

The other offerings consisted of a calf's head, uncooked, a gallon of ale, two penny loaves, and a pair of gloves edged with gold lace.

Whitsuntide is and always has been one of the great festivals of the year. It was commonly celebrated in all parts of the country by what was termed the Whitsun ale, and it was the great time for Morris dancers. At Chester, "*Mystery plays*" were acted until after the Reformation, when "*Pageants*" were substituted. Parochial meetings were formerly held at Whitsuntide, under the auspices of the Churchwardens, to which every body in the parish, of all ranks, came and spent the day. It was a kind of picnic, each parishioner bringing provisions. The ale, specially brewed for the occasion, was sold by the Churchwardens, and the money applied to the repairs of the Church.

22. Memorable for the first creation of baronets, 1611. It was done by James First ostensibly to raise a band for the amelioration of the Province of Ulster, but really to raise money for the King, each baronet paying the crown £1,000.

25. "*Flitting Day*" in Scotland, the day on which most people change their residences.

29. *Restoration of Charles the Second*—"Oak Apple Day": In some places in England, this day is celebrated as a festival in the same manner as May Day. The streets and houses are decorated with oak boughs, garlands and flags, and the day observed as a general holiday.

JUNE.

Dedicated to the *Juniors* as May was to the *Majors*—that is to the junior branch of the original Roman legislature. It was considered among the Romans the most propitious month for marriages.

1. In a very small island in Lough Derg, Ireland, is a cave called St. Patrick's Purgatory, which is annually visited every summer, from the 1st June to August by 8 or 10,000 persons. A Chapel is erected near it called "the prison," where the pilgrims remain twenty-four hours without food or sleep, repeating a certain routine of prayers.

11. *St. Barnabas Day*. A miraculous walnut tree, in the Abbey churchyard at Glas-tonbury, was said to bud invariably on this day.

15. Usual time of rising of the Nile. The Nile water is among waters what Champagne is among wines. However long it is kept it never becomes impure.

19. Signing of Magna Charta, 1215.

24. *St. John the Baptist—Midsummer Day*: The Irish believe that on the eve of this day the souls of all people leave their bodies, and wander to the place, by land or sea, where their death shall take place. In England it was believed that if one sat up fasting in the Church porch, he would see the spirits of those who would die in the coming year, pass in through the Church door. If an unmarried woman, fasting, laid a cloth at midnight with bread and cheese and sat down as if to eat, leaving the street door open, the person whom she was to marry would come in and drink to her by bowing and retire. Young men would go out to gather fern seed, which if got this night *without touching the plant* had the property of rendering them invisible. There were many other charms and ceremonies similar to those of Hallowe'en. In Scotland, the Masons celebrate St. John's Eve with particular ceremonies and much rejoicing. The

Order of the Garter is supposed to have been founded on this day, 1348.

JULY.

Originally "*Quintilis*," changed to July in honour of Julius Cæsar. It was called by the Saxons *Hey-Monath*, from the hay harvest.

1. On this day, 1801, the first trial of steam for propelling boats took place on the Thames.

4. *St. Martin's Day*: In Scotland this used to be called *St. Martin of Bullion's Day*, and there was a proverb that "if the deer rise dry and lie down dry on Bullion's Day, there will be a good gose-harvest"—that is an early harvest. Rain on this day is believed generally in Europe to betoken wet weather for twenty days.

10. *Korban Beisam*, or Feast of Sacrifices, one of the great days of the Mahommedans. Every family offers a sheep to God.

15. *St. Swithin's Day*: It is a common adage that the weather will continue for forty days the same as on this day. In some parts of England it is said when rain falls on this day, "St. Swithin is christening the apples."

25. *St. James the Great*: They say in Herefordshire, "Till St. James' Day is past and gone, There may be hops or there may be none." Another general proverb in England is, "Whoever eats oysters on St. James' Day, will never want money."

AUGUST.

Formerly *Sextilis*. The Emperor Augustus conferred on the month his own name.

1. *Lammas*: The old Pagan festival of the Gule, or first fruits. A "Lammas festival" was held in Lothian, Scotland, till the middle of the last century.

3. On this day, 1492, Columbus set sail for America.

15. *Minstrel's Festival at Tutbury*: This was a festival instituted by John of Gaunt, accompanied by many curious observances. It continued for 400 years, and was finally abolished by the Duke of Devonshire in 1778.

24. *St. Bartholomew's Day*: "St. Bartholomew brings the cold dew," is the popular proverb. The great Smithfield Fair, London, was held on this day till 1855. It lasted three days, and led at last to so much rioting as to cause its suppression.

27. Landing of Cæsar in Britain, 55 B. C., in Romney Marsh.

SEPTEMBER.

Called by the Saxons *Gerst-Monat*, or *Barley Month*, because in this they harvested their barley.

1. Opening day for shooting Partridges and Bustards.

2. Great fire of London, 1666, when two-thirds of the city were burned.

14. Death of Duke of Wellington at Walmer, 1852.

29. *Michaelmas Day*: Feast of St. Michael and all Angels. In England one of the four quarterly terms on which rents are paid; and in all the United Kingdom, the day on which Borough Magistrates are elected. It is a widely spread custom to have a goose for dinner. It became a superstition that eating a goose on Michaelmas Day ensured easy circumstances for the year.

OCTOBER.

Named from being the eighth in the year, according to the old Latin Calendar. Called