'piece of wood that is burning or intended for burning'. A small piece of wood, such as is normally used to light a fire with is sharpened a little bit. It cannot be a brass sword as these objects were too costly in A.-S. times to throw away.

The medicine-man makes four scarifications round the infected spot, catches the blood on the oaken stick with which he made the incisions and throws the stick away. With the blood the disease-spirit is drawn out (Cf. No. 6), and the stick is thrown away somewhere to prevent the spirit from returning or infecting anybody else. The Leechbook<sup>3)</sup> has a prescription against swellings that is worth comparing:

Wip onfealle. Genim æt fruman hæslenne sticcan  
oppe ellenne, writ þinne naman on, asleah þry scearpan  
on. Gefylle mid þy blode þone naman, weorp  
ofer eaxle oppe betweoh þeoh on yrnende wæter and  
stand ofer þone man. þa scearpan aslea and þæt eall

#### No. 26. WIÞ UTWÆRCE.

Wip utwærce, brembel þe sien begen endas on eorþan, genim þone  
neowran wyrtruman, delf up, þwit nigon sponas on þa winstran  
hand, and sing þriwa:

*Miserere mei deus.*

5 And nigon sipum *Pater Noster*.

Genim þonne mucgwyrt and efelastan, wyl þas þreo on meolcum  
oppæt hy readian. Supe þonne on neaht nestig gode blede fulle,  
hwile ær he oþerne mete þicge. Reste hine softe and wreo hine  
wearme.

10 Gif ma þearf sie, do eft swa; gif þu þonne git þurfe, do þridan  
siþe, ne þearft þu oftor.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 106a, b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

The magical function of this text depends on the exceptional nature of a bramble bush, whose shoots have taken root again, and on the way in which the prescription is prepared. The doctor who administers this remedy can be so certain of its effect that he need

<sup>3)</sup> Leechbook I, xxxix, 3.

swiginde gedo. (Against swellings. First take a stick of hazel or of elder wood, write your name in it, make three scarifications on the swelling. Fill the name with your blood and throw the stick over your shoulder or between your thighs into running water and stand over the man. Make the scarifications and do all this in silence).

The Latin prayers that follow in the charm text do not represent psalms or hymns but are complete in themselves. The four evangelists are mentioned because four incisions are made; for the explanation of the crosses before their names see No. 19. The forms of the verbs in ll. 4-5 may stand for the indicative or the subjunctive. Perhaps the writer or the copyist did not know the difference. They may be religious prayers for help or magical expressions of power. Ll. 8-9 show their magical nature in the use of the imperative and the last line is a threat rather than a mere statement.

#### AGAINST DYSENTERY.

Against dysentery, a bramble of which both ends are in the earth, take the newer root, dig it up, and cut nine chips on your left hand, and sing three times:

*Miserere mei deus.*

And nine times the Our Father.

Take then mugwort and everlasting and boil these three in several kinds of milk until they become red. Let him then sup a good bowl full of it fasting at night, some time before he takes other food. Make him rest in a soft bed and wrap him up warm.

If more is necessary, do so again; if you still need it then, do so a third time, it will not be necessary to do so more often.

not give it more than three times.

The natural way of curing the patient is also present in the advice to keep the man warm and make him rest softly.

*Miserere mei deus* is psalm 56 (Vulgate).

## No. 27. WIÞ LENCTENADLE.

Wermod, eoforþrote, elehtre, wegbræde, ribbe, cerfille, attor-  
lade, feferfuge, alexandre, bisceopwyrht, lufestice, salvie, cassue,  
wyrct to drence on welscum ealað, do haligwæter to and springwyrht.

Þis mon sceal writan on husdisce, and on þone drenc mid halig-  
5 wætere þwearn, and singan on:

+++++ A +++++ Ω +++++  
In principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum  
et deus erat verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud deum.  
Omnia per ipsum facta sunt.

10 Þweah þonne þæt gewrit mid haligwætre of þam disce on þone  
drenc. Sing þonne *Credo* and *Pater Noster* and þis leop:

*Beati immaculati* þone sealm, mid *Ad dominum* þam  
XII gebed sealmum.

15 Adiuo vos frigores et febres, per deum patrem omni-  
potentem et per eius filium Jesum Cristum, per ascen-  
sum et discensum salvatoris nostri, ut recedatis de hoc  
famulo dei et de corpusculo eius, quam dominus nos-  
ter inluminare instituit. Vincit vos leo de tribu iuda,  
radix David, vincit vos qui vinci non potest.

20 ✕ Cristus natus ✕ Cristus passus ✕ Cristus venturus  
✕ aius ✕ aius ✕ aius ✕ Sanctus ✕ Sanctus ✕ Sanctus.

In die salutiferis incedens gressibus urbes.  
oppida rura vicos castra castella peragrans.  
Omnia depulsis sanabat corpora morbis.

And þriwa þonne onsupe þæs wæteres swelces gehwæper þara  
mana.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 51a, b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

The function of the fourteen herbs of this charm is difficult to define. Most of them occur among the ingredients of the holy salve (No. 19), and hassock and lupine are frequently mentioned in remedies against elvish influences. Feverfew is added because of its supposed effect on fevers; bishop's wort because of its religious associations and, consequently, its power over spirits. It is uncer-

### AGAINST TYPHOID FEVER.

Wormwood, carline thistle, lupine, waybread, hound's tongue, chervil, the cock's spur grass, feverfew, alexander, bishop's wort, lovage, sage, hassock, work them into a drink in Welsh ale, add holy water and wild caper.

Write this on a paten, and wash it off into the drink with holy water, and sing over it:

+++++ A +++++ Ω +++++  
 In principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum  
 et deus erat verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud deum.  
 Omnia per ipsum facta sunt.

Wash with holy water the writing from the paten into the drink.

Then sing Credo and Pater Noster and this charm:

The psalm *Beati immaculati*, along with *Ad dominum* the twelve precatory psalms.

Adiuro vos frigora et febres per deum patrem omnipotentem et per eius filium Jesum Christum, per ascensum et descensum salvatoris nostri, ut recedatis de hoc famulo dei et de corpusculo eius, quem dominus noster illuminare instituit. Vincit vos leo de tribu Iuda, radix David, vincit vos qui vinci non potest.

✕ Christus natus ✕ Christus passus ✕ Christus venturus ✕ aius ✕ aius ✕ aius ✕ Sanctus ✕ Sanctus ✕ Sanctus.

Inde salutiferis incedens gressibus urbes,  
 Oppida, rura, casas, vicos, castella peragrans  
 Omnia depulsis sanabat corpora morbis.

And let either man partake of this same water then.

tain in how far springwort or wild caper is based on a connection between spring and lent, and in how far its sound suggested the buoyant cheerful spirits of a man who is on the way to recovery.

The form of the charm is largely Christianized but its atmosphere has remained pagan. Washing off words from a paten into a herbal drink and swallowing this drink afterwards is a frequent

device in magic. Writing itself was a form of magic power, the paten represents power, and the words derived power from their religious associations, their contents and their rhythm. Line 6 consists of Alpha and Omega, the first and the last letter of the Greek alphabet, representing God, the beginning and end of everything<sup>1</sup>). They are immediately followed by the beginning of the gospel of St. John, which states that God was the beginning of all. *Beati immaculati* is psalm 118 (Vulgate), consisting of twenty-two stanzas, each verse of the same stanza beginning with the same letter, and each stanza with a different letter. Ll. 14-23 are truly magical in spirit:

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No. 28. WIÞ DEOFLE AND UNGEMYNDE.

Wip deofle liþe drenc and ungemynde, do on ealu cassuc, elehtran moran, finul, ontre, betonic, hindheoloþe, merce, rude, wermod, nefte, elene, ælfþone, wulfes comb.

Gesing XII mæssan ofer þam drenc and drince.

5 Him biþ sona sel.

Drenc wip deofles costunga: þefan þorn, cropleac, elehtre, ontre, bisceopwyr, finul, cassuc, betonice, gehalga þas wyrta, do on ealu haligwæter.

And sie se drenc þær inne, þær se seoca man inne sie, and simle  
10 ær þon þe he drince, sing þriwa ofer þam drenc:

Deus in nomine tuo saluum me fac.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, ff. 125b, 126a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

The text falls into two more or less independent parts (ll. 1-5 and 6-11) which I have left together. They immediately follow each other in the manuscript, they have the same object, and line 8: *gehalga þas wyrta* is explained by line 4: *gesing XII mæssan ofer þam drenc*.

The magical element is conspicuous in *ælfþone* and *bisceopwyr* against *deofle*. Devil is the Christian name for a bad elf, and a plant that is associated with a bishop is the obvious means to drive

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<sup>1</sup>) *Apocalypse* I, 8; XXI, 6; XXII, 13.

I conjure you, cold and hot fevers, by God the Almighty Father, and by His Son Jesus Christ, by the ascension and descension of our Saviour, that you recede from this servant of God and from his body, whom our Lord resolved to brighten.

The lion from the tribe of Juda, the root of David, has conquered you, He Who cannot be conquered conquered you.

✕ Christ is born ✕ Christ has suffered ✕ Christ will come again.  
✕ ἅγιος ✕ ἅγιος ✕ ἅγιος ✕ Holy ✕ Holy ✕ Holy.

Therefore he went through the cities with salutary steps, wandering through towns, provinces, villages, houses and castles, he drove out the disease and healed all bodies<sup>2)</sup>.

### AGAINST THE DEVIL AND INSANITY.

A pleasant drink against the devil and against insanity. Put in ale hassock, lupine, carrot, fennel, radish, betony, water-agrimony, marche, rue, wormwood, cat's mint, elecampane, enchanter's nightshade, wild teazle.

Sing twelve Masses over the drink, and let the patient drink it. He will soon be better.

A drink against the temptation of the devil: buckthorn, garlic, lupine, radish, bishop's wort, fennel, hassock, betony, hallow these herbs, add holy water to the ale.

And let the drink be in the room where the patient is, and always before he drinks it, sing three times over the drink:

Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac.

out evil spirits. Hassock and lupine are regularly used against elves, and to a lesser extent the same is true of water-agrimony and fennel.

The charm is important because we hear that an incantation is uttered every time the drink is taken. The incantation itself is simple; it is in accordance with the pleasant character of the remedy, so different from smoking out the spirit or even beating it out.

<sup>2)</sup> Taken from Sedulius, *Carmen Paschale*, Lib. III, 23-25. Sedulius lived in the middle of the 5th century.



A parallel prescription occurs a little further on in the Leech-book (Book II, LXVIII):

A pleasant drink against madness. Lupine, bishop's wort, enchanter's nightshade, elecampane, garlic, water-agrimony, radish, burdock. Take these herbs when day and night divide.

Sing first in church the litany and the Creed and an

No. 29. WIP WAMBE WÆRCE.

Wip wambe-wærce and rysel-wærce. þær þu geseo tordwifel on eorþan upweorfan, ymbfo hine mid twam handum mid his ge-weorpe. Wafa mid þinum handum swiþe and cweð þriwa:

Remedium facio ad ventris dolorem.

5 Weorp þonne ofer bæc þone wifel on wege. Beheald þæt þu ne locige æfter.

þonne monnes wambe wærce oððe rysle, ymbfoh mid þinum handum þa wambe.

Him biþ sona sel.

10 XII monaþ þu meahst swa don æfter þam wifele.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 115b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

The Latin formula, which has nothing to do with the Latin liturgy of the Church, points to a borrowing from a classical source. This does not mean, however, that the Latin is classical in a stricter sense of the word. It is not quite certain what the subject is of *facio*, the doctor or the beetle: 'I apply a remedy against belly-ache', or 'I constitute the remedy against belly-ache'.

The injunction to throw something over one's shoulder and not to look round afterwards is not found in any definitely Anglo-Saxon source, but it is frequently met with in modern folk-lore. When I was a child and my milk-teeth began to fall out, my mother advised me to take them and throw them away over my shoulder, so that I could not find them again. If I happened to see them again I was sure not to get another tooth to replace the former. — In Lancashire they take a bag of stones, equal in number to the warts a person has, and then throw the stones over their left shoul-

**Our Father.**

Singing the song you must go to the herbs. Walk round about them three times before you take them. And go again to church. Sing twelve Masses over them when you have poured them off.

*Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac* is psalm 53 (Vulgate).

### AGAINST STOMACH-ACHE.

Against stomach-ache and pain in the abdomen. When you see a dungbeetle throw up earth, catch it between your two hands together with the heap. Wave it vigorously with your hands and say three times:

Remedium facio ad ventris dolorem.

Then throw away the beetle over your back and take care that you do not look after it.

When a man's stomach or abdomen pains him, catch the belly between your hands.

He will soon be better.

For twelve months you may do so after catching the beetle.

der. The warts soon quit the thrower, but if somebody chances to pick up the stones he will get as many warts as the number of stones he picks up<sup>1</sup>).

The idea underlying this prohibition to look round seems to be that by doing so a man establishes contact between himself and the disease-spirit, thus enabling the latter to enter the body of the victim through the eyes. In this instance the mound of earth thrown up by a beetle resembles a man's belly and the spirit is allured or forced to pass from the belly into the heap of earth. By waving about the beetle and the earth beforehand the magician had shown his power. He applies this power on the disease-spirit by catching the patient's belly between his two hands. It is interesting to note that he keeps this power for twelve months.

<sup>1</sup>) J. Harland and T. T. Wilkinson, *Lancashire Folk-Lore*, London 1867, p. 78.

## No. 30. WIÞ NÆDRAN SLITE O|&gt;ÞE SLEGE.

Wiþ nædran slite. Nim wegbrædan and agrimonian and nædderwyr̃t. Sele gegnidene on wine drincan, and wyr̃c sealfe of þam ilcum wyr̃tum.

And nim þa agrimonian, gewyr̃c anne hring ymb þone slite utan, 5 ne oferstihð hit furþor; and bind þa wyr̃te eft ofer þæt dolh.

Wiþ nædran slege. Do of þinum earan þæt teoro and smyre mid ymb, and sing þriwa þæs halgan Sancte Iohannes gebed and gealdor:

10 Deus meus et pater et filius et spiritus sanctus, cui omnia subjecta sunt, cui omnis creatura deservit et omnis potestas subjecta est et metuit et expavescit, et draco fugit, et silit vipera, et rubeta illa que dicitur rana quieta torpescit, et scorpius extinguitur, et regulus vincitur, et spelaius nihil noxium operatur, et omnia venenata et adhuc ferociora repente et animalia  
15 noxia tenebantur, et omnes adverse salutis humane radices arescunt. Tu domine extingue hoc venenatum virus, extingue operationes eius mortiferas et vires quas in se habet evacua, et da in conspectu tuo omnibus quos tu creasti oculos ut videant, aures ut audiant, cor ut magnitudinem tuam intellegunt.

20 Et cum hoc dixisset totum semet ipsum signo crucis armavit et bibit totum quod erat in calice.

Per signum sancte crucis, et per te Christe Jesum et deo summo patre vivis salvator mundi, in unitate  
25 spiritus sancti per omnia saecula saeculorum, Amen.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, ff. 42b, 43a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

*Slite* and *slege* both mean 'bite' in the context. *Slege* refers to the way in which snakes coil up and strike out at their victims, for it is derived from *slean*, 'to slay, strike'.

Waybread or plantain is one of the nine herbs in the charm of that name (No. 9); adderwort is applied on account of its name, derived from its appearance: 'Our adderworts are those plants which resemble an irritated snake raising its head', says Cockayne<sup>1</sup>); agrimony must also have had some special virtue ascribed

<sup>1</sup>) Cockayne II, Glossary, s. v. nædderwyr̃t.

### AGAINST SNAKE BITE.

Against snake bite. Take waybread and agrimony and adderwort. Pound them in wine and give them to drink, and compound a salve of the same herbs.

And take the agrimony, make one ring round about the bite, it (the poison) will not pass any further; and bind the herbs again on the wound.

Against snake bite. Take the wax from your ear and smear it about (the bite), and sing three times this holy prayer and charm of St. John:

Deus meus et pater et filius et spiritus sanctus, cui omnia subjecta sunt, cui omnis creatura deservit et omnis potestas subjecta est et metuit et expavescit, et draco fugit, et silet vipera, et rubeta illa quae dicitur rana quieta torpescit, et scorpius extinguitur, et regulus vincitur, et spelaius nihil noxium operatur, et omnia venenata et adhuc ferociora repentia et animalia noxia tenebrantur, et omnes adversae salutis humanae radices arescunt. Tu domine extingue hoc venenatum virus, extingue operationes eius mortiferas et vires quas in se habet evacua, et da in conspectu tuo omnibus quos tu creasti oculos ut videant, aures ut audiant, cor ut magnitudinem tuam intellegant.

Et cum hoc dixisset totum semet ipsum signo crucis armavit et bibit totum quod erat in calice.

Per signum sanctae crucis, et per te Christe Jesum et cum deo summo patre vivis salvator mundi, in unitate spiritus sancti per omnia saecula saeculorum, Amen.

to it, though I have not been able to find out what. Its native name was *garclife*. The Herbarium too contains a passage mentioning its efficacy against snake bite, even going so far as to say that 'it wonderfully removes the poison'<sup>2</sup>).

The three plants are made into a drink and they are laid on the bite. At the same time agrimony by itself is used to make one ring round the wound. The significance of this action was still clear, as is seen from the statement that the poison will not pass beyond

<sup>2</sup>) Herbarium XXXII, Cockayne I, p. 130.

the ring. So there is no danger of blood poisoning. The numeral 'one' implies that sometimes more than one ring was made.

In l. 6 the wax from a man's ear had the function of restricting the operation of the poison to the spot of the bite. The use of this wax is exceptional, though in general all human excrements were endowed with magic power.

No. 31. [WIÐ ATTRE].

þas gebedu þriwa man sceal singan ælc þriwa om þysne drænc  
and þæs mannes oruð eallinga on þone wætan þa hwile þe he hit  
singe. Gif se mon sy innan forswollen, þæt he ne mæge<sup>1)</sup> þone  
wætan þicgean, sinc him on þone muþ innan:

5           Tunc beatus Johannes iacentibus mortuis his qui  
venenum biberunt intrepidus et constans accipiens et  
singnaculum crucis faciens meo dixit:

10           Deus meus et pater et filius et spiritus sanctus, cui  
omnia subiacta sunt, cui omnis creatura deservit et  
omnis potestas subiacta est et metuit, expavescit cum  
nos te ad auxilium invocamus curis auditu nomina  
serpens conquiescit, et draco fuit, silicet vipera et  
15           rubita illa quae dicitur rana quieta et<sup>2)</sup> extorpescit,  
scorpius extinguetur, et regulas vincitur, et spalagias  
nihil noxium operatur, et omnia venenata et adhuc  
ferociora repentia animalia noxia tenebrantur et om-  
nes adverse salutes humanae radices arescunt. Tu do-  
mine extingue hoc venenatum virus, extingue opera-  
20           tionis eius mortiverus et vires quas in se habent et  
vacua, et da in conspectu tuo omnibus quos tu creasti  
oculos ut videant, aures ut audiant, cor uit magnitu-  
dinem tuam intellegant.

Et cum hoc dixisset totum se metipsum armavit  
crucis signa et bibit totum quod erat in calice.

25           Et postea quam bibit dixit:

Peto ut propter quos bibi convertantur ad te, do-  
mine, et ad salutem que apud te est te inluminante  
meriantur.

Per eundem.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 151a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

<sup>1)</sup> MS. ne and mæge.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. *et* is put in at the top of the line.

The Latin incantation recurs in No. 31. Ll. 21-22 suggest that the singing of this charm protected a man against poisoned wine. Compare the following prescription of the Leechbook:

Against any poison: Eat radish and burdock beforehand, nobody will be able to injure you by poison<sup>3</sup>).

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[AGAINST POISON].

These prayers must be sung three times each on this drink and the man's breath must be wholly on the liquid as long as he sings it. If the patient is inwardly quite swollen up, so that he is not able to take the liquid, it must be sung into his mouth.

Tunc beatus Johannes iacentibus mortuis his qui venenum biberunt intrepidus et constans accipiens et signaculum crucis faciens benedixit:

Deus meus et pater et filius et spiritus sanctus, cui omnia subjecta sunt, cui omnis creatura deservit et omnis potestas subjecta est et metuit et expavescit, cum nos te ad auxilium invocamus curis auditu nomina serpens conquiescit, et draco fugit, silicet vipera, et rubita illa quae dicitur rana quieta extorpescit, scorpius extinguitur, et regulus vincitur, et spalagias nihil noxium operatur, et omnia venenata et adhuc ferociora repentina animalia noxia tenebrantur, et omnes adversae salutis humanae radices arescunt. Tu domine extingue hoc venenatum virus, extingue operationes eius mortiferas et vires quas in se habent evacua, et da in conspectu tuo omnibus quos tu creasti oculos ut videant, aures ut audiant, cor ut magnitudinem tuam intellegant.

Et cum hoc dixisset totum semet ipsum armavit crucis signa et bibit totum quod erat in calice.

Et postea quam bibit dixit:

Peto ut propter quos bibi convertantur ad te domine et ad salutem quae apud te est te illuminante meriantur.

Per eundem [dominum nostrum Jesum Christum filium tuum qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate spiritus sancti deus per omnia saecula saeculorum, Amen].

---

<sup>3</sup>) Leechbook III, xlv, 1.

The importance of breath as an element of magic power is illustrated by the few lines of O.E. preceding the Latin prayers. Breath is the palpable manifestation of the spirit of life, all the more impressive because it is invisible. No part of it must get lost, and in singing the charm the magician must keep his mouth close above the liquid, so that all the breath will go into the drink. If the poison is already working and the man's throat is swollen up, the charm may be sung into his mouth.

The prayers seem to have been comparatively popular for they also occurred in No. 30. According to Cockayne<sup>1)</sup> they are taken from the legendary *Assumptio sancti Johannis apostoli*. For a charm

No. 32. [WIÞ LEODRUNAN AND WIÞ ÆLFSIDENNE].

Wiþ ælcra yfelre leodrunan and wið ælfsidenne þis gewrit writ him þis greciscum stafum:

++A++O+ŷ+iFByM++++BeppNNIKNETTANI  
Eft oþer dust and drenc wiþ leodrunan.

- 5 Genim brembelæppel and elehtran and pollegian, gecnua, sift þonne, do on pohhan, lege under weofod, sing nigon mæssan ofer. Do on meoloc þæt dust, dryp þriwa on haligwæteres. Sele drincan on þreo tida: on undern, on middæg, on non. Gif sio adl netnum sie, geot mid haligwætre on muð þæt ilce dust.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 52b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

The Greek letters may represent Alpha and Omega, υλος (?), χθους (?) and Veronica (?), the woman who dried Christ's face on His way to Calvary.

<sup>1)</sup> Cockayne II, p. 112.

to be effective it is necessary to know the cause. Therefore several animals are enumerated: draco, usually a harmless sort of snake and kept as a pet animal; vipera, or adder; rubita, a name derived from rubus, 'bramble', so the 'bramble-toad'; scorpius, or scorpion; regulus or lizard; spalagias is taken by Cockayne<sup>2)</sup> to mean the tarantula, a big spider of southern regions, whose bite is slightly poisonous. The word may also be connected with Gr. σπαλαξ, or mole. When these animals hear their names they will become powerless. In order to make the charm effective no risks are taken and the magician includes all harmful animals whose names he does not know and all adverse things threatening human welfare.

[AGAINST WITCHES AND ELVISH TRICKS].

Against every evil witch and against elvish tricks write this writing in Greek letters:

++ A ++ O + ŷ + iFByM +++++ BepPNNIKNETTANI

Again another powder and a drink against witches.

Take a blackberry and lupine and pennyroyal, pound them together, sift them, then put them in a bag, lay them under the altar, sing nine Masses over them.

Put the powder in milk and drip some holy water into it.

Give to drink at three times of the day: at nine a.m., at midday, at three p.m.

If animals have the disease, pour the same powder into their mouth together with the holy water.

<sup>2)</sup> *l.c.*, p. 113.



## No. 33. WIÞ LENCTENADLE.

Eft drenc wið lenctenadle. Feferfuge, hramgealla, finul, wegbræde. Gesinge mon fela mæssan ofer þære wyrte, ofgeot mid ealað, do halig wæter on. Wyl swide wel.

Drince þonne swa he hatost mæge micelne scenc fulne, ær þon sio adl to wille.

Feower godspellara naman and gealdor and gebed:

+++++ Matheus +++++ Marcus +++++ Lucas  
+++++ Iohannes +++++ Intercedite ++ pro me.

Tiecon, leleloth, patron, adiuro vos.

10 Eft godcund gebed:

In nomine domini sit benedictum.

Beronice Beronice. et habet in vestimento et in femore suo. scriptum rex regum et dominus dominantium.

15 Eft godcund gebed:

In nomine dei summi sit benedictum.

|×| M M R M þ. N ȝ. P T X |×| M R F P N ȝ. P T X

Eft sceal mon swigende þis writan and don þas word swigende on þa winstran breost, and ne ga he in on þæt gewrit, ne in on ber. And eac swigende þis on don:

20 HAMMANȝEL. BPONICE. NOȝePTAȝeΓ  
*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 53a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

*Eft* in l. 1 refers to a drink against fever which had been given on f. 51a (No. 19). The incantatory formula is a mixture of Latin, Hebrew, Germanic and Greek.

Cockayne<sup>1)</sup> thought that Leliloth, an Arabic idol, was meant, but Kahle<sup>2)</sup> explained that l. 9 stood for: *ticcon le-leloth patron*, 'you may be established for nights as our guardian spirit'. Because the Hebrew was no longer understood, the words themselves were regarded as names of spirits, and they were considered to have caused the disease, if the following words 'I conjure you' have any meaning.

The runic symbols in l. 16 are equally mixed up. Cockayne transcribes: DEEREþ HAND þIN DEREþ HAND þIN, 'thine hand vexeth, thine hand vexeth'. The eighth symbol ȝ always stands for

<sup>1)</sup> Cockayne II, p. 141.

<sup>2)</sup> Quoted by Magoun II, p. 27.

### AGAINST TYPHOID FEVER.

Again a drink against typhoid fever. Feverfew, ram-gall, fennel, waybread. Let somebody sing many Masses over them, pour ale over them, add holy water. Boil them very well.

Let the patient drink a large cupful as hot as he can, before the fever attacks him.

Say the names of the four evangelists, a charm and a prayer:

+++++ Matheus +++++ Marcus +++++ Lucas  
+++++ Iohannes +++++ intercedite ++ pro me.

Ticcon leleloth patron, adiuro vos.

Then a divine prayer:

In nomine domini sit benedictum.

Veronica, Veronica, et habet in vestimento et in femore suo. scriptum rex regum et dominus dominantium.

Again a divine prayer:

In nomine dei summi sit benedictum.

|×| M M R M þ. N ʝ. P T X |×| M R F P N ʝ. P T X

Afterwards you must write this in silence and silently put the words on the right breast, and you must not go indoors with the writing, nor carry it in. And you must also put this on in silence:

HAMMANŸEL. BPONICE. NOŸePTAŸeΓ

.....

and in the manuscript, and it is not a runic symbol; if it is a rune it probably stands for *s*. The fifteenth resembles a modern capital *F* and cannot stand for *E*, which is represented in the text by *M*.

The last line is written down in Greek letters, though it mentions two Hebrew names, Emmanuel and Veronica. The value of the third word is due to its incomprehensibility; it may be made up of two or three shorter words of uncertain meaning.

The magic effect of the charm is based almost completely on the oddity of its spelling and the mystery of its meaning, whereas the names of the four evangelists lend a slightly religious touch to the whole. The admonition to write down the words in silence and to put them on the right breast are the only reminiscences of A.-S. magic; the use of feverfew to drive away fever is classical (Latin *febrifuga*). What *femur*, 'hip, thigh', has to do with it is not clear. Perhaps the charm was worn on the hip at an earlier stage.

## No. 34. [GEWRIT OF HEOFONUM].

Se engel brohte þis gewrit of heofonum and lede hit on uppan Sanctus Petrus weofud on Rome.

Se þe þis gebed singð on cyrcean, þonne forstent hit him sealtera sealma. And se þe hit singð æt his endedæge, þonne forstent hit 5 him huselgang.

And hit mæg eac wið æghwylcum uncuþum yfele, ægðer ge fleogendes ge farendes. Gif hit innon bið, sing þis on wæter, syle him drincan. Sona him bið sel. Gif hit þonne utan si, sing hit on fersce buteran and smere mid þæt lic. Sona him kymð bot.

10 And sing þis ylce gebed on niht ær þu to þinum reste ga, þonne gescylt þe God wið unswefnum þe nihternessum on menn be-cumað:

15 Matheus. Marcus. Lucas. Iohannes. bonus fuit et sobrius religiosus. me abdicamus. me parionus. me orgillus. me ossius ossi dei fucanus susdispensator et pisticus.

M. M. L. I. Cum patriarchis fidelis. Cum profetis eterilis. Cum apostolis humilis. Jesus Christus et Matheus cum sanctis de fidelibus adiunctus est actibus.

20 M. M. L. I. Deum patrem. Deum filium. Deum spiritum sanctum trinum et unum et Iohannem basileus fidelium damasci per suffragium sancti spiritus lucidum omnipotens virtutibus sanctus est in sermonibus.

25 M. M. L. Iohannes. Panpulo dimisit et addinetum. A et O. per camellos abiunctionibus degestum sit pro omni dolore cum dubitu observatione observator.

Exultabunt sancti in gloria. letabuntur. Exultationes dei in faucibus eorum. et gladii.

Laudate deum in sanctis eius. oð ende.

*MS. Cotton Caligula A XV, f. 140a (11th century).*

The oldest letters supposedly originating in heaven were employed in Egypt and Babylonia, the countries that were the first to develop the art of writing<sup>1</sup>). The magic effect that lies in writings was heightened by the assertion that such writings came directly from heaven. Several legendary stories have sprung up to

<sup>1</sup>) Cf. *Handwörterbuch, s. v. Himmelsbriefe.*

## A CELESTIAL LETTER.

The angel brought this letter from heaven and laid it upon St. Peter's altar in Rome.

He who sings this prayer in church will profit (as much) by it as by the psalms of the psalter. And to him who sings it on his death-bed it is equivalent to receiving the Eucharist.

And it is also effective against every unknown evil, both flying and travelling. If the evil is internal sing it over water, give him to drink. He will soon be better. If it is external, sing it on fresh butter and anoint the body with it. He will soon recover.

And sing this same prayer at night, before you go to bed, then God will protect you against bad dreams that trouble men at night.

Matheus. Marcus. Lucas. Iohannes. bonus fuit et sobrius religiosus. me abdicamus. me parionus. me orgillus. me ossius ossi dei fucanus susdispensator et pisticus.

M. M. L. I. Cum patriarchis fidelis. Cum profetis eterilis. Cum apostolis humilis. Jesus Christus et Matheus cum sanctis de fidelibus adiunctus est actibus.

M. M. L. I. Deum patrem. Deum filium. Deum spiritum sanctum trinum et unum et Iohannes basileus fidelium damasci per suffragium sancti spiritus lucidum omnipotens virtutibus sanctus est in sermonibus.

M. M. L. Iohannes. Panpulo dimisit et addinetum. A et O. per camellos abiunctionibus degestum sit pro omni dolore cum dubitu observatione observator.

Exultabunt sancti in gloria. letabuntur. Exultationes dei in faucibus eorum. et gladii.

Laudate deum in sanctis eius. to the end.

explain how the letters came into human hands. Here it is laid by an angel on the altar of St. Peter in Rome. The archangel Michael is mentioned by name in some cases. Sometimes we are told that the letter hovered in the air at the baptism of Christ in the river Jordan. According to other stories Pope Leo copied the letter and sent a transcription to the Emperor Charlemagne, thus explaining its distribution in Northern countries.

These letters have remained in use up till the present day. They are effective against fire, water, fever, theft, dysentery, bullets, and in general against evils of every kind. As two instances occur in OE manuscripts (see No. 35) they seem to have been rather popular in Anglo-Saxon England.

### No. 35 WIÞ UTSIHTE

Þysne pistol se ængel brohte to Rome, þa hy wæran mid utsihtē micclum geswæncte. Writ þis on swa langum bocfelle þæt hit mæge befon utan þæt heafod, and hoh on þæs mannes sweoran þe him þearf sy.

Him bið sona sel.

Ranmigan. adonai. eltheos. mur. O ineffabile. Ominan. midanmian. misane. dimas. mode. mida. memagartem. Orta min. sigmone. beronice. irritas. venas. quasi dulap. fervor. fruxantis. sanguinis. siccatur. fla. fracta. frigula. mirgui. etsihdon. segulta. frautantur. in arno. midoninis. abar vetho. sydone multo. saccula. pp pppp sother sother.

Miserere mei deus deus mini deus mi.

A Ω N Y Alleluiah. Alleluiah.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 184a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

On celestial letters see No. 34.

The magic force of writing is intensified in the present instance by the use of a piece of parchment of a certain length, so that it will surround the head of the patient. In all probability the parchment was wound about the person's head before it was hung on his neck.

The formula itself is a mixture of Hebrew, Aramaic, Latin and Greek. Cockayne<sup>1)</sup> and Magoun<sup>2)</sup> have explained a number of

No. 35. <sup>1)</sup> Cockayne, III, p. 67.

<sup>2)</sup> Magoun II, p. 32.

The above version probably originated in the Orient, for ll. 13-14 contain corrupted Greek: μή ἄδικος, μή πανουργος, μή ὄργιλος, μή ἀνόσιος, and πιστικός<sup>2</sup>).

Ll. 25-26 are from psalm 149, verse 5 and 6; *Laudate deum in sanctis eius* is psalm 150.

### AGAINST DYSENTERY.

This letter was brought by an angel to Rome, when they were sorely afflicted with dysentery. Write this on a parchment so long that it can go round the head, and hang it on the neck of the man who is in need of it.

He will soon be better.

Ranmigan. adonai. eltheos. mur. O ineffabile. Ominginan. midanmian. misane. dimas. mode. mida. magartem. Orta min. sigmone. beronice. irritas. venas quasi dulap. fervor. fruxantis. sanguinis. siccatur. fla. fracta. frigula. mirgui. etsihdon. segulta. frautantur. in arno. midoninis. abar vetho. sydone multo. sacco. pp pppp sother sother.

Miserere mei deus deus mini deus mi.

A Ω N Y Alleluiah. Alleluiah.

words, though the majority remains unintelligible. The beginning apparently means: 'Shout, the Lord is my shield'.

Some Latin words can be distinguished: *Irritas venas quasi 'dulap'*, i.e. a burning fever (Cockayne); *siccatur* may be used to stop the dysentery; *sother* is Greek for 'saviour'; *beronice* is Veronica.

*Miserere mei deus* is psalm 50 (Vulgate).

No. 34. <sup>2</sup>) Cockayne, III, p. 289.

## No. 36. WIÐ GEDRIF.

Þis mæg wið gedrif. Genim IX oflætan and gewrit on ælcere on þas wisan: *Jesus Christus*.

And sing ofer IX pater noster, and sylle ætan ænne dæg III, and oderne III, and dritdan III; and cweðe æt ælcon siðan þis ofer done <sup>1)</sup> mann:

In nomine domini nostri Iesu Christi, et in nomine Sanctae et Individuæ Trinitatis et in nomine sanctorum VII dormientium, quorum nomina hæc sunt: Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Ioannes, Seraphion, Constantinus, Dionysius.

Ita sicut requiescat dominus super illos, sic requiescat super istum famulum dei N.

Conjuro vos frigora et febres per deum vivum, per deum verum, per deum sanctum, per deum qui vos in potestate habet, per angelos et archangelos, per thronos et dominationes, per principales et potestates, per totam plebem dei, et per sanctam Mariam, per XII apostolos, per XII profetas, per omnes martyres, per sanctos confessores, per sanctas virgines, et per IIII evangelistas Matthæum, Marcum, Lucam, Iohannem, et per XXIII seniores, et per CXLIII or milia qui pro Christi nomine passi sunt, et per virtutem sanctae crucis, adjuro et obtestor vos diaboli ut non habeatis ullam.

*MS. Harley 464, f. 177 (17th century transcript<sup>2)</sup>).*

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In spite of its Christian wording the atmosphere of this charm is pagan. The magic numbers three and nine play a conspicuous part and retain their full significance. The art of writing does not serve to make something known, but to provide a means for the patient to absorb the powers inherent in the name of Christ. The Seven Sleepers were well known for their legendary, perhaps we had better say magic, achievement of sleeping in Mount Celion for three hundred years. Their power is transmitted to the sufferer by means of a similarity: just as the Lord rested on them, He will rest on, i.e., assist and heal, this servant of God. Then all the powers

<sup>1)</sup> MS. donne

<sup>2)</sup> A note preceding this text says: Ex codice MS. Bibliotheca Wigern.

## AGAINST FEVER

This is effective against fever. Take nine wafers and write on each of them in this way: *Jesus Christus*.

And sing the Lord's Prayer over them nine times, and give to eat three on the first day, three on the second day and three on the third day; and say each time this charm over the patient:

In nomine domini nostri Jesu Christi, et in nomine Sanctae et Individuae Trinitatis et in nomine sanctorum septem dormientium, quorum nomina haec sunt: Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Johannes, Seraphion, Constantinus, Dionysius.

Ita sicut requiescit dominus super illos, sic requiescat super istum famulum dei N.

Conjuro vos frigora et febres per deum vivum, per deum verum, per deum sanctum, per deum qui vos in potestate habet, per angelos et archangelos, per thronos et dominationes, per principales et potestates, per totam plebem dei et per sanctam Mariam, per XII apostolos, per XII prophetas, per omnes martyres, per sanctos confessores, per sanctas virgines, et per IIII evangelistas Mattheum, Marcum, Lucam, Johannem, et per XXIII seniores, et per CXLIII milia qui pro Christi nomine passi sunt, et per virtutem sanctae crucis, adjuro et obtestor vos diaboli, ut non habeatis ullam.

of heaven are invoked and the charmer takes good care that he does not forget anybody. Generally we find that the disease-spirits are enumerated in this way. The change is no doubt due to Christian influence. The evil forces were brought together under the heading 'devils' (Cf. I. 20), while the good forces were kept apart as individuals; the names of the devils fell into oblivion, while every saint was endowed with a special activity. The names of the Seven Sleepers are the usual ones. They also occur in No. 7, 37, 39. No. 38 does not mention their names and in No. 40 they are *different*.

The formula is not quite finished. We are to read: I adjure and charge you, devils, that you have not any 'power to hurt this servant of God' (Cf. No. 27, ll. 13-16).



No. 37. SEPTEM DORMIENTES <sup>1)</sup>).

In Epheso civitate in monte Celion requiescunt sancti septem dormientes, quorum ista sunt nomina:

Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Dionisius, Iohannes, Serapion, Constantinus.

Per eorum merita et piam intercessionem dignetur dominus liberare famulum suum N. de omni malo. Amen.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 52 (11th century).*

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## No. 38. [SEPTEM DORMIENTES]

Domine Iesu Christe, qui somno deditus in mare a discipulis tuis excitari voluisti, per intercessionem sanctorum septem dormientium, quorum corpora in monte Celion requiescunt, fac dormire hunc famulum tuum N., ut convalescent a somno quem amisit tibi et sancte genitrici tue MARIE sanctisque martyribus tuis et omnibus sanctis tuis grates referat. Qui vivis et regnas.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 52 (11th century).*

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## No. 39. CONTRA FEBRES

- ✠ In nomine sancte et individue trinitatis.  
 In Effeso civitate Chelde ibi requiescunt VII sancti dormientes  
 Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Iohannes, Serapion, Dionisius et Constantinus.

Deus requiescet in illis. Ipse dei filius sit super me famulum (-am) tuum (-am) N. et liberet me de ista egritudine et de febre et populo inimici. Amen.

*MS. Cotton Faustina A X, f. 116a (11th century).*

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## No. 40. CONTRA FRIGORA

- ✠ Contra frigora omnibus horis scribis in carta et cum licio ligas ad collum egroti hora deficiente:

- ✠ In nomine domini crucifixi sub Pontio Pilato, per signum crucis Christi fugite febres seu frigora coti-

---

No. 37. <sup>1)</sup> MS. dormentes.

diana, seu tertiana, vel nocturna a servo dei N.

Septuaginta XIII milia angeli persequentur vos.

✕ Eugenius, Stephanus, Protacius, Sambucius, Dionisius, Chesilius et Quiriacus<sup>1</sup>).

Ista nomina scribe et super se portat qui patitur.

*MS. Cotton Faustina A X, f. 116a (11th century).*

#### No. 41. WIÞ UNCUÞUM SWYLE

Sing on ðine læcefinger III Pater Noster, and writ ymb þæt sare and cwed:

Fuge diabolus, Christus te sequitur.

Quando natus est Christus, fugit dolor.

And eft III Pater Noster and III *Fuge diabolus*.

*MS. Junius 85, p. 17 (11th century).*

#### AGAINST AN UNKNOWN SWELLING

Sing three Our Fathers on your leech-finger, and write around the sore and say:

Fuge diabolus, Christus te sequitur.

Quando natus est Christus fugit dolor.

And again three times Our Father and three times *Fuge diabolus*.

The leech-finger, that is, ring-finger or fourth finger, was called thus because it was supposed to be in direct communication with the heart, and because doctors touch the sick spot with this finger in order to cure the malady<sup>1</sup>). Its healing virtue was stressed by saying the Lord's Prayer over it three times, after which it was used to write the charm around the sore. By describing a circle round about the swelling the disease was localised and the danger of blood-poisoning removed. At the same time the magician was able to make the full force of the incantation bear on the spot affected, so that there was a greater chance of success. The Latin

No. 40. <sup>1</sup>) Though the names differ from those usually found, they denote the Seven Sleepers. See Note p. 172.

No. 41. <sup>2</sup>) A-S.D. II, s.v. læcefinger.

words may only have had a symbolical value, for if it is true that the patient had to wait until after Christmas for the devil to fly and the disease to disappear he might have had to wait for some months in certain cases. Still they may have been meant in the literal sense, for swellings are often long-lasting illnesses, and I have heard several times from charm-singers that the disease would last as long after the charming as it had done before.

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#### No. 42. WIÐ LIÐWÆRCE

Sing VIII sīþum þis gealdor þær on, and þin spatl spiw on:

Malignus obligavit, angelus curavit, dominus salvavit.

Him hiþ sona sel.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 116a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

#### AGAINST PAIN IN THE JOINTS

Sing nine times this charm on them, and spit your spittle on the sick spot:

Malignus obligavit, angelus curavit, dominus salvavit.

He will soon be better.

---

The belief in saliva is wide-spread. In the charm against eruption (No. 6) the magician spat three times into running water, after pouring out the blood which was supposed to house the disease. The function of the spittle is not very clear in the present charm. Was it rubbed into the skin or was it simply allowed to dry? At any rate it does not seem to have had the animistic significance of driving out the spirit.

The formula presents the number three in its structure. The rhyme of the verbs is due to the late Latin levelling of *b* and *v*, for the meaning is probably that the malignant one has bound the sufferer, but the angel will cure him and the Lord will save him. The same formula is found in *Lacnunga* 99:

Ab articulorum dolorum constantium malignantium:  
Diabolus lignavit, angelus curavit, dominus salvavit.  
In nomine medicina. Amen.

The Latin is corrupt, but the first line probably means what Cockayne has: For constant and malignant rheumatism<sup>1</sup>).

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No. 42. <sup>1</sup>) Cockayne III, p. 65.

No. 43. [THE SATOR FORMULA] (*For childbirth*)

Creator et sanctificator Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus qui es vera trinitas et unitas, precamur te domine clementissime pater, ut elemasina ista fiat misericordia tua, ut accepta sit tibi pro anima famuli tui, ut sit benedictio tua super omnia dona ista. Per.

✕ sator. arepo. tenet. opera. rotas.

Deus qui ab initio fecisti hominem et dedisti ei in adiutorium si-  
5 milem sibi, ut crescitur et multiplicatur, da super terram hanc famulam tuam N., ut prospere et sine dolore parturit.

*MS. CCC 41, Cambridge, p. 329 (11th century).*

The Sator formula is of Christian origin. Its earliest appearance is in a Christian church at Pompeii, destroyed in 70 A.D. Its magical effect lies in the fact that its five component parts must be written under each other, after which it may be read from right to left and from top to bottom:

```

      → S A T O R
        ↓ A R E P O
          T E N E T
            O P E R A
              R O T A S ←↑
  
```

It is apparently based on the letters of PATER NOSTER plus A and O<sup>1</sup>).

```

          P
          A
        A  T  O
          E
          R
    P A T E R N O S T E R
          O
          S
        O  T  A
          E
          R
  
```

No. 43. <sup>1</sup>) Unfortunately I have not been able to discover who suggested this ingenious solution, which is borne out by the word *Creator* in line 1.

The meaning is that the sower will keep the work of his hands, i.e., God, the Creator, will guard and guide all.

The formula was exceedingly popular in the Middle Ages and was used for all kinds of purposes, though this Anglo-Saxon use to procure easy parturition is exceptional. The present purpose was suggested by the word Sator, 'sower', and its relation to human seed.

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#### No. 44. WI|> DWEORH

Writ ðis ondlang ða earmas wiþ dweorh:

+ t +  $\bar{\omega}$   $\bar{A}$

And gnid cyleðenigean on ealað.

Sanctus Macutus, Sancte Victorici.

Writ þis ondlang ða earmas wið dweorh:

+ t + p + t + N +  $\omega$  + t + UI + M +  $\bar{\omega}$   $\bar{A}$

And gnid cyleþenian on ealað.

Sanctus Macutus, Sancte Victorici.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 165a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

#### AGAINST A DWARF

Write this along the arms against a dwarf:

+ t +  $\bar{\omega}$   $\bar{A}$

And rub celandine into ale.

Sanctus Macutus, Sancte Victorici.

Write this along the arms against a dwarf:

+ t + p + N +  $\omega$  + t + UI + M +  $\bar{\omega}$   $\bar{A}$

And rub celandine into ale.

Sanctus Macutus, Sancte Victorici.

---

The same formula is repeated, either because the scribe noticed he had made a mistake, or because he had discovered a slightly different version in another manuscript and he did not dare to choose between them, or because a different version had to be written on the right and the left arm.

*T* may stand for Trinity, *p* for pater, *N* for nomen, *UI* for Victorici, *M* for Macutus. The Greek letters *A* and *O* stand for God.

The nature of the disease is unknown (Cf. No. 7). The place of the letters may be connected with the artery.

No. 45. WI|> WIF BEARN EACENU (For a woman big with child)

Maria virgo peperit Christum, Elisabet sterelis peperit Iohannem baptistam.

5           Adiuro te infans, si es masculus an femina, per Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum, ut exeas et recedas, et ultra ei non noceas neque insipientiam illi facias. Amen.

Videns dominus flentes sorores Lazari ad monumentum lacrimatus est coram Iudeis et clamabat:

Lazare veni foras.

10           Et prodiit ligatis manibus et pedibus qui fuerat quatruiduanus mortuus.

Writ ðis on wexe ðe næfre ne com to nanen wyrce, and bind under hire swiðran fot.

*MS. Junius 85, p. 17 (11th century).*

This charm against childbirth is made up of Christian elements, and yet its atmosphere is pagan. The incantation consists of two parts, ll. 1-5 and 6-10. Two exceptional cases of childbirth are recounted: Mary, though a virgin, bore Christ, and Elisabeth, though her years of fruitfulness had passed, bore John the Baptist. Therefore the mother who is about to bring forth a child and says this charm need not be afraid that things will go wrong. Then the child itself is addressed and adjured to come forth speedily and not to harm the mother by any foolishness!

The latter half of the incantation contains the story of Lazarus (John, 11). The words of Christ: 'Lazarus, come forth', which produced such a miraculous effect, are used here to quicken delivery.

The OE. sentence at the end means: 'Write this on wax that has never been used for any purpose, and bind it under her right foot.' The magician presumably thought that the wax, a sticky material, attracted and drew out the child, and as OE. *swiþ* means 'strong' the operation was assisted by binding the wax on the right or 'stronger' foot. If the wax had served any other purpose beforehand, it would have lost its sacred and magic character.

## No. 46. GIF HORS BI|&gt; GEWRÆHT.

Gif hors bið gewræht, þonne scealt þu cweþan þas word:

Naborrede unde venisti, tribus vicibus  
 Credidi propter, tribus vicibus  
 Alpha et O, initium et finis.  
 Crux mihi vita est et tibi mor inimici.  
 Pater noster.

*MS. Harley 585, ff. 181b, 182a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The meaning of *gewræht* is not quite clear. Cockayne<sup>1)</sup> and Grendon<sup>2)</sup> are probably right in taking it to mean 'sprained, foun-dered'.

On *Naborrede* Cockayne remarks: This seems to be the Nabon-nedus of Berosus, in whose reign Babylon was taken by Cyrus. In the Vulgate the form of the name is Nabuchodonosor.

*Credidi propter* is psalm 115 (Vulgate).

Lines 4-5 are repeated in a slightly different form in No. 67, likewise a charm for horses. The words *Crux est vita mihi; mors, inimice, tibi* (The cross is life to me; death, O enemy, to thee) occur on one of the most ancient portable crosses, found in a Christian tomb at Rome<sup>3)</sup>.

The OE. words are: If a horse has sprained its leg, then you must say these words.

## No. 47. GIF HORS BI|&gt; GESCEOTEN.

Sanentur animalia in orbe terre, et valitudine vexantur, in no-mine dei Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti.

Extingunt diabolus per inpositionem manum nostrarum.

Quas nos separavimus a caritate Christi

Per invocationem omnium sanctorum tuorum.

Per eum qui vivit et regnat in seculo seculorum. Amen.

Domine quid multiplicati sunt III.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 182b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

<sup>1)</sup> Cockayne, III, p. 63.

<sup>2)</sup> Grendon, p. 224.

<sup>3)</sup> Hastings, *E.R.E.*, IV, p. 328.

For the meaning of the title, see No. 22.

The text is very corrupt. Cockayne <sup>1)</sup> says: The Latin words bear a ritualistic character, and may be perhaps arranged nearly thus:

*Oratio.* Sanentur animalia in orbe terrae, etc.

*Oratio altera.* Extinguatur diabolus, etc.

*Lectio. Rom. VIII, 35.* Quis nos separabit, etc.

Psalmus III.

No. 48. WI|> EALRA FEONDA <sup>1)</sup> GRIMNESSUM

Dextera domini fecit virtutem, dextera domini exaltavit me, non moriar sed vivam et narrabo opera domini.

5 Dextera glorificata est in virtute, dextera manus tua confringit inimicos et per multitudinem magestatis tuae contrevisti adversarios meos, misisti iram tuam et comedit eos.

Sic per verba amedatio sic eris immundissime spiritus fletus oculorum tibi gehenna ignis.

10 Cedite. a capite. a capillis. a labiis. a lingua. a collo. a pectoribus. ab universis. compaginibus membrorum eius ut non habeant potestatem diabolus ab homine isto (-a). N. de capite. de capillis. Nec nocendi. Nec tangendi. nec dormiendi. nec tangendi. nec insurgendi.  
15 nec in meridiano. nec in visu, nec in risu. nec in fulgendo Ne ff effuie.

Sed in nomine domini nostri Iesu Christi, qui cum Patre et Spiritu sancto vivis et regnas Deus in unitate Spiritus sancti per omnia secula seculorum.

*MS. CCC 41, Cambridge, p. 272 (11th century).*

The title means: Against the atrocities of all fiends.

Ll. 1-3 are from psalm 117, 16 (Vulgate); ll. 4-7 from Exodus 15, 6-7.

The word *amedatio* (l. 8) is obscure.

Ll. 10-16 are also found in No. 17 (ll. 68-75) and No. 19 (ll. 33-44]. Cockayne <sup>2)</sup> erroneously has *unus et aeternus deus* in l. 18.

No. 47. <sup>1)</sup> Cockayne III, p. 65.

No. 48. <sup>1)</sup> MS. *feoda*.

No. 48. <sup>2)</sup> Cockayne I, p. 386.



## No. 49. WIÐ GESTICE.

Writ<sup>1)</sup> Cristes mæġ, and sing đriwe đær on đis and *Pater Noster*:

Longinus miles lancea ponxit dominum et restitit  
sanguis et recessit dolor.

*MS. Junius 85, p. 17 (11th century).*

## AGAINST A STITCH

Write the sign of the cross (on the spot affected), and sing three times this on it, and also an Our Father:

Longinus miles lancea ponxit dominum et restitit  
sanguis et recessit dolor.

The title resembles that of No. 2, and the lance of l. 2 probably represents a knife, used in the present instance to inscribe a cross on the painful spot, that is, it served to sting the patient in order to drive out the evil spirit. The suggestive power of some medicine-men must have been so great that in doing so they did not draw blood, which phenomenon gave rise to the statement that the blood did not flow and the pain diminished. In later times the knife and all the rest of the magic apparatus of a witch-doctor were lost, and the above charm came to be used to staunch blood, as in the following 19th-century version:

A soldier of old thrust a lance into the side of the Saviour; immediately there flowed thence blood and water — the blood of Redemption and the water of Baptism.

In the name of the Father + may the blood cease,

In the name of the Son + may the blood remain.

In the name of the Holy Ghost + may no more blood flow from the mouth, the vein or the nose<sup>2)</sup>.

Longinus was the Roman soldier who pierced Christ's body with a lance, so that blood and water flowed from it. His name is frequently found in charms to stop bleeding<sup>3)</sup>.

No. 49. <sup>1)</sup> *MS. writ.*

<sup>2)</sup> Harland-Wilkins, p. 77.

No. 49. <sup>3)</sup> Cf. *Handwörterbuch, s. v. Longinus.*

No. 50. ÞIS IS ÞINAN YRFE TO BOTE

[Sing] ymb þin yrfe ælce æfen him to helpe:

AGIOS. AGIOS. AGIOS.

[Genim twegen] ....lante sticcan federegede, and writ on æg-  
ðerne sticcan [be] hwælcere ege an Pater noster oð ende.

And let þone [sticc]an þa [berene] on þa flore, and þone  
oð[e]rne on ..... ofer þam oðrum sticc[a]n.

*MS. Cotton Vitellius E XVIII, f. 13b (11th century).*

THIS IS A REMEDY FOR YOUR CATTLE

Sing this about your cattle every evening as a protection for  
them:

AGIOS. AGIOS. AGIOS.

Take two ..... four-edged sticks, and write on both sticks on  
each side one Our Father till the end.

And leave the one stick afterwards on the floor of the barn, and  
lay the second stick across the other.

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This manuscript was damaged in the fire of Ashburne House in  
1731. Several leaves have shrunk so as to make a large part of the  
text illegible. The text was emended like this by Cockayne<sup>1</sup>), except  
for line 5, where Cockayne has *bewritene* instead of *berene*.

A four-edged stick was also met with in the holy salve (No. 19),  
where, too, an inscription was made. The specific function in the  
present case remains obscure. They are laid on each other in the  
form of a cross to protect the cattle and the building from sickness  
and fire.

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No. 50. <sup>1</sup>) Cockayne I, p. 386.

No. 51. CONTRA DOLOREM<sup>1)</sup> DENTIUM

Christus super marmoreum sedebat. Petrus tristis ante eum stabat, manum ad maxillum tenebat, et interrogabat<sup>2)</sup> eum dominus dicens:

Quare tristis<sup>3)</sup> es Petre?

5 Respondit Petrus et dixit:

Domine dentes mei dolent.

Et dominus dixit:

10 Adiuro te migranea vel gutta maligna per Patrem et  
Filium et Spiritum sanctum, et per celum et terram, et  
per XX ordines angelorum, et per LX prophetas, et  
per XII apostolos, et per IIIor evangelistas, et per  
omnes sanctos qui deo placuerunt ab origine mundi,  
15 ut non possit diabolus nocere ei nec in dentes, nec in  
aures, nec in palato<sup>4)</sup> famulo dei, illi non ossa  
frangere<sup>5)</sup>, nec carnem manducare, ut non habeatis  
potestatem nocere illi non dormiendo, nec vigilando,  
nec tangatis eum usque LX annos et unum dies.

Rex, pax, nax, in Christo filio. Amen.

Pater noster.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 183a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The tooth-ache charm of St. Peter seems to be of Christian origin, at any rate I have not met with a non-Christian version so far. It is spread throughout Europe and has remained popular until the present day. In England the following version occurs in Blackpool:

Peter sat weeping on a marble stone.  
Jesus came near and said: 'What aileth thee, O Peter?'  
He answered and said: 'My Lord and my God!'  
He that can say this and believeth it for my sake,  
Never more shall have the tooth-ache.

<sup>1)</sup> MS. dolorum.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. interrogebat.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. tritis.

<sup>4)</sup> MS. palpato.

<sup>5)</sup> MS. fragere.

Sometimes we find this form, which must be worn inside the vest or the stays and over the left breast:

'Ass Sant Peter sat at the geats of Jerusalem, our Blessed Lord and Seviour Jesus Christ pased by and sead: What Eleth thee, he sead Lord my Teeth ecketh. Hee sead arise and folow mee and thy Teeth shall never Eake Eney moor. Fiat ✕ Fiat ✕ Fiat <sup>6)</sup>.

As *stone* rhymes with *bone*, the charm was mixed up in later times with an old Indo-Germanic incantation for a sprained or broken bone (i.e., leg):

Our Saviour Jesus Christ roat on a marbel Stone  
Senow to Senow, Joint to Joint, Bone to Bone.

Or:

For a sprain. As our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was riding into Jerusalem, His horse tripped and sprained his leg. Our Blessed Lord and Saviour blessed it and said:

Bone to bone and vein to vein,  
O vein turn to thy rest again <sup>7)</sup>.

No. 57 is a slightly different version of the same charm. The first words are also given in MS. Junius 85 (Bodleian Library, Oxford):

Wið toðece (Against tooth-ache)  
Sanctus Petrus super marmoream.

Apparently the formula was so well-known that it was not necessary to give the rest.

#### No. 52. AD DENTIUM DOLOREM.

Petrus sedebat super petram et manus suas tenebat ad maxillas suas et dixit Jesus:

Petre quid tristis sedes?  
Domine vermes <sup>1)</sup> in me. Fac mihi benedictionem quam fecisti Lazaro quem resciscitasti de mortuis <sup>2)</sup>.

No. 51. <sup>6)</sup> Harland-Wilkinson, p. 76.

<sup>7)</sup> For these and other versions see Ebermann, and *supra*, Ch. V.

No. 52. <sup>1)</sup> Open space in MS.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. demo rumto.

In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

10                   Adiuro te migranea per Patrem et Filium et Spiritum  
sanctum, ut tu amplius non possis<sup>3</sup> stare nec in fauci-  
bus<sup>4</sup>), nec in dentibus, nec in eapite tuo.

In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

Accipe Saxafriga id est grumin et petrasino et ambrosiana et  
apia et tanesia et mitte simul, et de quo eas cum vino inolta nova  
ita ut tribus vitibus suffundes eas de vino ut ad medietatem pro-  
15 veniad et postea da infirmum bibere.

*MS. Cotton Vespasianus D XX, f. 93 (11th century).*

*Saxafriga* is saxifrage; *grumin* is probably gromwell, M.E. *gromylle*, a plant with hard, dry seeds; *petrasino* is parsley, OE. *petersilie*, Gr. *πετροσέλινον*, i.e. rock-parsley; *apia* or *apium* is celery; *ambrosiana* is ambrose, a word derived from Gr. *ἀμβροτός*, immortal; *tanesia* is tansy, which word is derived from Gr. *ἀθανασία*, immortality. The first three plants are chosen because they can break through the hard, rocky surface of the teeth, and the two last because their bitter taste must drive away or kill the worm, and, perhaps, give immortality, i.e., lasting excellence to the teeth.

No. 53. WI|> OMUM AND BLEGNUM.

(Against erysipelas and blains)

Cristus natus aaius sanctus a xps passus aaius a xps resurrexit  
a mortuis aaius sanctus aa suptare potens.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 168a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

The meaning of the words in this text is intelligible, though the classical knowledge of the man who wrote them down was apparently negligible. *Aaius* stands for *ἅγιος*, and so do the superfluous *a's*; *xps* is the normal MS. spelling for *Christus*, and in the other texts I have always used the full form, but as *Christus* was written in full I have kept to the MS. reading in this case.

<sup>3</sup>) The rest of the text is in a different hand, though it goes straight on.

<sup>4</sup>) MS. *facibus*.

No. 54. WI|> BLODRINU OF NOSU.  
(Against bleeding of the nose)

Wriht on his forheafod on Cristes mel:

	s	
	t	
	o	
	m	
	e	
	n	
s t o m e n		c a l c o s +
	m	
	e	
	t	
	a	
	f	
	o	
	f	
	u	
	+	

MS. St. John's College 17, Oxford, f. 175a (A.D. 1110).

The incantatory formula is a transcription of the Greek:

στῶμεν καλῶς· στῶμεν μετὰ φόβου

Let us stand respectfully, let us stand in awe.

The magic power is based on the word *stand* and intensified by writing the whole on a man's forehead in the form of a cross. The same words were often used to stop bleeding. In 1939 Olivieri published the following text <sup>1)</sup>:

Ἔτερος ὀρκισμὸς πρὸς αἱμορραγίαν ῥινός. εἰς τὸ μεγα ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντοδυνάμου. ὁ προφήτης Ζαχαρίας ἐσφάγη ἐν τῷ ναῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἐπάγη τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, ὡσεὶ λίθος. οὕτω καὶ σύ, αἷμα, στήσον τοῦ δούλου τοῦ θεοῦ ὀδεῖνος, πῆξον, πάθος, ὡς ἐκεῖνο καὶ ὡς λίθος, ἀποκυρώθη ὀρκίζω σε εἰς τὴν πίστιν τῆς Βεραϊνωικῆς, αἷμα, πλεον μὴ στάξης. στῶμεν καλῶς, στῶμεν μετὰ φόβου. ἀμην. Ἰησοῦς Χρῖστος νικᾷ.

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<sup>1)</sup> Olivieri, "Medicinalia magica", *Philologische Wochenschrift*, LIX (1939), p. 143. (In margine codicis Vaticani Palatini 199, f. 122 r.).

## No. 55. [TO STANCH BLEEDING]

In principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nichil.

Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori (-trici) famulo (-e) tuo (-e) N. et de eius plaga amplius gutta sanguinis non exeat. Sic placeat filio dei sancteque eius genitrici MARIE.

+ In nomine Patris cessa sanguis

+ In nomine Filii resta sanguis

+ In nomine Spiritus sancti fugiat omnis dolor et effusio a famulo (-a) dei N. Amen.

+ In nomine sancte trinitatis, pater noster.

Hoc dic novies.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 52 (11th century).*

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## No. 56. [TO STANCH BLEEDING]

Ociani inter ea motus sidera motus vertat. restrige trea flumina flumen aridum vervens flumen pallidum parens flumen rubrum acriter de corpore exiens restringe tria flumina flumen cruorem restrigentem nervos limentum cicatricis concupiscente tumores fugante. Per dominum nostrum Iesum Christum.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 16b (11th century).*

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## No. 57. [TO STANCH BLEEDING]

Rivos cruoris torridi. contacta vestis obstruit fletu riganti supplicis arent fluenta sanguinis. per illorum quae siccata dominica labante coniuro sta. Per dominum nostrum.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 16b (11th century).*

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## No. 58. [TO STANCH BLEEDING]

+Rivos cruoris torridi contacta vestis obstruit fletu rigantis supplices arent fluenta sanguinis, per illorum venas cui siccato dominico lavante coniuro sta.

Per dominum nostrum Iesum Christum filium tuum qui tecum vivit et regnat Deus in unitate Spiritus sancti, per omnia saecula saeculorum.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 49a (11th century).*

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## No. 59. [TO STANCH BLEEDING]

Christe adiuva + Christe adiuva + Christe adiuva  
 +Rivos cruoris torridi contacta vestis obstruit fletu rigante supplicis arent fluente sanguinis.

Beronice. Libera me de sanguinibus deus deus salutis meae

AMICO CAPDINOPO ΦΙΦΙΡΟΝ ΙΑΡΑΚΑΚΙΜΟ

Fodens magnifice contextu fundavit tumulum usugma domine adiuva.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 49a (11th century).*

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## No. 60. [TO STANCH BLEEDING]

+In nomine sanctae trinitatis atque omnium sanctorum ad sanguinem restringendum scribis hoc:

COMAPTA OCOΓMA CTYΓONTOEMA EKTYTOΠO

+Beronice

Libera me de sanguinibus deus deus salutis mei

CACINCACO YCAPTETE

Per dominum Iesum Christum.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 49a (11th century).*

The seven preceding charms are all based on the idea of similarity and on the force of the word *stand* or *stop*. These magical notions are very old but the form in which we find the charms is Christian. There is first of all the Latin language of the ritual and then the contents themselves, especially the invocation of the Trinity, Mary, Veronica and the woman mentioned in Matthew 9, 20 - 22, who had been suffering from an issue of blood for twelve years and who was healed by touching the hem of Christ's garment. Christ Himself, Who bled from the wounds made by the nails, the lance and the crown of thorns, is the central figure in most of these charms. In Limburg, in the south of Holland, I have found this version:

Ik ging Jeruzalem binnen,  
 Daar vond ik een schone Jodinne.  
 Houd op met bloeden in den naam van Jezus Christus.  
 (I entered Jerusalem, where I found a fair Jewess.  
 Stop bleeding in the name of Jesus Christ).



After saying these words the sufferer must say 'five Our Fathers in honour of the five bleeding wounds of Christ and two Our Fathers in honour of the crown of thorns which never festered'.

The text of No. 55 is clear and may be regarded as complete, but the others are a little obscure owing to the corrupted state of the Latin.

#### No. 61. [AGAINST DEMONICAL POSSESSION]

Eulogumen. patera. cae yo. cae agion. pneuma. cae nym. cae ia. cae iseonas nenonamini.

Adiuro te satanae diabolus aelfae. per deum unum ac verum. et per trementem diem iudicii ut refugiatu[r] ab homine illo qui habeat<sup>1)</sup> hunc a Cristo scriptum secum.

In nomine dei Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 45b (11th century).*

This charm has been printed before by Singer<sup>2)</sup>. The manuscript writing is not very clear and in the fifth line Singer has *aepistolam* for *a cristo*. Our own reading is not quite certain either, and as a variant we suggest *a Chrysostomo*, the Greek saint and preacher, who lived in Constantinople in the fourth century.

The first two lines are a transcription of the Greek εὐλογοῦμεν πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα καὶ νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ εἰς αἰῶνας αἰῶνων ἀμήν, equivalent to the well-known Latin words: Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto, sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

The magical character of the text is based on the fact that the words have become unintelligible.

#### No. 62. [CONTRA FELON]

Aliud. Super infirmum dicat ista novem tribus vicibus in aqua et da infirmo bibere trbus vicibus tribus diebus et sanabitur:

+ Et ecce crucis signum + crux est reparatio rerum per crucis hoc signum. fuge potestas inimici retrorsum Iesus Christus cruce pugnat. vincit regnat. imperat Christiane tolle crucem sicque tutus ambula.

Pater noster IX vicibus.

*MS. Gonville and Caius College, Cambr. 379, f. 49a (12th century)*

<sup>1)</sup> MS. abeat.    <sup>2)</sup> Singer, *l. c.*, p. 31.

The *aliud* refers to the title of a charm (No. 72) preceding this one in the manuscript.

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No. 63. GIF WIF NE MÆGE BEARN BERAN.  
*(If a woman cannot bear a child)*

Solve iube deus ter catenis.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 183a (11th century) (Lacnunga)*

Its magical effect is supposedly based on the idea of similarity.

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No. 64. CONTRA FEBRES

+ In nomine Patris, et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

Coniuro vos febres per Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum et per sanctam Mariam genitricem dei ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei N.

5 Coniuro vos febres per deum verum per deum sanctum. per septuaginta nomina dei sancta et immaculata. elyon. elyon. elyon. eloy. eloy. eloy. Us. Ne. Te. Adonay. Tetragramaton. inimitabilis. invisibilis. eternus. simplex. summum bonum. incorporeus. creator. perfectus. Christus. Messias. sother. Emanuel. dominus. VIII genitus homo. Ysyon. principium finis. immaculatus. altissimus. sapientia. stella. omnia leticia. mercator. sponsus. othos. sebes. carus. agathos. primus. et novissimus. caritas. gaudium. sos. splendor. admirabilis, paraclitus. on. bonus. nobilissimus. Aries. leo. vitulus. serpens. ovis. agnus.

15 Per ista nomina. et per omnia cetera dei nomina coniuro vos febres et per angelos ac per archangelos. thronos et dominationes. principates et potestates. et cherubin. et seraphin et per omnes virtutes celorum. ut non habeatis potestatem. super hunc famulum dei. N.

20 Coniuro vos febres per omnes sanctos dei qui in celo et in terra sunt. et per omnia que creavit deus in septem diebus et in septem noctibus ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N.

25 Coniuro vos febres. sive. cotidianas. sive. biduanas. sive triduanas. sive quatruiduanas. sive quintanas. sive sextanas. sive septanas. sive octanas. et usque ad nonam generationem ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei N.

Postea dicantur hij tres psalmi. Ad te levavi oculos. Deus misereatur. Quicumque vult cum gloria patri. et kyrieleison. Christe eleison. kyrieleison. Pater noster Et ne nos Salvum fac servum esto ei  
 30 domine. Memor esto congregationis. Domine deus virtutum. Domine exaudi. Dominus vobiscum. Oremus: Respice domine super hunc famulum tuum N. in infirmitate corporis sui laborantem et animam refove quem creasti ut dignis castigationibus emendetur et continuo se senciatur esse salvatum. Per dominum.

35 Istud carmen debet dici in primo die novies. in secundo VIIIes tertio die sepcies. Quarto die VIes Quinto die Ves. Sexto die quater. Septimo die ter. Octavo die bis. Nono die semel.

*MS. Queens' College, Cambridge, 7, f. 142b (12th century)*

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Although the charm is clearly of Christian origin, the atmosphere pervading the whole is pagan and magical. Even the sign of the cross with which it opens is probably meant to be an element of power, for the second line at once stresses the magical character: it is a conjuration, not a prayer. The supreme being is not called upon for help, it is made use of. In accordance with this degradation the magician proceeds to invoke other powers, namely the angels and saints and everything else that may help. It is also a device of magic to repeat the same formula several times in order to increase the influence of suggestion: 'I conjure you . . . that you have no power over this servant of God' (ll. 3-4; 18-19; 22; 26). A third magical means is the use of names and numbers. The number of names does not amount to seventy, as the charmer boastingly claimed, still he strings together some fifty, drawn from Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and all stressing qualities of the power that is operating against the fever. Seven is a magical number and seventy is a multiple of that number and more powerful still. The magic of numbers is also applied in the recital of the charm (ll. 35-37): The first day it must be sung nine times, the second day eight times and so on, till on the ninth day once will suffice, as the disease-spirit is weakened by that time. Another magical idea is that the disease is a spirit.

Ll. 27-34 consist of elements borrowed from the Christian liturgy. Two of the three psalms are *Ad te levavi oculos* (Ps. 122, Vulg.) and *Deus misereatur* (Ps. 66, Vulg.); *Quicumque vult* is the Athanasian Creed. Then we get *Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto*,

*sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Amen; Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison* (Mass); *Pater noster* up to *Et ne nos inducas in tentationem sed libera nos a malo; Salvum fac servum* (Ps. 85, 2, Vulg.) and *Esto ei domine* are based on two verses said after the Litany of all Saints; *Memor esto congregationis* (Ps. 73, 2, Vulg.) and *Domine deus virtutum* (Ps. 83, 9, Vulg.) are two verses from the Preces feriales in the Vespers; *Domine exaudi orationem meam, Et clamor meus ad te veniat; Dominus vobiscum, Et cum spiritu tuo*; followed by a prayer made up for the occasion.

No. 65. [WI]Þ TOÞECE]

Sing ðis wið toðece syððan sunne beo on setle, swiðe oft:

Caio laio quaque uoaque ofer sæloficia sleah manna  
wyrm.

Nemne her þone man and his fæder<sup>1)</sup>, cweð þonne:

5 Lilumenne æced þæt ofer eall þonne alið, coliað  
þonne hit on eorðan hatost byrneð. Fintamen.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 135a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

[AGAINST THE TOOTHACHE]

Sing this against the toothache, when the sun is set, very often:

Caio laio quaque uoaque ofer sæloficia the man  
slew the worm.

Here name the man and his father, then say:

Lilumenne it aches most of all when it mitigates, it  
cools when it burns hottest on earth. Fintamen.

This and the next twenty formulas may be called 'gibberish or jingle charms'<sup>2)</sup>, because the contents have become incomprehensible for the most part. The reason lies in the introduction of foreign elements whose meaning soon became unknown, with the result that the words gradually developed into unintelligible, meaningless sounds.

Latin was studied by many people and it was the official

<sup>1)</sup> MS. fæd.

<sup>2)</sup> Cf. Grendon, pp. 112-115; 124-127.

language of the church, but Celtic, Greek and Hebrew were virtually unknown for centuries, and incantations made up in one of these languages soon turned into nonsense. Many charm-singers did not understand Latin either, and though we can often recognise certain words of a formula we are not able to reconstruct the sentence. When written texts were copied and circulated people made mistakes and after some copyings the sense was gone.

To compensate for the lack of sense the mysterious character of such jingle charms was deepened by the introduction or retention of a certain loose and irregular rhythm, and of rhyme, assonance and alliteration. The repetition of sounds, syllables and words is typical of this kind of charms:

caio laio  
 quaque uoaque (No. 65)

gise ges  
 audies maudies (No. 68)

leta lita tota tauta (No. 69)

bedegunda bredegunda elecunda eleuachia (No. 84),  
 etc.

Sometimes a whole passage is repeated (Cf. No. 69), possibly because the charmer thought that the formula was not yet long enough and he ought to go on for a few more moments, or because he knew that some words followed and he could not recollect them. For it requires a very good memory to remember a completely unintelligible text, and sooner or later most of such incantations disappeared.

The Latin in the present charm had lost its meaning and a few OE. words bearing on toothache were tacked on to it. *Gaio laio* may stand for *Gaio Seio*, 'a certain person'. *Lilumenne* has been regarded as the name of an Arabian god<sup>1)</sup>, and as the equivalent of 'little men', i.e., the spirits or worms in the teeth<sup>2)</sup>. *Fintamen* is of course *finit. Amen*.

Ll. 5-6 are obscure. I take them to suggest that the pain is mitigating at the moment it hurts most, that it is cooling when it burns

<sup>1)</sup> Cockayne, III, p. 9; Grendon p. 219.

<sup>2)</sup> Magoun II, p. 24.

hottest. Under the influence of the charm the pain is realized most, but at the same time the suggestion of alleviation is beginning to work and the pain is already diminishing. Grendon has: 'It aches beyond telling when he lies down; it cools when on earth it burns most fiercely'.

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No. 66. Wl|> OMAN

Genim ane grene gyrde and læt sittan þone man on middan huses flore and bestric hine ymbutan and cwed:

O pars et o rilli apars et pars iniopia. est alfa et o initium.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 186b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

*Against erysipelas*

Take a green stick and make the man sit down on the floor in the middle of the house and make a stroke round about him and say:

O pars et o rilli apars et pars iniopia. est alfa et o initium.

---

The explanation of the green stick is that green is symbolic of freshness and coolness, and as such it is efficacious against the red colour and the burning feeling that are symptomatic of erysipelas. Compare the green salve against erysipelas, Lacn. 4; the application of a leaf of green marsh against the same malady, Lacn. 47; and the fact that the patient is placed in running water, Charm No. 67, or in cold water, Lacn. 47, Leechbook I, xxxix.

By making a stroke round about the patient the disease-spirit is prevented from returning to him.

On the formula Shook<sup>1)</sup> remarks: 'The Latin incantation or formula contains only one completely garbled expression: *rillia pars*, which may be a corruption of *illorum pars*. This suggestion is based on a comparison of the formula with *Apoc. XXI, 6: ego sum A et O initium et finis*, and *ibid. 8: pars illorum erit in stagno*, etc. That both the formula and *Apoc. XXI, 8* are curses tends to confirm the emendation. The formula, properly punctuated, might well read: O pars, O illorum pars, et pars in(i)opia est. A et O, initium (et finis. Amen)'.

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<sup>1)</sup> Shook, p. 139.

## No. 67. WI|&gt; HORS OMAN AND MANNES

Wif hors oman and mannes, sing þis þriwa nygan siðan on æfen and on morgen on þæs mannes heafod ufan, and horse on þæt wynstre eare on yrnendum wætere and wend þæt heafod ongean stream:

In domo mamosin inchorna meoti. otimimeoti quod-dealde otimotiua el marethin.

Crux mihi vita et tibi mors inimici alfa et o initium et finis dicit dominus.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 186a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

## AGAINST ERYSIPELAS OF HORSES AND MEN

Against erysipelas of horse and man, sing this thrice nine times in the evening and in the morning, with the man on top of his head, with the horse on the left ear, in running water and turn the head against the stream:

In domo mamosin inchorna meoti. otimimeoti quod-dealde otimotiua el marethin.

Crux mihi vita et tibi mors inimici, alfa et o initium et finis dicit dominus.

No. 68. WI|> GEDRIF (*Against fever*)

+ In nomine domini nostri Iesu Christi. tera. tera. tera. testis. contera. taberna. gise. ges. maude. leis. bois. eis. audies. maudies. moab. lib. lebes.

Dominus deus adiutor sit illi. illi. eax. filiax. artifex. Amen.

*MS. Cotton Caligula A XV, f. 129a (11th century).*

## No. 69. [TO OBTAIN FAVOURS]

Gif þu wille gangan<sup>1)</sup> to þinum hlaforde oþþe to kyninge oþþe to oþrum menn odde to gemote, þonne bær þu þas stafas; ælc þæra þonne biþ he þe liþa and blið:

XX. h. d. e. o. e.o.o.e.e.laf.d.R.U.fi.ð.f.þ.A.x.Box.Nux,

No. 67. <sup>1)</sup> See Charm No. 46.

No. 69. <sup>1)</sup> MS. nearly illegible.

In nomine patris Rex. M. p. x.xix. x̄cs. x̄hi. īh̄.

✕ Deo. eo. deo. deeo. lafdruel. bepax. box. nux. bu.

In nomine patris rex marie. īhs. x̄pc dominus meus.  
īhc.

✕ Egrifici<sup>2)</sup>. senioribus. H. hrinlur. her. letus contra me.  
hee. larrhibus excitatio pacis inter virum et mulierum ... ..<sup>3)</sup>).

A.B. et alfa tibi reddit vota fructu leta. lita. tota. tauta. vel tellus  
vel ade virescit. *MS. Cotton Caligula A XV, f. 140b (11th century).*

“If you want to go to your lord, or to the king, or to another man, or to a meeting, then you must wear these letters; each of them will be gracious and friendly to you.”

The manuscript is defective and most of the text is hardly legible. The first line of the incantatory formula is repeated, with some variations, in the third line.

#### No. 70. [WI]þ þA BLACAN BLEGENE]

Sing ðis gebed on ða blacan blegene VIII syþðan, ærest Pater noster:

5 Tigad̄ tigad̄ tigad̄ calicet. aclu cluel sedes adlocles.  
acre earcre arnem. nonabiud̄ ær ærnem nidren arcum  
cunad̄ arcum arctua fligara uflen binchi cutern. nicu-  
param raf afðegal uflen arta. arta. arta trauncula.  
trauncula.

10 Querite et inuenietis. Adiuro te per Patrem et Filium  
et Spiritum sanctum, non amplius crescas sed arescas.

Super aspidem et basilliscum ambulabis et concul-  
cabis leonem et draconem.

CruX Matheus cruX Marcus cruX Lucas cruX  
Iohannes.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 136a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

#### [AGAINST THE BLACK BLAINS]

Sing this prayer against black blains nine times, beginning with an Our Father, etc.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. nearly illegible. Cockayne III, p. 290 has *Eonfra*.

<sup>3)</sup> The gap is an open space in the MS.



The charm enjoyed an uncommon popularity, for it occurs in two other manuscripts (See No. 71 & 72) and the initial words are mentioned on f. 165b of this manuscript: "This prayer must be sung against black blains (Glossed: Ad carbunculum) nine times: Tigad"

The first four lines of the incantation are unintelligible to me. Then we find a reference to Matthew VII, 7, followed by a Christian-worded though in reality magic adjuration of the disease-spirit not to increase but to dry up and vanish. *Super aspidem* is Ps. XC, 13 (Vulg.). The invocation of the four evangelists has been explained in connection with No. 19.

### No. 71. [AGAINST BLACK BLAINS]

Tigađ. Tigađ. Tigađ. calicet ac locluel sedes adlocles arce encrcere erernem Nonabaioth arcum cunat arcum arcua fligata soh wipni necutes cuterii rafaf þegal uflen binchni. arta. arta. arta. tuxuncula. tuxuncula. tuxuncula.

5 Querite et inuenietis. pulsate et aperietur vobis.

Crux Matheus. crux Marcus. crux Lucas. crux Iohannes.

10 Adiuro te pestiferum virus per patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum. ut amplius non noceas neque crescas sed arescas. Amen.

*MS. Bodley Junius 163 f. 227 (12th century)*

### No. 72. CONTRA FELON

Super infirmum dic mane et vespere tres tribus vicibus:

Thigat. Thigat. Thigat. calicet. Archlo. cluel. Sedes. Achodes. Arde. et hercleno. Abaioth. ArcocugtiA. Arcu. ArcuA. fulgura. sophuinit. ni. cofuedi. necutes cuteri. nicuram. Thefalnegal. Uflem. 5 archa. cunhunelaja.

Querite et inuenietis. pulsante et aperietur.

+ crux Matheus + crux Marcus + crux Lucas + crux Iohannes.

10 Adiuro te pestiferum virus per Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum. ut amplius homini huic non noceas neque crescas sed arescas.

+ In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen. Pater noster.

*MS. Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, 379, f. 49a (12th century).*

## No. 73. [WI] &gt; WYRME]

Wið ðon þe mon oððe nyten wurm gedrince, gyf hit sy wæpned cynnes, sing ðis leoð in þæt swiðre eare, þe her æfter awriten is, gif hit sy wifcynnes, sing in þæt wynstre eare:

5 Gonomil orgomil marbumil marbsai ramum tofed-  
tengo docuillo biran cuidær cæfmiil scuiht cuillo scuiht  
cuib duill marbsiramum.

Sing nygon siðan in þæt eare þis galdor and pater noster æne. Þis ylce galdor mæg mon singan wið smeogan wyrme. Sing gelome on þa dolh and mid ðinan spatle smyre. And nim grene curmeallan, cnuca, lege on þæt dolh, and beðe mid hattre cumicgan.  
10 MS. Harley 585, ff. 136b, 137a (11th century) (Lacnunga).

## [AGAINST A WORM]

If a man or a beast has drunk a worm, if it is of the male sex, sing this charm which is written hereafter into the right ear, if it is of the female sex, sing it into the left ear:

Gonomil orgomil marbumil marbsai ramum tofed-  
tengo docuillo biran cuidær cæfmiil scuiht cuillo scuiht  
cuib duill marbsirarum.

Sing the charm nine times into the ear, and once an Our Father. The same charm may be sung against a penetrating worm. Sing it frequently on the wound and smear on your spittle, and take green centaury, pound it, apply it to the wound and bathe with hot cow's urine.

Part of the incantation seems to be Irish: '*Gono mil, orgo mil, marbu mil* — I wound the beast, I beat the beast, I kill the beast' <sup>1)</sup>.

No. 74. WI] > ÞEOFENTUM (*Against theft*)

Luben luben niga efið niga efið fel ceid fel delf fel  
cumer orcggaei ceufor dard giug farig pidig delou delupih.

MS. Harley 585, f. 178a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).

No. 73. <sup>1)</sup> Cf. Thurneysen, *Zs. f. celtische Philologie*, XIII, 1919-1921, p. 106, cited by Magoun II, p. 23.

## No. 75. [WI] &gt; CORNE]

>is mæg horse wið þon þe him bið corn on þa fet:  
 Geneon genetron genitul catalon care trist pābist  
 etmic forrune nahtic forrune nequis annua maris  
 sanctana nequetando.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 182a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga)*

## [AGAINST CORNS]

This is good for a horse if it has corns (i.e., kernels or hard pimples) on its feet: Etc.

## No. 76. BLODSETEN

Eft gehal beren ear bestinge on eare, swa he nyte.  
 Sume þis writað :

✕ ægryn. thon. struth. fola argrenn. tart. struth. on.  
 tria. enn. piath. hathu. morfana. on hæl. ✕ ara. carn.  
 leou. groth. weorn. + + +. ffil. crondi. w. |×|. mro.  
 cron. ærcrio. ermio. æR. leNo.

Ge horse ge men blodseten.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 20a, b (10th century) (Leechbook)*

## FOR STANCHING BLOOD

Another (medicine for stanching blood). Thrust a whole ear of barley into the ear, so that he (the patient) does not know of it:

Some write this: . . . . .

For stanching blood in horse and man.

.....

The agreement in form between an *ear* of barley and the *ear* of a man or a horse is an interesting example of sympathetic magic. We have here a case of Anglo-Saxon magic in the strict sense of the word, for it originated in circumstances that only occur in OE.:

OE. *ear* — Prim. Germ. \**ahuz-*, Lat. *acus*

OE. *eare* — Prim. Germ. \**auzon*, Lat. *auris*

Such similarities continue to crop up independently as long as people believe in magic. In Holland a rose is applied against erysipelas or dandruff, because the flower and the disease have the

same name (Du. *roos*); in the Rhine province of Germany a crab is good against cancer, because of the same name<sup>1</sup>). This remedy was probably borrowed from Roman soldiers as Latin *cancer* has both meanings. In the Rhine dialect the name of the disease changed into *crab*, *Krebs*.

No. 77. [BLODSETEN]

Gif men ierne blod of nebbe to swiðe, sume þis writað:

+ ærgrin thonn struht fola. ær grenn tart strut onntria  
enn piathu Morfona onnhel. ara carn leow gruth  
ueron. + + +. Fil cron diw. |X|. inro cron aer crio  
ærmio ær leno.

Ge horse ge men blod seten.

*MS. Bodley Auct. 7-3-6, f. 2b (11th century).*

[FOR STANCHING BLOOD]

If people bleed too freely from the nose, some write this:

.....

For stanching blood in horse and man.

No. 78. [WI]Þ DWORH]

.....

and thebal guttatim aurum et thus de. + albra Iesus.  
+ alabra Iesus + Galabra Iesus. +

Wid þone dworh. on. III. oflætan writ.

T H E B A L G U T T A

*MS. Bodley Auct. 7-3-6, f. 1 (11th century).*

[AGAINST A DWARF]

.....

Against the dwarf write on three wafers.

The first line is a reminiscence of Isaiah 60, 6: 'Inundatio came-

<sup>1</sup>) J. Schrijnen, *Ned. Volkskunde*, Zutphen, no date, II, p. 93.

lorum operiet te, dromedarii Madian et Epha; omnes de Saba venient, *aurum et thus* deferentes et laudem Domino annuntiantes'.

The application of wafers may be due to the influence of No. 7.

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No. 79. [WI|> FLEOGENDUM ATRE]

Wip fleogendum atre and ælcum æternum swile. On Frigedæge aþwer buteran þe sie gemolcan of anes bleos nytne oððe hinde, and ne sie wip wætre gemenged.

Asing ofer nigon siþum letania and nigon siþum Pater noster and nigon siþum þis gealdor:

Acrae. æcre. ærnem. nadre. ærcuna hel. ærnem.  
niþærn. ær. asan. buiþine. adrice. ærnem. meodre.  
ærnem. æþern. ærnem. allū. honor. ucus. idar. adcert.  
cunolari. raticamo. helæ. icas. x̄pita. hæle. tobært tera.  
fueli. cui. robater. plana. vili.

þæt deah to ælcum and huru to deopum dolgum.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 43a (10th century) (Leechbook).*

[AGAINST FLYING POISON]

Against flying poison and every poisonous swelling. On a Friday churn butter which is milked from a cow of one colour or from a hind, and it must not be mixed with water.

Sing over it nine times the litany, and nine times an Our Father and nine times this charm:

(On the incantation cf. No. 19, ll. 28-29; No. 70; No. 71; No. 72. The table of contents of the Leechbook declares that the charm is in Irish.)

That is good against every wound and especially against deep ones.

---

No. 80. MEDICINA CONTRA FEBRES

In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

✠ + Ire + arex + xre + rauex + filiax + arafax + N.

*MS. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 367, f. 52a (12th century).*

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## No. 81. [WI]þ NÆDRAN BITE]

Some an word wið nædran bite lærað to cweþenne, þæt is:

Faul

Ne mæg him derian.

Wið nædran slite. Gif he beget and yt rinde sio þe cymð of neorxn̄a wonge, ne derað him nan atter.

þonne cwæþ se þe þas boc wrat þæt hio wære tor-begete.

*MS. Regius 12 D XVII, f. 43a, b (10th century) (Leechbook).*

## [AGAINST THE BITE OF AN ADDER]

Some teach to say one word against the bite of an adder, namely:

Faul.

No bite will be able to hurt him.

Against the bite of an adder. If he obtains and eats bark which comes from Paradise, no poison can hurt him.

Then he that wrote this book remarked that it was difficult to get.

This is the only case in the Leechbook that the compiler exhibits some personal feeling, but there is no denying that he was provoked.

## No. 82. [WI]þ UTSIHT]

þis man sceal singan nigon syþon wiþ utsiht on hrenbræden æg þry dagas:

+ Ecce dol gola ne dit dudum bethe cunda bræthe cunda. elecunda ele uahge macte me erenum. ortha fuetha la ta uis leti unda. noeuis terre dulce doþ.

Pater noster oþ ende. And cweþ symle æt þam drore huic. ð is.

*MS. Cotton Faustina A X, f. 116a (11th century).*

## [AGAINST DYSENTERY]

This must be sung nine times against dysentery on a lightly boiled egg for three days:

.....

And Pater noster to the end. And say it continually at the passage *drore huic is* <sup>1)</sup>.

No. 82. <sup>1)</sup> Magoun II, 23 made an attempt to explain the last few words.

## No. 83. [WI|&gt; UTSIHTE]

Ecce dolgola medit dudum beðegunda breðegunda  
elecunda eleuachia mottem mee renum orþa fueþa  
letaues noeues terre dolge drore uhic. alleluiah.

Singe man þis gebed on þæt se man drincan wille nygan siþan.  
And Pater noster nigan siþan.

*MS. Harley 585, ff. 185b-186a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

## [AGAINST DYSENTERY]

..... Cf. No. 82.

This charm is to be sung nine times on what the man wants to  
drink. And Pater noster nine times.

## No. 84. WI|&gt; CYRNLA

Arcus suped assedit uirgo canabið lux et ure canabið.

Sing ðis nigon siþan and Pater noster. VIII. on anum berenan  
hlafe and syle þan horse etan.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 186a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

## AGAINST KERNELS

Arcus suped asedit virgo canabid lux et ure canabid.

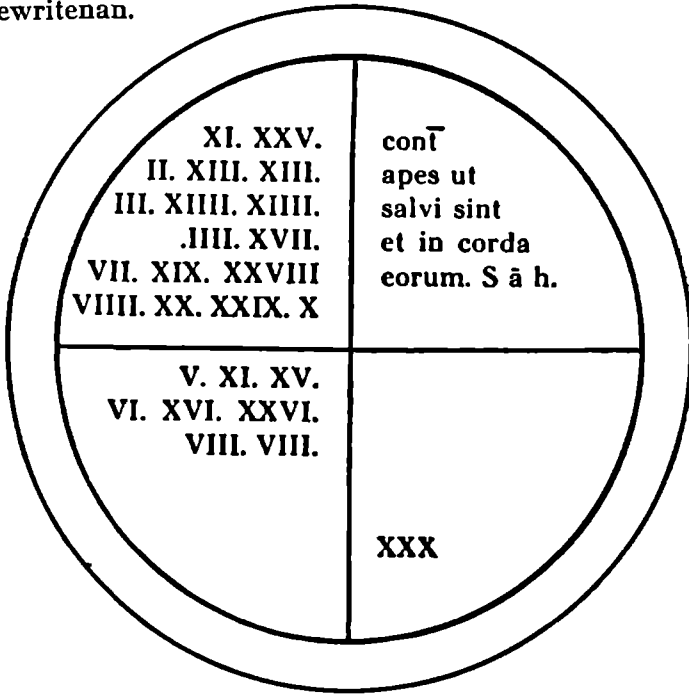
Sing this nine times and Pater noster nine times on a barley loaf,  
and give it the horse to eat.

The disease is evidently the same as that mentioned in No. 75. Cockayne<sup>1)</sup> suggested that the title might belong to the charm immediately preceding in the manuscript (No. 83). As the *dolgula*-formula is also found in another manuscript and as the object of the charm is specifically mentioned there (see No. 82), we may conclude that No. 83 is likewise meant against dysentery. Moreover the preceding prescription but one in the Lacnunga (No. 35) bears the title *Wid utsihte*. The compiler of the Lacnunga interrupted his remedies against dysentery in order to insert an Anglo-Saxon charm against miscarriage (No. 10), which he considered of greater interest.

<sup>1)</sup> *l. c.* III, p. 69.

No. 85. þIS IS SANCTE COLUMCILLE CIRCUL

Writ þysne circul mid þines cnifes orde on anum mealm-stane and sleah ænne stacan on middan þam ymbhagan; and lege þone stan on uppan þam stacan, þæt he beo eall under eorðan, butan þam gewritenan.



*MS. Cotton Vitellius E XVIII, f. 13b (11th century).*

THIS IS THE CIRCLE OF ST. COLUMKILL

Inscribe this circle with the point of your knife on a malmstone, and drive a stake into the earth in the centre of the garden, and put the stone on top of the stake so that it is wholly under the earth but for the inscription.

In his paper on "Early English Magic and Medicine" Singer quotes the legendary story of the birth of St. Columkill:

"The legend of the origin of this magical figure is contained in the Irish life of the saint by Manus O'Donnell, composed in 1532.

'On a time Ethne the mother of Columcille was in the place called Gartán, and it was the night before Columcille was born, and there appeared a fair youth in shining raiment, and he said she should bring forth on the morrow the son that was promised her to bear. And he told her there was a broad flagstone in the lake, to the south of the place where she was. . . . And he told her to let



bring that flagstone to a certain place . . . and that thereon should God will the child to be brought forth of her.

“In what manner shall I get the flagstone, seeing it is under the lake”, saith she “whereby shall I know it from other flagstones?”

“Thou shalt find it floating on the bosom of the lake”, saith he.

And Ethne found the flagstone on the morrow as it had been told her, and she let bring it from the aforesaid place. And albeit it floated on the surface of the lake, and Ethne’s folk brought it away with them without labour, yet certain it is that it were a task for thirty men to bring it from the lake to the place where it is to-day . . .

And it befell that the foresaid flagstone was under him at his birth, and the child rested him crosswise thereon, and the flagstone opened for him in such a wise that it left a place therein. And the figure of that cross is on that stone from that time to this day. And that flagstone remaineth in that place for working of marvels and wonders”.

Then he goes on :

“Irish archaeologists have frequently described a type of large flat stone, into the surface of which there has been cut in remote antiquity a design consisting primarily of a cross surrounded by a circle. A fine specimen of this type of Celtic monument is known in the glen to which Columcille’s name is still attached. To such stones magical powers were attached and their use passed over to the English.

The stake was presumably to prevent the stone from sinking and the stone thus laid was used for charming bees. Its form and title betray its Irish affinities. In the MS., however, the resemblance to the circle of Petosiris has tempted the scribe to write the days of the moon upon it after the manner of the Greek device”. So far Dr. Singer.

From this legend, and from Singer’s remarks, we may infer that St. Columkill was born in a place where there was such a stone, and that the power of the stone and the power of the saint were associated, so that after some time the latter gave his name to the stone and its inscription, thus christianising it. Later on legendary stories were made up to explain the cross (‘he rested him crosswise thereon’) and the presence of the stone itself.

It is difficult to ascertain whether the circle and the cross originally had some astronomical significance (the four quarters of heaven). The manuscript in which it is preserved contains astro-

nomical subjects and the scribe may have associated St. Columkill's circle with the circle of Petosiris and introduced the Roman numbers.

The Latin inscription states that the circle was intended as a protection for bees. The context is not quite clear. *Cont̄* normally stands for *contra*, but the charm is not meant *against* bees but *for* bees. It may have been a mistaken translation of OE *wip̄*, which has both meanings. *S ā h* remains a mystery.

The outer circle may represent the outline of the stone.

*Ymb-haga* is taken by Toller<sup>2)</sup> to mean an 'enclosure where bees are kept', on the analogy of *swin-haga*, 'an enclosure where swine are kept'; on the other hand it may simply mean 'an enclosure, a garden'. Cf. OE. *ymbhegian* and Du. *omheining*.

No. 86. [WI] > [ >EOFTE]

[>onne þe man<sup>1)</sup> hwet forstele, awrit þis swigende and do on þinne wynstran sco under þinum ho, þonne geacsaxt þu hit sona :

er	hx
h	h
d	d
n	n
d	d
xh	hx

MS. Cotton Vitellius E XVIII, f. 13b (11th century).

[AGAINST THEFT]

When somebody steals anything from you, write this in silence and put it in your left shoe under your heel, then you will soon find out about it.

No. 85. <sup>2)</sup> A.S.D., s. v. *ymbhaga*. See Magoun II, p. 33.

No. 86. <sup>1)</sup> MS. [ >ema.

## APPENDIX I

The following texts are given as further illustrations of the relation between magic and religion. All of them are prayers, but in all probability all of them were used alongside of real charms. The first text is a hymn to Mother Earth and is of pagan origin, whereas the rest is definitely Christian.

### A 1. TRACTATUS MEDICI DE VIRTUTIBUS HERBARUM

Dea sancta tellus. rerum nature parens. que cuncta generas.  
et regeneras. sydus quod sola prestas gentibus. Tutela celi ac maris.  
divum. arbitrarumque omnium. Per quam silet natura et sumnus  
capit. Eademque lucem reparas. et noctem fugas. tutissima umbras  
5 tegis et immensum chaos. ventosque et imbres. tempestatesque con-  
tines et cum libet dimittis et misces freta. fugasque solem. et pro-  
cellas concitis. Itemque cum vis hilarem promittis diem. et alimen-  
ta vite tribuis perpetua fide. et cum recesserit anima. in te refugi-  
mus. Item vocaris magna. tu mater deum pietate. que vicisti divum  
10 nominatum. Ipsa vires gentium et divum parens. sine qua. nec  
maturatur quicquam nec nasci potest. tu es magna. tu es divum  
regina. Dea. te divam adoro. tuumque ego nomen invoco. facilisque  
prestes hoc mihi quod te rogo. referamque gratias diva tibi merita  
fide. Exaudi queso et fave precibus meis. hoc quod peto a te diva  
15 mihi presta. volens herbas quascumque generat tua maiestas  
salutis causa tribuas cunctis gentibus. et ut mihi permittas medici-  
nam tuam hanc. Veni ad me cum tuis virtutibus. quicquid ex his  
fecero. habeat eventum bonum. cuique easdem dedero prosperes  
quicquid tribuis in te cuncta recedunt. Merito easdem a me accepe-  
20 rint. sanos eosdem. que prestas. nunc diva postulo, ut hoc mihi tua  
maiestas prestet. quod te supplex rogo. Nunc vos potentes omnes  
herbas deprecor exoroque maiestatem vestram. vos quas parens  
tellus generavit et cunctis gentibus dono dedit medicinam sanitatis  
in vos contulit maiestatemque omni generi humano. sitis auxilium  
25 utillissimum. Hoc supplex exposco. precor ve huc adestote cum

vestris virtutibus. quia que creavit vos. ipsa permisit mihi ut colligam vos. favente hoc etiam cui medicina tradita est. quantumque vestra virtus potest prestate medicinam. bonam causam. sanitatis gratiam. Precor mihi prestetis mihi per virtutem vestram ut omnibus viribus quicquid ex vobis fecero habeat effectum *bonum* celerimum. et eventus bonos ut semper mihi liceat favente maiestate vos colligere. pugnansque vobis. fruges recipere. et gratias agam per nomen maiestatis que vos iussit nasci.

*MS. Harley 1585, pp. 24-26 (11th century).*

The same hymn was edited by Heim<sup>1)</sup>, for it is preserved in five other manuscripts, the oldest of which, Codex Vossianus L. Q. 9, dates back to the sixth century. Heim's edition is based on the Codex Vindobonensis 93 (11th c.), while the other manuscripts are collated. In the Codex Vindobonensis it is preceded by a passage that gives a few directions as to how the herb basilisca must be gathered:

Thus it must be gathered that, whoever gathers it, must first consider his own welfare and go pure in everything; let him keep his clothes untouched and pure, that when he goes he may not be touched by a woman having her monthly periods nor by a man who is sullied. When he wants to gather the herb he must have an oak leaf in his hand, before he comes to it, and take spring-water from three springs, and with the help of the oak leaf he must purify or sprinkle himself with the spring-water thus: when the sun goes down, with the right hand, and pray 'dea sancta tellus'.

Nothing is known about the date or the place of its composition. This text, showing several independent variants, is not a transcription from one of the extant manuscripts.

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## A 2. [ÆCERES BLETSUNG] (*Blessing of the land*)

Þis is seo oðer bletsung.

Domine deus omnipotens, qui fecisti coelum et terram, tu benedicis fructum istum in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

And Pater noster. *MS. Cotton Vitellius E XVIII, f. 13b (11th century).*

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<sup>1)</sup> Heim, *Incantamenta Magica Graeca Latina*, Leipzig, 1892, pp. 503-505.

The produce of a piece of land depends on several factors that always remain uncertain. This precarious nature of agriculture led at an early date to the introduction of magic rites, for we find that agricultural peoples show more magic activity than nomads or hunters. The relation between magic and religion is very close in these rites as we have seen in No. 8. The OE. introduction says it is the second blessing. Another one, preceding this text, is the circle of St. Columbkil (No. 85), where the magic atmosphere is more apparent.

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### A 3. CONTRA OCULORUM DOLORUM

Domine sancte pater omnipotens eterne deus, sana oculos hominis istius N. sicut sanasti oculos filii Tobi et multorum cecorum, quod<sup>1)</sup> domine tu es oculus<sup>2)</sup> cecorum, manus aridorum, pes claudorum, sanitas egrorum, resurrectio mortuorum, felicitas martyrum et omnium sanctorum.

Oro domine ut eregas et inlumines<sup>3)</sup> oculos famuli tui N. in quacumque valitudine constitutum medelis celestibus sanare digneris; tribue<sup>4)</sup> famulo tuo N., ut armis iustitie munitus diabolo resistat et regnat consequatur eternum. Per.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 181a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

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### A 4. WI|> SARUM EAGUM (*Against eye-ache*)

Domine sancte pater omnipotens aeterne deus sana oculos hominis istius N. sicut sanasti oculos filii Tobi et multorum cecorum<sup>1)</sup>, manus aridorum, pes claudorum, sanitas egrorum, resurrectio mortuorum, felicitas martirum et omnium sanctorum.

Oro domine ut erigas et inluminas oculos famuli tui N. in quacumque valitudine constitutum<sup>2)</sup> medellis celestibus sanare digneris; tribue famulo tuo N., ut armis iustitie munitus<sup>3)</sup> diabolo resistat et regnum consequatur æternum. Per.

*MS. CCC 41, Cambridge, p. 326 (11th century).*

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No. A 3. 1) MS. quos. 2) MS. oculos. 3) MS. inlumnas.

4) MS. tribuere.

No. A 4. 1) Some words are missing after *cecorum*, cf. No. 52.

2) MS. constraintum.

3) MS. munitur.

A 5. WI|> SARUM EARUM (*Against ear-ache*)

Rex glorie Christe Raphaellem angelum exclude fandorohel auri-  
bus famulo dei illi. Mox recede ab aurium torquenti, sed in  
Raphaelo angelo sanitatem auditui componas. Per.

*MS. Gonville and Caius College, Cambr. 379, f. 49a (12th century).*

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A 6. WI|> MAGAN SEOCNESSE (*Against stomach-ache*)

Adiuva nos deus salutaris noster, exclude angelum Lanielem  
malum qui stomachum dolorem stomachi facit, sed in Dormiello  
sancto angelo tuo sanitatem servi tui in tuo sancto nomine sana-  
tionem<sup>1)</sup> ad ad tribuere. Per.

*MS. Gonville and Caius College, Cambr. 379, f. 49a (12th century).*

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A 7. [WI|> POCCAS] (*Against pocks*)

+ In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

N<sup>o</sup>. In adiutorium sit salvator. N<sup>o</sup>. deo celi regi regum nos debe-  
mus reddere gratiarum actionem adque se petere ut a nobis lues  
isti huius pestis careat et in nobis quam donavit salus vera maneat.

- 5 Iesu Christe me. N<sup>o</sup>. defende de perpetua potentiam adque nobis  
nunc extende benignam clementiam quia solus ipse potest prestare  
auxilium te petentibus ex toto corde donare presidium. Summe  
digne patrem pium dignum verum summum adque optimum ter  
rogamus. Audi preces famulorum famularumque tuarum domine  
10 Iesu Christe vite alta subveni auxilio et salutis tue pelta defende  
presidio summo et digne te obscuro intende ardiana mei cordis  
adque peto angelorum milia aut me. N<sup>o</sup>. salvent ac defendant dolo-  
ris igniculo et potestate variole ac protegat mortis a periculo tuas  
Iesu Christe aures nobis inclina clementiam in salute ac virtute in-  
15 tende potentie ne dimittas nos intrare in hanc pestilentiam sed  
salvare nos dignare potentiam tuam filii dei vivi Iesu Christi qui es  
vite dominator miserere adque nos huius mundi salvator deus  
libera illam domine de languoribus pessimis et de periculis huius  
anni quia tu es salvator omnium Christe qui regnas in secula. Fiat  
20 sanitas domine super me. N<sup>o</sup>. Amen.

Brigitarum dricillarum tuarum malint uoarline dearnabda  
murde murrunice domur brio rubebroht.

<sup>1)</sup> MS. canatione.

Sancte Rehhoc et Sancte Ehwalde et Sancte Cassiane et Sancte Germane et Sancte Sigismundi regis gescyldað me wið ða laþan poccas and wið ealle yfelu. Amen.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 191a, b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

Singer commented upon the last five lines of the text in his paper on 'Early English Medicine and Magic': "(The lines 21 and 22) are corrupt Irish and are said to contain the equivalent of Immaculate Maid of Heaven, Mary of God. The saints are mainly a Celtic group. Brigita is Bridget. Sanctus Rehhoc is the Celtic Rioc, who is perhaps identical with Riaghail and Regulus, the legendary founder of St. Andrews (8th c.). Sanctus Sigmundus rex was the son of Gundebald, King of Burgundy; he was converted from Arianism in 515 and became king in 516. Sanctus Germanus (378? - 428) was Bishop of Auxerre and missionary to Britain; he had a high reputation for his power over demons, and there are many Celtic stories of him. Sanctus Cassianus is perhaps the Alexandrian of that name who became Bishop of Autun and died in 355. Sanctus Ehwaldus is probably one of the Hewalds (Edwald), 'two priests of the English nation who had long lived in Ireland for the sake of the eternal inheritance' [Bede]; they were martijred in the 7th c." <sup>1)</sup>). They were martyred in Holland.

The saints are invoked to shield the singer of the charm from the loathsome pocks and from all evil.

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#### A 8. [AGAINST SMALLPOX].

Sanctus Cassius minutam habuit dominumque deprecatus est, ut quicumque nomen suum portatet secum, hoc malum non haberet. Dic pater noster tribus vicibus.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 52 (11th century).*

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#### A 9. WI|> POCCAS (*Against pocks*)

Sanctus Nicasius habuit minutam variolam et rogavit dominum ut quicumque nomen suum secum portare scriptum.

Sancte Nicasi presul et martir egregie, ora pro me N. peccatore et ab hoc morbo tua intercessione me defende. Amen.

*MS. Cotton Caligula A XV, f. 129 (11th century).*

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<sup>1)</sup> *l. c.*, p. 30.

A 10 WIP<sup>^</sup> GESWELL (*Against a swelling*)

Domine Jesu Christe deus noster per orationem servi tui Blasii festina in adiutorium meum.

*MS. Cotton Caligula A XV, f. 129 (11th century).*

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A 11. [FOR A SORE THROAT]

Domine Jesu Christi, vere deus noster, per intercessionem servi tui Blassi succurre in adiutorium servi tui.

Pater noster III.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 52 (11th century).*

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A 12. BENEDICTIO HERBARUM<sup>1)</sup>

Omnipotens sempiterne deus qui ab initio mundi omnia instituisti et creasti tam arborum generibus quam erbarum seminibus quibus etiam benedictione tua benedicendo sanxisti eadem nunc benedictione holera aliosque fructus sanctificare ac benedicere digneris ut sumentibus ex eis sanitatem conferant mentis et corporis ac tutelam defensionis eternamque vitam per salvatorem animarum dominum nostrum Iesum Christum qui vivit et regnat deus in secula seculorum. Amen.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 192a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

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A 13. ALIA

Deus qui hec holera que tua iussione et providentia crescere et germinare fecisti, etiam ea benedicere et sanctificare digneris et precamur ut quicumque ex eis gustaverint incolomes permaneant.

Per.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 192a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

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A 14. BENEDICTIO UNGUENTI<sup>2)</sup>

Deus pater omnipotens et Christe Iesu fili<sup>3)</sup> dei rogo ut mittere digneris benedictionem tuam et medicinam celestem et divinam

<sup>1)</sup> MS. Hebrarium.

<sup>2)</sup> MS. Unguentum.

<sup>3)</sup> MS. filii.



protectionem super hoc unguentum ut perficiat ad salutem et ad perfectionem contra omnes egritudines corporum vel omnium membrorum intus vel foris omnibus istud unguentum sumentibus.  
A.A.

*MS. Harley 585, f. 192a (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

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#### A 15. ALIA

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti et per virtutem dominice passionis et resurrectionis a mortuis, ut sanctificentur tuo verbo sancto et benedicentur omnes fideles cum gustu huius unguenti adversus omnes nequitias in mundorum spiritum et contra valitudines et infirmitates que corpus affligunt....

*MS. Harley 585, f. 192b (11th century) (Lacnunga).*

*Alia* refers to the preceding prayer, which serves the same purpose. This text stands at the end of the manuscript and the rest is illegible.

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#### A 16. [AGAINST ALL EVILS]

Obsecro te Iesus Christus filius dei vivi per crucem tuam ut demittas delicta mea. pro beata cruce. custodi caput meum. pro benedicta cruce custodi oculos meos. pro veneranda cruce custodi manus meas. pro sancta cruce custodi viscera mea. pro gloriosa cruce custodi genua mea. pro honorabili cruce custodi pedes meos. et omnia membra mea ab omnibus insidiis inimici. pro dedicata cruce in corpore Christi. custodi animam meam et libera me in novissimo die ab omnibus adversariis. pro clavibus sanctis quae in corpore Christi dedicata erant. tribue mihi vitam aeternam et misericordiam tuam. Iesus Christus. et visitatio tua sancta custodiat spiritum meum.

*MS. Regius 2 A XX, f. 45b.*

## GLOSSARY OF PLANT NAMES

When nothing is added the plants only occur under their modern English equivalents in Part I.

The following glossary is intended as a preliminary list of Anglo-Saxon plant names. It only contains the names mentioned in the present work and leaves out of account all the other names occurring in the OE. version of the Herbarium Apulei, the Leechbook and the Lacnunga. Although our knowledge of OE. plant names has increased considerably, there are still many gaps to be filled. In our list we first give the OE. name, then its modern English equivalent, next the Dutch name, and finally the internationally accepted Latin name. The figures refer to the number of the charms in which the plants occur.

*Ac*; oak; eik; *Quercus Robur*.

*æferde*, see *ædelferdingwyr*t.

*ægwyr*t; see *eagwyr*t.

*ælfþone*; enchanter's nightshade, witchwort; nachtschade, heksenkruid; *Circaea lutetiana*. 17 A, C, 28.

*æncglisc cost*; English costmary; boerenwormkruid; *Tanacetum vulgare*. 19.

*æscþrote*; vervain; verbena, ijzerhard; *Verbena officinalis*. 20.

*æsp*, *æps*, *æpse*; asp; esp, ratelpopulier; *Populus tremula*.

*æsc*; ash-tree; es; *Fraxinus excelsior*.

*ædelferdingwyr*t; stitchwort (?); grootbloemmuur; *Stellaria Holostea*. However, there is a gloss *avis lingua*. 19.

*agrimonie*; agrimony; agrimonie; *Agrimonia Eupatoria*. 19, 30.

*alexandrie*; alexanders, Macedonian parsley, horse-parsley; ?; *Smyrniolum Olusatrum*. In the middle Ages it was called *Petroselinum Alexandrinum*. 19, 27.

*alor*; alder-tree; els; *Alnus glutinosa*.

*aluwe*, *alewe*; aloe; aloë; *Liliaceae aloinae*.

*ampre*, *ompre*; see *docce*.

*anan beam*; spindle-tree; kardinaalsmuts; *Euonymus Europaeus*.

*antre*, *ontre*; radish; radijs; *Raphanus sativus*. 28.

*aprotanie*, *oportanie*, *superne wermod*; southernwood; citroenkruid; *Artemisia Abrotanum*.

*apuldor*; apple-tree; appelboom; Pyrus Malus. 9.

*attorlaþe, atorlade*; cock's spur grass (?); hanepoot; Panicum Crus Galli. In the text we have often used a translation of the OE. name, viz., 'venom-loather', to indicate its magical function. 5, 9, 19, 27.

*Banwyrt*; bonewort. — Bonewort may stand for various plants, but as we find a gloss *centaurea*, the herb probably denotes the small knapweed; wambuisknopen, zwart knoopkruid; Centaurea minor.

*belene, beolone, belone*; henbane, henbell, stinking roger; bilsenkruid; Hyoscyamus niger. 20.

*benedicte*; benedict, herb bennet; nagelkruid; Geum urbanum. But Lat. *benedictus* simply means 'blessed', and the adjective may have been applied to several medicinal herbs. 19.

*bete*; beet; biet; Beta vulgaris.

*berbene*; see *æschrote*. 19.

*betonice, bisceopwyrt*; betony, bishop's wort; betonie; Stachys officinale. 19, 28.

*bisceopwyrt*; see *betonice*. Bishop's wort; is the common wood-betony, which is meant here. Bishop's weed, or goutwort, is Aegopodium Podagraria; zevenblad. 6, 17 A, 19, 20, 24, 27, 28.

*birce*; birch; berk; Betula alba.

*bogen, boden*; rosemary; rozemarijn; Rosmarinus officinalis. 19.

*brade-leac*; garlic; look; Allium sp. See *garleac*.

*brembel, bremel*; bramble, blackberry bush; braamstruik; Rubus sp. 26, 32.

*brer*; briar, any prickly, thorny bush, now usually the wild rose bush; doornstruik; Rosa sp.

*brunwyrt*; brownwort, water-betony; helmkruid; Scrophularia aquatica. 19.

*Cammuc*; cammock; varkenskervel; Peucedanum officinale.

*cassuc, cassoc*; hassock, rushes, sedge; biespol, rietpol. Various kinds of coarse grass may be meant and it is not possible to give a specific Latin name. 5, 17 D, 18, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28.

*caul, cawlic*; cabbage; kool. 19.

*ceaster-æsc, ceaster-axsa*; black hellebore; nieskruid; Helleborus sp.

*celendre, cellendre*; coriander; koriander; Coriandrum sativum.

*centaurie*; see *eorþgealla*.

*cerfille*; see *fille*. 27.

*cerse*, *cærse*; cress. Various plants may be meant; see *ea-cerse*; *fen-cerse*; *tun-cerse*; *wylle-cerse*.

*cileponie*, *cylepenie*, *cilpenie*; celandine (the greater); stinkende gouwe; *Chelidonium majus*. 19.

*clate*; burdock; kliskruid; *Arctium Lappa*.

*clife*, *clive*; burdock (the small), clivers; kleeftkruid; *Galium Aparine*.

*cluffung*; crowfoot, blisterwort; (blaartrekkende) boterbloem; *Ranunculus sceleratus*.

*cneow-holen*; knee holly, butcher's broom; ?; *Ruscus aculeatus*.

*consolde*; comfrey; smeewortel; *Symphytum officinale*. 5.

*cristalle*; cristallium, flea-bane, flea-wort; vlooiencruid; various plants, especially *Inula Conyza* and *Plantago Psyllium*. 18.

*cropleac*; garlic; look; *Allium sp.* 17 C, 20, 28.

*curmealle*, *centaurie*; centaury, probably the greater centaury; *Chlora perfoliata*. 73.

*cu-slyppe*; cowslip; sleutelbloem; *Primula veris*.

*cwicbeam*; the A.S.D. gives: The Quickbeam, a sort of poplar [?], forte *populus tremula*?, *cariscus*, *juniperus*. *Populus tremula* is the asp or trembling poplar. According to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary NE. quickbeam is another name for the mountain ash or rowan-tree, *Pyrus aucuparia*, Du. lijsterbes. On the other hand, OE. *wice* is glossed *cwicbeam*, *cariscus*, and NE. witch, wych stands for a species of elm, *Ulmus montana*, Du. bergiep; and also for the wych elm, *Pyrus aucuparia*. *Ulmus montana* and *Pyrus aucuparia* resemble one another superficially, and in our days the two trees seem to be mixed up in the same way as in Anglo-Saxon times.

*cwice*; couch-grass, quitch (-grass); kweek (-gras); *Triticum repens*.

*cymen*; cummin; komijn; *Cuminum Cyminum*. 19.

*dile*; dill, anet; dille; *Anethum graveolens*. 5, 17 D, 19.

*disme*; tansy (?); see *helde*. 18.

*docce*; dock, sorrel; zuring; *rumex sp.* There are several varieties: *ea-docce*, *sur-docce*, *wudu-docce*. The Herbarium translates Lat. *lapathum* by *docce*, in which case we have to understand *ea-docce*; waterzuring; *Rumex Hydrolapathum*. OE. *sure*; sorrel; zuring; Germ. *Sauer-ampfer*; cf. OE. *ampre*. 5.

*dolhrune*; pellitory, pellitory of the wall, wallwort; muurkruid; *Parietaria officinalis*.

*draconze, dracanse, dracentse*; dragonwort, dragons; dragon; Artemisia Dracunculus. 17 D, 19.

*dwergedwostle*; pennyroyal; polei; Mentha Pulegium.

*ea-cerse*; watercress; waterkers; Nasturtium officinale. OE. *fen-cerse* and *wylle-cerse* are probably the same, but see OE. *tun-cerse*.

*ea-docce*; see *docce*.

*eagwyrt, ægwyrt*; eyebright; ogentroost, ogenklaar; Euphrasia officinalis.

*efelaste*; everlasting; droogbloem, zevenjaarsbloem; Gnaphalium sp. 26.

*elebeam*; olive-tree; olijfboom; Olea sativa.

*elehtre, ealhtre*; lupine; lupine, wolfsboon; Lupinus sp. 5, 17 A, D, 19, 20, 24, 27, 28, 32.

*elene, eolone, eofole* (mistake?); elecampane; alant (swortel); Inula Helenium. 5, 6, 17 B, 28.

*ellen*; elder; vlier; Sambucus niger. 5.

*ellenwyrt*, glossed *ebulum*; dwarf elder; kruidvlier; Sambucus Ebulus. See *wealwyrt*.

*elm*; elm; iep, olm; Ulmus.

*eofor-fearn*; polypody; eikevaren; Polypodium vulgare.

*eoforprote*; carline thistle; driedistel; Carlina vulgaris. We have sometimes used the transliteration 'boarthroat' to keep the magical connotation. 5, 19, 27.

*eordgealla, centaurie, fel terre*; centaury; centaurie; Centaureum sp.

*eorþmistel, mistel*; basil; basilicum, bazielkruid; Calamintha Clinopodium. The Herbarium has *clinopodium*.

*eorþnafela*; sparrow-grass; ?; Asparagus officinalis.

*eow*; yew, ife; taxis, ijf; Taxus baccata. 5.

*fane, fone, vane*; flag, iris; lis, iris; Iris Pseudacorus. 5, 19.

*feferfugie, feverfuge*; feverfew; moederkruid; Pyrethrum Parthenium 2, 17 D, 19, 27, 33.

*fel terre*; see *eorþgealla*.

*fen-minte*; fen-mint, water-mint; munt; Mentha sp. 5.

*fifleaf*; cinquefoil; vijfvingerkruid, ganzerik; Potentilla reptans. 19.

*fille, cerfille*; chervil; kervel; Anthriscus Cerefolium. 9, 19.

*finul, finule*; fennel; venkel; Foeniculum vulgare. 8, 9, 17 A, D, 18, 19, 20, 23, 28, 33.

*ful-beam* (Genitive form: *fulan beames*); alder-buckthorn; vuilboom; *Rhamnus Frangula*.

*gagel*; gale; gagel; *Myrica Gale*.

*garclife*, *egrimonie*; agrimony; agrimonie; *Agrimonia Eupatoria*.  
See *hindhiolope*.

*garleac*; garlic, leek; knoflook; *Allium* sp. 17 D, 20. Five varieties are mentioned: *gar-leac*, *crop-leac*, *por-leac*, *hol-leac*, *brade-leac*.  
*gate-treow*; The A.S.D. translates: cornel tree? However, it is probably goat-willow; waterwilg; *Salix capraea*, for the *gate-treo* occurs several times in groups of trees containing other names of willows, e.g., *Leechbook I* (See p. 84), where the *gate-treo* is preceded by the olive-tree, and this somewhat resembles a willow from a distance.

*geaces sure*; cuckoo sorrel, wood-sorrel; veld-zuring, wilde zuring; *Rumex* sp. See *docce* and *sure*.

*gearwe*, *gearuwe*; yarrow, milfoil; duizendblad; *Achillaea Millefolium*. 19.

*giprife*, *gyprife*, *gitrife*; cockle; bolderik; *Agrostemma Githago*. 20.  
*glappa*; burdock?; kliskruid; this suggestion is apparently based on the Latin name, *Arctium Lappa*. 8.

*grundeswyligie*, *grundeswelge*; groundsel; kruiskruid; *Senecio vulgaris*. 19.

*hænep*, *henep*; hemp; hennep; *Cannabis sativa*. 19.

*hægþorn*; hawthorn; haagdoorn; *Crataegus* sp.

*hæsel*; hazel; hazelaar; *Corylus Avellana*.

*hæpberige*; heath-berry, bilberry; bosbes, in West Friesland the bilberry is also called besheide; *Vaccinium Myrtilus*. 20.

*hæwene hnydele*, *hæwen hydele*; britannic; Engelse alant; *Inula britannica*. The Herbarium has *brittanice*. 19.

*haransprecel*, *haranspicel*; viper's bugloss; slangenkruid; *Echium vulgare*. 6, 19, 20, 24.

*hare-wyrt*, *haran-wyrt*; dittander, pepperwort, 'harewort'; peperkers; *Lepidium latifolium*. 20.

*harhune*; horehound; malrove; *Marrubium vulgare*. See *marubie*.  
*heahheolope*; see *hindhiolope*.

*healswyrt*; throatwort, 'neckwort', daffodil?; ruig klokje; *Campanula Trachelium*. 19.

*hege-clife*; hedge-clivers, cleavers; kleefkruid; *Galium Aparine*.

*hegrife*, *hegerife*; cleavers, heyriffe; kleefkruid; *Galium Aparine*. 6, 20, 24.

*helde*, glossed *tanacetum*; tansy; boerenwormkruid, reinvaren; *Tanacetum vulgare*.

*heorotbrembel*; buckthorn; wegedoorn; *Rhamnus cathartica*. See *þefeporn*.

*hindebrer*; hindberry, raspberry; framboos; *Rubus idaeus*. 19.

*hindhiolope*, *hindhælepe*, *heahhiolope*; water-agrimony, hemp-agrimony; leverkruid; *Eupatorium cannabinum*. 19, 28.

*hleomoce*, *leomoce*; brooklime; beekpunge; *Veronica Beccabunga*.

*hnut-beam*; nut-tree, probably the hazel; hazelaar; *Corylus Avelana*.

*hofs*, *reade hofs*; alehoof, red hove; hondsdrif, hoefijzertje; *Glechoma hederacea*. 19.

*holen*; holly; hulst; *Ilex Aquifolium*.

*holleac*; see *garleac*.

*hræfnas fot*, *hrefnas fot*; ravensfoot; boterbloem; *Ranunculus* sp.

*hramgealla*, *ramgealla*; 'ram-gall', marsh-trefoil, water-trefoil; waterdrieblad; *Menyanthes trifoliata*. 33.

*hune*; see *harhune*. 19.

*hylwyrt*, glossed *pollegia*; 'hilwort', pennyroyal; polei; *Mentha Pulegium*.

*hymele*, *humele*, *eowo-humele*; hop; hop; *Humulus Lupulus*. The plant is mainly cultivated for the green cones of the female plant, which explains the *eowo-humule*, i.e., the ewe-hop or female-hop. 20.

*ifig*; ivy; klimop; *Hedera Helix*.

*isenheard*; 'ironhard'; ijzerhard; *Verbena officinalis*. But the first part of the compound also occurs in NE. ironheads, a local name for *Centaurea nigra*, see *æschrote*; and in NE. ironweed, ironwort; ijzerkruid; *Sideritis*. 19.

*læcewyrt*; 'leechwort', sanicle, wood-sanicle, self-heal; heilkruid; Germ. Heilkraut, Heil aller Welt; *Sanicula Europaea*. However, OE. *læcewyrt* may well denote various plants, and NE. self-heal also stands for *Sanicula Europaea*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*. OE. *wudumerch* is also glossed *saniculum*.

*lambes cerse*, *lombes cerse*; lamb's cress; kers; *Cardamine hirsuta*. In the prose passage following the Nine Herbs Charm *lombes cerse* takes the place of *stune* in the charm formula. 9.

*leomuice*; see *hleomoce*.

*levastica*; see *lufestice*. 19.

*lilie*; lily; lelie; *Lilium* sp. 5, 19.

*lipwyr̄t*; lithe-wort, wayfaring-tree; wollige sneeuwbal; *Viburnum Lantana*. *Lipwyr̄t* is glossed *ostriago*. Cockayne thinks it is another name for NE. dwarf elder; OE. *wealwyr̄t*, q. v.

*lufestice, levastica*; lovage; lavas, leverstok, lubbestok, maggiplant; *Levisticum officinale*. 17 D, 27.

*lustmoce*; lady's smock, cuckoo flower; pinksterbloem, koekoeksbloem; *Cardamine pratensis*.

*mægde, magede*; camomile; kamille; *Anthemis nobilis*. NE. may-weed, or stinking camomile, is *Anthemis Cotula*. 9.

*mapuldor*; maple-tree; ahorn, esdoorn; *Acer campestre*.

*marubie, marrubie, harhune*; horehound; malrove; *Marrubium vulgare*. 5.

*mealwe*; mallow, cheese-flower; maluwe, kaasjeskruid; *Malva sylvestris*.

*meargealla, mergelle*; gentian; gentiaan; *Gentiana* sp. See *mersc-mealwe*. 19.

*medowyr̄t*; meadowsweet; moerasspiraea; *Ulmaria palustris*. 19.

*merce*; marche, smallage; wilde eppe, wilde selderij; *Apium graveolens*. 19, 28.

*mersc-mealwe*; marsh-mallow; ?; *Althaea officinalis*. 5.

*mersc-meargealla*; gentian; klokjes gentiaan; *Gentiana Pneumonanthe*.

*mistel*; see *eorpmistel*.

*mistel, mistel-tan*; mistletoe; marentak, vogellijm, mistel (tak); *Viscum album*. The mistletoe of the oak, which we meet with in the text, is rare nowadays, and was probably rare in Anglo-Saxon days.

*mucgwyr̄t*; mugwort, motherwort; bijvoet; *Artemisia vulgaris*. 9, 19, 26.

*myrra*; cicely, sweet cicely; Roomse kervel; *Myrrhis odorata*.

*nædderwyr̄t*; adderwort; adderwortel; *Polygonum Bistorta*. 30.

*nepte, nefte*; catmint, cat's mint, nep; kattenkruid; *Nepeta Cataria*. 28.

*netele*; nettle, stinging nettle; brandnetel; *Urtica dioica*. In the prose passage to the Nine Herbs Charm *netele* takes the place of *wergulu* in the charm formula. See also *reade netele*. 9.

*oleastrum, þæt is, wilde elebeam*; oleaster, wild olive-tree; olijfwilg, duindoorn; *Hippophae Rhamnoides*.

*oportanie*; see *aprotane*. 19.



*petresilige*; parsley; peterselie; *Petroselinum sativum*. 19.  
*polleie*; see *dweorgedwostle*. 5, 19, 32.  
*porleac*; porret, leek, garlic; prei; *Allium porrum*. See *garleac*.  
*rædic, redic*; radish; radijs; *Raphanus sativus*. See *antre*. 19.  
*ragu*; lichen; korstmos; Lichen sp. 17 A.  
*ramgealla*; see *hramgealla*.  
*reade netele*; red nettle, deaf nettle; dove netel; *Lamium purpureum*. 1.  
*ribbe*; ribwort; smalle weegbree; *Plantago lanceolata*. However, the Herbarium and some glosses have *cynoglossa, canes lingua*, which is hound's tongue; hondstong, hondscribbe, ribbe (Zee-land); *Cynoglossum officinale*. So it is probably the latter. 19, 27.  
*rude*; rue; wijnruit; *Ruta graveolens*. 17 D, 19, 27, 28.  
*safine*; savin(e); zevenboom; *Sabina officinalis*. 19.  
*salfige, salvige*; sage; salie; *Salvia officinalis*. 17 D, 19, 27.  
*saturege, sæderige*; savory; bonenkruid; *Satureia hortensis*. 19.  
*sealh*; sallow; waterwilg; *Salix* sp.  
*sideware*; zedoary; zedoar, kurkuma; *Curcuma* sp. 18.  
*sigel-hweorfa*; heliotrope; heliotroop; *Heliotropium Europaeum*.  
The Shorter Oxford Dictionary remarks: "Heliotrope, a name given to plants of which the flowers turn so as to follow the sun; as the sunflower, marigold, etc." This explanation may hold good for modern heliotrope, but it is a little doubtful whether OE. *sigel-hweorfa* is the same plant, for there are several OE. glosses: *heliotropus, eliotropia, solsequia, nimphea*. Now, *solsequia* means solstice, and in France, Germany and Holland various herbs are indicated by the equivalents of the word 'solstice'. Even the S.O.D. records this phenomenon *s.v.* solstitial: "Of plants (after Lat. solstitialis herba): Coming up at the summer-solstice; growing or fading rapidly — 1783". 19.  
*singrene*; singreen, houseleek; huislook; *Sempervivum tectorum*.  
*slahþorn*; black-thorn, sloe-thorn; sleedoorn; *Prunus spinosa*.  
*sperewyr̥t*, glossed *inule campane*; spearwort (the lesser); egelboterbloem, *Ranunculus flammula*. But the gloss points to *elecampane*; alant; *Inula Helenium*. See *elene*.  
*springwyr̥t*; 'springwort', wild caper, caper spurge; kappertjes, kakboon (Friesland); *Euphorbia Lathyris*.  
*strælwyr̥t*; clubmoss (?); knotsmos, wolfsklauw; *Lycopodium clavatum*.

*strewberige*; strawberry; aardbei; *Fragaria* sp. 5, 19.

*stune*; see *lambes cerse*. 9.

*sund-ompre*; see *ampre, docce* and *sure*. *Sund-ompre* seems to be the same as *ea-docce*.

*sure*; sorrel; zuring; *Rumex acetosa*. See *geaces sure, ampre* and *docce*.

*superne wermod*; see *aprotane*.

*swegles æppel*; 'swail's apple'. It is uncertain what plant is meant. Cockayne suggests beetle nut.

*tun-cerse*; garden-cress, nasturtium; tuinkers; *Lepidium sativum*. See *cerse*.

*þefe-þorn, þife-þorn, þefan þorn*; buckthorn; wegedoorn; *Rhamnus cathartica*. 24, 28.

*þeorwyr*t; ploughman's spikenard; ?; *Inula Conyza*.

*þorn*; thorn; doornstruik; *Rhamnus* sp.

*vinca pervinca, vica pervica*; periwinkle; maagdepalm; *Vinca major*. 19.

*wealwyr*t, *wealhwyrt, wælwyr*t, glossed *ellenwyr*t, *ebulum*; wall-wort, dwarf elder; kruidvlier; *Sambucus Ebulus*. See *ellenwyr*t, *lipwyr*t.

*wegbræde, wegbrade*; waybread, plantain; weegbree; *Plantago major*. 2, 9, 17 D, 30, 33.

*welig*; willow, withy; wilg; *Salix* sp. See *gate-treo, sealh, and wipig*.

*wenwyr*t. Two kinds are mentioned: *Seo clufih*te *wenwyr*t, 'the bulbed *wenwyr*t', and *seo cneo-eht*e *wenwyr*t, 'the knotty *wenwyr*t'. It is not known what plants are meant.

*wergulu*; see *netele*. 9.

*wermod*; wormwood; alsem, aalst, weermoet; *Artemisia Absinthium*. See *aprotane*. 5, 17 D, 19, 20, 27, 28.

*wice*; witch, wych-elm. See *cwicbeam*.

*wir, wyir*; myrtle; mirte; *Myrtus communis*. 19.

*wipig*; see *welig*.

*wrættu, wrætt, wræt*; crosswort; kruiswalstro; *Galium Cruciata*. 19.

*wudubind(e)*; woodbine, honeysuckle; wilde kamperfoelie; *Lonicera Periclymenum*.

*wudumerce*; wild parsley; wilde eppe; *Apium* sp. Glosses: *apis sylvatica* and *saniculum*. See *merce* and *læcewyr*t.

*wudurofe*; woodruff; lieve-vrouwen-bedstro; *Asperula odorata*. 19.  
*wuduweaxe*; wood waxen, dyer's broom; verfbrem; *Genista tinctoria*.  
*wulfes comb*; wild teazle; kaardebol; *Dipsacus fullonum*. 28.

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## STELLINGEN

1. De bewering van Walther Paetzel (Die Variationen in der alt-germanischen Alliterationspoesie, Palaestra XLVIII, 1913, p. 11), dat het nooit de drang tot verklaring en verheldering is, die de dichter tot variatie aanzet, is onhoudbaar.
2. Klaeber's emendatie (Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg, Boston, 1928<sup>2</sup>) van regel 240 van het Beowulf gedicht is te verwerpen.
3. De tegenwoordige uitspraak van de Engelse woorden *hand*, *land*, *sand*, enz., is nog altijd niet voldoende verklaard.
4. De verklaringen van de O.E.D. van *daffodil* zijn onbevredigend.
5. Marlowe heeft in zijn toneelstuk over Dr. Faustus niet speciaal de tovenaars willen uitbeelden maar de strijd tussen goed en kwaad.
6. Horatio vervult in de Hamlet van Shakespeare niet de rol van trouwe vriend maar die van de confidant.
7. Het probleem van de zog. voorspelling van de Nar in King Lear III, ii, 79 vlg. is niet opgelost door deze passage eenvoudig weg te laten, zoals Granville-Barker aanbeveelt (Prefaces to Shakespeare, First Series, 1946, p. 200).
8. De toespelingen op toverpraktijken in de Edda liederen zijn, in tegenstelling tot die in de prosa verhalen, allen dichtertlijk gekleurd.
9. De tekst van de Oud Engelse toverformule voor een goede reis vertoont Oud Saksische invloeden.

10. De verklaring, die Marett geeft van het ontstaan van de bezweringsformule en het gebed (Folk-Lore, June 1904, pp. 132-165), is te eenzijdig.

11. De bewering van Preusz (Globus LXXXVII, 1905, pp. 118-119), dat de taal haar ontstaan dankt aan de tovenarij, is door geen enkel bewijs gestaafd.

12. De definitie van P. W. Schmidt (Der Ursprung der Gottes-idee, I, Münster i.W., 1926<sup>2</sup>, p. 520) insisteert te sterk op de tegenstelling tussen tovenarij en godsdienst.

13. Het is dringend gewenst om de bezweringsformules en de toverpraktijken in ons land zo spoedig mogelijk te verzamelen en deze in één groot werk uit te geven.









