

by the Saxons "Wyn Monath," or Wine Month.

4. *St. Francis of Assisi*, founder of the Friar Minors, one of the most celebrated of all the saints of the Roman Church.

9. *St. Denis or Dionysius*, first Bishop of Paris and Patron Saint of France,  
"St. George he was for England,  
St. Denis was for France,  
Singing *Honi soit qui mal y pense*."

25. *St. Crispin's Day*: Patron Saint of Shoemakers, who still in many places celebrate the day with great festivities.

31. *Hallowe'en, or All Hallows Eve*: Thought to be the time above all others when supernatural influences are most abroad. Celebrated all over the United Kingdom with games and trying of charms, eating of nuts and apples, &c.

### NOVEMBER.

Ninth month in the Latin year, styled by the Saxons *Wint-Monat* or "*Wind Month*," and also *Blat Monath* or bloody month, from it being customary in this month to slaughter cattle for winter use.

1. *All Saints' Day*. Great Earthquake at Lisbon in 1755.

2. *All Souls' Day*: Celebrated in the Romish Church by offering Prayers and Masses in behalf of souls in Purgatory.

5. *Gunpowder Plot*. Landing of William of Orange at Torbay.

9. *Lord Mayor's Day*: The new Mayor of London goes in procession through London to Westminster, to be sworn in.

11. *Martinmas Day*: St. Martin, Bishop of Tours, sometimes styled the Apostle to the Gauls. Patron Saint of Tavern keepers, Vintners, &c.

"And Martinmas beef doth bear good tack,

When country folk do dainties lack."

22. *St. Cecilia's Day*: Patroness of Music, especially Church Music.

30. *St. Andrew's Day*: Patron Saint of Scotland. Kept by Scotchmen all over the world.

### DECEMBER.

Tenth month in the old Roman Calendar, "*Winter-Monat*," or *Winter Month* among the Saxons. Afterwards changed to "*Holy Month*," on account of Christmas coming in it.

6. *St. Nicholas Day*: Patron of the Russian nation, guardian of virgins, children, sailors and parish clerks.

14. Death of the Prince Consort, 1861.

21. *St. Thomas Day*: The shortest day in the year.

"St. Thomas gray, St. Thomas gray,

The longest night and the shortest day."

In some parts of England, poor persons on this day "go a gooding," that is, make the round of the parish, getting good things for the approaching feast of Christmas.

24. *Christmas Eve*. The hanging of the Mistletoe on this evening is a relic of Druidism. The Yule Log is transmitted from our Scandinavian ancestors. A Yule Candle of monstrous size accompanied it, and was burned for the twelve nights of the Christmas festival. The cocks are said to crow all

night long, bees to sing in their hives, and bread baked on this eve never to grow mouldy. The Christmas Tree has extended from Germany into all Christian lands. "Snap dragon" has been handed down from time immemorial as a Christmas sport. "The Mummings" still go their rounds in remote parishes in England. The "Waits" play for two or three weeks, terminating their labours on Christmas Eve.

25. *Christmas Day*: The greatest festival of the year. The only one in which Friday may be kept as a feast instead of a fast. Among the Goths and Saxons called *Jul* or *Yule*, most probably from *giul* or *hiul*, the wheel or turning point of the year. It was considered particularly lucky when Christmas fell on a Sunday, and the reverse when it fell on Saturday. In Devonshire it is believed that if the sun shines bright at noon on Christmas Day, a plentiful crop of apples may be expected. The Christmas Carols sung on Christmas Eve, and the early morning of Christmas Day are among the most beautiful features of its celebration in England. Christmas charities are largely dispensed, and in olden times it was customary to extend these to the animals. The "Boar's Head" was formerly the foremost dish on the board at Christmas. It was brought in with a great flourish of trumpets, &c. Next in importance came the Peacock, Geese, Capons and Pheasants helped to furnish, and furmeties were indispensable. Mince Pies were popular as early as the sixteenth century, and plum pottage was the precursor of the Christmas pudding. At Glastonbury a famous Thorn tree was said always to blossom the second time on Christmas Day. In Withering's "British Plants" (edition 1818), this second flowering on Christmas Day is described.

26. *St. Stephen's Day*: A strange superstition was that horses this day should be well galloped and then bled, to insure them against disease for the following year. "Christmas Boxes" are collected on this day by postmen, dustmen, &c., &c., and the new Pantomime is produced in the evening.

27. *St. John the Evangelist*. A custom used to prevail on this day of obtaining supplies of hallowed wine, which was used in the manufacture of manchets, or little loaves, an antidote against poison for the ensuing year.

28. *Innocents' Day*: Childermas Day. It used to be reckoned especially unlucky to marry on this day, and no one would begin any piece of work on it. In Cornwall, even now housewives will not scour or scrub on the day. It was an old custom to whip all the children of a house on this morning, in order that the memory of the day might be the better fixed in their mind.

31. *New Year's Eve*: Hogmany. In Scotland this day is observed in much the same way as Christmas Eve in England. The "Guisers" take the place of the "Mummings," the children sing songs instead of carols, and receive gifts from the farmers. The Old Year is let out and the New let in, and peals of bells burst forth from every steeple, "Ringing out the Old Year," and warning us another has commenced.