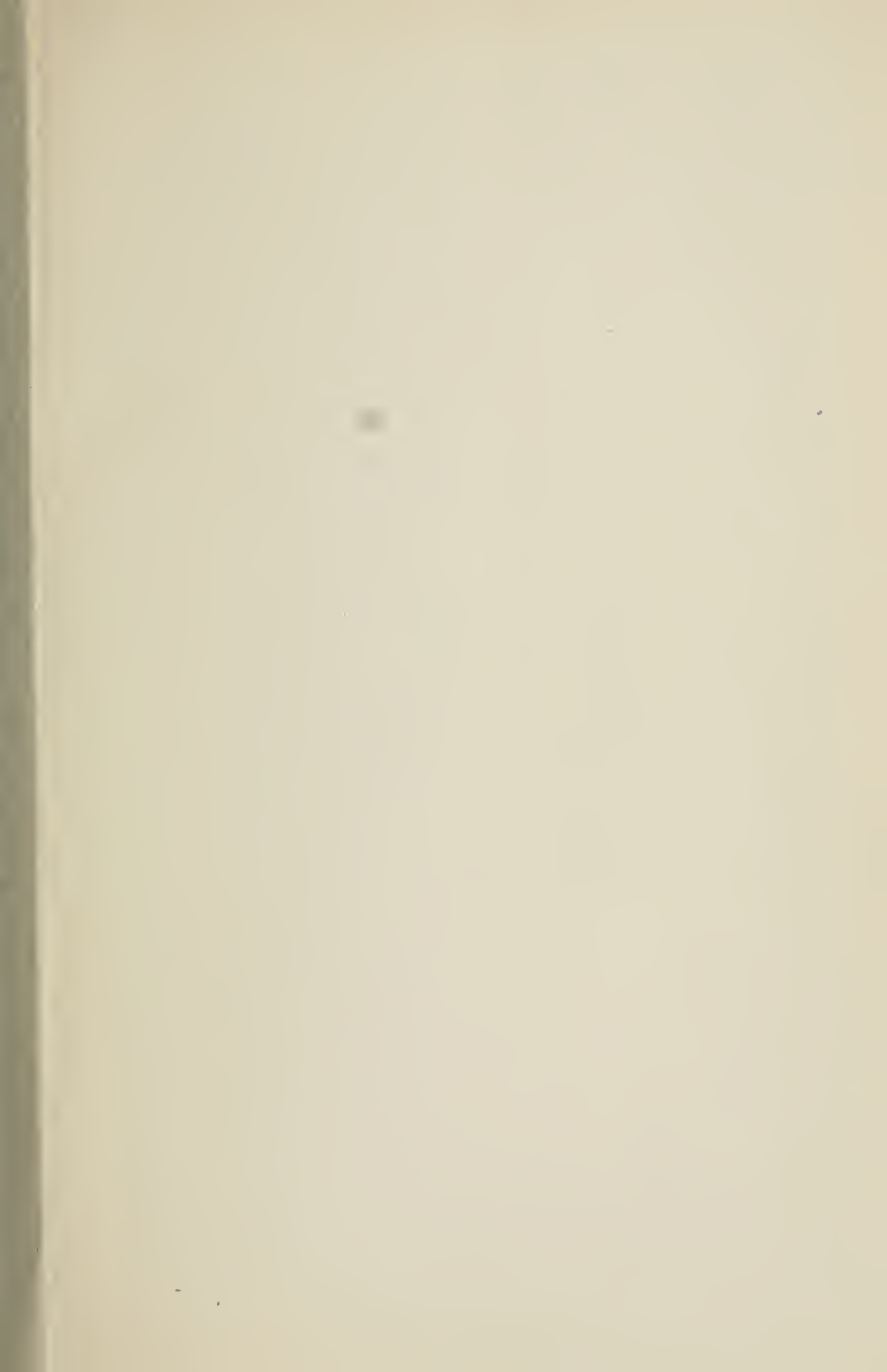


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INTENSIFYING SIMILES IN ENGLISH

INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

BY

T. HILDING SVARTENGREN

LIC. PHIL.

BY DUE PERMISSION OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL FACULTY OF LUND
TO BE PUBLICLY DISCUSSED IN ENGLISH
IN LECTURE HALL I, MAY 4th, AT 10 O'CLOCK A. M.
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY



LUND 1918

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Preface.

It is absurd that a book of this kind should be compiled far away from English libraries and English-speaking surroundings, but present conditions have made it unavoidable. The English — and continental — critic is asked kindly to bear in mind that I have not been able to consult any English library since August 1914, and that I have not had access to Swedish University Libraries for more than a few weeks every year. Moreover, their stock of English books leaves a good deal to be desired, and the slender resources of a Swedish school-master do not enable him to order all the books he would like to use and have. It must be added that many of the works that would have been useful for this collection probably are out of print and not available outside the British Museum or the Bodleyan. This is why it has been impossible for me to verify many of the quotations in Lean's Collectanea and other sources.

It was originally my intention to start an inquiry on a rather large scale, but my attempts in this direction soon made it evident that, owing to causes needless to dwell upon, postal conditions and other circumstances would not make such an inquiry an unqualified success. Nevertheless I have to thank Miss Edith Underwood, of Durham, and several correspondents of Notes & Queries for many valuable replies.

Hazlitt said of his Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases that he had 'spared no pains to make it satisfactory and complete'. But I do not think that any collection of this kind can ever be 'satisfactory and complete'. That would require, in the first place, a far more intimate acquaintance with English language and Literature and English life generally than can be expected from a person not born to a life-long intimacy with things English. It is only natural that my nationality should peep through both in matters of style and of treatment. And, further, it is often extremely difficult, even for an English person, to decide whether a phrase is proverbial or individual or occasional. In this respect I have preferred to err on the side of too much rather than to be too niggardly, as many similes that I had suspected to be simply nonce-phrases after some time were found to be proverbial, and the same thing may apply to many similes represented only by one instance. It is also in many cases difficult to say whether a phrase is a literal comparison or metaphorical, i. e. a proverbial simile. (See Introduction). It can

only be hoped that in spite of shortcomings and mistakes nothing really important shall be omitted.

I have to apologize for many typographical inconsistencies. Especially Chapter I leaves much to be desired in this respect. Unfortunately I did not fully realize it until it was too late to have it altered.

It is my duty, and pleasure, to acknowledge my debt of gratitude to Prof. E. Ekwall, of Lund, for some literary references and many an act of obliging kindness in connection with my philological work, to Dr. Carl Lindsten, Headmaster and Librarian of Eksjö Realskola, and Dr. S. Landtmanson, Librarian of Västerås högre allmänna läroverk, for their very valuable assistance. Some Scripture references I owe to the courtesy of my colleague J. Viotti, D. D. Miss Catherine Burgess, Västerås, has been kind enough to revise my style (from p. 60) and to help me read the proofs.

Västerås, April 7. 1918.

T. Hilding Suartengren.

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ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS CONSULTED.

I. Texts.

- AD, Archy's Dream, 1641, ed. Hindley, 1873.
Addison. See Steele.
Anstey, VV, F. A., Vice Versa, 1882, Newnes Sixp. Copyright Novels.
AR, The Actors' Remonstrance, or Complaint for the Silencing &c., 1643, ed. Hendley, 1873.
AV, Appius and Virginia, 1575, Dodsley, Old Plays, xii.
AVe, Authorized Version.
Arber 29, English Reprints, The Last Fight of the Revenge at Sea &c., described by Sir Walter Raleigh &c. 1591—1595, London, 1871.
Band, Cuff and Ruff. 1615, ed. Hindley, London, 1873.
Barham, IL, R. H. B., The Ingoldsby Legends, 1840—42, Nelson & Sons, 6d Classics.
Baring-Gould, BS, S. B.-G., The Broom-Squire, 1896, Methuen, 7d ed.
» RS, Red Spider, 1887, Collins 3 1/2d Novels.
» VM, The Vicar of Morwenstow, Methuen.
Barr, UJ, Robert B., An Unsentimental Journey. Hodder & Stoughton, 6d.
Barry, RA, Lodowick, B., Ram Alley, Dodsley, Old Plays, V.
Beaumont & Fletcher, BB, Beggar's Bush, ed. Darnley, 1840.
» KBP, Knight of the Burning Pestle, Darnley, 1840.
» KK, A King and No King, Darnley
» MT, The Maid's Tragedy, Old Engl. Plays ed. F. J. Cox.
» NG, The Noble Gentleman, ed. Darnley, 1840.
» WGC, Wild Goose Chase, ed. Darnley.
Bell, WM, J. J. B., Wee Macgregor, 1902, Nelson.
Belloc, CE, H. B., Mr. Clutterbuck's Election, 1908, Nelson.
Bennet, BA, Arnold B., Buried Alive, 1908, Hodder & Stoughton, 6d.
» GW, » The Gates of Wrath, Chatto & Windus.
Besant, AS, Walter B., All Sorts and Conditions of Men, 1882, Chatto & Windus 1908.
» RMM, Ready Money Mortiboy, 1871. Collins Modern Fiction.
Benson, C, E. F. B., The Climber, 1908, Nelson 7d.
Blackmore, LD, R. D. B., Lorna Doone, 1869, Sampson Low & Co.

- Boorde*, Introduction, A. B., *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of the Knowledge*, 1542, EETS, es, 10.
- Burton*, AM, Robert B., *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621 Ed. Bohn.
- Butler*, H, Samuel B., *Hudibras*, ed. Thomas Park, in *British Poets*, ed. Sharpe, XXXVI—IX.
- Caine*, D, Hall C., *The Deemster*, 1887,
 » EC, » *The Eternal City*, 1901, Heinemann, *The Film Books*, III.
- Cassel's Mag. of Fiction*, 1914.
- Castle*, IB, Agnes & Egerton C., *Incomparable Bellairs*, 1904, Nelson.
- CC, *The Countryman's Care and the Citizen's Feare*, 1641, ed. Hindley, 1873.
- Conrad*, Romance, Joseph C. & F. M. Hueffer, *Romance*, 1903. Nelson.
- Copping*, GG, Arthur E. C., *Gotty and the Guv'nor*, 1907, Nelson.
- Courlander*, MS, A. C., *Mightier than the Sword*, 1912, Nelson.
- Cullum*, HM, Ridgwell C., *The Hooded Man*, Hodder & Stoughton.
- Day, BBB, *Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green*, 1659, Dodsley.
- Dekker*, GH, Thomas D., *The Gvls Horne-Booke*, ed. Hindley.
 » HWL, *Honest Whore London*, 1873.
 » OF, *The Pleasant Comedie of Old Fortunatus*, Herausgegeben nach dem Drucke von 1600 von Dr. Hans Scherer, *Münchener Beiträge zur rom. und engl. Philologie*, XXI.
 » PW, *Penny-Wise Povnd-Foolish*, *Materialien zur Kunde des älteren engl. Dramas*, XXIII.
 » SM, *Satiro-Mastix, or the Untrussing of the Humorous Poet*, *Materialien &c.*, XX.
- Dickens*, NN, *Nicholas Nickleby*, Nelson Classics, 2 vol.
 » PP, *The Pickwick Papers*, »
- Ditchfield*, PC, P. H., D., *The Parish Clerk*, Methuen, 1907.
- DNL, *The Daily News and Leader*, chiefly 1912, 1913.
- Doyle*, AG, Sir Arthur C. D., *The Adventures of Gerard*, 1903,
 » Firm, » *The Firm of Girdlestone*, 1890, Collins.
 » R, » *The Refugees*, 1893, Nelson.
 » SF, » *The Sign of Four*, 1890, Nelson.
- DP, *Damon and Pithias*, Dodsley, *Old Plays*, I.
- Dryden*, A, *Absalom and Achitophel*, *Dryden's Wks*, ed. Scott & Saintsbury, Vol. IX.
 » *Amphitryon, or the Two Sosias*, *ibid.* vol. VIII.
 » *Cleomenes, The Spartan Hero*, *ibid.*
 » L, *Limberham, or the Kind Keeper*, *ibid.* Vol. VI.
 » *Oedipus*, *ibid.*
 » SF, *The Spanish Friar, or the Double Discovery*, *ibid.*
- Eliot*, MF, George E., *The Mill on the Floss*, Nelson's Classics.

- Exmore Scolding*, London 1839 (The Collection was originally made about the beginning of the 18th c. by a blind itinerant fiddler. It attracted the notice of a neighbouring clergyman, who by the fiddler's assistance put the Exmore Scolding into the form in which we have it now, and before his death, which happened soon after 1725, communicated it to the editor of the first and subsequent editions).
- Ford*, LM, John F., *The Lover's Melancholy*, Materialien &c. XXIII.
 » LS, » *Loues Sacrifice*, *ibid.*
- Fox*, TG, S. M. F., *This Generation*, 1913, Fisher Unwin.
- Galsworthy*, CH, John G., *The Country House*, 1907, Nelson.
 » F, » *The Fugitive*, 1913, Plays Vol. III, Duckworth.
 » IP, » *The Island Pharisees*, 1904, Heinemann.
 » M, » *The Mob*, Plays Vol. III.
 » MP, » *Man of Property*, 1906, Heinemann.
 » P, » *The Pigeon*, Plays, Vol. III.
- GGN, See Still, GGN.
- Gissing*, CL, George R. G., *The Crown of Life*, 1899,
 » FC, » *Our Friend the Charlatan*, 1901, Chapman & Hall.
 » GS, » *New Grub Street*, 1891, Smith, Elder & Co.
 » HC, » *House of Cobwebs*, 1906, Constable.
 » TT, » *The Town Traveller*, 1898, *The Novelist*, XXIX.
- Goldsmith*, GNM, Oliver G., *The Good-Natured Man*, ed. Cunningham, Vol. I.
 » SSC, » *She Stoops to Conquer*, Cunningham.
 » VW, » *The Vicar of Wakefield*, »
- Greene*, FBB, Robert G., *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Dodsley, *Old Plays* VIII.
- GU, *The Generous Usurer* Mr. Nevell, 1641, ed. Hindley, 1873.
- Hardy*, DR, Thomas H., *Desperate Remedies*, 1871.
 » FMC, » *Far From the Madding Crowd*, 1874.
 » GND, » *A Group of Noble Dames*, 1891.
 » HE, » *The Hand of Ethelbertha*, 1876.
 » JO, » *Jude the Obscure*, 1896.
 » Lao, » *A Laodicean*, 1881.
 » LLI, » *Life's Little Ironies*, 1894.
 » MC, » *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, 1886.
 » PBE, » *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, 1873.
 » RN, » *The Return of the Native*, 1878.
 » Tess, » *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, 1892.
 » TM, » *The Trumpet Major*, 1880.
 » TT, » *Two on a Tower*, 1882.
 » UGT, » *Under the Greenwood Tree*, 1872.

- Hardy*, W, Thomas H., *The Woodlanders*, 1887.
 » WB, » *The Well-beloved*, 1897.
 » WT, » *The Wessex Tales*, 1888; all McMillan & Co.
- Harland*, MFP, Henry, H., *My Friend Prospero*, Nelson.
- Harraden*, I, Beatrice H., *Interplay*, 1908, Nelson.
- Harrison*, A, Constance Cary H., *The Anglomaniacs*, 1887. The Engl. Library, Brockhaus.
- Hawkins*, *The Hawkins' Voyages*, 1530—1593, Hakluyt Soc. 1878.
- Heywood*, CGW, Thomas H., *A Pleasant conceited Comedie*, wherein is shewed how a man may choose a good wife from a bad, 1601 (for date and authorship, see *Materialien &c.* XXV, Prof. Swaen).
 » WKK, » *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Old Engl. Plays, ed. Cox.
- Hocking*, MF, Joseph H., *O'er Moor and Fen*, 1901, Hodder & Stoughton.
- Hope*, PZ, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, 1894, Nelson.
 » RH, Rupert of Hentzau, 1898, »
- Hornung*, TN, H. W. H., *A Thief in the Night*, 1905, Nelson.
- Jackson's Recantation*, 1674, ed. Hindley, 1873.
- Jacobs*, MC, W. W. J., *Many Cargoes*, 1896, Newnes 6d Novels.
- Johnson*, R, Samuel J., *Rasselas, The Prince of Abissinia*, J's Wks, Oxford, 1825, Vol. I.
- Jonson*, Alch., Ben J., *The Alchemist*, The King's Library, ed. Gollancz.
 » EM, Ben J., *Every Man in his Humour*. Old Engl. Plays, ed. Cox.
- Kingsley*, HW, *Hereward the Wake*, Nelson.
 » WH, *Westward Ho!* Ward, Lock & Co.
- Kipling*, PW, *Poetical Works*, New York, Crowel & Co.
- Langland*, PPl. W. Langland, *Pierce Plowman*.
- Lieder*, *Die gedruckten engl. Liederbücher bis 1600*, ed. Bolle, Palaestra XXIX, Berlin, 1903.
- London*, BA, Jack L., *Before Adam*, 1909, Collins.
 » CF, » *Children of the Frost*, 1902, ed. Newnes.
 » CW, » *The Call of the Wild*, 1903, Heinemann, 1912.
 » DS, » *A Daughter of the Snows*, 1902, Nelson.
 » FM, » *The Faith of Men*, 1904, Heinemann, 1912.
 » FP, » *Tales of the Fish Patrol*, 1906, Heinemann.
 » Game, » *The Game*, 1905, Heinemann, 1913.
 » GF, » *The God of his Fathers*, Everett.
 » IH, » *The Iron Heel*, 1909, »
 » LL, » *Love of Life*, 1908, »
 » ME, » *Martin Eden*, 1910, Heinemann, 1915.
 » MF, » *Moon-face* 1906, »

- London*, SB, Jack L., *Smoke Bellew*, 1912 Mills & Boon.
 » SP, » *The Scarlet Plague*, »
 » SS, » *The Son of the Sun*, 1912, Mills & Boon.
 » SST, » *South Sea Tales*, Mills & Boon, 1911.
 » SW, » *The Sea Wolf*, 1904, Heinemann.
Longfellow, SSt, Henry, W. L., *The Spanish Student*, ed. Dürr,
 Leipzig, 1867.
Long Meg, *The Life of*, ed. Hindley, 1873.
Lyall, DV, Edna L., *Derrick Vaughan and the Autobiography of*
a Slander, 1887, 89, The Engl. Library, Brockhaus.
Lydgate, CBK, John L., *Complaint of the black Knight*, ed. Krausser,
 Halle, 1896.
Lyly, AC, Alexander and Campaspe, Dodsley, 1825.
 » MB, *Mother Bombie*, Ed. Warwick Bond, 1902.
Maclaren, YB, Ian M., *Young Barbarians*, 1901, 6d ed.
Malvery, SM, Olive Christian M., *The Soul Market*, 1907, Hutchinson.
Marchmont, CF, A. W. M., *A Courier of Fortune*, 1905, Ward,
 Lock & Co.
Marlowe, ES, Christopher M., *Edward the Second*, Old Engl.
 Drama, Clarendon, 1899.
 » F, » *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*,
 Old Engl. Plays, ed. Cox.
Masefield, CM, John M., *Captain Margaret, Nelson*, 1909.
 » MS, » *Multitude and Solitude*, 1909, Nelson.
 » *Poems and Ballads*, 1910.
 » PG, John M., *Tragedy of Pompey the Great*, 1910,
 Sidgwick and Jackson.
Massinger, VM, Philip, M., *The Virgin Martyr*.
Mason, PK, A. E. W. M., & Andrew Lang, *Parson Kelly*, 1900,
 Newnes 6d.
May, H, Thomas May, *The Heir*, 1622, Dodsley, *Old Plays*, VIII.
Melusine, compiled by Jean D'Arras, englisht about 1500, ed.
 Donald, EETS, es, LXVIII.
Merriman, LH, H. Seton M., *The Last Hope*, 1904, Nelson.
Milton, *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, ed. W. T. Wilson, Yale
 Studies in English, New York, 1911.
 MM, *The Man in the Moon, or the English Fortune Teller*, 1609,
 ed. Halliwell, 1849.
 MS, *The Prophesie of Mother Shipton*, 1641, ed. Hindley, 1873.
N. Age, *The New Age*, Vol. X, 1910.
Nashe, Thomas, Wks, ed. by Ronald B. McKerrow, Sidgwick &
 Jackson, 1904—1910.
 NC, *New Custom*, 1566, Dodsley, *Old Plays*, I.
 NG, Thom Nash, *his Ghost*, 1642, ed. Hindley, 1873.
Norris, Jim, W. E. N., *My Friend Jim*, 1886, McMillan, 1909.
Northbroke, DD, John N., *A Treatise against Dicing, Dancing,*
Plays, and Interludes, c. 1577, ed. J. P. Collier, 1843.
Notes, R. B. McKerrow's *Notes to the Wks of Thomas Nashe*.

- Oxenham*, Gate, John O., *The Gate of the Desert*, Daily Mail 6d Novels, 1905.
- » MS, » *A Maid of the Silver Sea*, 1910, Hodder & Stoughton, 1912.
- Pain*, DO, Barry P., *De Omnibus*, 1901, Fisher Unwin.
- Peele's Fests*, Merie Conceited Iests of George Peele, Gentleman. Date? ed. Hindley, 1873.
- Pepys*, Diary, ed. Braybrooke & Wheatly, London, 1893, Vol. I, II.
- Phillpotts*, AP, Eden P., *American Prisoner*, 1904, Nelson.
- » M, » *The Mother, Ward*, Lock & Co. 7d., 1908.
- » P, » *The Portreeve*, 1906, Unwin's Libr.
- » SW, » *The Secret Woman*, 1905.
- » TK, » *Three Knaves*, 1912, McMillan.
- » WF, » *Widecombe Fair*, 1913, Nelson.
- Pinero*, BD, Arthur W. P., *The Big Drum*, 1915, Heinemann.
- Poe*, TMI, E. A. P., *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*.
- Pope*, Dunciad, Wks of A. P. by Croker, Elwin & Courthope, London, Vol. II, 1871, Vol. IV, 1882.
- » EC, *An Essay on Criticism*.
- » *Rape of the Lock*.
- Porter*, TAW, Henry P., *Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599, Percy Soc. Vol. V.
- "Q" MV, *Major Vigoreux*, 1907, Nelson.
- Puritan*, *The Puritaine or the Widow of Watling-streete*, 1607, ed. C. F. Tucker Brooke (probably by Marston).
- Respublica*, *A Play on the Social Condition of England at the Accession of Queen Mary*, ed. Magnus, EETS, es, XCIV.
- Richardson*, P, Samuel R., *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, The Wks of S. R., ed. by Leslie Stephen, London, 1883.
- SC, *The Stageplayers' Complaint*, 1641, ed. Hindley, 1873.
- Scott*, A, Walter, S., *The Antiquary*, Everyman's Libr.
- » OM, » *Old Mortality*, Nelson.
- » RR, » *Rob Roy*, Collins.
- » W, » *Waverley*, Collins.
- Sharphan*, F, Edward S., *Fleire*, 1607, Ed. Nibbe, Materialien, 1912.
- Shak.*, Shakespeare, The Wks of, ed. W. G. Clark, J. Glover & W. A. Wright, Cambridge, 1863—6, unless otherwise stated. The plays are quoted by initials only: MND, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, LLL, *Love's Labour's Lost*, KH IVa, 1st Pt of *King Henry IV*, &c.
- Shaw*, CBP, Bernard S., *Cashel Byron's Profession*, ante 1883, Constable, 1914.
- » IK, » *The Irrational Knot*, » , Constable.
- » LA, » *Love among Artists*, » , »
- Sheridan*, R, Richard B. S., *The Rivals*, McMillan's Libr. of Engl. Classics.
- » SS, » *School for Scandal*, *ibid.*

- Smollet*, RR, Tobias S., Roderick Random. Wks of T. S., ed. J. Moore, London, 1797. vol. II.
- Snow Storm*, The Great Snow Storm of 1614, ed. Hindley, 1873.
- Songs*, Carols, and other miscellaneous Poems, from the Balliol MS 354, Richard Hill's Commonplace Book, ed. Dyboski, EETS, es, CI.
- Spenser*, FQ, Faerie Queene, ed. McMillan.
- ST, Sheep Tracts, c. 1550, EETS. es, XIII.
- Starkey*, England in the Reign of King Henry VIII, ed. Sidney J. Herrtage, EETS, es, XXXII.
- Steele & Addison*, Essays, The Lover and other Papers, Scott Libr., 1887.
- » » Spectator.
- Stevenson*, NAN, Robert L. S., New Arabian Nights, 1882, Collins.
- » TI, » Treasure Island, 1883, Cassel & Co.
- Still*, GGN, John S., A ryght pithy, pleasant, and merrie Comedy, intytuled Gammer Gurton's Needle, 1575, Dodsley, 1825, I.
- Stowe*, UTC, Harriet Becher S., Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852, Nelson's 6d Classics.
- Supplication*, Four S., 1529—1553, EETS, es, XIII. See above ST.
- SV, Studies in Verse, The Grafton Press, New York, 1905.
- Swift*, GT, Jonathan S., Gulliver's Travels;
- » PC, Polite Conversation.
- » TT, Tale of a Tub, Bohn's Standard Libr. 1899—1900.
- Tailor*, HLP, Robert T., The Hog hath lost its Pearl, Dodsley, Old Plays, VI.
- Taylor*, CU, John T. (Water Poet), Certain Travailes of an Uncertain Journey, 1653.
- » DS, » A New Discovery by Sea, 1623.
- » FT, » Farewell to the Tower-bottles, 1622.
- » GE, » The Great Eater of Kent, &c., 1630.
- » GN, » Sir Gregory Nonsense, His Newes from no place, 1622.
- » JL, » Jacke a Lent, His beginning and Entertainment, 1630.
- » KW, » The Kings Majesties Welcome to Hampton Court, 1647.
- » MF, » Mad Fashions, 1642.
- » MV, » A Very Merry Wherry Voyage, 1622.
- » NL, » A Navy of Land ships, 1627.
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Note. Owing to the *deplorable circumstance that many English Publishers still leave their works undated*, it has been impossible to date all the above books. Some of the dates, hunted up in various catalogues, Literary Yearbooks, &c. may be found incorrect. The present writer cannot be held responsible for the inaccuracies of these works of reference. The dates given to early MnE works recently edited are those ascribed to them by their editors.

The abbreviations of dialects and counties are those used by the English Dialect Dictionary.

For passages quoted from NED as a rule only the dates and the writers' names are given.

Other Abbreviations.

- c. = circa, or = cent., century.
cf. = confer.
co. = county.
cor. = correspondent.
cp = compound.
Cy = country.
dial. = dialect(s), dialectally.
ed. = edited, edition, editor.
fig. figurative(ly).
fr. = from.
gen. sim. = general simile.
inst., insts = instance, instances.
iron., = ironical.
lit. = literary, literature.
Obs! = observe.
obs. = obsolete.
rec. = recorded.
sim. = simile(s).
st. = standard.
C. = George Carline, Esq. of 3 Park Crescent, Oxford.
U. = Miss Edith Underwood, of 19 Western Hill, Durham.
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Introduction.

Aim and Scope.

The aim of this book is to give a collection of *Intensifying Similes* in English, chiefly Modern English, i. e. such proverbial metaphorical comparisons as intensify a quality or an action to an indefinite high degree. It is necessary to emphasize *intensifying* and *metaphorical*, as one finds that these ideas are sometimes lost sight of in the discussions of problems connected with these phenomena. The passage "She tore a little hole, about as big as a wafer, in the brown paper" (Hardy), contains no sim., but a literal measurement, more or less exact. But if we are told that a piece of bread is as thin as a wafer, it is a metaphorical way of saying that it is very thin indeed. If the fairy-tales say that the giant whom Jack killed was as high as a house, it is a metaphor to describe his huge size, but if a bricklayer thinks that his scaffold was just as high as a house, it is more or less a measurement of the actual size. A boy on the village green will boast that he can throw his ball almost as high as *the* Maypole, and tell his friends that his father is as tall as *a* Maypole. In the first instance it may be an exaggeration, but it is an actual measurement that is aimed at, the second is an hyperbolic metaphor. These instances tell us two things, in the first place, how slight the difference and how easy the transition may be from a literal comparison to a metaphorical simile, and, in the second place, how difficult it is to decide whether a phrase is a literal comparison or a simile, *unless the full context is given*. There are further many similes that are not intensifying. 'To creep like a snail, to go along like blazes' are *descriptive* similes. But 'to talk like blazes' would be both descriptive and intensifying at the same time. The same thing can be said of many other similes, especially verbal ones, i. e. similes in which the first member is expressed by a verb, but also to some adjectival similes, e. g. those referring to colours, which allude just as much to a certain kind of colour as to a high degree of it. From this we learn that the sphere of the Intensifying Simile cannot be circumscribed definitely. Therefore, it will sometimes be difficult to say whether a phrase ought to be included or no.

But "the researches of linguists, mythologists, and ethnographers have no other aim; the task is invariably the description of a human mind or of the characteristics common to a group of minds¹." The aim of this work is not only to collect these 1001 similes, but to try to find out, as far as this will be possible for a person in the compiler's position, the human interests behind them, the experiences and the circumstances of life and the outlook upon life that have helped to create them.

Previous Treatment.

Intensifying in English has been dealt with by many, chiefly continental, scholars. Best known among the works bearing on the subject are C. Stoffel's *Intensives and Down-toners, A Study in English Adverbs*, Heidelberg, 1901, and Dr. Eugen Borst's *Die Gradadverbien im Englischen*,² Heidelberg, 1902. Borst devotes a paragraph to *Vergleichung*, and gives some few instances, old and new. Elworthy, in his *Grammar of the Dialect of West-Somerset*, also gives a few pages to the subject. In old collections of proverbs we find lists of Similes, and already in 1600 there was published *A Treasure or Storehouse of Similes* by Robert Cawdray. This book is not obtainable in Sweden, but to judge from quotations it seems to be a rather large collection of all sorts of metaphors. In Ray's *Handbook of Proverbs* there is a list of some 250 "proverbial similes", but not a few of these are descriptive. Bohn, who edited Ray's Handbook, added some few in his *Complete Alphabet of Proverbs*. A more important addition was made by Hazlitt in his *Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*, and in Lean's *Collectanea*, Vol. II, ii we find *A New Treasury of Similes*, a collection of both intensifying and descriptive similes comprising 140 pp. It is founded on earlier collections and, above all, his own extensive readings. In spite of its size, Lean's *Treasury* is not satisfactory. There are few attempts at explanation, not a few old mistakes have been copied, and his quotations are not always reliable, as he did not make it a rule to copy literally. When he found in Shakespeare the expression 'a merry Greek', it turned out in his collection 'as merry as a Greek' &c. Many of the shortcomings are due to the fact that Lean died before he had completed his work, and his editors did not always understand his entries, and many of the notes he scribbled in the margin of his manuscripts have been ridiculously misplaced. The present volume, apart from the compiler's own reading, is largely founded upon Lean's *Treasury*, the collections of the *New English Dictionary*

¹ Leon Mead, *Word Coinage*, 46.

² I owe a debt of gratitude to the memory of Dr. Borst, who fell fighting for his country in the beginning of the war. It was his *Gradadverbien* that drew my attention to the present subject.

the *Slang Dictionary*, and the *English Dialect Dictionary*, without the aid of which the work would have been practically impossible. It need hardly be mentioned that the quotations from Lean must be taken with caution.

Arrangement.

Two methods of arranging proverbs are possible, the alphabetical one, and a classification under various headings. The alphabetical method is easy to handle, and is therefore very often resorted to. But in the case of intensifying similes it is not satisfactory from a scientific point of view, as it regards the form rather than the thing itself. Being mechanical and superficial, it does not compel the collector to put these proverbial expressions into their natural contexts, which alone can bring out and illustrate the precise meaning. Having found what he regards as the standard form of the saying and its place in the alphabetical system, he may rest satisfied. As a matter of fact, previous collectors have too often done so. That is one of the reasons why it is often difficult to get at the exact force of a proverb. But the alphabetical arrangement is unsatisfactory also from a practical point of view. It is almost impossible to find a proverb, unless one knows the exact wording or at least the first words. Therefore the other method, a classification under various headings is preferable. A table for the scientific classification of proverbs is given in Vol. 34, p. 235 ff. of the publications of the *Folklore Society*, arranged upon the lines laid down in the *Handbook of Folklore*, but it is not fully satisfactory, as it classifies proverbs both according to their meaning and their form. The various subdivisions are to a large extent alphabetically arranged, which causes things naturally connected to be given under different headings far apart. A proverb like 'drunk as David's sow' would have to be repeated three times, first: I, Anthropological, (a) Eating and Drinking; second: III, Physical, (p), Rural, 76, Natural History, A, Animals; and last, Historical, Personal. According to this system, most sim. would have to be given at least twice, or, if it is given only once, it would have to be referred to somewhere else. In this way the collection would become an elaborate network of references and cross-references, but it would lack the governing principle. However interesting may be the sources from which a proverb is drawn, one must never forget that the chief thing about it is always its meaning, and a system that starts from anything else is doomed to a more or less complete failure. Therefore, in the following pages, similes have been classified according to the meaning of the first member of the comparison, as far as it has been possible to find it out. This has not always been easy, as many of the sim. taken out of dictionaries and other collections, lack their natural context. In many cases this is of no importance, as the first member of the com-

parison is clearly enough defined by itself. "As drunk as an owl" does not want any elucidating context, but "as hard as nails" can only be understood contextually. The more wide and vague the sense of the word representing the first member is, the more necessary is a context. But there is another difficulty about this system. The word that represents the first member may mean more than one thing, e. g. as big as bull-beef, as hard as nails. This makes it necessary to have the same sim. under various headings. These differences of meaning may be so subtle and gradual that our system becomes too gross, and the arrangement a more or less arbitrary matter.

Intensifying similes may be divided into two groups, *Definite Similes* and *General Similes*. In the sim. "as good, bad, &c. as ever twanged" the second member *as ever twanged* can be used, as a standard of comparison, of practically anything, it is of general application, hence the sim. has been called *general*. On the other hand, in the sim. "as drunk as an owl" the second member *owl*, can be used as a standard of comparison only within a very limited or definite sphere. Hence such sim. have been termed *definite*. The General Similes are very unimportant compared with the other group.

The system arrived at is as follows: —

- I. Similes referring to Mind and Character.
- II. Similes chiefly referring to the Human Body.
- III. Similes otherwise referring to form, to Colour, Size, the Surface and Substance of Things.
- VI. Other Definite Similes.
- V. General Similes.

As every one will see, the different chapters do not altogether exclude one another, but it is to be hoped that the arrangement offers no practical difficulties. Each chapter has been divided into sections, as will be found in the *Table of Content*. It has been my endeavour to arrange these sections systematically, i. e. things that are naturally connected have been placed together. This has not always made it easier to find a certain sim., and I am now willing to admit that it might perhaps have been just as good a plan to arrange these sections alphabetically, somewhat on the lines adopted by Wander in his *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon*. — The similes of each section have been arranged according to the sources, i. e. the provinces of life and nature from which they have been drawn. The table will be roughly this: —

1. Religion.
2. History, Tradition.
3. Human Beings.
4. Parts of the Human Body.
5. Drink and Food.
6. Clothing.

7. Money.
8. Implements and Tools in and about the house, the house and its parts.
9. Metals, Minerals, Wood as raw material.
10. Human Actions, Abstract Nouns.
11. Place-names.
12. Domestic Animals.
13. Other Animals.
14. Vegetable Kingdom, apart from 5.
15. Inanimate Nature.
16. Seasons and Days.

For a more detailed list of the various groups, see p. 432 ff. I have purposely abstained from making this table fixed and rigid so as not to prevent a natural combination of things naturally connected. But this, on the other hand, has brought about a certain laxness, and many cases of inconsistency have to be apologized for.

A Song of New Similes.

My passion is as mustard strong:
I sit all sober sad;
Drunk as a piper all day long,
Or like a March hare mad.

Round as a hoop the bumpers flow;
I drink, yet can't forget her;
For tho' as drunk as David's sow,
I love her still the better.

Pert as a pear-monger I'd be,
If Molly were but kind;
Cool as a cucumber could see
The rest of womankind.

Like a stuck pig I gaping stare,
And eye her o'er and o'er;
Lean as a rake with sighs and care,
Sleek as a mouse before.

Plump as a partridge was I known,
And soft as silk my skin,
My cheeks as fat as butter grown;
But as a goat now thin!

I melancholy as a cat,
Am kept awake to weep;
But she, insensible of that,
Sound as a top can sleep.

Hard is her heart as flint or stone,
She laughs to see me pale,
And merry as a grig is grown,
And brisk as bottled ale.

The God of Love at her approach
Is busy as a bee.
Hearts sound as any bell or roach,
Are smit and sigh like me.

As me! as thick as hops or hail,
The fine men crowd about her;
But soon as dead as a door-nail
Shall I be if without her.

Straight as my leg her shape appears;
O were we joined together!
My heart would be scot-free from cares,
And lighter than a feather.

As fine as five-pence is her mien,
No drum was ever tighter;
Her glance is as the razor keen,
And not the sun is brighter.

As soft as pap her kisses are,
Methinks I taste them yet;
Brown as a berry is her hair,
Her eyes as black as jet:

As smooth as glass, as white as curds,
Her pretty hand invites;
Sharp as a needle are her words,
Her wit like pepper bites:

Brisk as a body-louse she trips,
Clean as a penny drest;
Sweet as a rose her breath and lips,
Round as the globe her breast.

Full as an egg was I with glee;
And happy as a king.
Good L—d! How all men envied me!
She loved like anything.

But false as hell, she like the wind,
Changed, as her sex must do;
Tho' seeming as the turtle kind,
And like the gospel true.

If I and Molly could agree,
Let who would take Peru!
Great as an Emp'ror should I be,
And richer than a Jew;

Till you grow tender as a chick
I'm dull as any post;
Let us like burs together stick,
And warm as any toast.

You'll know me truer than a die,
And wish me better sped;
Flat as a flounder when I lie,
And as a herring dead.

Sure as a gun, she'll drop a tear
And sigh perhaps and wish,
When I am rotten as a pear,
And mute as any fish.

John Gay's Poems, Vol. II, p. 277.

CHAPTER I

SIMILES REFERRING TO MIND AND CHARACTER.

Innocence and Good Character in General.

You are innocent,/ A soul as white as heaven. Beaumont & Fletcher, Maid, 83.

Can you doubt the honour of a lady who is as pure as heaven? Thackeray, HE, 138.

. . . that I might take her/ As spotless as an angel in my arms! Heywood, T. WKK, 71.; as innocent as an angel of light. Richardson, P., 205, 1741.

"She is as pure as an angel," cried young Esmond. "Have I said a word against her?" shrieks out my lord. . . . Do you fancy I think that *she* would go astray? No, she hasn't passion enough for that. She neither sins nor forgives." Thackeray, HE, 152.

I — that am innocent as the angels in heaven — was a thief: Baring-Gould, RS, 300, 1887. — 'Angel' has been an appellation of an innocent person at least from Skakespeare's times. Cf. "Us all knows the man do mean well us an angel." Phillpotts, AP, 244, 1904.

. . . they will cast and condemn any clerk, though he were as innocent as Abel. Fitzjames, Letter to Wolsey, 1514, Brooks Adams, CD, 198. "Abel" is sometimes used appellatively for an innocent person. See Östberg, 70.

I was as innocent as Moses in the bulrushes. Vachel, WJ, 66, 1908. They are as innocent as grace itself. Shak., AYL, I, iii, 50.

Their virtues else — be they as pure as grace,/ As infinite as man may undergo — Shak., Hamlet, I, iv.

As virtuous as holy truth. Beaumont & Fletcher, Valintinian, I, ii. Lalage is as correct in her morals as a bishop's wife. Shaw, IK, 41, 1880.

As innocent as the child newborn. Middleton, Fam. of Love, 1608, Lean, II, ii.

As clear as the newborn infant. Marlowe, Lust's Dominion, 1657, Green, Tu Quoque, 1614, Lean, II, ii. Cf. Shak., KR III, II, i, 69.

Is she virtuous? — As the newborn babe. Richardson, P., 332, 1741.

As innocent as a child unborn. S. Wesley, Maggots, p. 2, 1685, Lean.

As innocent as the babe unborn. Lean, II, ii; Phillpotts, TK, 205. A gentleman born and bred, champion of the world, sober, honest, spotless as the unborn babe. Shaw, CBP, 291, 1885. As innocent as the sweetest babe in heaven. Hardy, RN, 408, 1878.

As innocent as a babe. Hardy, LLI, 291, 1894. — Cf. Alas, my bab, my innocent. Towneley Myst. c. 1460. NED.

How was she, who was as innocent as a child, to know what was the meaning of the covert addresses of a villain? Thackeray, HE, 152.

Th' old seal would lie there sleepin' innocent as a child. "Q", MV, 233, 1907.

She was as pretty and fresh and pure-looking as a child. White, BT, 173. — 'Clear' meaning 'free from guilt, innocent' dates from c. 1400.

As good as gold in the gutter. Hood, 1845, NED.

Sunning, after binding himself by a solemn promise not to jump about, was permitted to crawl into the bows, where he lay flat upon his stomach, as good as gold, the whole time. Norris, Jim, 137, 1886.

"I'll give you my word; I'll be as good as gold," solemnly declared O'Hara. Castle, IB, 53, 1904. See also Doyle, Firm, 190, 1890.

An' my girl's good as gold, and thrifty as the Bible ant. Phillpotts, SW, 193, 1905. — Leave her alone, she's as good as gold. She can't help if the brother is a rascal. Baring-Gould, RS, 144, 1887.

Oh, you'll like Radway, he's good as gold. White, BT, 378. "Would you like to know?" — "Do you mean to say you'll tell me?" he exclaimed. "If you do, I'll say you are as good as gold." Shaw, CBP, 159, 1885. See also *ibm* 218. Slang, Northall, FP.

This sim. is not recorded in any collection of proverbs previous to Lean. By Slang it is explained 'very good, usually of children.' To judge from the above inst. this cannot be quite correct. When applied to a child it seems to refer to one that is obediently submissive and still. When used of grown up people it seems to denote good character or generally pleasing qualities or great kindness, trustworthiness or faithfulness to a given promise. Northall, FP, explains, 'Well-behaved, of moral worth and behaviour.'

Let her alone, and in five minutes the storm will be over, and she as good as pie again. Dow, Jun., Patent Sermons, i, 21, 1847, Thornton; [A girl is occasionally said to be] as good as pie. Yale Lit. Mag. xxxi, 228, 1866, Thornton. Another inst. of 1878. This seems to be an exclusively American phrase. But cf. also 'as noist, as right as a pie,' Ch. IV.

Our kinsman Gloucester is as innocent . . . As is the sucking lamb or harmless dove. Shak., KH, VIb, III, i, 69.

I am as innocent as the skipping lamb.

So pure and innocent, as that same lamb,/ She was in life. Spenser, FQ, I, i, 5. Ere I be, inercnt as a lamb. London, GF, 113. 'Lamb' as a symbol of innocence already in OE.

He maketh as though he were as holy as a horse, il pretent la sainteté dung cheval. 1530, NED. Cf. 'horse-holy' used by Nashe.

And she was symple as dowve on tree. Chaucer, RR, 1219.

As innocent as a dove. Howell, 1659, Lean, II, ii.

You are as innocent as a dove. Richardson, P., 151, 1741.

"The dove is an emblem of innocence and purity. Adopted by our Lord in the text 'Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.' From this, as well as from the fact of the Holy Spirit appearing in its form, it was considered the scriptural sign of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity . . ."

Swainson, BB, 170. Wyclif has 'Be ge war as serpentis and symple as dowues. Matt. x, 16. The Greek text has *ἀκέραιοι*, which means 'unmixed, free from falsehood.' Cf. also 'Doves are accounted innocent and loving creatures,' Dekker, GH, 26.

Off went Polly, innercent seemin'ly as a guse-chick. Som. Dev. EDD.

Now by my maiden honour yet as pure/ As the unsullied lily, Shak., LLL, V, ii, 351. Cf. . . . yet a virgin,/ A most unspotted lily shall she pass/ To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her. Shak., KH VIII, V, v, 59. — The lily has been employed as the emblem of purity at least from the time of Chaucer. See NED. Lilies are also said to spring from the grave of one unjustly executed as a token of the person's innocence. Dyer, FP, 12.

Heo haefde seofon siþum beorhtran saule þonne snaw. Blickl. Hom. 971.

Danne wurð ic . . . hwittere thane ani snaw. c. 1200, Vices & Virtues, NED. . . . it is chaste and pure as purest snow. Spenser, FQ, II, ii, 9. [said of the tears of a maiden changed to stone].

Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Shak., Hamlet, III, i, 136. . . . black Macbeth/ Will seem as pure as snow. Shak., Mb, IV, iii, 52.

What if this cursed hand/ Were thicker than itself with brother's blood/ Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens/ To wash it white as snow? Shak., Hamlet, III, iv.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Kingsley, WH, 136. Cf. Isa. i, 18, Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. — Cf. also the following lines: —

'And Matcham, though a humble name,
Was stainless as the feathery flake
From heaven, whose virgin whiteness came
Upon the newly frozen lake.' Barham, *IL*, 372, 1842.

. . . her that I looked up to as angel of God, as pure as the light
of day; Kingsley, *WH*, 258.

As clear as that day thou wert born. Bale, King John, ante 1563.
Lean, *II*, ii. Cf. As pure a maid as I was born. Day, *Blind
Beggar*, 1659, Lean, *II*, ii.

. . . my honour/ (Which I have kept as spotless as the moon)
Heywood, *T*. *WKK*, 77. — To-day the moon would hardly
be taken as an emblem of spotlessness, whatever may have
been the case in Heywood's time.

Matheo, thou didst first turn my soul black;/ Now make it white
again. I do protest,/ I'm pure as fire now, chaste as Cyn-
thia's breast. Dekker, *HWh*, Ia, xii. Cf. I'm damaged goods.
And you're as clean as fire. Wells, *AV*, 300, 1909.

When used of a woman some of the above sim. with
'pure' refer to her chastity.

Bad or Mean Character.

. . . this old voman, that is wors than the black deuell of helle;
Three, 49, c. 1500. They are more foul than the black devil
of hell. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, ii, 269, 1509, Lean, *II*, ii.
A diuell, worsen then the worst in hell. Ford, *LS*, 163, 1633.

. . . a sinne but he (the pander) was as absolute in as Sathan
himselpe, Nashe, *II*, 260. Cf. also A more arranter devil is
there not betwixt St. David's and London, Lodge, *Wit's
Misery*, 1596, Lean, *II*, ii.

The absence of later inst. is noteworthy.

Lady Answ. Well, for my life, I cannot conceive what your lord-
ship means.

Lord Sparkish. Indeed, madam, I meant no harm.

Lady Smart. No, to be sure, my lord! You are as innocent
as a devil of two years old.

Neverout. Madam, they say, ill-doers are ill-deemers; but I
don't apply it to your lordship. Swift, *PC*, 261. — This sim.
is in Ray, Fuller, Hazlitt, and Lean, but nothing is said about
it. Does it not mean that the innocence of Lord Sparkish is
rather doubtful? A devil can hardly be said to be innocent,
for in spite of his being only two years of age he must have
learnt some of the wicked ways of "Old Nick". But observe
also the playful connotation about such phrases as 'a young
devil, you little devil.'

. . . a soul/ Leaprous as sinne itself, then hel more foule. Dekker,

- OF, 64. . . . that his soul may be as damned and black/
As hell, whereto it goes. Shak., Hamlet, III, iii, 94.
- As black as Hades. Not unfrequently used by educated people
of a person's character. U.
- Ugly and black as sin. NED. Cf. As ugly as sin and not half
as pleasant. Lean, II, ii. Universally used. U. — For other
inst. of 'black as sin' see Ch. III.
- O bosom black as death. Shak., Hamlet, III, iii, 64.
- As wicked as Job's wife. Lean, II, ii. — This is Lean's way of
quoting. It is taken from Shak., MW, V, v, where we read,
Page. And poor as Job? — *Ford*. And as wicked as his
wife? — It is very improbable that it ever was used as a pro-
verbial sim.
- Wicked as the witch of Wokey. Somers — Wokey Hole is a
cavern in this county, supposed to have been the haunt of a
witch, who was transformed into stone. Hazlitt.
- As sinful as a witch. Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXXV, 84.
- As black as a witch. Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXXV, 84.
— Witches are of two kinds, black and white. The former
were looked upon as the more dangerous and devilish. *ibid*.
For further notes on black, white, and grey witches see Hazlitt,
DFP, 653. Cf. also black and white magic.
- As bad as Jeffries. Wise, New Forest, p. 179, 1863. Lean, II, ii.
— What is the application of this sim.? If Jeffries refers to
any historical person, it is probably George Jeffreys, the cruel
and unmerciful president of the commission for the western
circuit during the "bloody assizes" in 1685. Hampshire and
Somerset and the other S. W. counties had only too well-
founded reasons to remember him. See Strand, April 1916, 366.
— There is in Grose, 1790, this obsolete Yorkshire expression
'St. Jeffery's day' = Latter Lammas.
- To have a conscience as large as a shipman's hose. Jewel, Def.
of Apol. 1567, Lean, II, ii. Clarke, Ray, Hazlitt. — Lean,
II, ii, 846, has some further references to this and similar
phrases. Cf. also 'Making the scripture a shipman's hose to
cover their own malicious humours.' NED, 1625.
- He hath a conscience like a cheverel's skin, that will stretch.
Hazlitt, 187. If they make their consciences stretch like chiuerel
in the raine. 1589, NED. The nature of cheveril leather is,
that if a man take it by the sides and pull it in breadth, he
may make a little point as broad as both his hands; if he
take it by the ends and pull it in length, he may make it as
small as a thread. Curtis, 1576, NED. There is also a phrase
'a cheverel conscience' rec. in NED from 1583 to 1662. —
Cheverel was marked as obsolete already by Johnson.
- A traveller to Rome must have the backe of an Asse, the
belly of a Hogge, and a conscience as broad as the Kings
highway. Moryson, 1617, NED.

. . . their conceited religion, craving mercy of neither God or the King for their offences, and making their consciences, as it were, as wide as the world. The Arraignement, 6.

And the flesh'd soldier, rough and hard of heart,/ In liberty of bloody hand shall range/ With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass/ Your fresh-fair virgins and your flowering infants. Shak., KH V, III, iii, 11.

As full of honesty as a marrowbone is full of honey. Wever, An Enterlude called Lusty Juventus, n. d., Lean, II, ii. — Cf. the numerous sim. 'as full of . . . as an egg of . . .' Ch. XX.

. . . thy love is as black as ebony. Shak., LLL, IV, iii, 243; see 'black' Ch. III.

Why say thy sinnes are blacker then ieat,/ Yet may contrition make them as white a snowe. Shak., Hamlet, III, iii, q. 1. /as snowe?/. See 'black' Ch. XX.

To have a conscience worse than any dog. Taylor (W. P.), A Thief, Lean, II, ii.

As vile as a sow. Barclay, Ecl. ii, ante 1530, Lean, II, ii.

As mean as a rooster in a thunder shower. Dow. 1847. Thornton.

Ez meean ez a cuckoo. — The cuckoo lays its eggs in other birds' nests. Blakeborough, NRY, 242.

We are mean, that's wat's the matter with us, dukes and dustmen, the whole human species — as mean as caterpillars. Galsworthy. IP. 33, 1904.

He was 'viler than dirt.' Barham, IL, 331. The expression is used by a girl of a man whom she had loved until she discovered that he had many loves elsewhere. — Mean as muck. n. Yks. Mean = 'of bad character, worthless.' EDD.

An ugly feend, more foul than dismall day, Spenser, FQ, II, vii, 26. — On 'dismal days,' *dies mali*, *dies atri*, see NED. The expression seems to have become obsolete in the early 17th c.

'Foul' meaning 'abominable, wicked' goes back to OE times. 'Black' has a similar sense from c. 1580. — Some of the sim. under 'black' Ch. III are perhaps also used of a morally worthless person and his actions.

Honest, Faithful, Trustworthy.

. . . now doth thy honour stand . . . / As firm as faith. Shak., MW, IV, iv.

I am as true as truth's simplicity. Shak., TC. III, ii, 156.

. . . was found as trewe as any bonde, Chaucer, Duch., 934.

As true to one as the beggar to his dish. Melbancke, Philotimus, 1583. Cf. the phrase 'To know a thing as well as the beggar knows his dish.' This 'dish' was the beggar's receptacle for alms, the clap-dish or alms-dish.

I am as true, I wold thou knew, as skin betwene thy browes.
Still, GGN, V, ii, 121, 1575. Porter, Two Angry Women,
1599, Lean, II, ii.

An old man . . . honest as the skin between his brows.
Shak., MA, III, v, 11. Cartwright, 1643, NED. — Joe, generally
speaking, was honest as the skin between his brows; Barham,
II, 519, 1840. NED has no inst. after 1643 and marks it as
obsolete. "A proverbial expression probably from the sup-
position that the eyes and forehead are especially indicative
of character." Foster, SWB, 307.

Thou shalt be as honeshet as the skin between his hornsh.
B. Jonson, 1614, NED.

Wilt thou be honest to me? — As your nails to your fingers,
which I think never deceived you. Dekker, HWh. Ib.

As true as thy coat to thy back. Gascoigne, Glass of Gov. iv,
3, 1577. Lean.

She aye sad and constant as a wal/ Continuyng euer hire Inno-
cence oueral. Chaucer, Cl. T. 991, Rom. of Rose, 5250.

Thow schalt me fynde as just as is a squire; Chaucer, ST, 2090.
The T-square, an emblem of honest impartiality. See Spenser,
FQ, II, i, 58.

. . . when their rhymes, Full of protest, of oath and big compare,
Want similes, truth tired with iteration,
'As true as steel, as plantage to the moon,
As sun to day, as Turtle to her mate,
As iron to adamant, as earth to the centre,'
Yet after all comparisons of truth,
As truth's authentic authour to be cited,
'As true as Troilus' shall crown up the verse

And sanctify the numbers. Shak., TC, III, ii, 166 ff. As
true to thee as steel to adamant. Cooke, 1614, NED.

Thais. You'll be constant? — *Cl.* Above the adamant:
goat's blood shall not break me. Marston, Insatiate Countess,
i, 1613. Lean, II, ii.

In these sim. the adamant is identified with the load-
stone or magnet, but it was also looked upon as its natural
opposite, as appears in the following quotation: — "You
draw me, you hard-hearted adamant,/ But yet you draw not
Iron, for my heart/ Is true as steel." Shak., MND, II, i, 195.
— Adamant and goat's blood. "The Adamant though it be
so hard that nothing can bruise it, yet if the warme blood
of a Goat be powred vpon it, it bursteth," Lyly, 1579,
NED. This belief was frequently referred to by Elizabethan
writers.

As faithful as the needle to the pole. Cowan, PS, 139.

True as the needle to the pole,/ Or as the dial to the sun.
Barton Booth's Song, ante 1733, Cowan, PS, 139.

As still to the star of its worship, though clouded

The needle points faithfully o'er the dim sea; Thomas Moore's Sacred Songs, N. & Q., Aug. 1852, 207. N. & Q. vol. 6 has some further inst.

As true as a gun. Ben Jonson, Tale of a Tub, II, i, Lean, II, ii. Solly's the tug-captain, a mighty good fellow, true as a gun barrel. White, BT, 378. Cf. 'as right, as sure as a gun.'

You have been as true to me as hilt to blade. Doyle, R, 161.

As true steel as Ripon rowels. Fuller, 1661, NED. Drayton, Pol. ii., Ray, Hazlitt, Lean.

As true steel as Rippon spurs. Fuller, Proverbs, 1732, Bohn, 322.

"It is said of trusty persons, men of metal, faithful in their employments. Rippon, in this county [Yorkshire] is a town famous for the best spurs of England, whose rowels may be enforced to strike through a shilling, and will break sooner than bow." Ray. Ripon spurs had become proverbial in the early 17th c.

She was as true as tempered steel. Hornung, TN, 27, 1905.

But doutelees, as trewe as any steel/ I haue a wyf, though þat she poure be. Chaucer, 476/2426. Trew as steele in ech condicioun, Chaucer, Troyl. V, 831. See also *ibid.* Leg. IX, 21, Parl. of F. 395, &c. I thought his policy as just and true as steel. Republica, V, vi, 1553. How the Good Wife, Hazlitt, E. P. Poetry, i, 185, Lean, II, ii. I warrant thee, my man's as true as steel. Shak., RJ, II, iv, 187, *ibid.* MND, II, i 195.

They reposed unbounded confidence in me, and believed that I was as true as steel. Dickens, NN, lxi; Doyle, R, 186. Coggan had been true as steel all through the time. Hardy, FMC, 471, 1874. He . . . is as true as steel in his love, Marchmont, CF, 184, 1905.

For thogh so be that lovers be as trewe/ As any metal that is forged newe. Chaucer, C. of Mars, 200. Cf. 'the noble iforged newe'. See 'bright' Ch. III.

As trusty and as true as stone. Chaucer, Romance of Rose, 5248. Though true as touch, though daughter of a king . . . Is from her knight devorced in despayre. Spenser, FQ, I, iii, 2. — This is probably the touchstone, from the true or genuine qualities of the metal being tried by 'touch' or by the touchstone.

As true as flint was Jacob Armitage. Marryat, 1847, NED. Other kinds of stone seem to be used in a similar way: "Trust Honor as you'd trust granite." Baring-Gould, RS, 114, 1887.

Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,/ As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,/ I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb. Shak., MND, III, i, 92. Cf. 'To work like a horse.'

I've followed you, and been true to you as a dog. Baring-Gould,

RS, 301, I've served your honour these fifteen years faithful as a dog. Ibid. 295. Cf. the Sw. 'trogen som en hund.' The 'dog' is found in a great variety of sim.

Women be trewe as tirtyll on tree. Songs, 112. See Willert, AF. And of faire Britomart ensample take/ That was as true in love as Turtle to her make. Spenser, FQ, III, xi, 2. See also ibid. VI, viii, 33. Shak., TC, III, ii, 166. As true as a turtle to her mate. Ray, Hazlitt, &c. The turtle-dove is often mentioned as a type of conjugal affection and constancy. NED.

She now holds in wedlock, as true as a dove,/ The fondest of mates, Horace Smith. Verses on Surnames, N. & Q., II, viii, 72.

As true as plantage to the moon. Townl. Myst. 23, Lean II, ii. See also Shak., TC, III, ii, 166. 'Plantage' is anything planted, vegetation, according to NED. Prior, On the Popular Names of British Plants &c. p. 184, thinks that the Moonwort (*Botrychium Lunaria*, L.) is here intended. Britten & Holland, EPN, 384. But it is immaterial whether a special plant or plants in general are alluded to. The sim. refers to an old idea formerly more widely current than now, viz. of the moon's influence on the vegetable world. The following lines are of interest, "the poor husbandman perceiveth that the increase of the moon maketh plants fruitful, so as in the full moone they are in best strength, decaying in the wane, and in the conjunction do entirely wither and fade." Scott, Discoverie of Witchcraft. See further, Dyer, FLP, 114 ff., Hulme, NH, and Hazlitt, DFF, 416.

. . . a soul truthful and clear as heaven's light. Hardy, PBE, 320, 1873.

He's a good chap, honest as daylight, Baring-Gould, BS, 283, 1896.

Matabel is as honest and true as sunlight. Baring-Gould, BS, 243.

Open as the morning sun, an' as honest. His face is enough. Phillpotts, P., 54, 1906.

He seemed a solid, somewhat stupid fellow, but as honest as the day and very obliging. Hope, RH, II. 1898.

They know perfectly well that a man may be as honest as the day . . . and not believe in what they teach. Wells, LL, 214, 1900.

She was as simple-hearted and honest as the day was long. Twain, TS. 99, 1876.

But I am constant as the northern star,/ Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality/ There is no fellow in the firmament. Shak., JS, III, i 60.

As steadfast as the polestar. Phillpotts, SW.

Open, Straightforward.

There is that good-hearted man — open as a child. Hardy, UGT, 22. His disposition is a open as a child's. Shaw, CBP, 290.
 As open as the midday. Davenport, A New Trick to Cheat the Devil, iv, 2, 1639, Lean, II, ii.
 Stark was wont to be open as daylight. Phillpotts, AP, 297.
 Square-built and broad-shouldered, good-humoured and gay,/ With his collar and countenance open as day. Barham, IL, 368.
 Cf. He hath a tear for pity, and a hand/ Open as day for melting charity. Shak., KH IVb, IV, iv, 32.

Chaste.

As chaste as was Saynt John. Barclay, Ship of Fools, i, 113, 1509, Lean, II, ii.
 If I live to be as olde as Sibilla, I will dye as chaste as Diana. Shak., MV, I, ii, 95. Cf. *ibid.* AYL, III, iv, 14, He hath bought a pair of cast lips of Diana: a nun of winter's sisterhood kisses not more religiously; the very ice of chastity is in them.
 . . . she as solemn as Minerva — she as chaste as Diana. Thackeray. BS, vi. The goddess of the 'cold fruitless' moon is also the patroness of virginity.
 As chaste as Penelope. Barclay, Ecl., ante 1530, Lean, II, ii. Marlowe, Faustus, 40. And I as constant as Penelope. 1606, NED. — Well-known is the history of Penelope, who for twenty years rejected the proposals of the suitors.
 . . . she was . . . honest-hearted . . . graceful to a degree, chaste as a vestal. Hardy, T, 213, 1889. A woman of spotless chastity is sometimes called a vestal.
 As chaste as a veiled nun. Bishop Hall, Sat. IV, iii, 1599.
 And as chaste as a childe þat in cherche wepeth, Langland, PPl, I, 178.
 John Darby of Bartholomew Close, who died 1730, and his wife Joan, "As chaste as a picture cut in alabaster. You might sooner move a Scythian rock than shoot fire into her bosom." Brewer, DPF, 331.
 Chaste to her lorde, both day and night,/ Chaste as is the turtyll upon the tre. The Knight of Curtesy &c., Hazlitt, E.P. Poetry, ii, 67, Lean, II, ii. Cf. 'as true as a turtle.'
 As chaste as the rose. Rowley, All's Lost, iv, 1383, Lean, II, ii. You seem to me as Dian in her orb,/ As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown. Shak., MA, IV, i, 56.

- As chaste as morning dew. Young, *Night Thoughts*, 1743, *Lean*, II, ii.
- I thought her/ As chaste as unsunn'd snow. Shak., *Cy.*, II, iv, 13.
- As chaste as untrodden snow. *Lean*, II, ii.
- Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Shak., *Hamlet*, III, i, 136. Cf. The noble sister of Publicola,/ The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle/ That's curdied by the frost from purest snow/ And hangs on Dian's temple. Shak., *Cor. V.*, iii, 64.
- Annabel, than May's first morn more bright,/ Cheerful as summer's noon, and chaste as winter's night. *Recommend. Verses*, Dryden, IX, 215.

Lecherous, Lewd, Common.

- Though squeamish in her outward woman/ As loose and rampant as Doll Common. Butler, *Hud.* II, 117. — Doll Common was the young woman in league with Subtle the Alchemist in Ben Johson's play, and Doll is a name given generically to a female pet, a mistress. NED. — Loose has had the connotation of 'lecherous' from the end of the 15th c. Rampant with the sense of 'lustful, vicious' from c. 1680 to 1812. NED.
- . . . 'tis a willing soul, I'll warrant him, eager upon the quarry, and as sharp as any governour of Covent Garden. Dryden, *Limb.*, VI, 52.

Although strictly speaking no proverbial sim., this phrase deserves to be chronicled as it helps to illustrate London life in bygone centuries. Covent Garden has not always been London's great fruit and flower market. In the early part of the 18th cent. it was a favourite football ground for the prentices, and to judge from Dryden and other writers of the 17th and 18th cc. it seems to have been somewhat of a disreputable neighbourhood. It must, in fact, have teemed with brothels. The Covent Garden governours were no doubt of the same profession as the 'Covent Garden Abbesses', and the Covent Garden 'nuns' were their quarry. See *Slang*. — The "Town-miss" lives 'in noble rooms, richly furnished about C. G.' *Town-Miss* p. 3.

- My wife . . . deserves a name/ As rank as any flax-wench, that puts to/ Before her troth-plaint. Shak., *WT*, I, ii, 277. — Rank meaning 'lustful, licentious' rec. in NED c. 1520—1765. *Slang* gives 'flax-wench' as a name for a prostitute from 1604.
- As common as a whore. *Lean*, II, ii.
- As good a maid as her mother. 1659, *Lean*, II, ii. In the nature of things, a mother cannot be a 'maid'. Cf. the saying

'As good a maid as Fletcher's mare, that bore three great foals.' 1552, Hazlitt.

As common as a woman or her synonymy. Hausted, *Rival Friends*, 1632, Lean, II, ii.

. . . your friendship as common as a prostitute's favours. Goldsmith, *GNM*, 197.

Shee is as common as Rubarbe among Phisitions. Nashe, III, 121, 1596. Cf. The phisicians with a lyttel Rubarb purge many humours of the body. 1533, NED. Rhubarb does not appear to have been cultivated in England before the 18th c., although it was known much earlier.

As common as tobacco (of a woman). — This is how Lean quotes from Dekker, *HWh Ib*. The actual text reads: — 'I know not of what cut her die is now, but she has been more common than tobacco: this is she that had the name of the Honest Whore.' — Tobacco seems to have been introduced about 1580.

As common as a barber's chair. Gosson, *School of Abuse*, 1579. Lean, II, ii.

A notorious strumpet as common as a barber's chair. Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, III, iv, Clarke. Rec. in *Slang to 1708*. Cf. 'that's a bountiful answer that fits all questions. — It is like a barber's chair, that fits all buttocks, the pin-buttock, the quatch-buttock, the brawn-buttock, or any buttock.' Shak., *AW*, II, ii, 13. A barber's chair is also one of the numerous appellations for a prostitute, because a barber's chair is common to all comers.

As common as the barber's cittern for every serving man to play upon. Dekker, *HWh Ib*. That cursed barber! I have married his cittern that's common to all men. B. Jonson, *Silent Woman*, III, v. Lean, II, ii. Citterns were mostly found in barbers' shops for the use of customers. See Skeat & Mayhew, *TSG*, 76, and NED. The cittern, the musical instrument, is known from 1566.

Ez common ez the deear-sneck. — Any one handles it. It implies that a sneck is liable to be pressed or used by any one; the sim. is of opprobrious nature. Blakeborough, *NRV*, 243. Sneck is a chiefly northern word for an iron, or sometimes wooden, latch. See *EDD*.

As common as any tavern-door. Sharpham, *Fleire*, 1607, Lean, II, ii. Those who entered a tavern were likely to meet 'The Oysterwench in her lawful Occupation at the Tavern-door.' T. Brown, 1704. NED.

Slaver with lips as common as the stairs/ That mount the Capitol. Shak., *Cy.*, I, vi, 104.

As common as the town sewer. Lean, II, ii. A 'common sewer' is a slang phrase for a prostitute.

As common as Coleman hedge. Withals, 1616, Clarke, 1631.

Hazlitt, *Lean*. 'The old proverbial simile "as common as Coleman Hedge", now Coleman street.' Steevens in his note to *Shak.*, TC, V, x, 55. McKerrow, *Notes* 480. A. Golding in his translation of Calvin on *Deut.*, sermon xii, has, (in reference to Tamar) "Juda thinking /her/ a harlot as common as Colman-hedge." J. A. H. Murray, *N. & Q.*, 7, ix, 387.

'The phrase /Coleman hedge/ is of very frequent occurrence in the 16th cent., but none of the quotations known to me throws any light on its origin. Perhaps it was a piece of low slang, which had been in oral use long before it appeared in print, or perhaps the allusion was too well known to need any comment.' Murray, *ibid.* 'Wherever this was, it is evident that it was a resort of prostitutes.' McKerrow, *l. c.* Several attempts at localizing this 'street' have been made. London has now several Coleman streets, and formerly there must have been still more. Best known is perhaps the one that runs from Old Jewry and Lothbury to London Wall. It is now a very commonplace business street, but it has witnessed historical events of some importance, Venner's Insurrection being one of them. We read of the 'credulous, soul-murdered proselytes of Coleman Street.' (Vicars in his attack on John Goodwin), and Dryden, in his *Epilogue to the Assignation, 1672*, speaks of "The zealous rout from Coleman street." From these and numerous other allusions it appears that this Coleman street was a haunt of Puritans. Consequently, it can scarcely have anything to do with our sim. There is a Coleman Street in Islington, and there used to be one about a mile N.W. of Liverpool Str. St., but nothing of interest for our purpose seems to be known about them. 'Colmans Hedge is mentioned in the deed of surrender of the property of St. Giles Hospital to Henry VIII . . . June 2, 1537., where among other lands, is named "five acres of pastures in a certain close there near Colmans Hedge . . ." In another deed it is mentioned as "the lane called Colmannes hegg." This lane must have been nearly on the site of West Street, Seven Dials.' J. Tucket, *N. & Q.* 7, ix, 454. But as this land was hardly built upon at all until after 1600, as the same writer tells us, it cannot very well have been known as a resort of prostitutes before that time. But in Howell's *Londinop.*, 58, 1657, we read of "A great Hawyard, or garden, of old time called Coleman Haw." NED. It appears that this Coleman Haw (?hedge or street) was situated in Aldgate Ward. The neighbourhood is described by Stowe and subsequent writers in very unfavourable terms, as a resort of "gamesters" and other undesirables, and as late as 1817 it is referred to as a "mean and low spot" *N. & Q.*, 7, ix, 454. This is probably the Coleman Hedge mentioned in *Cocke Lorelles Bote* (c. 1500), where we read (Percy

Soc. p. 13) "Of Colman hedge a sight they had/ That made his company very glad,/ For there they thought all to play/ Bytween tyborne and chelsay." J. A. Murray, l. c. This, if any, would be our Coleman Hedge.

But on the other hand there are things that speak against it. The writer of the Prognostication, Nashe III, 392, has "the wormes of Saint Pancredge Church build their bowers under the shadow of Coleman hedge." And Gabriel Harvey, in Pierce's Supererogation, 1593, p. 59, says, "He still proceedeth from worse to worse, from the wilding tree to the withie, from the dogge to the grote, from the catle to the swine, from Primrose Hill to Colman Hedge." Thus it would seem to be connected both with St. Pancras Church and Primrose Hill. (McKerrow l. c.). But it must be observed that there is nothing to compell us to draw the conclusion that this 'connection' actually means proximity of situation. What does Saint Pancredge (church) really stand for, and what are the "wormes"? We know the Pancridge parson, who is scarcely more respectable than any hedgeparson, and in 'A Tale of a Tub' Ben Jonson speaks of "a Pancridge Earl", which means 'an Earl of show' (Lean), and 'an old Pancridge' is simply a term of contempt (see Halliwell and Lean). Consequently "the wormes of Saint Pancredge (church)" would mean 'the hedge lady-birds' (of a certain district), and what he wants to say is perhaps simply that they are, in character and nature, not very far from "everie rag and colman hedge" (North's Translation of Plutarch ed. 1676, p. 43). 'The phrase "to go from Primrose Hill to Colman hedge" in the sense of to go from bad to worse, was a favourite one with Harvey.' J. A. H. Murray, l. c. This justifies the inference that the phrase is used in a transferred sense rather than meaning any fixed or given locality. — Of Primrose Hill nothing appears to be known to justify its being taken as a type of something bad.

Nothing, in short, makes it *necessary* to suppose that the Coleman hedge of the sim. is to be identified with any special Coleman Street, or Hedge, or Haw in the City of London in the 16th century. On the contrary, its connection with other localities in a more or less figurative use and its frequent occurrence as an appellation for a prostitute make it probable that, whatever may once have been the case, it simply stood for something degraded and immoral.

There is further to be noticed the fact that the standard form of the sim. is 'as common as Coleman *hedge*'. Unless Steevens has found some inst. of the form introduced by him, we are free to suppose that 'as common as Coleman *Street*' is nothing but a literary 'improvement'. 'Hedge' is the starting point, and it would seem to be the simplest way to explain the phrase as a development of the sim. 'as common as a

hedge' (see below), 'Coleman' being one of the many additions introduced in sim. for the sake of alliteration, assonance, and rythm. There is e. g., 'as deaf as a doorpost', beside the more common 'as deaf as a post', 'as deaf as a doornail' beside 'as deaf as a nail'. In these sim. 'door' is added only for the sake of alliteration. There is in Sw. something of a parallel in the sim. 'klart som solen i Karlstad' (clear as the sun at Karlstad). There is no reason why the sun should be more clear at K. than anywhere else. 'i Karlstad' was added to give the phrase a humorous touch and to render it more forcible by the aid of alliteration. In the same way the 'Coleman hedge' of our sim. is substituted for the colourless 'hedge' in order to make the phrase more expressive. The 17th cent. pronunciation of the word Coleman makes this only the more probable. Daines, in his *Orthoepia Anglicana* of 1640, says "in *olm l* is omitted, as *Colmes* quasi *Comes*, and so *Colman*, as *Coman*". (See Jespersen, *A Modern English Grammar*, I) Consequently the words 'common' and Coleman' were pronounced in very nearly the same way, which must have given the Elizabethans, who were very fond of plays on words — and very simple and innocent they often seem to us — an opportunity of giving vent to their punning propensities.

There is still to be considered the question how Coleman Hedge acquired the appellative sense it has in 'everie rag and colman hedge.' If we suppose that the phrase originally referred to some locality, e. g. Coleman Haw (? hedge) in Aldgate, we must believe that the name is used for those who frequented the place. But this use is not very often met with. 'Dials' may stand for the thieves hailing from Seven Dials, and cf. Pancrudge above, but we do not speak of a 'Grub Street' for a hackney writer, a 'Fleet Street' for a hedge journalist, a 'Newgate' for an inmate of that Prison, or 'Durham Alsatia' when we mean a knock-kneed resident of Alsatia. Also in this case it is easier to start from the simplex 'hedge'. The extensive pejorative use of this word makes it probable that it may also have been employed as a term of abuse. An angry woman may have hurled at an other the words 'ye hedge . . . !' which practically meant 'hedgewhore'. In the course of time 'Coleman' was added as some sort of pun on the adjective 'common'.

As common as the hedge. Slang, fr. 1690. B.E., N.D. Canting Crew, 1725, Lean, II, ii.

This Doll Tearsheet should be some road. — I warrant you, as common as the way between St. Albans and London. Shak., KH IVb, III, ii, 153. This is only a case of *species pro genere*. As common as the highway. Clarke, Ray, Lean, Slang. Cf. The hyghe waye ys large and commune to all; ante 1530, NED. Heo is As commuyn as a Cartwei to knaues and to alle. Lang-

- land, P. Pl. Dives and Pauper, 65, 1535, Lean, II, ii. Albeit the wife were as common as the Cartwaie. Swinburn, 1599, NED.
- As chaste as dogge at bytche-watche. Horman, *Vulgaria*, 67, 1519, Lean, II, ii. In all languages and times the dog, and especially the female, the bitch, is regarded as a type of lewdness. Cf. *Chaude comme une chienne*. Joubert, *Erreurs Populaires*, I, ii, 11, Lean, II, ii. In English 'bitch' has been applied opprobriously to a lewd and sensual woman from c. 1400. "Call her Prostitute, Bawd, dirty Bitch." Wolcott, 1790, NED. It is not found now in literature, as it belongs to a department of life that is outside the pale of books and print. This applies to most of the sim. under this head, if not all.
- Lawless as a townbull. Ray, Fuller, Hazlitt, Lean. — A townbull was a bull kept in turn by all the cow-keepers of a village, NED, hence fig. of a man; "a common whoremaster, one that rides all the women he meets".
- As lecherous as a he-goat. Ray, Lean. Cotgrave, 1611, NED. He is as hot in love as goats. T. Adams, 1580, Lean, II, ii, 842. Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys, /As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross/ As ignorance made drunk. Shak., *Oth.*, III, iii, 406. — From time immemorial the goat has been associated with lechery. Cf. Lyons be pride, Foxes be fraude, Gete be stynke of lechery. c. 1440, NED. Thou art in thy religion an Atheist, in thy dyet an Epicure, in thy lust a Goat, in thy sleep a Hogge. Ford, LM, 13. — 'Prime' meaning 'sexually excited' has only this inst. in NED.
- One of your lazie, liquerous, lascivious, femenine ingenderers; more wavering than a wethercocke, more wanton than an ape, more wicked than an infidel, the very sink of sensuality. MM. 22, 1601.
A' was the very genius of famine; yet lecherous as a monkey, and the whores called him mandrake: Shak., KH IVb, III, ii, 294. As hot as monkeys. Shak., *Oth.*, III, iii, 406. Cf. also More giddy in my desires than a monkey. Shak., AYL, IV, i, 154.
- As lecherous as a she-wolf. Clarke, Lean, II, ii. Cf. As salt as wolves. Shak., *Oth.*, III, iii, 406, see above. 'Salt' meaning 'in heat', 'lecherous' rec. fr. 1541 to 1683, and was frequent in Shak. 'Pride' = 'heat' 1486—1604.
- As lecherous as a she-ferret. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Pilgrim*, III, vi. Lean, II, ii. Cf. They /otters/ goe sault at suche times as firrets goe sault. Googe, 1577. NED.
- As hoot he was, and lecherous as is a sparwe. Chaucer, *Prol.* C.T, 1386. Cf. The sparwe, Venus sone. Chaucer, *Parl. of F.*, 351.
-Bright as the day and as the morning fair,
Such Chloe is and common as the air,
And make mine honour but a barber's chair. Prior.
Lean, II, ii.

For other sim. that refer, or possibly may refer, to the same thing, see Sympathy, Love Ch. IV, Hot Ch. III. For sim. with 'common' = 'frequent' see Ch. IV.

False, Fickle.

As false as God is true. Heywood, Lean, II, ii.

All ye three can lie as well /As can the falsest devil in hell. Heywood, Four P's. Dodsley, I, 100. Cf. þe lyer is ylich þe dyeule þet is his uader. 1340, NED. See St. John, viii, 44; Tim. I, iii, 2; Titus, ii, 3. Cf. His tongue is as cloven as the devil's feet. Hazlitt. — The Samoreen . . . black as the devil, and as treacherous. Sir T. Herbert, 1638, NED. On the devil's cloven foot, see Hazlitt, DFF, 176.

False — false he be — false as the first snake. Phillpotts, SW, 98, 1905. This is probably the 'old serpent', 'more subtil than any beast of the field', that tempted Eve (Gen. iii, 1—5). The snake, or serpent, has since early times been the symbol of treachery.

Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell. Shak., Oth., IV, ii, 40. False as hell, and cruel as the grave. South, 1676, NED. But false as hell, she, like the wind, / Changed, as her sex must do; Gay, NS. It is also used of statements etc. He found all to be false as hell. Earl of Arran, 1678; Ld Ellenborough, 1813, NED. Cf. also the following quotations: There's more deceit in women than in hell. Dekker, HWh, Ia, ix; Thou art a villain, a malicious devil, / Deep as the place where thou art lost, thou lyeest. Dekker, HWh Ib.

Benjy Pennyways were not a true man or an honest baily — as big a betrayer as Joey Iscariot himself. Hardy, FMC, 118. — Judas is the arch-betrayer, and from the time of Caxton the name is used as an appellative for a false and traitorous person. See NED and Östberg.

Every word this abominable priest has uttered is as false as the Alcoran. Dryden SF, VI, 517.

He told a falsehood as black as Styx, as easily as he paid a compliment or spoke about the weather. Thackeray, HE, 233. See Black Ch. III.

He was moderately truthful towards men, but to women lied like a Cretan. Hardy, FMC, 193. — From time immemorial Cretan lying has been proverbial. Cf. . . . hee (the devil) proues a damb'd lying Cretan. Dekker, Ed. Grosart, II, 90. If you ask me *Quare* /why I have dissembled/ I answer, *Quia prudentis est multum dissimulare*. /To speak more playner, as the proverb does go, . . . *cum Cretense cretiso*. Damon and Pithias, Dodsley, I, 284. Cretians are alway liars. Titus, i, 12.

Κρήτες 'αεὶ φεῦσται. . . ; the hexameters opening with these words occur in Epimenides, and the quoted part in a hymn to Zeus by Callimachos, which seems to point out that the words must have become proverbial by the time of Callimachos. (N. & Q.).

As false as Waghorn, and he was nineteen times fauser than the deil. Kelly, *Scottish Proverbs*, 1721. — Waghorn, a fabulous personage, who being a liar nineteen times (or, according to others, four and twenty times) greater than the devil, was crowned king of liars. Hence extravagant liars are said to be *as ill as Waghorn*, or *waur than Waghorn*. Aberdeen. This fanciful denomination may have been formed from this gentleman having a *horn* on his head, which he wagged. Jamieson.

As big a liar as Tom Payne (or Pepper), and he got kicked out of hell for telling lies. Devon. N. & Q., VIII, ii, 368, *Dialect of Leeds*, 1862, 405. "The devil is said to have given up Tom in despair." Hazlitt. Cf. He's about as mean as the make 'em. The only reason he didn't die long ago is becuz the devil thought him too mean to pay any 'tention to. White, BT, 80. — Strange to say, Tom Paine is a Yorkshire expression for the oak. EDD.

(But if you want a thorough-paced liar, that will swear through thick and thin, commend me to a friar. Dryden, SF, VI, 517. Though all holy friars/ Were very great liars/ And raised stories faster than Grissel and Peto. Barham, IL, 500. Amyas shook his head and said that friars were liars. Kingsley, WH, 201. This was the idea of friars already in Chaucer's time. See Meiklejohn, London, p. 77.)

. . . have the art of dissembling at his fingers' ends as perfect as any Courtier. Nashe, II, 220, 1593. To lie like a courtier. Swift, Poem on W. Hood, Lean, II, ii. False as the cringing Courtier's plighted word. Gay, 1720. NED.

There's more deceit in him than in 16 potecaries. Dekker, HWh, Ib. The apothecaries of the olden times seem to have been held in contempt. To talk like an apothecary was to talk nonsense, and Apothecaries'-Latin and dog-Latin were equivalents. See Slang.

To lie like a lawyer. Lean, II, ii. He'll lie like to your Switzer or lawyer; he'll be on any side for most money. Webster, *Malcontent*, i, 1, 1604, Lean, II, ii. — Cf. the following quotations: — One may as soon find honesty in a Lawyer's house, as the least cause of mirth in the world. SC, 2. 1641. — Lawyers are not respected, neither are they accounted Honest, because they sell their lines dearer than the Apothecaries Physics, which I confess is dear enough, yet nothing comparable to the price of their lines, which gape wider than an Oyster-wife's mouth, and straddle wider than a French-man's legs. Fie, fie! Lawyers are accounted knaves all over the country. CC, 5,

1641. See also Taylor, KW, 18. In N. & Q., 1, xii, 44, there is an old poem on the lawyer. He is represented as standing outside the gates of Heaven. St. Peter is extremely unwilling to admit him, but our lawyer outwits him, and gets himself inside by cheating. Cf. the proverb 'by degrees as lawyers go to heaven'. Northall, FP, 11.

A friend of his, 'equus fortissimus', i. e. one who lied like a trooper, Badham, 1854. NED. See Swearing.

As true as a tinker. Ap. and Virg. Hazlitt, Old Plays, iv, 118. The tinker has a very black book indeed. See e. g. *Drunk*.

To lie like a thief. Day, Blind Begger of Bethnal Green, IV, 1659. Lean.

To lie like a whore. Nice Wanton, Hazlitt, Old Plays, ii, 173. Lean, II, ii, 1560. — To lie at command like a strumpet.

Davies, Civil Wars of Death and Fortune, 1609, Lean, II, ii.

As false as a Scot. Ray. "I hope that nation generally deserves not such an imputation; and could wish that we *Englishmen* were less partial to ourselves, and censorious of our neighbours."

Ray. But in spite of Ray English people *would* look upon the Scots as false, and must have done so from the time of the earliest border wars. Some quotations may illustrate the case.

False Scots are ye. Skelton, D. of Albany, p. 26, Lean, II, ii.

I am a Scotyshe man, and have dissemblyd muche. Boorde, Introduction, 135, and a couple of pages further on he says,

" . . . but of all nacyons they will face, crake, and booste themselfe, theyr frendes, and theyr contrey, aboue reason; for many will make strong lyes." And elsewhere the same writer gives this piece of advice, Shortly to conclude, trust yow no Skott, for they will yowse flatteryng wordes, and all is falshode.

1536, NED. It is said that a Scot will prove false to his father and dissemble with his brother. Taylor, Christmas In and Out, 1652, Lean.

On the other hand T. Campbell, who was a Scotsman born and bred, wrote, "The Scots are steadfast — not their clime". Pilgrim of Glencoe, ii, 1842.

You are as changeful as a girl. Baring-Gould, BS, 122, 1896.

Such an act /That . . . makes marriage-vows/ As false as dicers' oaths. Shak., Hamlet, III, iv, 45.

That's a word as full o' holes as a sieve with them. Hardy, FMC, Cf. Such things . . . To thee be as sure as water in a sieue. Barclay, 1515, NED.

No taffety more changeable than they. Taylor, KW. 14. Cf. . . . thy doublet of changeable taffeta. Shak., TN, II, iv, 74. Rid-dling oracles . . . like changeable taffata (wherein the woofe and warfe are of different colours), seems of several hues, as the looker on takes his station. Fuller, 1650. NED.

Ez mean ez bo'd-lahm. Blakeborough, NRY, 241; "it deceives those who rest upon it; in daily use".

(To lie like a rope upreert. Exmoor Scolding, 150. I. e. as fast

as a horse would gallop. — This is another instance of Lean's way of quoting. The original has, "tha wut lee a rope up-reert." And the editor explains, 'To *lie a rope up-right* contains a pun on the word *lie*, and means the telling of such a lie as is a contradiction in itself; or what is as impossible to be true as for a rope which lies on the ground to stand upright at the same time.' See *Exmore Courtship*, p. 25. Does it not simply mean, 'He lies so fearfully that he can make a rope that lies on the ground stand on end?')

He lies like a gas-meter. I. e. prodigiously. COD.

. . . . A stormy peple, vnsad and euere vntrewe,

Ay vndiscreet and chaungynge as a vane,

Delitynginge euere in rumbul that is newe,

for lyk the moone, ay wexe ye and wane. Chaucer, 434/995. Cf. But as a wedercock, that turn'th his face/ With every wind, ye fare; Chaucer, *Skeat*, EEP, 61. I am as very a turncoat as the weathercock of Paul's. *Marriage between Wit and Wisdom*, 1579, Shak. Soc. repr. 24, Lean IV. More wavering than a weathercock. MM, 2, 1601. See *Lecherous*.

Ez waffly as a mill-sail. *Blakeborough*, NRY, 241. Waffly here implies 'unstable'; the mill-sail is turned about by every wind which blows. *Ibid.* 244. Cf. She was as waffel's ony clout. Donald, 1867, EDD. A windy, waffling soort o' chap wheea nivver kens his ain mind. Yks., EDD.

As false as Newgate. Very false, Shr. EDD. The name of the old City prison is found in several phrases connected with sharping and thieving and jail-birds in general. See *Slang*.

Bishops will lye like dogs. 1588, NED. . . . but you'll lie, like dogs, and yet say nothing neither. Shak., *Tempest*, III, ii, 18.

The five properties of a host (or tavern keeper): The head of a stag, the back of a nag, The belly of a hog, To fawn and lie like a dog, To skip up and down like a frog. P. Rob. Ap. 1696. Lean, IV.

To lie as fast as a dog can lick a dish. Ray, *Hazlitt*.

She will lie as fast as dogs will lick a dish. She is, of truth, as false as god is true. Heywood, PE, 78. To lie as fast as a dog will lick a dish. Ferguson, *Scotish Proverbs*, 1641, Lean, II, ii.

. . . hearken to him.' He will tell lies as fast as a dog will eat white pot. W. Som. Gloss. 246.

He lies as fast as a dog can trot. Palsgrave, 1530. *Slang*. Old C. held forth with a long speech lying as fast as a dog would trot. Hawker, *Diary*, II, 236, 1843.

From the very earliest times, the dog figures as the type of all that is vile and low in a great many proverbial phrases, in English and other languages. The most comprehensive of these proverbs is the old Sw. 'Werlden är en hynda' (the world is a bitch), which Grubb, *Ordseder*, 758, gives as an

equivalent of the Latin *Mundus in maligno positus*, and the German *Die Welt badet in Lügen*. — The following lines may be quoted as an attempt at tracing the origin of this idea among the *Germanic* peoples. “De Hond (which met Odin on his going down to Niffelheim) was de Germaansche Helhond, welke benaming later an den Duivel werd gegeven. Zo kan het begrip ontstaan zijn, dat de Hond met de booze in verband staat. Hij heet valsch en loensch te zijn, is een verachtelijk dier . . . Sloet, Dieren, 31. See further *Drunk*, Ch. II.

He . . . woulde lye as fast as a horse woulde trotte. Skelton, 1529.
He lies as fast as a horse can trot. Haz. 1566, NED.

To lie as fast as a horse would gallop. See above ‘To lie a rope upreert’.

As much honesty as had my mother’s great hoggish sow. Wilson, *The Three Lords and Ladies of London*, Hazlitt, *Old Plays*, vi, 311, 1590. (Ironical) Lean, II, ii.

As false as a fox. Montgommery, Cherry and Slae, 1597, Hazlitt. No more truth in thee than in a drawn fox. Shak., *KH IVa*, III, iii, 40. Cf. *Ase vox is best falsest*. *Ancren R.*, 1225, NED. See *Clever, Cunning. Vulpes amat fraudem, lupus agnam, femina laudem*.

As fause as a rot (=rat). Jackson & Burne, 595. Sly, untrustworthy.

As fearful as a hare, and will lie like a lapwing. 1606, NED. “The lappewinke hath lost his feith, And is the brid falsest of alle,” said already Gower, *Conf. Am.*, ii, 329, and Chaucer says ‘the false lapwyng, ful of trecherye’ *Parl. F.*, 347. You resemble the lapwing, who crieth most where his nest is not. Lyly, *AC*, II ii. Dodsley, ed. 1825 has the following note: ‘This simile occurs in our ancient writers perhaps more frequently than any other which can be pointed out.’ Several inst. from Massinger, Ford, Dekker, Rowley &c. are given. — ‘The lapwing is almost universally held in bad esteem, as is shown by the various titles and legends in which it plays a part.’ See Swainson, *BB*, 185.

You’ll find her as slippery as an eel. Richardsson, *P*, 207, 1741. No, you are not bad. You are a dear. But as slippery as an eel when I want to get a confession from you. Hardy, *JO*, 326, 1896.

As slippy as an eel. Untrustworthy, not to be depended upon. Ant. Frequently used in reference to a person who could not be easily bound or kept to a bargain. 1892, *EDD*.

Her promise of friendship for any avail, /Is as sure to hold as an eel by the tail. Heywood, *PE*, 24.

As trusty as is quick eel by the tail. *Trial of Treasure*, 1567, Hazlitt, *Old Plays*, iii, 228.

There is as much hold of his word as of a wet eel by the tail. Slang. As slape as an eel’s tail. Yks. Cowan, *PS*, 36.

A crafty, schuffling, unreliable person is said to be a slape chap. EDD. Cf. also, Whosoever have hym best, is no more sure of hym, than he that hath an ele by the tayle. 1524, NED. — Cf. Sw. hal som en äl; Dutch, zo glad als een aal; German, so glatt wie ein Aal.

Cowards, whose hearts are all as false /As stairs of sand, Shak., MV, III, ii, 83. — . . . his words are loose/ As heaps of sand. Dryden, SF, VI, 507. Sand is often used as a symbol of instability. Cf. 'If the citizen owes his primary allegiance to his state, then this Republic is held together by a rope of sand.' Edgar Cowan, 1861, Cowan, PS, 29. 'Rope of sand' used of something that has no coherence or binding power from 1624, NED. See also Matt, vii, 26.

So giddy are the common people's mindes,/ So glad of change, more wavering than the sea. Ferrex & Porrex, V, i, Dodsley, ed. 1825.

As faithless as the sea. Gay, Wife of Bath, 1713, Lean, II, ii. — The sea is often called 'cruel, treacherous.'

She was false as waters. Shak., Oth., V., ii, 137. Cf. But were they false/ As o'er-dy'd blacks, as Wind, as Waters,/ As dice are to be wish'd. Shak., WT, I, ii, 132.

Blandamour, whose fancie light/ Was alwaies flitting as the wavering wind/ After each beautie that appeard in sight, Spenser, FQ, IV, ii, 5. . . . vain fantasy, /Which is as thin of substance as the air,/ And more inconstant than the wind. Shak., RJ, I, iv, 99.

As false as the wind. Lean, II, ii, — Wind and water have ever been the likeness of a faithless and inconstant mind. — *Nam mulier cupido quod dicit amanti In vento et rapida scribere oportet aqua.* Catullus.

As changeable as an April day. Lean. April is often used *fig.* in reference to the changeable weather of the month. NED.

Flattering, Fawning, Smooth-spoken.

Th' old man hed nobbut two suns, and one was as blunt as a hatchet, an' t'other slaape as oil. Lin. EDD. See *Slippery, Smooth*, Ch. III.

To the people they're ollers ez slick ez molasses. Lowell, 1848, NED. Slick and sleek have had the meaning 'oily, fawning, plausible' from c. 1600. NED. Smoth spaniel, soothing grome, Slicke oonly knave, egregious parasite! 1600, NED.

As flattering or fawning as a spaniel. Ray.

He /a pander/ must haue the backe of an asse, the snout of an elephant, the wit of a fox, and the teeth of a wolf, he must

faune like a spaniel, crouch like a Jew, liere like a sheep-biter. Nashe, II, 260.

As flattering as a spaniel. Withals, 1616, Lean, II, ii.

The fawning (flattering) spaniel is mentioned by NED from 1569. Fawning and submissive persons have been called, or compared with, spaniels from the latter half of the 16th c. For inst. see NED and Dryden, VIII, 354, Pope, Dunciad, III, 199, note. The following inst. may be worth quoting, "I am your spaniel, and, Demetrius,/ The more you beat me, I will fawn on you. Shak., MND, II, i, 202. Cf. the Shropshire proverb 'A spaniel, a wife, and a walnut tree, The more they are beaten the better they be!' The vice-admiral . . . (who is as officious, poor man! as any spaniel can be . . .). Pepys, I, 163.

She made him tame as a spaniel. Butler, H., III, 144.

They flattered me like a dog. Shak., KL, IV, vi, 96.

To fawn like a dog that stands at receipt of a trencher. Melbancke, Philotimus, 28, 1583, Lean, II, ii.

You show'd your teeth like apes, and fawn'd like hounds. Shak., JS, V, i, 41.

But the wyld man, contrarie to her feare,/ Came to her creeping like a fawning hound. Spenser, FQ, VI, v, 11.

Sane.

Thou' you're as sane as Satan you can go clean off your dot.

Verse of 1896. NED has no inst. of the adj. sane before 1628, and this particular sense dates from 1721. See *Clever*.

Wise.

As wise as Solomon. Chest. Plays, ii, 103; Barclay, Ship of Fools, i, 96, 1509, Davies of Hereford, Civil Wars of Death and Fortune, 103, 1609. Brewer, Dict.

As wise as Saba. Marlowe, F, 40. See *Chaste*. The queen of Saba.

Though a man be as wise as a constable at his entrance, his wit sometimes is so shrunk in the wetting, that he may want the understanding of an ass. Taylor, JL, 16. See Melbancke, Philotimus, L3, 1583, Lean, II, ii.

Which of the constables is this?

As wise as t'ullot. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. Unless this is ironical, it must be the owl at night. For the owl in daytime, see *Stupid*.

Wise as a serpent. — 'This refers to the serpent which tempted Eve, or more probably the old notion that serpents were extremely wise.' Brewer, Dict., 1306. Most probably in English from Matt. xi, 16, Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Clever, Crafty, Cunning.

- As crafty as the devil of hell. Gascoigne, 1587, Lean, II, ii.
 He was cunning as the diel. Jenny's Bawbee, Scottish Musical Museum, ed. 1839, vol. v, 439.
 She is as deep as the devil or any draw-well. Nhb. EDD.
 As cunning as Lucifer. Richardson, P., 55.
 It requires one as clever as Satan to question your assertion. Ware, s. v. Devil doubt you.
- As deep as hell. Davies, J., Wittes Pilgr. c. 1610, A. Brome, Ballads, V, iii, 1664. Lean, II, ii.
- You are as clever as the devil's disciple. Vachel, WJ, 25, 1908.
- As fause as a Pendle witch. — 'Eawr Matty gets as fause,' said he, 'As one o' Pendle witches,' Waugh, Poems, ed. Milner, c. 1860. 'This is a saying which keeps on record the traditional association of Pendle Forest with witches.' Wright, RS, 211. These traditions must be very old; we have Thomas Heywood's "well received comedy" The Late Lancashire Witches, and in the 17th c. numerous persons were put to death, in and out of Lancashire, "lawfully convicted" of witchcraft. See Roby, Traditions of Lancashire, I, 280 f.
- He're as fause as a boggart. Lan. EDD. A boggart is a ghost or apparition. — Fause < false = sharp, clever.
- He's as deep as Wilkes. Common expression in Linc. signifying very great deepness or cunning. Linc. Gloss. 1877. Also in Nhp. EDD writes Wilks, and explains 'A person who was proverbial for his craft and cunning; or more probably allusive to Wilkes, the celebrated pseudo-patriot.' Is this John Wilkes, the politician? His versatility and powers of fascination may perhaps have given rise to such a saying. But cf. the Irish 'as close as a wilk,' which, through the plural (They are) as close as wilks, may have developed into 'as deep as wilks.' The word 'wilk' (= willock = periwinkle) not being understood, may have given rise to speculations as to some crafty person called Wilks, or Wilkes. The form *wilk* is also found in Lin. — Deep has had this sense from the beginning of the 16th c.
- As cunning as Craddock, &c. Ray.
 As cunning as a crafty Craddock. — It appears to be more than probable that John Craddock, vicar of Gainford, 1594,

might have given rise to the proverb. He was a high commissioner for Durham, a justice of the peace, the bishop's spiritual chancellor, and vicar-general. . . . He took bribes as a magistrate, and did numerous other underhand practices. Mr. Walbran, in his *History of Gainford*, records a few of his crafty misdeeds. Ray. — 'Mr. Ray gives the above proverb thus: /see above/ but as to what is included in the "et cetera" I am at loss to imagine.' Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXIX, 45. — Cf. the Cumberland saying 'as lean as a cradda (crad-dagh)', EDD.

As cunning as Capain Drake. Hazlitt, Ray, ed. Bohn. It is not found in Ray, 1768. It is only natural that a man like Captain Drake should have become the central figure of many legends and a prototype of all that is excellent.

As deep as Garrick.

Beside this standard form, which is, or was, current in Lin. Yks. Shr. Hfr. Sur. Sus. Dev. Cor. Guernsey, (N. & Q.), we have *Garry*, War. Glo., *Garratt*, Pem., *Garry-warrick*, Hrf., *Garlick*, West Som. ("a very common saying", W. Som. Gloss. 189), *Charlock* (*Brassica sinapistrum*) W. Cor. "Any farmer will appreciate the meaning of the latter." N. & Q., 10, viii, 377. *Carrick* on the coast of Cornwall, N. & Q., 6, iv, 386. "As *artful* as Garrick", or "as deep as Garrick" has been familiar to me since earliest childhood, and is yet current in most parts of the county, and most likely in all other parts of England." Boston, Linc., N. & Q., 6, iv, 540.

The saying was used "in the days of my boyhood, upwards of fifty years ago." "I remember its being a common saying with my nurse, a Plymouth woman, full sixty-five years ago." *ibid.* This would take it back to c. 1825. It is probably much older.

This sim. does not appear to be found in lit. English. The only sources known at present are EDD and N. & Q. "I have repeatedly heard /this saying/ from the lips of cottagers." N. & Q., 6, iv, 540. It "is often used by the lower classes, and, indeed, sometimes jocularly by the better educated." *ibid.* It was used by "a woman in a remote Surrey village." N. & Q., 6, iv, 386. 'But on the other hand "As deep as garlic" was the way a high-born lady of my acquaintance used it.' N. & Q., 6, iv, 541.

Now, what is this *Garrick*, *Garratt*, *Garry* &c.? — "Here and there some noteworthy man is commemorated in an everyday simile, as for instance: as deep as Garrick . . ." Wright, RS, 185. A correspondent of N. & Q., 2, ii, 307, writes as follows: '. . . . is remarkable as showing that the genius of the modern Roscius was something beyond the mere fame which attaches itself to the actor of an age . . . although . . . the name of Garrick has been corrupted into 'Garratt', the exi-

stence of such a proverb among people who can scarcely have heard of G. shows how widely spread the fame of that great actor must have been.'

This theory presents no very great difficulties. It may seem rather strange that a sim. supposed to allude to a famous literary London hero should be of a certain frequency in rustic speech but remarkably absent in literary English. But this is not unparalleled. We have 'as sour as Hector' and, more strange still, 'as merry as Momus'. Who would expect the old Greek god to turn up in English dialects? This shows that we may find in the dialects literary allusions that are foreign to standard English. Garrick's fame must have spread, and there is nothing strange in his becoming the hero of many popular myths and the embodiment of sharpness and cunning. There is a Swedish parallel. To the uneducated in many parts of Sweden the great poet Bellman is nothing but a court-jester of a rather coarse stamp, and a person who knows nothing of the real Bellman could tell burlesque stories of the fictitious one that would stagger the literary historian. In a similar way with Garrick. Gradually the man and the stories that had gathered about his name were forgotten, but the phrase remained. Consequently the word Garrick ceased to have a meaning of its own, and was easily corrupted into something else or supplanted by something intelligible. From this point of view it is rather strange that it should have been kept uncorrupted to such an extent.

As deep as *Carrick*. It has been suggested that this is not a corruption of Garrick, but simply the Celtic word *carrick*, *carraig*, *carreg* meaning a (submersed) rock (see Dinneen, P. S., An Irish-English Dict. s. v. *carraig*.), and J. Holden Mc Michael, a frequent correspondent of N. & Q., writes *ibid.* 10, viii, 377, as follows, 'The allusion in this phrase is said to be, not to Garrick the actor, but to the depth of Carrick sound in N. B. (see *ibid.* 3, xi, 469). I do not know in what part this deep sound occurs, however, and should have thought the saying refers rather to Carrick, a small rocky island of the north coast of Antrim . . . connected with the mainland by a bridge . . . spanning a chasm 80 feet deep.' If the saying is Irish, or at any rate Celtic, how are we to explain its chief occurrence in districts where a Celtic influence is impossible? No Irish instance has as yet been produced.

An altogether different explanation has been given by A. Smythe Palmer in a very interesting paper on 'Folk-Lore in Word-Lore' in the *Nineteenth Century*, 1910, II, 545 ff. He admits that the present shape of the sim. is due "to the fame of the great actor, which had reached the ears of the rustics," but it is only a "reshaping, under the influence of folk-etymology, of a much older expression." This has been

preserved in the purest way in the Pembrokeshire form 'as deep as Garrat.' 'Garrat' is a development, he thinks, of the 14th c. word *gerard* or *gerrard*, which means 'an evil one' or 'the evil one', and he quotes the Fr. expression *Gerard le Diable*. Thus the sim. would mean simply 'as deep as the devil'. But he goes still further. This obscure word is a ME form of the Scandinavian *Geirrod*, a figure of some importance in Northern mythology. This is a fire-giant, who is called "the crafty knave", "the hundred wise," and gradually was looked upon as 'a sort of King of Death or the Underworld', and might "readily come to be regarded as one with the devil of popular Christianity. Thus Gerard as a devil-name in medieval writers would naturally be accounted for; and, lastly, the Garret who enjoys a proverbial reputation for 'depth' or evil cunning among the peasantry of our own day would have his pedigree unfolded". (Cf. a figure in Irish mythology Earl Garrett, who rides round the Curragh of Kildare on a steed whose inch-thick silver-shoes must wear as thin as a cat's ear, ere he fights the English and reigns over Ireland. See Conway, *Demonology & Devil-lore*). 'As deep as Garrick' ultimately means as abysmal or unfathomable as *Geirrod*, the subterranean Hades of the ancient Scandinavians.'

This is both ingenious and interesting. But as long as our actual knowledge of the sim. and its supposed origin is so limited as it really is, a discussion is likely to be guided by our sympathies rather than by facts. Facts tell us very little. A development Gerard > Garratt is of course quite possible, and we know that Gerard was a term for the devil, but we do not know whether it had vitality enough to survive to the 18th c. to be refreshed again and reshaped by the fame of Garrick, and become current in so widely different districts as Pembroke, Guernsey, Sussex, and Yorkshire, a development of course not altogether impossible, though not very probable. ('As deep as Garrick' may of course have become current in districts where the old word Gerard was totally unknown).

It is naturally very tempting to connect Gerard with the "crafty knave", 'the hundred-wise' *Geirrod*. For a northern origin of the word speak the pronunciation of *G* (see NED) and the fact that Gerard, which occurs in *Cursor Mundi*, is found in MSS C. and G 2, of which C represents the original Northumbrian MS, but not in the chief Midland MS (See Barth, C., *Der Wortschatz des Cursor Mundi*). Palmer mentions the French *Gérard le Diable*. Of this G. le D. Colin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire Infernal*, says, 'garnement du treizième siècle, enfant de grande maison à Gand. La sinistre histoire de ce possédé, de son fils Gérard le Maure et de la tour rouge est établie dans les Légendes infernales.' (An old castle at

Gent called *het Steen de G. le D.*, where the provincial archives used to be kept, still reminds us of the old legends). This and the circumstance that a French Gérard could not possibly have developed into an English Garratt, make a French origin of the word improbable.

But it is not absolutely necessary to go deep into mythology, Scandinavian or otherwise, to explain how Gerard came to mean 'the evil one'. There are, all over the world, a great many euphemisms for the devil. Personal names form one of the many groups of such expressions. In English we have not only Old Nick and Old Harry, but also Davy Jones, the sailors' devil, Nickie Ben, Old Roger, Tom Titivil, Simie (late 18th c., North Cy), and in Scotland Clottie Ben, in Swedish not only Gammel Erik, but also Horn-Per (Hornie Peter); in northern Germany he is sometimes called 'der Rote Jakob, Jan Kräuger aus Philippsgrün, Meister Urian, and Herr Lorian.' Why should precisely these names be chosen? That is a question as easily answered as the one why a certain unmentionable vessel should have been called in English *jeremiah*, in some parts of Sweden *Rebecka* or *Kalle* (Charlie). For some reason, which we do not know as yet, Gerard may have been used in this way.

As *slee* as *onny Danniell*. Stagg, *Misc. Poems*, 1807. Cum. EDD. *Slee* (= *sly*) means clever. — See Dan. I, 17.

As *cunning* as a *crowder*; as *cunning* as *Crowder*. *Gentlemen's Mag.*, 1754, *passim*. There are two explanations of this saying. One writer maintains that *cunning* means skilful, clever, as it still does in many dialects, and that the *crowder* of the adage is the musician, the fiddler. Another correspondent thinks that it is ironical and alludes to a certain person called Samuel Crowder, a carrier, who became proverbial for his want of astuteness. Both of them call it a northern saying. The sim. is quoted by Hazlitt and Lean in the first form.

As this is all we know of the sim., conjectures are not very profitable. But the following considerations may be to the point. We do not find that the fiddler is renowned for *cunning* &c. On the contrary, a proverb says, 'Show me a fiddler, show me a fool.' etc. There is in NED another word 'crowder' connected with the verb 'to crowd I.' One of the two instances given runs like this: A certain old crafty Crowder laden throughly with the Popes Bulles raunged the coastes. (1581). NED explains 'one who crowds.' But this does not tell us much. Now, the only meaning that could be assigned to the verb in this case is 'to push a wheelbarrow or handcart.' This sense is still extant in some dialects. The *crowder* would consequently be either some sort of carrier without a horse (Samuel the Crowder?), or perhaps some sort of pedlar carting his wares about the country in a wheelbarrow. One

would think that a person of this character had to be pretty smart if he were to thrive, but we find that Cobbet writes 'The poor deluded creature . . . who knew nothing . . . about such matters . . . was a perfect pedlar in political economy'. 1825, NED. And D'Israeli: The most innocent . . . those whose talent has been limited by Nature to peddle and purloin. NED. These inst. show that pedlars and peddling have been connected with mental inefficiency. But this idea may have developed in later times as, with the increase of shops and modern commerce, peddling deteriorated, and became too contemptuous to deserve the name of a trade.

As crafty as a Franciscan friar. Tusser, Husbandrie, p. 11, 1513. See *False*.

He has as many tricks as lawyer. Withals, 1616, Lean, II, ii. See *False*.

As cunning as a Christian. Lei.

As fause as a Christian. Wright, RS, 112.

My horse is as sensible as a Christian. Wor. w. Som.

As wise as a Christen. Nhb. My dog's as false as any man. Linc. 1886. Folk-Lore LXIII, 409. In the same way of a horse. — These are different forms of a sim. often applied to dogs or horses to indicate that they are as clever as human beings.

That lad is as sharp as bottled porridge. — It denotes mental briskness — as a clever boy in school. Cuthbert Bede, N. & Q., 7, iv, 48.

As sharp as if he lived on Tewkesbury mustard. Higgson's MSS Collections, Hazlitt; Heywood. Tewksbury mustard, "the best the world affords", was famous in Shakespeare's days, but is so no longer.

He was a very good fellow, keen as mustard. 19 Cent. Nov. 12, 895. 'Keen' meaning sharp-witted, shrewd dates from the beginning of the 18th c. See *Eager*.

As full of wit as a ginger-beer bottle is of pop. Bartlett, Americanisms, Lean, II, ii. Not recorded in Thornton.

As sharp as a razor. Horman, Vulgaria, 277, 1519. Lean, II, ii. Ray. This sim. has a variety of applications. See *Sharp*, Chapter III.

As sharp as a knife. Barclay, Ship of Fools, ii, 4. Lean, II, ii. — Cf. Some lown as sharp set as a knife Was lurking bye. 1794. EDD. — Sharp-set = sharp-witted, keen.

They are sharp as spear, if they seem but slender (of women). Towneley Myst. p. 309. Lean, II, ii.

As deep as a tailor's thimble. Yks. EDD. A tailor's thimble has no botom.

As sharp as a needle. T. Heywood, Fair Maid of the Exchange, p. 27, Lean; I am not so dark neither; I am sharp, sharp as a needle. Shadwell, 1688 NED. This is the only thing

he is soft in; he's sharp as a Needle in anything else. Bailey, 1725, NED.

Denner had a mind as sharp as a needle. Elliot, 1866, NED. Now, the yeller dog was as sharp as a needle. London Mag. '15, 750. Hardy, DR, 321, UGT, 191, &c. — This is a very common phrase, and it seems to refer chiefly to sharpness of mind.

But he is as gleg as Mac Keachan's elshin that ran through sax plies of bend-leather, and half an inch of the king's heel. Scott, Heart af Midlothian, XVII. — 'Gleg' is 'sharp', and the elshin, or elsin, is the shoemaker's awl. See N. & Q., 10, viii, 114, where an account of Mac Keachan's awl is given. This proverbial saying is said to be of Scott's own coinage. But cf. the Yks phrase 'as sharp as an elshin.' EDD.

As sharp as the little end of nothing. Bartlett, Americanisms. Lean, II, ii. Not rec. in Thornton. 'The little end of nothing' must be disappearingly sharp.

As deep as Chelsea, or Chelsea reach. This is a comparison for cunning in Norfolk. — 'I asked an old lady who said in my hearing that her cat was as deep as Chelsea, what or where Chelsea was; but all she knew about it was, "that it was a saying like."' N. & Q., 2, III, 258. See *Dead* Ch. II.

As subtle as a dead pig. Walker, 1672, Lean, II, ii. I am told, my lady manages him to admiration. — That I believe; for she is as cunning as a dead pig; but not half so honest. Swift, PC, 293. This is a very puzzling phrase. Does it mean that 'dead pigs' are not always really dead, but sometimes show, in a rather surprising way, that they are quite alive?

As fawse as a owd tup. Lan. EDD.

As sharp as an ape. Udall, Er. Ap., p. 371, 1542, Lean, II, ii. Is this ironical?

As fawse as a bag o' monkeys. 1879, EDD. Cf. He's as cunning as a basketful of monkeys. Doyle, F., 73, 1890.

He has as many tricks as a dancing bear. Hazlitt.

He has more items than a dancing bear. Hazlitt. See *Ill-tempered*.

She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking. Goldsmith, SSC, 242. See below 'as clever as a hare.'

As crafty as a Kendal fox. Ray. See N. & Q., 1853, 233, Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXIX, 219. — The Kendal fox-hunt is not altogether unknown.

Master would be crafty as an old fox if he weren't stupid as an owl. Baring-Gould, BS, 292.

Mossie was a clever loun,

A little mare did buy;

She winket and she jinket,

That none could her come nigh.

She was as crafty as a fox,

And clever as a hare;

An' I'll tell by an' by

How Mossie teuk's mare. c. 1810. N. & Q., 4, III, 95.

The Spaniard was as cunning as any fox. Kingsley, WH, 184. Amyas . . . was cunning as a fox in all matters of tactic. Kingsley, WH, 97.

As cunning as a clyket. Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXV, 107. *Clyket* is said to be a fox; probably a term for the he-fox in the rutting time. The females of fox, wolf, and hare are said to go to clyket, or more commonly, (on) clyk-eting when they are in heat.

She is as false as a little fox. Linc. EDD. Yon little terrier o' yours is as wick as a fleä, an' as fause as a fox. Lin. EDD. Sly as a fox. Brewer, Dict., 1143. Hewett, Dev. 12.

We are beastly; subtle as the fox for prey, / Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat. Shak., Cy, III, iii, 40. — The shrewdness and craft of the fox, which are proverbial in all Germanic languages, are alluded to already in OE.

Sharp as a weasel. — Bright, intelligent, EDD, Oxf.

As sharp as a rezzil. Nicholson, E. Yorks., Folk-Lore LXIX, 223.

As clever as a quhittret. — Reference might be made to the use of the word as a term of endearment, applied to a child, particularly to a clever, sharp, active child. Jam. EDD.

As wacken as a witterick. — Sharp, quick-witted. Linc. 1877. Folk-Lore, LXIII, 411.

I was so cunning as a viper. Phillpotts, AP, 405.

As cunning as a cuttle, or cuttle-fish; or 'as crafty, deceitful, strategic &c. Cf. the following verse: —

And lol the timid cuttle-fish

So skilled in strange deceit,

That sputeth floods of inky hue

To hide its quaint retreat. Robert Bigsby, Cowan, PS, 32. The common cuttle-fish, *Sepia officinalis*, also called *ink-fish*. 'Allusions to this . . . mollusc are met with frequently in the writings of the Greeks and Romans; and the proverb, accordingly, is familiar to-day to many who have no personal knowledge of the strange creature and its peculiar power'. See Cowan, l. c., where further references are found.

As cunning as a bee. Lyly, Alexander & Campaspe, IV, in Lean, II, ii; probably no proverbial sim. but one of Lyly's many "quaint conceits". The text runs as follows: — /Diogenes has given out that he is going to fly/ *Psyllus*. /wanting to know if the great event is likely to take place/ We shall hear, for here cometh Manes. — Manes, will it be? — *Manes*.

Be! he were best be as cunning as a bee, or else shortly he will not be at all.

As sharp as a wasp. — Bright, intelligent. Oxf., EDD.

A smart little tweggink lass, ut nipt obewt us sharp us a breecor. 1819, Lanc. EDD. T'lad's as sharp as a breecor. Yks.

Sharp as a bree. Yks. EDD. See above 'sharp as a razor.' *Sharp* Ch. III.

As sharp as a thistle. Towneley Myst. 100., Lean, II, ii. Meaning?

As deep as a draw-well. Northall, FP., 8. Hazlitt.

As deep as a well. Lin. EDD. Clever, cunning. — Howell, *Paroimiologia*, 1659, has the phrase 'as deep as Currie well.'

His plot be deeper than the sea. Phillpotts, AP, 405.

As deep as the North. Jackson & Burne, 594. Cf. the phrase 'too far north' known from Smollet's time. 'Too canny, too cunning to be taken in; very hard in making a bargain. The inhabitants of Yorkshire are supposed to be very canny, especially in driving a bargain.' Brewer, *Dict.* 897. There is also a Wor. saying 'to have been as far North as anyone', to be no more a simpleton than anyone. EDD. The Nhp. word 'Northish' means 'sharp, overreaching'.

Deep? She was as deep as the North star. Hardy, DR, 471, 1871. 'As deep as the northstar, as deep as Garrick.' These are two degrees of comparison for intensified cunning in common use amongst the lower classes in this town and neighbourhood. Haverfordwest. N. & Q., 2, II, 307. — This sim. has probably something to do with the guiding of ships. Cf. *The Northstar . . . doth better guide the pilot, than even the moon herself.* Boyle, 1661, NED.

Oh, my brains are quick as lightening. Phillpotts, AP, 178. See *Quick*, Ch. III.

Mad, Crazy.

As mad as the devil. J. Wilson, Belphegor, 1691, Lean, II, ii.

As mad as the Devil of hell. Fleming, 1576, NED.

The nigger's crazy — crazy's Nebokoodneezer. Twain, HF, 355. See Dan., iv, 32.

I know what I know, that which will vex every vein of thy heart, and make thee as mad as the Man in the Moon. Vinegar & Mu., 10, 1673. — For the Man in the Moon see *Knowledge, Ignorance*.

The idea of the moon's influence on life is very old, and was formerly far more prevalent than now. A person who came under the malignant influence of the moon was 'moon-struck', or a lunatic (from Latin *luna*, moon), and his mental derangement was either intermittent, the symptoms

increasing or decreasing with the changes of the moon, or permanent lunacy, originally the term only for the former kind of insanity. The following quotations furnish some illustrations. "I think the moon has crazed them all." Jonson, *Alch.* V, i, 123. "Mad as þe mone sitt more oþer lasse." Langland, *P. Pl.*, X, 108. "When the moon is in the full, then wit's in wane." W. Rowley, *Witch of Edmonton*, II, i, 1658, Lean, II, ii. *Fluello*. Are there no lawyers here amongst you? /in a mad-house/

Town. Oh no, not one: never any lawyer. We dare not let a lawyer come in; for he'll make 'em mad faster than we can recover 'em.

Dake. And how long is't ere you recover any of these?

Town. Why, according to the quantity of the moon that's got into 'em. Dekker, *HWh*, Ia, xii. — 'Bacon seems to have considered that even the "braine of a man waxeth moister and fuller upon the Full of the Moone;" and therefore, he continues, "it were good for those that have moist braines, and are great drinkers, to take the fume of Lignum &c. about the Full of the Moone." He also tells us, in his *Natural History*, that the influences of the moon are four: "the drawing forth of heat, the inducing of putrefaction, the moisture, and the exciting of the motions of the spirits." — In respect to the last influence he goes on to say, "You must note that the growth of hedges, herbs, haire, &c. is caused from the Moone, by exciting of the spirits as well as by increase of the moisture. But for the spirits in particular the great instance is Lunacies.'" Folkard, *PL*, 167. — In a book by a French doctor, printed at Lyon in 1625, there is a list of diseases caused by the moon: *Apostumes de matières humides, fistules, imbécillité d'estomach et de reins, folie provenante de trop aimer . . . vertigo ou tournement de tête, legereté de cerveau semblable à folie, folles imaginations . . . et autres qui ont causes latentes et reviennent par certain temps.* *N. & Q.*, 2, II, 384; see *ibid.* and 4, I, *passim*, where evidence is given that the belief in the moon's influence on the state of health lived on till after the middle of last century.

If he were as madde as a weaver. 1609, *NED*.

On the subject of politics, my dear Alvanley, he is as mad as a hatter. Gronow's *Recollections and Anecdotes*, 1863, 151. I tell you the man was as mad as a hatter. *Phillpotts*, *TK*, 205. *Hewett*, *Dev.* 12; *N. & Q.*, *NED*. The phrase has been 'stereotyped for the present generation by the excellent fooling of Alice in Wonderland.' A. Smythe Palmer, *Folk-Ety-mology*, XI.

This does not appear to be an old phrase. There was published in 1863 a farce called 'As mad as a Hatter', which

shows that it must have been tolerably well known by that time, although no earlier instance has been found. Nevertheless, attempts have been made to date it back to older times. Hazlitt says: ". . . it appears from the dedication to the Hospital of Incurable Fools, 1600, that there was at the time living an excentric character, perhaps not possessed of superfluous intelligence, known as John Hodgson, alias John Hatter, alias John of Paul's Churchyard. Possibly we may here have the original "mad hatter." — Nashe, III, 212, speaks of "the bedlam hatmaker's wife by London bridge, he that proclaymes hymselfe Elias." If anyone deserves the name, this "bedlam hatmaker" must be the original 'mad hatter'.

The 'hatter' of the sim. is usually explained as a maker of hats. In DNL (Febr. 1913) there is the following humorous statement: 'After he had pointed out /a writer in the Central China Post/ that there are hundreds of varieties of English hats, he declares: The reason for such diversity is to be found in the fact that the men who make hats in foreign countries are all mad. When they speak there of a man who has lost his mental balance, they say that he is as mad as a hatter.'

But why should the hatter be mad sooner than any other craftsman? Various reasons have been given. The phrase is said to have been imported from Australia, and the mad hatters are the shepherds and hutkeepers, who at the same time were makers of hats. Owing to their lonely life they often become crazy and have given rise to the sim. (*Adventures and Experiences of a University Man*, 1871, p. 69), N. & Q., 4, VIII, 395. The fact that 'mad' = 'violent, angry' is applied to hatters is supposed to arise from 'personal extravagance, owing to the superabundant prosperity of journeymen-hatters'. N. & Q., 9, VII, 257. The hatter's madness is said to be dipsomania 'induced by working with hot iron in a heated atmosphere and in a standing position', *ibid.* 396, and the 'full text of the proverb should run "as mad drunk as a hatter" or "as mad through drunkenness as a hatter." See *Drunk*, Ch. II.

"William Collins, the poet, was the son of a hatter at Chichester, Sussex. The poet was subject to fits of melancholy madness, and was for some time confined in a lunatic asylum at Chelsea. The other lunatics, hearing that his father was a hatter, got up the saying," *Antiquary*, Dec. 1876, N. & Q., 5, XII, 178.

"The French compare an incapable or weak-minded person to an oyster: "He reasons like an oyster". I would suggest therefore that the French *huître* may have given occasion to the English hatter. 'Il raisonne comme une huître' may have come out "as mad as a hatter." N. & Q., 3, V, 24.

As mad as a hatter — as mad as a natter, meaning 'nadder, adder' is a solution propounded by two correspondents of N. & Q., 4, III, 64.

A writer *ibid.* 3, V, 64 speaks of a word 'knattery', from which he supposes the existence of a word knatter, and hence 'as mad as a knatter'. 'Knattery' means irritable. — There is a Sc. and n. Cy verb 'gnatter, knatter' which means 'to gnaw, bite at anything hard' and fig. to find fault with constantly, worry', and a Yks. subst. 'gnatter, natter' = a person who constantly scolds or complains. EDD.

"Hatter is perhaps a popular survival of the old English word *hetter* meaning furious, violent, inflamed with anger. It survives in various senses in the dialects, e. g. *hetter*, ill-natured, bitter, keen, spiteful, malicious (Northampton); Sc. *hettle* fiery, irritable; Chs. *hattle*, wild, A. S. *hactol*, hot, furious Compare also O. E. *hethelc*, a hot iron; *hotter*, to boil (North); *hotterin*, boiling with passion. Thus the phrase would mean 'as mad as a person hot with passion' . . . Cf. But for her I should ha' gone hothering mad. Dickens, *Hard Times*, Ch. XI." Palmer, *Folk-Etymology*, Ch. XI. — In Stratman & Bradley there is a word *heter*, *hetter*, *hatter*, quick, rough, cruel, and the adv. *heterliche*, *hatterliche*, fiercely, violently. In Pegge's *Derbicisms* there is an obsolete verb *hetter*, to scold; to be *hetter*, to be eager, fierce (of a dog); to cry *hetterly*, of a child. In the present dial. there is a verb to *hatter*, which, among other things, means to harass, vex, ill-treat; to fret, make a fuss. There is also a substantive meaning a jumble, confused crowd, a knot or tangle: to be *in a hatter*, of a face all over sores. *Like a hatter* (given as a distinct word in EDD) is, it would seem chiefly in northern parlance, a more or less general intensive, in the sense of vigorously, boldly: He faced him /death/ like a hatter. . . . he rins loik ony hatter. To fight like a hatter. — 'As mad as a hatter' would be a very natural development.

Thus it would seem that a northern word signifying something vigorous, spiteful, and disordered and used as a general intensive has been adopted by writers who did not fully understand it, and associated with a word identical in form but widely different in sense.

If so be I hadn't been so scatter-brained and thirthingill as a chiel,
I should have called at the school-house as I cam up along,
Hardy, UGT, 24.

As mad as May butter. Monsieur Shattilion's mad . . . Mad as May-butter, And which is more, mad for a wench. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Noble Gentleman*, I, ii, NED. — Maybutter is unsalted butter preserved in the month of May for medicinal use. No inst. of the term is rec. after 1660. 'If during the month of May before you salt your butter you saue a lump thereof and

put it into a vessel, and set it into the sunne the space of that moneth, you shall finde it exceeding medicinable for wounds.' 1615, NED. Cf. *Neverout*. Miss, the weather is so hot, that my butter melts on my bread. — *Lady Answ.* Why, butter, I've heard'em say, is mad twice a year. Swift, PC, 234. Butter is mad twice a year. Once in summer heat, when it is too thin and fluid; and once in the cold of winter, when it is hard to spread. Ray. 'Be not mad, butter; if it be/ It shall both July and December see.' Rob. Heath, Epigr., p. 38, 1650. — Unsalted butter 'set into the sunne' for a month must be a little "beside itself." But the twice-yearly madness of the butter refers to something else. There seems to have been some sort of superstitious belief that May produce and May births were in some way inferior or undesirable. May-babies are sickly, N. & Q., Febr. 1853, 153, and May-kittens and May-ducks are both considered unlucky or as causing mischief. *ibid.* 2, III, 477.

Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog! Shak., MW, IV, ii. Cf. As mad not as a march hare, but as a madde dogge. More, 1529, NED. s. v. hare. As mad as a dog. Lin. EDD. Cf. also the cp sim. dog-mad, which is rec. from 1645, NED. "Wine loved I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey." Shak., KL, III, iv, 88. As mad as a mastiff. Clarke, Lean, II, ii.

We meet the mad dog in proverbial expressions in many languages from very early times. This madness was caused, our forefathers believed, by the malignant influence of the dog-star, when in conjunction with the sun.

Tame mel no: I'll be madder than a roasted cat. Dekker, HWh, Ia, xii.

As mad as a baiting bull of Stamford. N. & Q., Ray, Hazlitt &c. have the *baiting* b., Fuller the *baited* bull. — This phrase had its origin in the bull-running which took place annually six weeks before Christmas in Stamford, Linc., derived from a traditional incident recorded by Butcher, in his Survey of Stamford, p. 40. A full history of the bullbaiting is given in Burton's Chronology of Stamford, 1846. N. & Q., 2, I, 460, 9, IX, 98. The "rude nasty pleasure" of bullbaiting, as Pepys called it, lived on far down into the 19th c., and at Stamford the memory of it was kept alive long after the suppression of the sport itself by "The Bull", an air performed by the orchestra at the theatre whenever it was open, and to which the old bull running song was sung by the bullards. N. & Q., 2, I, 392.

As mad as a cappel-faced bull. Hardy, UGT, 135. 'Cappel-faced' is white-faced with red or dun speckles.

Ez mad ez a bull at a yat. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. In daily use.

As mad as a bull among humble bees. Bartlett, *Lean*, II, ii. Not in Thornton.

They've tootk away the poor old John . . . to the 'sylum, they zess how th'old man's so maze as a sheep. w. Som. EDD., Hewett, *Dev.* 11. A complete lunatic is said to be 'so mazed as a sheep' *Dev.* EDD. 'This is the precise equivalent to the conventional "as mad as a March hare"'. We in the west, however, draw our simile from a well-known disease of sheep, which makes them keep spinning round, and when the animal is so affected it is always said to be *mae' ūz.*' Elworthy. See also the *W. Som. Gloss.* 468. Cf. My head is as mazed as a dizzy sheep. Kingsley, *WH*, 218.

As mad as a tup. A Yorkshire saying equivalent to 'as mad as a March hare. *N. & Q.*, 6, IX, 266. See *Angry*.

It would make a man as mad as a buck to be so bought an sold. *Shak.*, *CE*, III, i 72.

As mad as a tithe pig. Davenport, *City Nightcap*, 1661, *Withals*, 1616. *Lean*, II, ii. Tithe-pig is a term known to *NED* from 1555. — Why should a tithe-pig be more 'mad' than any other pig? Is it because, being taken to the tithing, it was likely to be more than usually obstinate, wilful, and excited?

As mad not as a march hare, but as a madde dogge, *More*, 1529, *NED*.

Contrary to reason ye stamp and ye stare,/ Ye fret and ye fume, as mad as a March hare. Heywood, *PE*, 72. Even so /sleep/ hurteth the drunkards, bench-whistlers, that will quaff until stark staring mad like March hares. Bullein, *Bulwarke of Defence*, 1562, *Lean*, III. /Women at a madhouse/ are madder than march-hares. Dekker, *HWh.* Ia, xii. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Two Noble Kinsmen*, III, v, Dryden, *L.*, VI, 100.

For now the mob had all begun/ As mad as hares in March to run. Ward, *English Reformation*, p. 80, 1716. *Lean*, II, ii; Smollet, *RR*, 208; Kingsley, *Water Babies*, 208, Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 447, *W*; Hewett, *Dev.*; Brewer, *Dict.*, 805 &c.

Masid as a March hare he ran like a scut. Skelton, *Garland of Laurel*, 632, 1523; *scut* is another word for the hare. *NED*.

Thanne þey begynne to swere and to stare, And be as braynles as a Marsh hare. 14 . . ., *NED*. — For further inst. see *Slang*.

For though this somnour wood were as an hare. Chaucer, *Friar's Tale*, 1327.

Thus the standard form of the sim. is known from 1529,

although the term March hare dates from the 14th c. — There are frequent allusions to March-hare madness in ME literature, although the idea of the hare's madness seems to go back in English at least to Chaucer. See above and cf. Swiche glaring eyen had he as an hare, Chaucer, 20/684. We have the terms 'harebrained' (what madde hare-brayned sotts we are, Nashe, II, 91), and 'March-mad', which dates from the early 17th c. NED, and 'The mad March days' Masefield, BP. The following quotations furnish some further illustrations. "I say, thou madde March hare," Skelton, 1520, Lean, II, ii. "Though the shape of the March hare show not in thee,/ Yet hast thou the March hare's mad property." Heywood, PE, 274. I am going to Ireland away to cool my hot liver in a bog, like a Jack-hare in March." Kingsley, WH, 148. "He is like a March hare beat out of his country . . . and don't know whither to run next." "Hareskins is in . . ., from September to the end of March, when hares, they says, goes mad." Mayhew, London Labour and London Poor, N. & Q., 1851, Sept. p. 208.

The sim. is commonly explained as a reference to the fact that hares are unusually shy and wild in the month of March, which is their rutting time. NED, Nare's Glossary, N. & Q. &c. But doubts have been expressed as to the sufficiency of this explanation. Erasmus, in his Aphorisms says that hares are wilder in *marshes* from the absence of hedge and cover. (N. & Q., 9, IX, 98). Thus his reading would probably have been 'as mad as a *marsh* hare'. Hazlitt writes '*queery marsh* hare. Heywood, Epigr. 2nd Hundr., 1562, 95, very properly says — "Are not midsomer hares as mad as March hares?" Borde, however, in his *Boke of Knowledge*, 1542, has, "staring madde like March Hares." — It is very improbable that *marsh* has anything to do with the phrase. The term March-mad speaks against it. It is true that the first instance of the word (as braynles as a Marshe hare) may speak in favour of this interpretation but both the *M* and the fact that the name of the month was occasionally written with *sh* in ME, make it not only possible but also indisputable that *March*, the name of the month, is the word of the sim. Animals are known to be guilty of all sorts of extraordinary behaviour during their rutting seasons. To judge from N. & Q., 2, IX, 492. the hares must be particularly wild in March. Even if they were not remarkably so, and more than other beasts, a slight zoological inaccuracy may be counterbalanced by a piece of good alliteration, which is perhaps the chief thing about the sim.

But there is in Heywood's 'midsomer hare' probably more than meets the eye. An old writer, Anthony Askam, quoted by Hulme and Folkard, says, speaking of a species of Sow

Thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), also called Hare's Palace or Hare's Lettuce, "yf a hare eate of this herbe in somer, when he is mad, he shal be hole." "For yf the hare come under it, he is sure that no best can touche hym." Grete Herbale. 'According to an old belief the hare recruits her strength, or recovers herself from summer madness by eating this plant.' Britten & Holland. Toppell, in his Natural History, alludes to this superstition: — "When hares are overcome with heat, they eat of an herb called *Latua leporina*, that is, hare's lettuce, hare's-house, hare's-palace; and there is no disease in this beast the cure whereof she does not seek for in this herb." Dyer, FLP, 263. *Heat* in this case probably means 'a hot distemper without any kind of humour' (NED), according to mediaeval physiology. To these old writers the summer madness of the hare was an acknowledged thing, and the Chaucerian 'as wode as an hare' perhaps refers to the 'midsomer hare' just as much as to the March Hare. This 'distemper' of the hare's may have something to do with ancient and mediaeval ideas concerning the temperament of the humours of the hare and be connected with its well-known melancholy. See *Melancholy*.

Brayn-wood as beestes, Langland, PPL, a, X, 61.

As mad as a willock. — The willock is a bird, in some parts of England called the Foolish Guillemot. "The same bird that 'after shutting the door after him', presents the kitty with the fish he has reappeared with. This is not the action of an ill-mannered bird; nor have I seen anything wild in his demeanor." Ed. Fitz Gerald, Wks, ii, 466, 1887, Folk-Lore, XXXVII. See *Foolish, Stupid; Angry*.

As mad as a coot. Skelton, Phylp Sparrowe, N. & Q., 2, II, 447. Cf. No more wit than a coot, Bale, Kyng Johan, c. 1540, Hazlitt, and the epithet *mad coot*, which is also found in Skelton. The coot of this sim. is probably the same bird as the willock. See NED, coot, 2 b. See also *Stupid, Angry*.

A body what never seed a opery before would swar they was every one either drunk or crazy as loons. Major Jones's Sketches of Travel, 1848. The oid man'll run as crazy as a loon a-thinking 'bout his household affairs. Riley, Puddleford, 1854. Thornton. — The long-drawn whistling call of the loon may have appeared uncanny to some people and thus given occasion to the sim.

Hartford is getting to be quite a sensation city, going it over every novelty, "as crazy as a bed bug." Winstead Herald, 1861, Bartlett. This ungentle simile is occasionally varied by calling the insect a "Kalamazoo bedbug." Thornton. — The word bed-bug dates from 1813. NED.

How does Hamlet? — Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend Which is the mightier. Shak., Hamlet, IV, i, 7. Cf. He was met even now As mad as the vex'd sea. Shak., KL, IV, iv, 1.

Fond.

As most of the following sim. are taken from EDD, where they are given without any context, their exact force and application can be known only to those who are intimately acquainted with English dialects. The word is rendered 'silly, foolish, daft,' and occasionally 'easily duped.' It is nevertheless possible that there may be other connotations verging on other senses of the word. *Fond* = foolish, silly is obsolete in standard literary English from 16th c. Since then it has the connotation of credulous, sanguine.

As fond as Fadge. Yks. EDD. "We had a saying to a person who acted fondly or foolishly, 'Thoo's as fond as Fadge 'at laid iz pooak doon ta fart.' 'Fadge is the name given to a mythical half-witted fellow, who was once sent by a nobleman with a live hare in a poke; nothing being handy to fasten the sack, he was cautioned to hold it tightly. All went well until he wanted to fart, when he laid the sack down, and so lost his hare." EDD s. v. fadge sb2, which otherwise means a short thick-set person. There are five other subst. *fadge* in EDD.

As fond as the men of Belton 'at hing'd a sheap for stealing a man. Lin.

As fond as the folks of Token. Cum. — The people of Brampton (in Cum. not far from the old Roman wall N. E. of Carlisle.) assert that the first coach that passed through Token was followed by a crowd of its inhabitants in order to see the big wheels catch the little ones. Denham Tracts, 1892; Wright, RS. This is a pure Gothamite story.

But I am weaker than a woman's tear, / Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance, / Less valiant than the virgin in the night, / And skillless as unpractised infancy. Shak., TC, I, i, 9. In this case 'fond' refers to one who is tender and inexperienced.

As fond as Dick's hatband, at went roond his hat nahn tahms, an then wadn't tee. Nicholson, Folk-Speech, Yks. For further notes on Dick's hatband see *Ill-tempered, Obstinate*.

As fond as any farden can'le. Yks. — 'Farthing-candle' is a term sometimes used to denote things of inferior value or quality: — Not so much as the light of a farthing-candle is to the light of the sun. 1673, NED. The farthing-candle style of notes. 1848, NED.

He's as fond as a besom. Dur. Yks. Lin.; fond-as-a-buzzom. N. Cy; as font as a buzzom. Nhb. 'Besom-head' is another term for a blockhead, whence *besom-headed*. 'He's as fond as a bezom,' or 'bezom-headed,' very foolish indeed. Atkinson, Whitby Gloss., 1864, NED. See also Folk-Lore, LXIII, 409. "A very common simile." Wright, RS, 79.

- He's as fond as a brush. Dur. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 241.
- As fond as a yett. Nhb. As fond as a yat. Yks. — The folly of a gate is admitted on all hands; does it not without any reason bang itself against the gate-post? Blakeborough, NRY, 242. — 'As fond as a yat' is a common saying to or of a person who does anything against his personal interests. EDD.
- She is as fond as a cart about him. Yks. Cf. As drunk as a wheelbarrow.
- As fond as a billy-goat. Yks. Billy-goat is a familiar term for a male goat, rec. from 1861. NED.
- As fond as a horn. — Easily duped. Yks. Cf. The cp. sim. horn-mad.

Foolish, Stupid.

A preest without a letter,
 Without his vertue be gretter,
 Doutlesse were moche better
 Vpon him for to take
 A mattocke or a rake.
 Alas for very shame!
 Some can not declyne their name;
 Some can not scarsly rede,
 And yet he wyll nat drede,
 For to kepe a cure,
 And in nothing is sure;
 This *Dominus vobiscum*
 As wyse as Tom a thrum,
 A chaplayne of trust
 Layth all in the dust. Skelton, Colyn Clout, 277 ff.

Here the MS has *Jacke athrum*. Cf. his Poems against Gar-nesche, ed. Dyce, I, 126,

God sende you wele good spede,
 With *Dominus vobiscum!*
 Good Latyn for Jake a thrum,
 Tyll more martyr may cum.

In his Magnyfycence Skelton mentions Jacke a Thrommys bybylle (I, 272) and also in his Garlande of Laurell (I, 370). Cf. also "And therto acordes too worthi prechers, Jacke a Throme and Jone Brest-Bale." Burlesques, Reliquiae antiquae, ed. Wright & Halliwell, i, 84. — Tom-a-Thrum is a sprite which figures in the fairy tales of the M. Ages. 'A queer-looking little auld man,' whose chief exploits were in the vaults and cellars of old castles, also called Thrummy Cap, which name is still current. Brewer, Reader's Handbook, and EDD.

- As knowing as Kate Mullet, and she was hanged for a fool. Wright, RS, 163. Mullet is otherwise a provincial term for a bird.
- As wise as the Dean of Dunstable. J. Taylor, *Lean*, II, ii. — See *Plain*, Ch. III.
- As wise as a man of Gotham, the men of Gotham. Ray, Fuller.
- As wise as the men of Gotham who built a wall about the wood to keep out the cuckoo.
- As wise as he who carried the coach-wheel on his back, when he might have trill'd it before him all along. Howell, *Instr. For. Trav.* p. 5, 164. *Lean*, II, ii. This is an instance of genuine Gothamite wisdom.

The "wisdom" of the men of Gotham was proverbial at the time when the Towneley plays were written, c. 1460, and their village and themselves have been referred to practically ever since. Nashe and G. Harvey speak of them, and so do Taylor the Water-Poet, Dekker, and Bishop Hall &c. They are mentioned in the play "A Knack to Know a Knave" as also in an earlier play 'Misogonos'; in 1643 there appeared a short political squib called "The Fool's Complaint to Gotham's Colledge", and Poor Robin's Prognostication some fifty years later speaks of the same college, which is the *alma mater* of those who have passed their degree at Blocksford. In 1798 we have a Brief Sketch of the Kingdom of Gotham, and in one of the Anti-Corn-Law tracts there are the following lines: — If fooleries of this kind go on, Gotham will be put into Schedule A, and the representation of Unreason transferred into the West Riding. &c.

The Merry Tales of the Wise (or Mad) Men of Gotham were formed into a chap book as early as the beginning of the 16th c., attributed to Andrew Borde, the author of *Boke of Knowledge*, (Late ed. by Halliwell and Hazlitt), and Gothamite stories are still current, at least in Derbyshire (*N. & Q.*, 10, vi, 137).

The wisdom of the wise men of Gotham was of the kind that tries to drown an eel. Hence the proverb 'He's na eel-drowner mair than me'. Rxb. EDD. They also tried to hedge in the cuckoo, tumbled their cheeses down-hill to find their way to Nottingham market, and further the women being told to wet the meal before giving it to the pigs, threw it into the wells and the pigs after. *Lean*. Oral tradition also makes them boil their porridge in the whirlpool of a river, and their schoolmaster call a hedgehog, which he did not know, one of the animals Adam had not named, &c.

Gotham is said to be the village of this name in Nottinghamshire. "Nobody ever dreamt of disputing the location of the Gotham tales at the village half-a-dozen miles south of Nottingham untill well into the 19th c." A. Stapleton, *N. & Q.* 10, VI, 85, and scarcely more than two generations ago the

village was visited by its Derbyshire neighbours who wanted to see the 'cuckoo bush' (N. & Q.). But "the ancient town of Gotham, famous for the seven sages (or wise men) who are fabulously reported to live there in former ages" (Taylor, ST, 12), is rather erratic. It is a cant name for the city of Newcastle, and New York has been so styled at least from 1800. See Thornton, where numerous inst. are collected. Even London has been called Gotham, and the Londoners, Gothamites (N. & Q., 11, IV, 25). "There are local Gothams, not unknown in Scotland." (N. & Q., 3, II, 3). It has practically developed into some sort of appellative for a place whose inhabitants are thought to behave in a particularly stupid way.

Many genuine Gothamite stories have been attached to other places. "The wise men of Madeley" (in Shropshire) hedged in the cuckoo, and the "wise folk of Lorbottle" tried to build it in, and so did the people of Borrowdale in Cumberland (Lean), and their worthy brethren of Coggeshall chained up the wheelbarrow when the mad dog bit it (N. & Q.) to mention only one of their well-known 'jobs', and some of the stupidities later charged home to the Gothamites were originally localized in Norfolk (Halliwell). Many of them are not even indisputably English. There are parallels or exactly similar stories in many other countries. The eel-drowning episode is told in the same way in the south of Sweden, and the men of Auteuil, a French Gotham, punished a sacrilegious mole by burying it alive (Charles Beauquier, *Blason Populaire de Franche Conté*, 1897; for other French Gothamite stories see the French magazine *Mélusine*, Vols ii—iv), and the *Schildburger* and *Thädener* of the Germans are guilty of the same or similar deeds as the Gothamites in England and *Telje tokar* in Sweden. On inspection, many of the "merry tales" appear to be common European and Indo-Germanic. "The prototypes of — or at least, parallels to — most European tales of the Gothamite class have been discovered, within quite recent years, in the *Jak-Játakas* and other Buddhist works." Clouston, PTF, i, 65. — After all, Churchill is right when he says in his Poem 'Gotham': —

Far off (no matter whether east or west,
A real country, or one made in jest)
Not yet by modern Mandevilles displaced,
Nor by map-jobbers wretchedly misplaced,
There lies an island, neither great nor small,
Which, for distinction's sake, I Gotham call.

But the real question before us is this, Why was the proverbial Little Witham called Gotham, and why were these international stories, on becoming current and receiving local additions by traditions and 'lateral diffusion,' associated with the

name of an obscure Nottingham village? Hazlitt says on the subject, 'Any other provincial town might have been selected, with about equal justice and propriety, as all such places are principally remarkable for their ignorance and barbarism.' In his introduction to the *Merry Tales &c.* Halliwell says, 'It is a work of the utmost difficulty to trace, with any certainty, the origin of these traditions, often as positive as they are fanciful, which assign general properties to the inhabitants of certain localities, and which often last for ages, continually deriving additional strength from increasing antiquity. Such traditions are sometimes the result of near observation and experience, obtained after the lapse of a long period, and generally elicited by foes, and they are frequently merely the offspring of chance and uncertain fancy.'

The general characters which nations have obtained in various ages are examples of the former. The attribute of folly and stupidity to the men of Gotham . . . is one of the most remarkable instances of the other.' — But *chance* and *fancy* are scarcely sufficient to explain. . . . Halliwell goes on to tell a tradition how the Gothamites first became proverbial for their stupidity, but it is clearly of later origin, invented to explain the tales.

(See N. & Q., 1, II; 9, III, V; 10, V; 10, VI, and A. Stapleton, *All about the Merry Tales of Gotham*, 1900).

As wise as the Mayor of Banbury, who would prove that Henry III was before Henry II. Howell; Cf. Like the mad Mayor of Gantick, who was wise for one day and then died of it Cornwall saying. The mayor of Stockton town and the mayor of Hartlepule, the first a silly young fellow, the second's an awde fule. Lean. — Banbury is one of the many places on which contempt has been poured, rightly or wrongly. Already Latimer speaks of *Banbury Glosses* (see his *Wks*, ed. Parker Soc. ii, 299), and *Banbury stories* are not worth listening to. It is not only the Mayor that is noted for his ignorance and stupidity, as is witnessed by the proverb 'Like Banbury tinkers that in mending one hole make three.' Fuller. (Cf. You have mended it, as a tinker mends a kettle; stop one hole, and make two. Swift, PC, 261. "When I was young it was proverb in East Cornwall that the tinkers repaired one hole and made two." N. & Q., 4, IX, 375). "Banbury was noted for Puritanism, famous for twanging ale, zeal, cakes, and cheese." Braithwait, *Strappado*, 1615, Lean. It is probably the severe puritanism of its inhabitants that brought the charge of foolishness on the town. They are reported to have hanged a cat on a Monday for catching a mouse on a Sunday, which may be regarded as an evidence of the connection between Puritanism and foolishness.

As much wit as three folks, two fools, and a madman. Chs. Hazlitt.

. . . his brain, Which is as dry as the remainder biscuit/ After a voyage. Shak., AYL, II, vii, 38. Cf. the term biscuit-brained, NED.

They say Poins has good wit. — He a good wit? Hang him, baboon! his wit is as thick as Tewkesbury mustard. Shak., KH IVb, II, iv, 224. See *Clever*.

As soft as one's pocket. Lan. Wor. Foolish, empty-headed. EDD. This sense of *soft* is rec. in standard lit. English from 1621.

As wise as a gooce, or as wise as her mothers aperi string. Udall, 1542, NED. — The reference is probably to those who are unable to work or judge without the directions of others.

Sharp as the corner of a round table. Slang, Common. — Rare; used of one who cannot see a joke. *U*.

As daft as a door-nail. Yks. Folk-Lore, XLV, 429. EDD. See *Dead*, Ch. II.

He hath in his head/ As much brain as a burbolt. Udall, RRD, 38; Cooper has the note, A birdbolt, a short, thick arrow, with a blunt head, chiefly made use of to kill rooks. It appears to have been looked upon as a symbol of dullness. So in Marston's 'What you Will', 1607, "Ignorance should shoot/ His gross-knobbed bird-bolt."

His brain is as toom as a barrel. — Occasionally heard in Sc., N. & Q., 3, XI, 511. Maa heed is teum, nee wit is in. Nhb., and cf. toom-brained.

As stupid as a post. Robinson, Handful of Pleasant Delights, 1584, Lean, II, ii. The fellow, stupid as a post,/ Believ'd in thruth it was a ghost! 1816, NED. See *Deaf*, Ch. II.

They are as stupid as Blocks, 1678, NED. See *Deaf*, Ch. II, and cf. blockish, blockishly ignorant &c.

To have no more skill than a dog. Tarlton, Jests, p. 39, 1611, Lean, II, ii.

(Stupid monks) As wyse as Waltom's calfe,
Must preche a Goddes halfe
In the pulpit solempnely. Skelton, Colyn Clout,
811, ed. Dyce.

Ye will me to a thanklesse office heere,
And a busy officer I may appeere.
And Jack out of office she may bid me waike
And think me as wise as Waltam's calf to talke
Or chat of her charge, havying therein nought to doo.
Heywood, PE, 58.

Some running and gadding calves, wiser than Waltham's calves that ranne nine miles to suck a bull, for these ranne above nine hundred miles. Disclosing of the great Bull, 1567, Slang. As wise as Waltham's calf, that went nine miles to suck a

bull and came /home?/ athirst. Mercurius Melancholicus, Sept. 1647, N. & Q., 6, V, 136.

As wise as Waltham's calf who went nine miles to suck a bull and came back more thirsty than he went. Howell, Lean. She is wise as Waltham's calf, / Yet may suck a bull till she leeves but Half. J. Davies, Epigr. 366, p. 177, 1614, Lean, II, ii.

As wise as Walton's calf — /he/ is fain to return home more fool than he came for spending of horsemeat. Arth. Hall, Admonition to F. A., 1576, Lean. — Cf. also the following proverbial sayings: — For Waltham's calves to Tyburne needs must go/ To suck a bull and meete a butcher's axe. The Brainless Blessing of the Bull, c. 1571, N. & Q., 6, V, 136. And furthermore, whosoever went to Rome, were it for never so ghostly and godly a purpose to obtaine the bishop's bulles, if he did bring no money with him he might return home Like a calf. A. Borde, Abuse of Rome, c. 1550, Lean, II, ii. Who goth a myle to sucke a bull, Comes home a fole, and yet not full. Barnes, In the Defence of the Berde, 1542, EETS, Extra S., 10, 314. He went all the way to suck a bull a-dry. Berkshire, of a sleeveless errand. Hazlitt.

As wise as Watton's calf. Clarke, Lean, II, ii.

As wise as Wudsie's calf that ken't milk frae water. Hislop, 1862. Lean, II, ii.

At last his brother thought of me, and said unto him, that he would bring a man unto him, that was neither doctor, nor Apothecary; then he began to hearken a little, but what was I then? An alchymist (which he understood as well as Waltham's calf). R. Mathews, Unlearned Alchymist, 1662, N. & Q., 6, V, 199.

Essex calves the proverb praiseth, and some are of the mind that Waltome calf was also that countryman. Buttes, Dyet's Dry Dinner, i, 1599, Lean. 'This is a proverb which belongs exclusively to Essex, but is frequently applied to other places of the name of Waltham, in Berkshire and elsewhere.' Platt, N. & Q., 6, V, 136. Lean says of this proverb, N. & Q., 5, X, 10. 'Here the addition is a perversion of the original meaning, which is a fling at the monks for their foolish preaching. The calf may have belonged to Waltham Abbey; or can the miraculous image there have been in view?' — Further information required to settle the question. Cf. You great calf, ye should have more wit, so ye should. Udall, RRD, 1553. You silly, doting, brainless calf, 1627, NED.

As wise as John of Gotecham's calf. Rowlands, Pair of Spy Knaves, 1619. Lean, II, ii. See above.

The panic fear which is bred of ignorance and which afflicts the city-reared, making them as silly as silly horses. London, LL, 154.

- As wyse as a greathedded Asse of Alexander. Thomas More, Lady Fortune, Prologue. — *Ass* generic for stupidity and ignorance since the time of the Greeks. Hence in many proverbial expressions, but chiefly since 1500; the early references to the animal being mostly Scriptural, with no depreciatory associations. NED. But cf. Mannkinn . . . skillaes swa summ asse. Orm., 1200, NED.
- As wise as my mother's sow. Marriage of Wit and Wisdom, p. 16, Lean, II, ii.
- I dare with any man forty pence To make him shortly as wise as an ape. W. Wager, The Longer thou Livest, C. iii, c. 1568. Lean.
- As foolish as monkies till twenty or more,
As bold as lions till forty and four;
As cunning as foxes till three score and ten;
Then they become asses or something — not men. Harland & Wilkinson, Lancashire Legends, 1873, 188, Northall, FR, 495. Cf. Less human genius than God gives an ape. Pope, Dunciad, I, 282; and the expressions, to make anyone his ape = to befool him; God's ape = a natural born fool, ape reasons = foolish reasons, and the adj. apish. — The *ape* is chiefly regarded as a stupid animal, it would seem, but the *monkey* may be cunning and 'fause.' See *Clever*. In this case probably the deftness of the animal has given rise to the sim.
- As wise as a hare. Skelton, Elynor Rummin, Lean, II, ii. Ironical, see *Mad*.
- When the little evil spirit misses my voice, he will come and tumble you out of your hammocks, and make you dream of ghosts every night, till you grow as thin as blow-guns, and as stupid as aye-eyes! Kingsley, WH, 366. — The aye-eye is a squirrel-like quadruped found only in Madagascar. The phrase is most likely of Kingsley's coinage.
- (You haven't got the sense God gave a rooster. White, BT, 326. *Rooster* is a chiefly American word for the cock, rec. in Thornton from 1806.)
- As wise as a goose on Bedlam Green. Beaumont & Fletcher, Prophetess, Lean, II, ii. And that which is the mischief of it too, is to see the Codled fool take upon him in that tune /of drunkenness/ and exercise his husbandly authority like a Mayor of Queenborow, and with as much discretion . . . nodding out his commands with less wit than a gander on a green. Trenchfield, Cap of Grey Hairs &c. 1678, Lean. He has na more sense than a May gosling. W. Rye, Norf. Ant. Misc., i, 308, Lean. Cf. Mad as May-butter, Weak as a midsummer gosling. — A foolish, inexperienced person has been called a gosling since Shakespeare's time.
- As wise as a sucking gully. Jackson & Burne, 395. The

gully is a gosling. The word is rec. nowhere else, it would seem.

As silly as a gull. Northall, FPh, 11. *Gull*, an unfledged gosling. The word is known from Wyclif, and is now used chiefly in some midl. and s. e. dialects.

As wise as a goose, Udall, Er. Ap., 118, Lean, II, ii.

As witty as the goose, Hickscorner, /Hazlitt, Old Plays, i, 184/.

Davies, The Scourge of Folly, 1614, Lean, II, ii.

As dizzy as a goose. Clarke. — This is probably a dial. saying. In the dial. this adj. means foolish, stupid, half-witted. But cf. I ha'n't slept to-night, for thinking of plots to plague Doricourt; . . . they drove one another out of my head so quick that I was as giddy as a goose and could make nothing of 'em. 1780, NED.

As silly as a goose. Northall, FPh, 11.

As daft as a goose. Yks. EDD.

Ye men schul ben as lewed as gees. Chaucer, MeT, 1031. NED. Doctour Pomaunder As wise as a gander Wotes not wher to wander. Skelton, 1529, NED. That goose that still about will wander . . . Shall home come again as wise as a gander. Barclay, 1509, NED. — The goose and the gander are frequently put together in alliterative expressions. See Willert, where there are inst. from Byron, Dickens, Thackeray &c. Proverbial stories about the goose that went abroad but returned as stupid as before are current in Sweden and Germany and probably other countries as well. Cf. also 'For all your labour and gostely intent Ye will come home as wise as ye wente. Heywood, Four P's, 1569, Lean, II, ii. Get you gone, and come home as wise as you went (like a woodcock. I had like to say) Vinegar & Mu. 2. There are similar phrases in Becon, 1564, Cawdray, c. 1600, and in G. Harvey &c. Lean, II, ii. Föra swijn til Rijn, dhæt blijr ändå swijn, Grubb, Ord-seder, 232, is an old Swedish proverb meaning the same thing. Hee hath no more wit in his pates, then the arrantest Cander at Coose fayre. (Morgan, the Welshman) VW, 24.

But in these nice sharp quilllets of the law/ Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw. Shak., KH VIa, II, iv, 17. Trial of Treasure, Hazlitt, Old Plays, iii, 2, 1567, Lean, II, ii. — *Daw* is a Lin. term for a silly chattering person. In standard English 1500—1608.

Master would be crafty as an old fox if he weren't stupid as an owl. Baring-Gould, BS, 262. Zo stupid's an owl. Hewett, Dev. 12. Lean, II, ii. This is probably the day aspect of the ancient bird of wisdom. Does the Yks. phrase 'as wise as t'ullot' refer to the *night* owl? Cf. the adj. owlsh = stupid &c.

Lusty like a herring, with a bell about his neck, wise as a woodcock: as brag as a body-lose. Marriage of Wit and Science, II, i, Notes, 410. He clamb up into a thistle tree and cut

down an hasyll twygge and broke his head till it was whole, and when he came home, he was as wise as a woodcock. Melbancke, Philotimus, L. 3, 1583, Lean IV. Hazlitt has inst. from 1520, 1563, 1575, and Lean from Withals, 1586. Although no later inst. of the sim. itself have been found, there are numerous subsequent allusions to the stupidity of this bird. Nashe, Shakespeare, Dekker, Ford, Buttler, Swift refer to it or the springes with which it is so easily caught.

"A woodcock without brains in it." Ford, LM, 19. 'The woodcock was supposed to have no brains; hence its name, says Harting, became a synonym for a fool. This is mentioned by Willoughby in his "Ornithology" (iii, 1, § 1), who, however, gives no reason for the bird's ill repute. Among us in England, this bird is infamous for its simplicity or folly; so that a woodcock is proverbially used for a simple foolish person.' Swainson, BB, 190.

. . . . Which void of wisdom presumeth to indite/ Though they have scantly the cunning of a snite. Barclay, Ecl. iv, ante 1530, Lean, II, ii. Cf. The snite need not the woodcock betwite. Ray. 1678, which means that the poke is no better than the sack!

Mad (= silly) as a willock. Suffolk saying. 'The willock or common guillemot is in some parts of England termed the foolish g., from the indifference it shows, in the breeding season, to the approach of man. Cf. the French proverb "Bête comme un guillemot".' Swainson, BB, 217.

As stupid as a coot. NED. No inst. given. A common English provincialism. Slang; Cowan, PS. See *Mad. Coot* is used fig. for a simpleton, chiefly dial. and U. S. It is rec. in Thornton from 1794.

As stupid as an auk. North Country. Cowan, PS, 37. *Auk* is the name of several northern diving and swimming birds, e. g. the guillemots. — Where the bird is unknown, the ox is substituted for it easily in the simile. Cowan, PS, 37. No such sim. with ox has elsewhere been found.

Silly as a toad. Soft as a toad. Said of a foolish body, who may be styled a 'soft toad.' N. & Q. 9. VIII, 516. Cf. He is as stupid and as venomous as a hunchback'd toad. Pope, Dunc., I, 106. See *Obstinate, Ill-tempered; Antipathy*, Ch. IV.

As witty as a haddock. Hyckescorner, 1520, Hazlitt. See *Deaf*. He is sillier than a crab, that has all his brains in his belly. Hazlitt.

As silly as a mawk. Cum. EDD. See *Fat*, Ch. II.

As wise as a wisp. Hewood, Clarke; Lin. 1776, Folk-Lore, LXIII, 411.

As wise as a wisp, or a woodcock. Ray.

Dull.

In the following sim. *dull* seems to mean: stupidly slow of understanding and action, listless and depressed.

- As dull as the devil. Wilson, Belphegor, i, 1691, Lean, II, ii. — This is not the way the devil is looked upon in other sim. But see Ch. V.
- As dull as a Dutchman. Cl. H. &c. Not known to Ray or Bohn. An echo of the long-standing hatred between the English and the Dutch. See *Drunk*, Ch. II.
- As dull as an alderman at church, or a fat lap-dog after dinner. Holcroft, Duplicity, I, 1, 1834, Lean, II, ii. For fear of growing more dull in this thick aldermanic air. Wilkes, 1770, NED. Quite as dull in their aldermanic way. Hawthorne, 1870, NED. — Aldermanic feasts are looked upon as being duller than most other forms of collective eating. Cf. However greedy the appetite for wonder may be . . . it is as easily satiated as any other appetite, and then leaves the senses of its possessor as dull as those of a city gourmand after a Lord Mayor's feast. Kingsley, WH, 350. Cf. also 'an alderman's pace'.
- As dull as a whetstone. R. Heath, Epigr. 1650. Lean, II, ii. — Does this refer to the form or colour of a whetstone? One is rather accustomed to associate it with sharp-witted lying. Cf. I thought it not the worst traffic to sell whetstones. This whetstone . . . will set with an edge upon your inventions, that it will make your rusty iron brains purer metal than your brazen faces. Whet but the knife of your capacities on this whetstone, and you may presume to dine at the Muses' ordinarie . . . Randolph, 1634. Slang.
- My hart as dull as lead. Songs, 89. — As dull as a pig of lead. Help to Discourse, 125, 1636, Lean, II, ii. When he woke, his brain was heavy as lead. Gissing, HC, 122.
- Tendre wyttes . . . be made as dull as a betell. Whittinton, 1520, NED. Ray. . . . to have been as dull as a beetle. Richardson, P, I, 261. Cf. Our faculty to understand is still left . . . we are no meere blockes and beetles. Rogers, 1642, NED. The wooden instrument. See *Deaf, Dumb, Blind*, Ch. II.
- Till you grow tender as a chick/ I'm dull as any post. Gay, NS. See *Deaf*.
- As dull as dun in the mire. Ray. *Dun's in the mire* is a proverbial phrase alluded to already by Chaucer, and see Fletcher, Woman-hater, IV, 2, Shak., RJ, I, iv, 41, Butler, H, III, iii, 110. *Dun's in the mire*, or *To draw Dun out of the mire* was a rural pastime described by Gifford (see Foster). But does the sim. refer to the game itself, looking upon it as one

of the dullest things imaginable? This cannot be the case, as Gifford says that he has seen "much honest mirth at it." Hazlitt writes: "Comp. Halliwell in v. From the colour of a horse it would not be easily distinguishable." The real drift of these words is not "easily distinguishable", but it would seem that according to H. the dullness refers to the colour of the horse. But perhaps it is simply an allusion to the log that represents Dun, and might be rendered 'as dull as a block.' Further information required.

I am as lewed and dull as is an asse. Occleve, 1420, NED. See *Stupid*.

As dull as a bachelor beaver. Bartlett, *Lean*, II, ii. See *Busy*. The Toawd is as dull as a Dormouse. 1709, NED. As dull as a dormouse at home, but a vary toun Bull abroad. 1709, NED. See *Sleep* Ch. II.

As dull as a full-crammed capon. R. Heath, *Epigr.*, p. 4, 1650, *Lean*, II, ii. The capon sometimes figures as a type of dullness. Cf. Some /men/ are capones by kinde, and so blunt by nature, that no art at all can whet them. Wilson, 1551, NED.

And there you stand as dull as a fish. Bridges, 1889, NED. See *Mute, Drunk*, Ch. II.

Come, come, Mrs. Muse, we can't part in this way, / Or you'll leave me as dull as ditch-water all day. Barham, *IL*, 456. Warren, *Ten Thousand a Year*, 1841, Cowan, *PS*, 33. Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, IV, 252, *Mutual Friend*, III, 174. H; W, where further inst. are found. The people are as dull as ditchwater. Maxwell, 1844, NED. I find them dull as ditchwater. Travers, 1893, NED. Critics . . . called them Pharisees, as dull as ditchwater. Galsworthy, *IP*, xi. See *Proud*.

As dull as ditchwater or stale small beer. Quoted *N. & Q.* 8, VIII, 129.

She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the princes jester; that I was duller than a great thaw. Shak., *MA*, II, i, 216.

The motions of his spirit are dull as night. Shak., *MV*, V, i, 86.

Melancholy, Gloomy.

As melancholy as the Man in the Moon. NED, 1609. — For the Man in the moon see *Ignorance*, Ch. IV. Cf. also 'as mad as the man in the moon.' The moon's influence on mind and body has already been dealt with under *Mad*. The following lines may be added: Selon La Martinière, "cette planète lunaire est humide de soy, mais par l'irradiation du soleil, est de divers tempéraments. Comme en son premier quadrat elle est chaude et humide, auquel temps il fait bon saigner les

sanguins; . . . et en son quatrième elle est froide et seche; auquel temps il est bon de saigner les melancholiques. &c." Larousse.

As joyful as the back of a gravestone. Northall, FPh, 9.

The boy remained as dismal as a hearse. Twain, TS, 99. This of course refers to the car that carries the coffin.

. . . looking as cheerful as an undertaker at his post of duty. Harrison, A, 159. Professionally the undertaker may be of subdued manners and a doleful countenance, but privately "your undertakers are the merriest fellows in the world," if we are to believe Dickens, PP, II, 42.

. . . as sadly as mutes at a funeral. Gaskell. — The mutes as professional mourners are spoken of from 1762.

As melancholy as a Quaker meeting-house by night. Barlett, Lean, II, ii.

. . . what senceless thing in all the house that is not now as melancholy as a new set-*vp* Schoolmaster. Dekker, SM, 9. — One does not wonder at Dekker's schoolmaster being a little melancholy, as we find that at a much later date 'the sum commonly paid to a schoolmaster in Peshawer is about fifteen pence a month.' NED, 1815, s. v. schoolmaster.

The girls, in dreadful lowness of spirits, and feeling as flat as so many pancakes, returned to their houses. Besant & Rice, AS, 157. Cf. "flat as a pancake" Ch. III. *Flat* = depressed, out of spirits rec. from 1602. NED.

I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as crestfallen as a dried pear. Shak., MW, IV, v, 91.

Why, how now, humorous George? What, as melancholy as a mantle tree. 1606, NED. Old Grandsir Thickskin, you that sit there as melancholy as a mantletree. NED, 1606. — What is there melancholy about a mantle or mantel-tree? There is of course the alliteration, and then the mantel-tree is likely to be black, i. e. melan ($\mu\epsilon\lambda\alpha\nu$).

. . . our faces will be as long as clock-cases all day. Hardy, W, 438. The word clock-case is rec. from 1761, NED.

You look as long-favoured as a fiddle. Hardy, UGT, 78, 1872. Her face as long as a fiddle. Hardy, TT, 135, 1882. . . said J. with a face as long as a fiddle. Caine, D, xxvi, 1887.

. . . the cook comes up to me pulling a face as long as a fiddle. Jacobs, MC, 10, 1896. This sim. does not seem to be very old. It is not known to Lean or Hazlitt. NED mentions it but without giving any instances, and renders it 'to look dismal.' But *fiddle-faced*, of a long, unhappy-looking face, goes back to 1785.

Falst. I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear. *Prince.* Or an old lion or a lover's lute. *Falst.* Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe. *Prince,* What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moorditch? *Falst.* Thou hast the

most unsavoury similes. Shak., KH IVa, I, ii, 71. "As melancholy as the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe" does not seem to have become a *proverbial* sim., no other inst. of it having been found. It has been suggested that 'the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe' refers to the croaking of frogs. It is true that frogs and toads have been styled Lincolnshire bagpipes (see Lean, and N. & Q., 5, IV, 368). But on the other hand we read in Armin's Nest of Ninnies, 1608, p. 9 (Shakesp. Soc.): — "Amongst all the pleasures provided, a noyse of minstrells and a Lincolnshire bagpipe was prepared — the minstrells for the great chamber, the bagpipe for the hall — the minstrells to serve up the knight's meate, and the bagpipe for the common dauncing." (N. & Q., 8, III, 13). Drayton also speaks of bells and bagpipes as belonging to Lincolnshire, which shows that of old the county was famous for this musical instrument. There is nothing in the context to make any other interpretation necessary or probable.

As melancholy as an unbraced drum. Centlivre, The Wonder, 1714, Lean II, ii.

I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in warren. Shak., MA. This is a reference to Isaiah, i, 8: "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers." This seems to be a well-known passage to judge from the following quotation: — "Go thy ways home, Tregarthen; go thy ways home, and teach yourself that all this world and the kingdoms thereof be but what the mind o' man makes 'em, and Saaron itself but a warren for rabbits." Tregarthen shook his head. "A barren rock! Come now, bring your mind to it!" Cai suggested, coaxing. "'Tis no good, Cai." — "A cottage in a vineyard; what says holy Isaiah? A lodge in a garden of cucumbers — a besieged city —" "Q", MV, 173.

As melancholy as Fleet street in the Long Vacation. Dekker, Northward Ho! NED.

The dice of late are grown as melancholy as a dog. Nashe, II, 218. Cf. the term 'a sad dog', and see *Mad*, and *Sick*, Ch. II.

As melancholy as Gibbe, our cat. Chaucer, R. of Rose. P. Plowman Vis.

As melancholy as a gib'd cat. Ray; Walker, Paroem.

I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear. Shak., KH IVa, I, ii, 71.

Melancholy as a gib-cat over his counter all the forenoon. Lambe, 1820, NED. W. Irving also speaks of the melancholy of a gibbed cat. 1824, NED. Common proverbial phrase. Still in use at the present time. Nhp. EDD. *Gib* is the contraction of Gilbert, a name formerly given to the male cat, as Tom is now. On the meaning of gib'd (gibed, gibbed) see NED.

I am as melancholy as a cat. Lyly, 1592, NED.

“Who is that?” said Fido. — “One as melancholy as a cat.” MM, 39, 1609 /said of a disappointed lover/. Gayton, Art of Longevity, xxii, 1659, Lean, II, ii; Gay, NS. No later inst. found. — “The common or vulgar cat is a creature well known, and being young it is very wanton and sportful: but waxing older is very sad and melancholy.” Speculum Mundi, Hulme, NH, 194. But this melancholy has probably less to do with age than with season. The caterwaul in early spring is more than sufficient to explain the origin of the sim. On the connection between heat, especially when spent, and melancholy, see below.

As melancholy as a collier's horse. Return from the Parnassus. IV, i, 1606, Lean, II, ii. This perhaps refers to the melancholy colour of all that belongs to collieries.

As pensive as a stallion after coitum. Chapman, Revenge for Honour, I, i. Cf. Donzel, methinks you look melancholic, After your coitum, and scurvy. Jonson, Alch., IV, iv, 584. Fletcher has the same ungraceful sim. *Omne animal post coitum triste*. Withals, 1616. Lean.

What's up with you? asked Dennant; you look as glum as any m-monkey. Galsworthy, IP, 70; 'glum' is rec. from the middle of the 16th c. It is hard to see what there is glum or gloomy about a monkey. A monkey is a term of playful contempt for a youngster who is just the opposite of sad or melancholy, and a person who performs comical antics is given the same name. But cf. 'Mutianus tells us that when the moon is on the wane the monkeys are sad, but they adore the new moon with the liveliest manifestations of delight.' Hulme, NH, 136.

As melancholy as a lugg'd bear. Shak., KH IVa, I, ii. The lugged or baited bear occurs in other proverbial sim., see *Cross*, and cf. A gracious aged man, Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick. Shak., KL, IV, ii, 42.

As melancholy as a hare. Shak., KH IVa, I, ii, 75. Webster, White Devil, i, 1612, Lean, II, ii.

As glum as a hare. Gayton, Art of Longevity, xvii, 1659, Lean, II, ii. Cf. Madam, will your ladyship have any of this hare? — No, madam, they say 'tis melancholy meat. Swift, PC, 278.

There is a good deal of folklore in these words. Why is the hare looked upon as melancholy? Andrew Boorde gives us an explanation “Tymorosyte doth brynge in melancoly humors.” Consequently, being a timorous beast above all others the hare must be especially melancholy. “The byble sayth the hare is an vnclene beeste, and physycke sayeth hares flesshe is dry, and doth ingender melancoly humors.” Boorde, EETS, e. s., 10, 275. “Hare, a black meat, melancholy and hard of digestion; it breeds *incubus*, often eaten, and causeth fearful dreams” Burton, AM, I, 250. As it was firmly believed

that those who partook of the flesh of any animal thereby partook also of its nature, the flesh of the hare was avoided. (Hulme, NH, 166). And the prejudice against it does not seem to have died out. "It is widely spread throughout the county /Dorset/ at the present day." N. & Q., II, VIII, 346. "The rustic's refusal now-a-days in the West of England is: — 'Ise never eat hallow fowl,' under which term he includes hare's and rabbits as well as wild fowl." G. T. Manning, *Rural Rhymes*, 1837, Introduction, Lean. This goes back to very ancient times. Already in Cæsar's *De Bello Gallico*, V, 12, we read: — *Leporem et gallinam et anserem gustare fas non putant*, which may have had something to do with its being made use of for the purpose of divination. And down through the ages it has been a "beast of evil meeting", and is perhaps so still. This may also be connected in some way with the well-known superstition that witches change themselves into hares. (N. & Q., II, VIII, 346). The Scriptural words of the hare as unclean (Levit. 11, 6) must have helped to fix the aversion to hare's flesh in the minds of a superstitious people. But on the other hand: — *Sumpto in cibis lepore vulgus gratiam corpori in septem dies fieri arbitratur, frivolo quidem joco, cui tamen aliqua debeat subesse causa in tanta persuasione*. Pliny, Nat. Hist. XXVIII, 79. But the idea of the hare's flesh procuring seven days' beauty is probably not indigenous to Great Britain.

So Dan said nothing about the debt, and went back to the fisher-fellows with a face as long as a haddock's. Caine, D, xv. See *Laughing, Deaf*, Ch. II.

As hevvy as a sod I grete with myn eene. Towneley Myst.

Young gentlemen would be as sad as night/ Only for wantonness. Shak., KJ, IV, i, 15. Cf. "Melancholy! is melancholy a word for a barber's mouth? Thou shouldst say heavy, dull, and doltish; melancholy is the crest of courtiers, and now every base companion . . . says he is melancholy." Lyly, *Midas*. Things have changed. Melancholy is fashionable no more, and nearly all the sim. containing the adj. are obsolete.

His countenance was black as night. Martineau, 1832, NED. He remained silent and looked as black as night. Benecke, PA, 93. Cf. also: It /a prospective marriage/ is as gloomy as midnight. Hardy, HE, 380.

A face as gloomy as a thunderstorm. Hardy, RN, 53.

H. /was/ as gloomy as a thundercloud. Hardy, Lao, 153.

As glum as thunder-cloud. Cleveland Gloss.

There stood the Queen . . . frowning like a thunderstorm. NED, 1865.

Old Billy looked as black as thunder. Caine, D., xv. Copping, GG, 77, Doyle, Lean &c. See *Ill-tempered*.

Grave, Stiff.

- As grand as doomsday and as grave. Tennyson, see W.
- Jim, what's the matter with thee? Thee's look so solid's old Time. W. Som. Gloss. 693. Whad's the matter, Maister? — yo' looken as solid as owd times. Sh. EDD. grave, depressed. 'As solid as old times.' Northall, FPh. See *Cool, Quiet, Steady*.
- As stiff as Tommy Harrison. — A popular phrase. N. & Q., 7, VIII, 368.
- As grave and formal in my gate as a Spanish don or the reader of a parish marching in front of a funeral. Cotton, Scarronides, Pref., 1670, Lean, II, ii.
- As grave as a judge. Poor Robin, 1766, Lean, II, ii; Brewer, &c. Wesley, Maggots, 1685.
There was old George sitting on the bench as grave as a judge. 1889, NED. — He looked as solid as a judge all the while. 1895, Stf; Lan; Lin.
- Barney's eye flashed fire = he stood erect, and was about to speak, but mastering himself . . . he took up the garment, and left the room as perpendicular as a quaker. Barham, IL, 31.
Then Ph . . . ps came forth, as starch as a quaker, Whose simple profession's a pastoral-maker. Sheffield, 1720, NED.
Bell Barry adopted a dignified reserve that almost amounted to pomposity, and was as starch as any quakeress. Thackeray, BL, i. Cf. By his garb, one would have taken him for a quaker, but he had none of the stiffness of that sect. Smollet, 1771, NED.
'Perpendicular' of a person's erect figure or attitude is known from 1768. The earliest inst. in NED is of some interest: — He canter'd away before me as happy and as perpendicular as a prince. Sterne. 'Starch' = stiff is rec. from 1717.
- As solid as my grandmother. Contention between Lib. and Prod., Hazlitt, Dodsley, Old Plays, viii, 602. 'Solid' = grave, serious is a dialect word. In lit. English it means also sedate, steady, which sense is rec. from 1632.
The 'Holy Hermandad' / . . . each looking as grave as a 'Granddad'. Barham, IL, 293.
- The men say she is as stiff as a poker; and the women are afraid of her; she is so proud and prudish. Mrs. Hervey, 1800, NED. Lady Elizabeth, as stiff as a poker, sat with her mouth pursed up, vexed to death. Mrs. Hervey, 1800, NED. . . . replied Nasmyth, still as stiff as any poker. Hornung, TN, 168. Cf. He is as stiff as if he had swallowed a poker. Yks., EDD, 'stand-offish', supercilious. — Of a stiffness so perfect that part of his toilette seemed to be swallowing a poker.

- Ld. Brougham, 1844, NED. — This sim. is not known to Ray and Hazlitt.
- To look as solemn as gargellis in a wall that gryn and stare. Ruyn of a Ream, 178, n. d. Lean, II, ii. See *Laughing, Grinning*.
- As grave as an old gate-post. Ray; Matteux, Rabelais, V, xxviii, 128, NED. The gate-post is known to NED from 1522. The simplex *post* occurs in other sim. as well; see e. g. *Deaf*.
- He was, I found afterwards, an absurd pompous person, as stiff as a ramrod. Conrad, Rom. 92. *Ramrod* is a comparatively modern word, being rec. from 1797. Cf. the adj. *ramroddy* and the subst. *ramrodism* both referring to (military) stiffness.
- I had been sitting demure as a gib cat. Gall. 1898, EDD. See *Melancholy, Modest*.
- Ez solemn ez a coo. Blakeborough, NRY, 241; in daily use.
- As grave as an owl. Brewer, DPF, 546. They were sitting side by side on the sofa, looking as grave as a pair of owls. Krüger, Schwierigkeiten des Englischen, III, 331.
- He's solemn and serious as an old owl. London, ME, 73. Cf. The gravest fish is an oyster, the gravest bird's an owl, /The gravest beast's an ass, and the gravest man's a fool. Lean IV.
- Had your mouth as mim, and as grave as a May-puddock. Graham, 1883, EDD. A May-puddock is a young frog.
- As solid as ess. Said of one looking serious. 'Ess' means dead ashes, without a spark of fire. Jackson & Burne, 595. — The word *ess* occurs in two other sim.: 'as plain as the letter S', 'as big(-sorted) as ess (S). This is apparently a reference to the old \int -type, which certainly was both plain and big compared with the other letters. And there is nothing impossible in its being used in the sim. in question. Further informations wanted.
- They were all as silent and serious as night. Benson, 1795, NED.

Calm, Steady, Unflinching.

- The wold Blackbird is so steady as a Church. Som. 1895, EDD. See *Safe*, Ch. IV.
- As serene as a Stoic /of a French writer's temperament/. DNL, 5, IX, '12.
- Swithin, who was stable as a giant in all that appertained to nature and life outside humanity, was a mere pupil in domestic matters. Hardy, TT, 280; NED has no modern inst. of this adjective referring to persons and their dispositions.
- Cuff /a prize-fighter/ had lost all presence of mind and power of attack and defence. Figs, on the contrary, was as calm as a quaker. Thackeray, VF, v. See *Grave, Stiff*.

Pyne could be as stolid as a red Indian when the occasion demanded it. Tracy, Pillar, 144. — The stolidity of the red Indian is proverbial.

She dunno what she knows in that line /fighting/, 'cept when she is mad, and then it all comes out. You've got to git 'er mad fast, though. Quiet as a child at other times. Whiteing, No. 5 44.

He was as calm as vertue. Shak., Cy, V, v, 174.

As quiet as murder. Lean, II, ii.

As steady as old Time. Lean, II, ii. See *Grave*.

As cool as a custard. Lean, II, ii. — Is this custard the dish, and what is the application of the sim.?

A young maid is as cold as a cucumber. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Cupid's Revenge*. Lean, II, ii.

And of courage as cold as cucumber. John Tatham, *The Rump*, i, 1660. *ibid.*, *The Scots Figgaries*, 1652; *Poor Robin*, 1690, Lean, II, ii; see W., where some modern inst. from Eliot, Phillpotts &c. are given.

As cool as a cucumber. Gay, NS; W; Tracy, Pillar, 110, &c. Have no fear for yourself,' he says, cool as a cucumber, Phillpotts, TK, 106. — "I tell you, the way you caught on about that slop was something worth seeing. When I asked you — I didn't half expect it. Bif! Right! Cool as a cucumber . . . You acted like a gentleman over that slop". Cf. also: — "Permit me to add, most precious and adorable creature, that you are the coolest cucumber that it has yet been my privilege to meet." Bennet, GW, 7.

As to the different forms of this sim. it may be said that 'as cold &c.' is now, if not obsolete, at least very rare in modern English, 'as cool &c.' being the prevalent form. As the adj. differ in meaning the sim. themselves must have had somewhat different applications. Both forms are used of material things in the literal senses of the words (see *Cold* Ch. III). The earlier form is used of the unimpassioned nature of a 'cold' woman, but it does not seem to have, or have had, the sense of *cool* = undisturbed, calm, which is the usual force of the adj. in the later form of the sim. But *cool* also refers, to judge from the quotation from Bennet, to callous and deliberately impudent daring.

"Miss, shall I send you some cowcumber?" — "Madam, I dare not touch it; for they say, cowcombers are cold in the third degree." Swift, PC, 274. This no doubt goes back to mediaeval quackery. The cucumber was perhaps looked upon as being "cold and moist of complexion".

As quiet as a clock. Whittinton, *Vulgaria* 1520, Lean, II, ii. This form of the sim. is perhaps more correctly placed under *Quiet*, Ch. IV.

But they /soldiers/ were as steady as clocks and chirpy as

crickets. 1878, NED. This must be a reference to the still and regular ticking of a watch or perhaps any other time-piece. Cf. also: — "A little kindnes maks him who was as hote as a tost, as coole as a clock." Thomas Lodge, *Euphues Shadow*, G2, 1592. (N. & Q., 11, X, 247).

Calm as coffins. Dickens, *Master Humphrey's Clock*, I, 60, W.

. . . grow calm and quiet as lambs. Swift, TT, 83. I speak to several toppermost carriage people . . . without saying ma'am or sir to 'em, and they take it as quiet as lambs. Hardy PBE, 103, TM, 252, &c. For further inst. of this sim. see *Still, Quiet* Ch. IV; See *Good-natured*.

The Solid South . . . still stands as firm and stolid as a hickory stump. 19 Cent. 12, 1027. For other sim. with *hickory* see *Stiff, Tough*, Ch. III.

I was nervous . . . but Bob was cool as an iceberg. London, R, 226. *Iceberg* is a late word, being rec. only from 1820. Cf.

Captain Thelwal is a perfect iceberg. Lady C. Bury, 1840, NED.

As stable as the hills. DNL, 12, IV, '13, See *Still, Quiet*, Ch. IV.

With fawning words he courted her a while; . . . But wordes and lookes and sighes she did abhorre, As rock of Diamond steadfast evermore. Spenser, FQ, I, vi, 4.

He is as steady as a rock; supports all his wife's family without complaining; and denies himself beer to buy books for his son. Shaw, IK, 170. — He'd always been as steady as a rock. Boldrewood, 1889, NED. *Steady* = regular in habits, not given to dissipation or looseness in conduct. NED.

. . . there are many who mock/ At fear, and in danger stand firm as a rock. Barham, IL, 508; Though as firm as a rock in my own faith, I could not help remembering my grandfather held a different one. Thackeray, BL, xvii. —

Dan's face had undergone some changes during the last few minutes, but when he lifted it to the deemster's it was as firm as a rock. Caine, D. xv. This form of the sim. has probably about as wide a sphere as the adj. *firm* itself. See *Hard, Firm* Ch. IV.

I expect your folk are dranting folk — quiet as the ground. Nrf. EDD. 1898.

A Soule as euen as a Calme. Shak., KH VIII, III, i, 166.

Good-natured, Mild, Gentle, Patient.

Mr. Glegg, . . . though a kind man . . . was not as meek as Moses. Eliot, 1860, NED. — Swithin was meek as Moses, TT, 209. — So meek as Moses now most times. I miss the thunder of him. Phillpotts, AP, 369. A brute at home and mild as Moses outside. *ibid.* P, 310. Cf. The mildest meekest of man-

kind, like Moses. Byron, DJ, 9, 21. — This is not the idea one would form of the great reformer who brought his race away from bondage into the steeling solitudes of the desert, but it is a reference to *Nu.* 12, 3: 'Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth', which is looked upon as being an interpolation.

She said no more, but, turning to her room as meekly as a martyr, heard him go downstairs. Hardy, JO, 332.

Patient as pilgrimes, for pilgrimes arn we alle. Langland, PPl, XIII, 130.

As stoute as a Stockefish, as meeke as a mecocke. R. B., 1575, NED. *Meacock* is a word known from the beginning of the 16th c. and means an effeminate person. NED.

This clerk was cleped heende Nicholas; . . . he was sleigh and ful prive, And lik to a mayden meke for to se. Chaucer, MiT, 16. — In tym of pes, mek as a maid was he. Wallace, 1470. Cf. *þeos milde meke meiden* 1225, NED.

A child as maydyn myld. Songs, 45.

A proper gallant gentleman, and as kind as a maid, too. Kingsley, WH, 471. As softspoken as a girl. Phillpotts, SW.

Here could I breathe my soul into the air, /As mild and gentle as the cradle-habe/ Dying with nother's dug between its lips. Shak., KH VIB, III, ii, 391. — He was a very nice gentlemanly man indeed . . . He said to me as gentle as a babe when all was done: . . . Hardy, JO, 434.

. . . bowing as meek as a child. Hardy, LLI, 268,

. . . an Irish heart as tender as a child's. N. Age, X 3.

Thou art Hermione, or rather, thou art she /In thy not childing, for she was tender/ As infancy and grace. Shak., WT, V, iii, 25.

I was patient as the midnight sleep. Shak., Co., III, i, 85.

. . . though greater than King or Kaiser, yet is the mighty Aldrovando milder than mother's milk. Barham, IL, 97. Lean, Rog. — *Mother's milk*. is rec. from the times of Dunbar. NED.

As mild as milk. Debate of the Body and Soul (1st quarter of 13th c. W.). . . a temper mild as milk. Hardy, MC, 29.

— Yet your father, instead of being angry, was mild as milk. Hardy, W, 50. — I was getting a little excited: but you who are as mild as the milk that dews the soft whisker of the new-weaned kitten, will forgive me. Barham, IL, v.

Zo mild's milk. Hewett, Dev., 11. — 'As mild as milk' is not known to Ray, Hazlitt, Lean. See *Sweet* Ch. IV.

What's the good of a plan that ain't no more trouble than that? It's as mild as goose-milk. Twain, HF, 299. — *Goose-milk* is a term unknown to the Dictionaries.

Her temper pretty near so sweet as the cream she makes. Phillpotts, AP, 37.

After her trouble her temper — as sweet as honey afore — got soured a trifle. Phillpotts, TK, 103. See *Sweet* Ch. IV.

Oh! the cussedness of being shut up for weeks with a fightin' man!
For the fust two days they're as sweet as treacle; and then
their contrariness comes out. Their tempers is puffict 'ell.
Shaw. CBP, 104.

As soft as a boiled turnip. — Easily given to tears. A boy who
cries for a little, or who is cowardly, is sure to have this sim.
contemptuously thrown at him. Yks. EDD.

... our Nance making a great big fellow like you as fool-soft as
a bit of tallow. Oxenham, MS, 14. *Fool-soft* is a word found
in no dict.

Did not th'illustrious Bassa make /Himself a slave for Missie's sake,
And with bull's pizzle, for her love, /Was taw'd as gentle as
a glove? Butler, H, 149. See *Easy*, Ch. IV.

You tread upon my patience: but be sure/ I will from henceforth
rather be myself,/ Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition;
/Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,/ And
therefore lost the title of respect . . . Shak, KH IVa, I, iii, 5.
See *Flattering, Fawning; Smooth, Soft*, Ch. III.

She /the moon/ may make a man as soft as a sponge . . . or as
hard as a bar of steel. Hope, RH, 272.

Ez good-natured ez a pump. — A pump never grumbles, no matter
how often or by whom it is handled. Blakeborough, NRY, 241.

As mild as a cat in a capcase. The Christmas Prince, 1607, Lean,
II, ii. The exact force of this sim. escapes the compiler. In
the same work there is the phrase 'as sober as a cat in a
capcase.' — The *capcase* seems too have been used in certain
phrases of a proverbial character: /Dice-playing/ causeth manie
of them (oftentimes) to bring a castell into a capcase, a whole
manour and lordshippe into a cottage, their fee simple into
fee single. Northbrooke, DD, 115, 1577. — Thus many gam-
blers bring a castle into a cap-case. Hinde, 1641, NED. No
inst. of the word is rec. before 1577 and after 1641. The
same phrase occurring in both inst. makes it probable that it
had acquired a proverbial character already in 1577, which
means that the word must have existed a good deal earlier
than 1577.

Miss Brentwood thinks I am as mild as a kitten and as good-
natured and stolid as the family cow. London, IH, 58.

Ez patient ez a cat. Blakeborough, NRY, 239; in daily use.

He pat was woned to be Meke as a lomb, ful of pite. c. 1330.
And as a lamb sche sitteth meeke and stille. Chaucer.

As meek as ever was eny lamb. Chaucer, Sec. Nonn. T.,
197; MiT. 16. /Women are/ meke as a lambe. Songs, 112;
Melbancke, Philotimus, 158. She went away as meek as a
lamb. Harraden, I, 438. — Not known to Ray, Bohn and Hazlitt.
— The absence of inst. from c. 1580 to modern times is rather
strange. But it would seem, to judge from the scarcity of inst.

in NED, that the adj. *meek* was not a favourite word with the 17th and early 18th cc.

As lough as lombe. Langland, PPI, VIII. 196; XX, 36. *Low* = humble, meek is rec. from Langland and onward, although now rare. NED.

When he is angryest of all I can make hym as mylde as a lamb. Palsgrave, 1530, NED; Kyd, Span. Trag. IV; Ray. — In war was never lion raged more fierce/ In peace was never gentle lamb more mild/ Than was that young and princely gentleman. Shak., KR II, II, i, 173. Cf. As mild as a sheep. Melbancke, Philotimus, B 64. Ray.

He is not the flower of courtesy, but I'll warrant him as gentle as a lamb. Shak., RJ, II, v, 42. Ray.

She was as patient and willing as a lamb. Hardy, GND, 19. Papa's as quiet as a lamb now. Anstey, VV, 154. — The above inst. show that the standard forms of this sim. belong to ME and early MnE, where they are met with frequently. The lamb has been the symbol of meekness and gentleness &c. from prechristian times. But Christianity with its allusions to the 'patient and willing' lamb that was led out to be slaughtered, must have helped to give currency to expressions and phrases referring to its 'meekness.' — Uit Johannes I, 29, waar Jezus genoemd wordt het Lam Gods, dat de zonde der wereld wegdraagt, ontstond zulk eene vereering van het Lam dat zij in aanbidding ontaarde, wat door de kerk in de 7e eeuw als "eine zu heidnische und zweideutige Sitte" verboden werd. Sloet, Dieren, 140.

Faire is my loue, but not so faire as fickle; Milde as a doue, but neither true nor trustie. Shak., Pass. Pil. NED.

As mild and gentle as a dove. Shak., Hamlet, V, i, q. 1.

This is mere madness:/ And thus a while the fit will work on him; Anon as patient as the female dove/ When that her golden couplets are disclosed,/ His silence will sit drooping. Shak., Hamlet, V, i, 272. Some of them had the reputation of being the hardest men in the three States, others were mild as turtle-doves. White, BT, 234.

"Some held that she who loved it /salt/ was most angry, and some held the contrary; showing how the dove, which delightest /sic!/ most therein, is the gentlest, lowliest, lovingest, meekest and friendliest bird that is. But the other side argued, to prove their reason, that all those kind of creatures which have the gall, if they delight in salt, of force cannot be testy, affirming also that the dove hath no gall, which is the only cause of her simpleness . . ." Grange, Golden Aphroditis, L, 4, r. Lean, II, ii, 619. Cf. "I am pigeon-livered and lack gall." Shak., II, ii, 551. He has no more gall in him than in a dove. Dekker, H. Wh, Ia, ii. Towards the end of the Middle Ages we find widely spread the idea of the pigeon

having no gall. Sir Thomas Browne calls it a "popular and received Tenent", and goes on to say that already "the Aegyptians from this consideration did make it /the dove/ the Hieroglyphyck of meeknesse." And though it is "averred by many holy writers", it is nothing but one of the "vulgar and common errors." "While some affirmed it had no gall, intending only thereby no evidence of anger or fury, others have construed it anatomically, and denied that part at all." *N. & Q.*, 7, XI, 434. This "popular error" must have lived on far down into the 19th c., at least in Scotland, for in Jamieson's *Popular Ballads of Scotland*, ii, 159 ff. we read of a "bird without a ga", which is the dove, for "sin' the flood of Noah/ The dow she had nae ga," to which the editor adds the following note: — "The peasants in Scotland say that the dove that was sent out of the ark by Noah flew till she burst her gall; and that no dove since that time ever had a gall." *N. & Q.*, 7, XI, 518.

- A fellow may have a hard cynical kind of way of putting things, and yet . . . have a heart as tender as a spring chicken underneath. Anstey, VV, 143. Till you grow tender as a chick, I'm dull as any post. Gay, NS.
- As gentle as a jay on tree. *World and Child*, 1522, Hazlitt, O. P., i, 254, *Lean*, II, ii. See *Merry*, p. 71.
- As meke as bryde in kage. Brunne, 1303, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 409. I've been as weak as a fly with you before, 'cause of your curly hair. Phillpotts, AP, 120.
- Ez mild ez a May-morn. Blakeborough, NRY, 240; in daily use. Sylvia's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May. Pope, 1704, NED. Cf. *Mild May evening*, Ch. Brontë, Shirley, I, 244.
- As mild as a moonbeam. Said of a particularly mild and placid person. Nhp. EDD.

Modest, Bashful.

- . . . drinking tay and coffee with them as modest as saints. Hardy, LLI, 271. *Modest* is not rec. before 1565. NED.
- As bashful as a lenten lover. Denham. Cf. A man of strict religious habits, self-denying as a lenten saint. Hardy, GND, 161. Dolent, contemplative lent-lovers, . . . who never meddle with the flesh. Urquhart, Rabelais, 1694; See Cotgrave, s. v. *Caresme*, Amoureux de Caresme. *Lean*, II, ii. A raid was formerly made on the brothels on Shrove Tuesday in order to aid an enforced continency during Lent. Dyce, Notes to Middleton, iii, 217, *Lean*. Lent does not seem to have been a proper time for love and marriage, as we read in the old verse 'Marry in Lent/ And live to repent,' which is a remini-

scence of the fact that already the Council of Laodicea had prohibited the celebration of marriage in Lent (Lean, N. & Q., 7, VII, passim). The word *lent(en)lover* is not rec. in NED. . . . the . . . inflexible British Snob can be as humble as a flunkey and as supple as a harlequin. Thackeray, BS, xxii.

As coy as an alderman's oldest daughter. Nabbes, Tottenham Court, ii. 3, 1638, Lean, II, ii. — For allusions to *aldermen* see *Dull*.

As demure as a whore at a christening. Kelly, Scottish, Proverbs, 1721, Lean, II, ii. *Demure* = affectedly coy rec. from 1693.

She who used to be as humble as a milkmaid, is as proud as a princess. Thackeray, HE, 103. — This is the milkmaid of 17th and 18th c. poetry, a nauseatingly refined, modest, and humble, person, full of songs and unearthly perfections.

Ye ride as coy and stille as doth a mayde Were newe spoused sittynge at the bord. Chaucer, NED.

This young man is as bashful as a mayden. Three, 23.

As modest as the maid that sips alone. Pope, D, III, 144. Cf. Fair, sweet and modest maid. Beaumont & Fletcher, 1607, NED.

. . . make Master impudency blush like a Virgin. G. Harvey, Wks II, 238. For other sim. with *Blush* see *Red Ch.* III.

As humble as a spaniel. Ned Ward, Nupt. Dial. II, vii, 1710, Lean, II, ii. See *Fawning, Flattering*, p. 25.

As modest as a gib cat at midnight. Davenport, City Nightcap, iii, 1661. See *Melancholy*.

As mim as pussy Baudrons. Gall. *Baudrons* is a N. Cy word for the cat.

. . . She smirked and she smiled, but so lipped this lass,
That folk might have thought it done only alone
Of wantonness, had not her teeth been gone.

Upright as a candle standeth in a socket

Stood she that day, so simper-de cocket.

Of ancient fathers she took no cure nor care,

She was to them as coy as a crokers mare.

She took th'entertainment of the young men

All in dalliance, as nice as a nun's hen. Heywood, PE, 52.

Ray has 'as coy as Croker's mare.' Perhaps one of the "childish errors" that Hazlitt complains of. NED renders *coy*: 'not responding readily to familiar advances', which fits the context excellently, as far as the 'lass' is concerned. But this cannot very well be applied to the pottery hawker's mare. The adj. may have had senses verging on *steady, cautious, chary*, as Brewer suggests, which may have been applicable to a steady horse. It must be remembered that *still, quiet* is the original meaning of the word.

He . . . was as shy with ladies as a young colt, and could no more dance a minuet than a donkey. Thackeray, BL, xvi.

As humble as a lamb. Barclay, Ecl. v., ante 1530.

He's bauld as a lion, though mim as a lamb. Lth. 1865, EDD,
See *Good Character. Gentle, Mild.*

. . . a man who was as shy as a wild deer. Doyle, R, 11.

Mony braw lasses . . . When they are afore folk, are mim as a
moose. 1881, EDD. The venturolocust was now as mim as a
moose. Fif. EDD. Cf. *Still* Ch. IV.

As mim and as sleek as a moudie. Slk. EDD. See *Soft, Smooth*
Ch. III.

She's not froward, but modest as the dove, Shak., TS, II, i 285.

My pure, pure, Grace, modest as a turtledove, how came I
ever to possess you? Hardy, W, 421.

The young leddy was aye as mim as a May puddock to a' the
lave o' mankind. Ayr. 1822, EDD. See *Grave.*

I's foorced to flite, an' then she's as hummle as a crawling-clock.
Yks. EDD, 1876. (as lowly as a creeping beetle).

They're all meek and mild and humble as earthworms. Phillpotts,
TK, 17.

She's a tireless church-goer, and so good as gold, and so humble
as a worm; Phillpotts, WF, 46, 122.

Pretends to be modest as a violet in the hedge, and yet she's as
proud as a jay. Phillpotts, WF, 242.

Polite, Civil.

Ez polite ez t'divil. — His Satanic Majesty is said to be willing
to shake hands with anyone, Blakeborough, NRY, 243.

As affable as a duke to his paying guests. DNL.

As civil as lawyers. Webster, Westward Ho! (Dekker) 1607,
Lean, II, ii. See *False.*

But you must be as civil as butter to the Cardinal. Hope, PZ,
50. Cf. the phrase 'As demure /or civil/ as if butter would
not melt in his mouth.' H. She's as mim as if butter wadna
melt in her mouth. Dmb. NED, 1844. He looked so demurely,
I thought butter would not have melted in his mouth. Sedley,
1687, NED. 'To look as if butter would not melt in one's
mouth' is found already in Heywood, Latimer, and Palsgrave,
Cf. also the following French quotation: — A cette parole
myst dame Mehault ses mains à ses costez et en grant couroux
luy respondy . . . que Dieu merci, aincoires fondoit le burre
en sa bouche, combien . . . qu'elle n'avoit que un seul dent.
Les Evangiles des Quenouilles, ed. 1855, p. 32, N. & Q., 2,
I, 283. *To butter* = flatter fulsomely; Gifwa smicker för smör.
Grubb, 767.

You're always as polite as pie to them. Twain, HF, 22. Cf. 'as
good as pie'.

The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion. Shak., MA., II, i, 262. No inst. of *civil* = polite, courteous is rec. before 1606. On this word Foster writes "*Civil* = sourish. Cotgrave defines *aigre-douce* as 'a civile orange, or orange that is between sweet and sower'." There is in Nashe, Introduction, 19, another inst. of the sim.: — ' . . . for the order of my life it is as ciuil as a ciuil orange'. In this case the adj. must mean 'orderly, well-governed', which sense is rec. 1591—1685, NED. This seems to make it probable that the sim. may have had about as wide a sphere as the adj. itself, that *civil* could be intensified in all its senses, as far as they are capable of being so, by a comparison with 'a civil orange.' This is of a course a play on Seville. "About Sivill the best orenge grow, and are called by us Civil-orenges, under which name the women in London that sell any comprehend the best, calling them all so." Cole, Adam in Eden, 1657, N. & Q., 10, VI, 325.

As polite as a fish-hook. Cowan, PS, 36. Ironical?

Glad, Merry.

Live as merry as Momus. Northall, FPh, 9. — It is rather strange that this Greek deity, the personification of censoriousness, often mentioned in Lucian as a lampooner of the gods, should have become a type of merriment in English dialects. But the witty lampooner may easily have come to be looked upon as a jester or a creator of merriment. "Momus est resté la personification de la folie, non pas de cette folie sombre qui dégrade l'homme, dont l'aspect nous affraye et nous attriste, mais de cette folie charmante et rieuse engendrée par les plaisirs, à laquelle la sagesse ne dédaigne pas de prendre part quelquefois." Dict. Larousse, s. v. Momus. Cf. also the term Momus Polichinelle of Alexander Piron's *Arlequin-Deucalion*. Was Momus a figure in travelling puppet shows patronised by the rustics?

Sometimes she laught as merry as Pope Jone. Spenser, FQ, II, vi, 3. The 2nd edition reads differently: — . . . that nigh her breath was gone.

The Bishop of Man liveth here at his ease, and as merry as Pope Joan. Pilkington, Wks, vii, Letter to the Archb. of Canterb. 1564, Lean, II, ii And sit down in my chaire by my wife faire Alison/, And turne a crabbe in the fire, as merrie as pope John. Damon and Pithias, Dodsley, I, 276, 1571. Pope Julio . . . was a greate and wary player, . . . being a goode companyon, and as the phrase is, as mery as Pope Joane. Harrington,

1597, NED. Northall FPh 9. — *Papissa Johanna* is generally said to have been an Englishwoman, who became elected Pope in 855, succeeding Leo IV and preceding Benedict III. She held her position for upwards of two years, but after the expiration of that time was delivered of a child, and died during parturition while proceeding in a procession. This fabulous personage created a good deal of "learned" controversy between some early protestant divines and their catholic opponents. "Her very existence itself seems now to be universally rejected as a fabrication from beginning to end." Sir T. Browne, Wks, III, 360. Prudentius Trecensis, Bishop of Troyes, a contemporary of the above-mentioned popes, writes in his chronicles as follows: — *Mense Augusto Leo apostolicæ sedis antistes defunctus est, eique Benedictus successit.* Monumenta Germaniæ Historica, Hannover, 1826, I, 449. N. & Q., June 1851. See further N. & Q., 3, I, 459.

- As merry as Maid Marian. Wither, Motto Poems, 1621, Lean, II, ii. — Maid Marian belongs to the cycle of Robin Hood, Little John &c. See Barham, II, 95, and cf. "She /Long Meg/ knew some rules of decorum: and although she were a lustie bousing rampe, somewhat like Gallemella, or Maide Marian, yet she was not such a roinish rannel &c." G. Harvey, Pierce's Supererogation, 1593. See Enc. Brit.
- As merry as the maids. Ray. Cf. As merry as a maid might be. Melbancke, Philotimus. 467, 1583, Lean, II, ii.
- As merry as a king. Interlude of Youth. H., O. P., II, 14, Lean, II, ii. See *Happy, Pleased* p. 77.
- Gladder than the gleoman that gold hath in gyfte. Langland, PPl, XII, 104.
- As merry as a fiddler. Christmas Prince, 1607; Seven Days of Week, i; Wit's Interpreter. p. 2, 1655, Lean, II, ii.
- As merry as the maltman. Kelly, Scot. Proverbs, 1813, Lean, II, ii. Cf. 'as merry as mice in malt.' The maltman is the maltster.
- As merry as a carter. Braithwaite, Whimsies, 1631, Lean, II, ii.
- As merry as tinkers. Howell, 1662, Lean, II, ii.
- As merry as forty beggars. Dekker, Shoemaker's Holiday; Howell, 1662, Lean, II, ii. See Ch. V.
- As merry as a bridegroom on his wedding-day. Taylor, NL.
- As merry as cup and can. Nashe, II, 248. As merry as cup and can: Drink makes thee dull: But cans are most sad when they are most full. Davies Ep. 363, Lean, III. Ray. Heywood, PE, ed. Sharman, 103, has 'Merry we are as cup and can could hold.'
- And all went merry as a marriage-bell. Byron, 1816, NED. Hardy, How to be Happy though Married, 18, 1886. Everything merry as a marriage-bell. Wells, Kipps, 297. Merry marriage-bells, a piece of alliteration frequently used.

Ez merry ez a Maypole dance. Blakeborough, NRY, 242; in daily use.
 As merry as a two-year old. Northall, FPh. This must be a young colt. — There is in H. the phrase 'as merry as the mares.' Hazlitt does not give any authority, which in some cases has been found out to mean that it is taken from Ray *ed. Bohn*. This applies to the case in question. In Bohn's Complete Alphabet of Proverbs, p. 319 we read: 'As merry as the mares, 186'. — P. 185 f. we have Ray's Proverbial Similes, but instead of *the mares* Ray gives *the maids*. Consequently *mares* must be a misprint for *maids*, and Hazlitt has copied it. See *Sure*, Ch. IV.

I feel it in my bones that we shall be as frisky as lambs to-morrow.
 Tracy, Pillar, 160.

As lusty as so many bacon-hogs or sucking calves. Kennet, 1702, NED. *Lusty* seems to mean 'strong, healthy, growing rapidly' rather than 'merry, cheerful.'

Next came fresh Aprill, full of lustyhed, / And wanton as a Kid whose horn new buds. Spenser, FQ, VII, vii, 33. Wood, Manx Prov. 263. Wanton is *the* word for a playful and gambling kid.

As merry as the pricket. Herrick, 1648.

As merry as a buck. Billingsly, Brachy-Martyriologia, p. 187, 1657, Lean, II, ii.

As merry as mice in malt. Clarke; H.

As merry as a March hare. Skelton, 1520 NED. See *Mad*.

And hom he goth, as mery as a popinjay. Chaucer, Shipm. T. Syngeth ful merrier than the popinjay. Chaucer, Shipm. T. 369.
 As merry as the popinjay. Drayton, Shep. Garl. 1593.
 Lean, II, ii.

As blithe as Robin Reddocke. Smyth, Berkeley MSS, 1639, Lean, II, ii. Robin Reddock = R. Redbreast.

Yet listen, lordes, to my tale, Murier than the Nigtyngale, Chaucer, 195/ 2023.

As merry as the morning lark. Sir Giles Goosecap, 1606, Withals, 1616. Lean, II, ii. Merry as a lark. Hamerton, 1873, NED.
 As glad and as gay as the lark. Baring-Gould, BS, 189; London, LL, 185.

Zo gay's a lark. Hewett, Dev. 11.

Quite blyth and cheerful as a lark. Yks, 1831, EDD.

Would he have been cheerful as a lark, picknicking with a bottle of champagne? Phillpotts, WF, 428.

And forth sche goth, as jolly as a pye. Chaucer, Shipm. T. 209.
 And she for her part, made us cheer heaven high — The first part of dinner merry as a pie. Heywood, PE, 60. King's Halfe-penny-worth of Wit in a Pennyworth of Paper. H.

Stibborn and strong and jolly as a pye. Chaucer.

As eny jay sche light was and jolyf. Chaucer.

Gentil, jolyf, so the jay. Kluge, 83.

As glad as fowl of a fair day. Clarke; Lean, II, ii. . . . was ful glad thereof, as fowl of day. Chaucer.

As fain as fool of a fair day. Kelly, Sc. Proverbs, 1721, Lean, II, ii. As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne. Chaucer, K. T., 1579. They were as a glad of his comyng/ As foul is fain whan that the sonne upriseth. Chaucer, ST, 51.

Al so fayn as foul of fair morwenynge. Langland, PPl. XII, 104 (C-text).

For was there never fowl so fayn of May, As I shal been whan that sche cometh in Troye. Chaucer, Tr. & Cr. v, 425.

As merry as the byrd on bough. Morality, 626 /Digby MSS. Abbotsford Club/ Lean, II, ii.

As merry as byrd on the briar. Cofler of Canterbury, 1608. Cf. Hop as light as bird from brier. Shak., MND, V, ii.

As blithe as a bird on the tree. Lean, II, ii.

Sprightly and gay/ As the bird on the spray. Barham, IL, 419.

Cf. *ibid.* 550: Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the spray. — This wes in the moneth of May, Quhen byrdis syngis on the spray. Barbour, 1375. NED.

They, all as glad as birdes of joyous Pryme, Thence lead her forth. Spenser, FQ, I, vi, 13.

As merry as a bird in May. Clarke, Lean, II, ii.

As blithely as a bird of May. Hardy, HE, 208.

Sat downe upon the dusty ground anon; /As glad of that small rest as Bird of Tempest gon. Spenser, FQ, III, vii, 10.

. . . which I did as blithe as a bird. Richardson, P, 35.

I should be as glad as a bird to leave the place. Hardy, MC, 226. — For some further inst. of the early forms of this sim. see Skeat, EEP, 94.

She . . . merry as a grig is grown. Gay, NS.

I thought you had all supt at home last Night? — Why, so we did — and all as merry as Grigs. NED, 1728.

As merry as Griggs. Josiah Wedgwood, Letter, 1775, N. & Q., 9, XII.

I grew as merry as a grig, and laughed at every word that was spoken. Goldsmith, Ess. VI.

The learned gentleman . . . is as merry as a grig at a French wateringplace. Dickens, Bleak House, XIX.

One day I wur ith' fielt, sowing away as merry as a grig. Gaskell, 1841.

All of them looking as happy and as merry as grigs. Cudworth, 1884, Yks, EDD.

He may be as agreeable as possible — as merry as a grig. Duncan, AG, 117.

So merry's a grig, so merry's a cricket, are equally common. Suf. Som.

Once blythe as grigs, our merriment/ Is changed to meditation. Nhb. 1840, EDD.

Going up and down five flights of stairs with soup, joint and pudding, whilst one carried the tray and the other swung a hand lantern in front, required time and exertion. They vere cheerful as grigs over it. Tracy, Pillar, 67.

From morning till neet we're as happy as grigs. Lanc. Ballads. EDD. — As brisk as a grig. Yks. 1856. NED.

Her aunt . . . has turned as lively as a grig. Dickens, 1840, NED.

She'll be as lively as a grig to-morrow. Barlow, 1892, Ir. EDD.

These are the forms known to the compiler. H. has 'as merry as the grig'. Probably his own coinage. No inst. of the phrase itself has been found before Gay, although the expression *merry grig* is nearly 200 years older. In PE it does not seem to be very common, except perhaps in the dialects. A cor. of N. & Q., 10, I, 94, informs us that the saying was in constant use when he was a lad in Derbyshire, but he has not known it to be used at Worksop (Nottingham) except by himself.

Now what is *grig*, *Grig*, *Grig(g)s*? The matter has been discussed at some length in N. & Q., NED and by H. It is most commonly explained as a sand-eel or a cricket. But the word is not generally understood as appears from the fact that a writer quoting the sim. in the form given by Wedgwood goes on to ask, "Who was Griggs?" — The word has a variety of meanings other than those rec. in NED. In Staffordshire bantams, which are known for their pugnacious and spirited character, are so called. In Yorkshire children from about four to eight years of age are styled grigs. "I have always understood that a grig was a tadpole. As a youth I used to fish for them under this name and that of bull-heads." N. & Q., 10, I, 36. (They are also called *porriwiggles*). The above-mentioned Nottingham man makes the following very interesting statement: "Gnats dancing in the sun were grigs, and so were "cheese-jumpers" said to be as they moved and jumped on the cheese-boards in provision shops. Anything having a lively motion was a grig, and tadpoles were included in the list. Along the roads after a shower of rain appeared lively insects, which were known as fishflies, and these "danced like grigs" in the sun as long as the lanes remained wet." N. & Q., 10, I, 94. A class of vagabond dancers and tumblers who visited ale-houses have been so called. "Hence Levi Solomon, who lived in Sweet Apple Court, being asked in his examination how he obtained his living replied that he went a-grigging." Brewer, Dict. 555. ('grigging' is other wise a term for grig or sand-eel fishing). We have also the above-mentioned term *a merry grig*, an extravagantly lively person (NED).

Now, which of all these things is referred to in the sim.? Is

the *grig* of the adage the sand-eel, the cricket, the merry companion, or something else? All the senses would fit the context about equally well. "Whether we translate the phrase by "as lively as a little eel" or by "as cheerful as a cricket" we get equally good sense either way, and I am now in some doubt as to which it should be; for the meaning a *little eel* seems to be the more usual one." W. W. Skeat, N. & Q., 3, X, 516. We are no doubt right in assuming that the *grig* of the sim. represents the sense uppermost in the mind of the speaker or writer. But how can we know anything about that? The meaning most common in Staffordshire is perhaps the one least known in Northumberland, and a sense very frequent in Somerset is perhaps not even known in Ireland. We must perhaps be content to say that it represents something that is full of spirits and lively motions, the idea that seems to underlie nearly all senses. When using the sim. people in different parts of the country, who are familiar with the word *grig*, may assign to it different meanings. Those who do not know it (it is not a common word in st. E.) fall to speculating about it, and are likely to repeat what they have been told. To these people the *grig* will be a sand-eel or a cricket according to the opinions of their authorities. There is nothing in the sim. itself or its application that obliges us to prefer one sense to the other. It is of course also possible that many speakers use the word without giving it any fixed or special sense. To them it means simply 'anything having a lively motion.'

It has been put into connection with the earlier recorded term a *merry Greek*, not unfrequently used by the Elizabethans and rec. from 1536 to 1694. To the inst. given by NED these may be added: — I have committed to my mind such store of pleasant devises to please their humours at the table that I am called my Lords merry Greeke, for the company is the merrier that I am in. Fulwell, *Ars Adulandi*, 1576. He's the merriest Greek that ere was heard of. Dav. of Hereford, 1605. Lean. Long hair is the only net that women spread about to entrap men in; and why should not men be as far above women in that commodity, as they go beyond men in others? The merry Greeks were called *καρηχομόωντες* (long-haired) Dekker, GH, 30. — NED says, "The relation of *merry grig* to *merry Greek* is obscure; no doubt one of them must have been a perversion of the other, but the difference of recorded date is too slight to afford ground for saying that *merry Greek* is the original. The probability seems indeed rather on the other side as it is not easy to explain why Greek should be used in this sense, for which there is no precedence in French." But cf. Brewer Dict. 555, 'Patric Gordon . . . says, "No people in the world are so jovial and merry, so given to sing-

ing and dancing as the Greeks.” Skeat, who must have changed opinions, is, as usual, less doubtful. In his CED he says, s. v. *grig*, ‘In phr. “as merry as a grig” *grig* is for *Greek*; from L. *graecari*, to live like Greeks, i. e. luxuriously.’ — But a mere assertion is no argument, and as long as no further facts have been produced, no one is bound to accept so extraordinary a theory. Why should a dialect word that in every respect has the look of a good native word be a corruption of a loanword? It is true that the terms *merry grig* and *merry Greek* are translated into French in the same way: — “They team in French, a boon companion or merry greek, *Roger bon temps*”. Howell, 1650, NED. A *merry-grigge*, *Roger bon temps*, *gale bon temps*, *goinpré*. Sherwood, Elworthy, W. Som. Words, 301. But no translation or rendering can ever give the exact force and all the connotations that a word possesses. It may also be true that the spheres of the words coincide to a very great extent, but a careful perusal of the two articles in NED will show that they are not synonyms in the strictest sense of the word. A merry (or mad or gay) Greek is not only a merry fellow, he is also often a roysterer or a person of loose habits; the word was, or could be used as, a euphemism for a drunkard. The *merry grig* is an extravagantly lively person full of frolic and jest (NED). This justifies the conclusion that the words may go back to different origins. Etymologically the *grig* of the sim. has nothing to do with *Greek*. It is simply one of the many uses of this dialect word, which in most cases signifies something small, quick and lively. Is this its primary meaning? Cf. A true Trojan, and a mad merry grig, though no Greek. 1820. Slang. *Greek* in a *merry Greek* is the old loanword, and the term is occasioned by, or at least explained by, statements like the one in Brewer (see above), and the verb referred to by Skeat. It is noteworthy that the term became current in the early 16th c., the period that witnessed the incoming of the ‘new learning.’ It must be remembered also that there is no inst. of a sim. ‘as merry as a Greek.’ Lean gives this phrase, but it is clearly a literary ‘improvement’. Consequently there is no need to expect a precedence in French or to suppose a perversion of one of the terms into the other. Being similar in sound and belonging to the same sphere of ideas, a *merry grig* and a *merry Greek* may have been used, to a certain extent, indiscriminately, and have been mixed up and misunderstood, especially by latter day interpreters.

As blithe and gay as so many Chiswick nightingales. Josiah Wedgwood in a letter to Bently, 1778. The C. nightingales are of the same kind as the fen nightingales in Linc. Cf. the term Dutch nightingale.

As merry as a cricket. G. Harvey, *New Letter of Notable Contents*, 1593 . . . shall we be merry? — As merry as crickets, my lad. Shak., KH IVa, II, iv, 85. Haughton, Grim, the Collier of Croydon, Lean.

To live as merrily as crickets in an oven. Kingsley, WH, 398. Oh, they were fierce; they were as merry as crickets. 1886, NED. Mullens had become as cheerful and lively as a cricket. NED, 1878.

As pleasant as a cricket. G. Harvey, NED, 1592. "The presence of this cheerful little insect is lucky and portends some good to the family." W. Jardine, *Naturalist's Library*. Lean. On the other side the cricket is often associated with things that are far from merry. Crickets, crows, ravens, cats, &c. are beasts of ill omen. See Lean *passim* and Wright, RS, 315, Dryden, *Oedipus*, IV, 200, Sloet, *De Dieren*, 384 &c.

Exclaim not, neither bewail these pore ones estate, for they can see day at a little whole, and live as merrie, the old proverb saith, as white bee in hive. Bullein, *Bulw. of Def.* Lean, IV. This "old proverb" is not known to any other authority.

We were riding on Hameldon a week ago, and he was bright as a bee and telling me the names of the places, and full of fun, too. Phillpotts, WF, 273.

"Hang thinking, 'snigs, I'll be as merry as a pismire: come, let's in." Wm Cartwright, *The Ordinary*, III, iv, ante 1561. It occurs proverbially. J. H. McMichael, *N. & Q.*, 10, I, 277. See *Proud; Busy*.

'As jolly as a sand-boy', designates a merry fellow who has tasted a drop. 1823, NED. You'll get into it by and by, you see if you don't, and be as jolly as a sandboy. Anstey, VV, 113. Northall, FPh. 8. Zo jolly'z a zan'bwoy. Hewett, Dev. 11. We will smoke together and be as merry as sandboys. Fitz Gerald, 1841, NED. Lean, — What is a *sandboy*? NED explains ?A boy who hawks sand for sale, and quotes John Bee's *Dict. Turf*: — "*Sand-boy*, all rag and all happiness; the urchins who drive the sandladen neddies through our streets, are envied by the capon-eating turtle-loving epicures of these cities." Dickens uses the word in *Old C. Shop*, Ch. xviii, "The Jolly Sandboys was a small roadside inn . . ., with a sign representing three sandboys increasing their jollity with as many jugs of ale and bags of gold . ." But this does not tell us what a sandboy is. "Danny and Billy Quilleash were sworn chums, and the little sandboy learned all the old salt's racy sayings." Caine, D, vi. Here the context makes the sense clear. It simply means a boy that runs about on the beach. The word has also been explained as a labourer who works among sand and gravel pits (*N. & Q.*, 3, IX). "Sand-boy" is the vulgar name of a small insect, which may be seen

in the loose sand so common on the seashore. This insect hops and leaps in a manner strongly suggesting of jollity, and hence I imagine the simile arises.' N. & Q., 3, IX. † the young shrimp skipping on the sand. Lean. Further information required.

As merry as three beans in a blue bladder. P. Robin's Ap. 1698. For further references to this or similar phrases see Lean II, ii. Jingles with *three blue beans* &c. are rec. from 1600, Slang. See *Easy*, Ch. IV.

Madame, ye make my heart light as kyx,/ To see you thus full of your *meretrix*. Heywood, PE, 135. Pun on *merry tricks*. For other sim. with kix (kex) see *Dry*, *Weight*, Ch. IV.

So playde these twayne, as merry as three chips. Heywood, PE, NED. See *Smiling*, *Laughing* &c.

As merry as flovers in May. Lean, II, ii.

As blithe as May. Fletcher, Poems, 1656, Lean, II, ii.

As merry as the day is long.

So were I out of prison and kept sheep,/ I should be as merry as the day is long. Shak., KJ, IV, i, 18. . . . there live we as merry as the day is long. Shak., MA, II, i, 41. Byron, Child Harold, Pt iii, 21. Lean, II, ii. &c. See p. 78.

Happy, Pleased, Content.

Bluejackets as happy as Cherubims. DNL, 22, VII, '13. — Cf. the phrase 'to be in the Cherubims' = to be in good humor. Udall, 1542, Slang.

. . . looking as sweet and contended as an angel half full of pie. Twain, HF, 368.

I was (as the poet says) as pleased as Punch. 1813. NED. (The poet referred to has not been discovered). Dickens, *Hard Times*, 44, W. Norris, *Jim*, 221. &c. — *Punch* is an abbreviated form of *Punchinello*. On the origin of this term and the comic character it represents see *Enc. Brit.* It appears that the introduction into England must have been later than the Restoration period.

I will tell ye, Lady, your great Lord and I/ Have thought ourselves as happy as a King/ To drink the water of a christal spring. *Tragical History of Guy, Earl of Warrick*. 1661, N. & Q., 2, X, 350.

Which made the Dog get on his Legs, pleas'd like a little King. Motteux, 1694, NED.

I am as croose as a king with my ain Jessie Glen. Kcb. EDD. *Croose* = pleased, happy.

If I . . . would send . . . a pound of tobaccko, I should make her husband as happy as a prince. 1804, NED. See *Proud*.

- As pleased as a dog with two tails. Lin. EDD. Folk-Lore, LXIII, 409. See *Proud*.
- She was pleased as an old war horse. Harraden, I., 57.
- Mabel herself be happy as a cow. Phillpotts, WF, 375.
- As happy as a sow i' muck, in a muckhill; a phrase setting forth the contented state of those who live for sensual pleasure. Lin. 1877. Folk-Lore, LXIII, 409.
- As happy as little pigs in new straw. Lanc. EDD.
- So fat as a maggot he is, and so happy as a coney. Phillpotts, WF, 451.
- As lucky as a calling duck. Letter of 1617, N. & Q., 9, VIII, 484.
- 'E comes back fishin' 'ere as 'appy as a lark. Copping, GG, 161, Vachell, WJ. 104. See *Merry* p. 71.
- As happy as a tom tit. Vachell, WJ.
- As pleased as a jay with a bean. Glou. In the vernacular, Az plazed az a joy with a beun. Robertson, Gloss. co. Glouc. 1890. Northall, FPh. 10.
- The poor peasant who satisfies his hunger with submission and salt pork, penitence and potatoes, is as sound as a live oak corporeally and as happy as a clam at high water. Dow, Sermons. Cowan, PS, 34; Bartlett.
- Inglorious friend! most confident I am,
Thy life is one of very little ease;
Albeit men mock thee with similes.
And prate of being "happy as a clam": J. G. Saxe, To a Clam. Cowan, PS. The habitat of the clam is on the coast . . . between high tide and low water mark. It is only gathered when the tide is out. When the tide is in, the clam is secure from molestation, and this accounts for the proverb "as happy as a calm at high tide," J. E. N. Brooklyn, U. S., N. & Q., 7, VIII, 179. Only American, it would seem.
- He was a light-hearted, busy creature, overjoyed to be in a bustle, and as happy as the day is long. Dickens, NN., xxxviii. . . . looking as happy as the days are long. Hardy, DR, 370.

Laughing, Simpering, Grinning.

- To laugh like old Bogie. Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXXV, 86.
— Old B. is the devil. The term is not rec. before Barham, IL.
- To laugh like a pixy, pixies. Dev. Cor. EDD. Rec. from 1816. Folk-Lore, XXXV, 84, Athenaeum, 1846, p. 1092; Wright, RS, 210. Pixies are supernatural beings akin to fairies, and the word is in popular use in the s. w. of England from Cornwall to Wiltshire and Dorset; rec. from 1630. NED. "They must have been a merry lot, since 'to laugh like a Piskie' is a popular saying." Hunt, 1865, EDD.

To laugh like Robin Goodfellow. Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXXV, 85. "This merry fay acted the part of fool or jester in the court of Oberon, the Fairy King." Ibid. ". . . you are that shrewd and knavish sprite, Call'd Robin Good-fellow: are you not he. That . . . misleads nightwanderers, laughing at their harm? Shak., MND. For further references to this frolicsome spirit see Hazlitt, FF, 518.

She simpers like a bride on her wedding-day. Ray.

Lady Smart. Her tongue runs like the clapper of a mill; she talks enough for herself and all the company. *Neverout*. And yet she simpers like a firmity kettle. Swift, PC, 246. Ray; Fuller has *frumenty*-kettle.

She simpers like a frumetty kettle at Christmas. Folk-Lore, XXXV, 92. Furmety or firmity (there are about a dozen forms of the word) is a good old country dish much relished on village feast-days, and in some parts of the country it forms, or formed, the principal feature of Christmas-Eve's supper. (EDD).

To simmer like a porridge-pot on the fire when it first begins to seethe. Nashe, Unfortunate Traveller, Lean, II, ii.

She simpers like a riven dish. Ray.

"Aw look at them — the two of them — grinnin' together like a pair of old gurgouls on the steeple." Caine, D, vii.

So Norcott told me — grinning like a rain-shoot. Phillpotts, AP, 406.

To grin like a basket of chips. Grose. Lean, II, ii.

He smiles like a basket of chips. Shropshire, early 19th c. N. & Q, 4, VII, 9, Cf. 'As merry as three chips.'

To grin like a Cheshire cat. NED, N. & Q. &c. Rec. fr. 1800.

So like a Cheshire cat our Court will grin. P. Pindar, ii, 91, 1830. Lean. Grinning like a Cheshire cat eating cheese. EDD. Grinning like a Cheshire cat chewing gravel. Harland & Wilkinson, Lanc. Leg. 1873, p. 194. "I made a pun the other day, and palmed it on Holcroft, who grinned like a Cheshire cat." Charles Lamb, Letter to Manning, ChsG. 63. See also "Alice in Wonderland." Brewer (Dict. 224) says that it is applied to persons who show their teeth and gums when they laugh. Query correct? Most people show their teeth when they laugh. — "Who was the naturalist who first discovered the peculiarity of the cats of Cheshire?" Thackeray, Newcomes, xxiv. "Cheshire is a county palatine, and the cats, when they think of it, are so tickled that they can't help grinning". N. & Q. "Some years ago Cheshire cheeses were sold . . . moulded into the shape of a cat, bristles being inserted to represent the whiskers. This may possibly have originated the saying." N. & Q., 1, II, 412. Ibid. 1, V, 402, it is ascribed to the unhappy attempt of a sign painter to represent a lion rampant, the crest of an influential family, on

the sign-boards of many of the inns. As these figures resembled cats, they were so called. There are similar cases. In the Wiltshire village of Charlton there was an inn called The Cat at Charlton. The sign of the house was originally a lion or some such animal, the crest of a noble family of the neighbourhood. Towards the end of the 18th c. there was in Houndsditch, in London, a signboard called "Two sneezing cats" (N. & Q., 10, V, 397), and Barham, IL, 109, speaks of a quondam inn called the "old Cat and Fiddle". It is also said to be an allusion to the crest of the Grovenor family (a talbot). N. & Q. "It is possible, however, that the arms of the Earl of Chester, namely a wolf's head, may have suggested the phrase, for . . . in the engraving of the coat of arms of Hugh Lupus, as given by Sir Peter Leycester, the wolf's head might very well be mistaken for that of a cat; whilst the grin is unmistakable". ChsG. — Attention must further be drawn to the fact that *Cheshire cat* is also a sobriquet of a woman of that county, as is witnessed by the saying "a Welsh bitch makes a Cheshire cat, and a Cheshire cat makes a Lancashire witch," (N. & Q., 9, II, 134), which is supposed to represent "the harlot's progress in factory towns." Lean.

- To smile like a brewer's horse. Howel, 1659. Lean, II, ii.
- To simper as a miller's mare. D'urfey, 1720, Lean, II, ii. Cf. *Sober* Ch. II, and the phrase 'to work like a mill-horse.'
- To simper as a mare when she eats thistles. Swift, PC.; Davies, *Scourge of Folly*, 1614. Cf. An ass where thistles grew exceeding rife, / How simperingly he did a thistle gnaw. *ibid.* Lean, II, ii.
- To grin like a sheep's head in a pair o' tangs. Hislop, *The Proverbs of Scotland*, 1862, Lean, II, ii.
- "Grinning like a weasel in a trap" among keepers and others in the North Riding some forty years ago. N. & Q., 10, XII, 148. See *Clever*, p. 34; *Ill-tempered*, *Cross*.
- Mr. Sawdust then came up to them, smiling like a 'boilt haddy.' Luk., EDD. See *Melancholy*, *Gloomy*; *Deaf*, Ch. II.

Proud, Haughty.

- For with the princes of pride the prechours dwellen; þei ben digne as þe devel þat dryppeþ fro heuene, PPl. Crede, 1394, NED. As proud as the devil. Peele, *Old Wife's Tale*. 1595, Wilson, 1691, Centlivre, 1715. Lean, II, ii. Zo proud's tha dowl. Hewett, Dev. 12. Though haughty as the Diuel or his dam. Ford, LM, 38.
- As proud as Lucifer. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, ii, 59, 1509; *Strange Metamorphosis of Man*, 1634; Wright, *Pol. Poems*,

i, 315. Lean, II, ii. A true man and as proud as a lucifer. Hardy, MC, 173, *ibid.* DR, 70, FMC; Brewer, Dict. 1013, &c. I, being as ambitious and as proud as Lucifer's own self. Kingsley, WH, 163. See Isa. XIV. 12 15. Hence many references in MnE, e. g. And pryde proceidis of the Deuil. Lyndesay (Kissel) 5. Stone and iron are only dust; they will not endure; but the pride of Lucifer &c. Phillpotts, AP, 239. A poisoned race. Pride has ruined 'em; as it ruined the Devil, their dam. *ibid.* 55. — *The devil and his dam.* In "Christian mythology" the devil can have no mother, but popular belief has provided him with a mother or grandmother (*Teufels Grossmutter, fans mormor*), no doubt taken over from primitive Germanic demonology. The fact that the devil's race is made to begin with his *mother* hints to a matriarchal origin of the idea. (Lipperheide 561).

Lord Stafford is as proud as hell. Swift, 1711, NED.

Some are as proude as Nabugodonosor. 1526, NED. Dan., i-iv tell of Nebuchadnezzar's pride and fall. — See *Mad, Crazy*, p. 35.

As proud as Punch. Crefton 1889, NED. Dickens, 1861, Alcott, Jo's Boys, 358, W. See *Happy*, p. 77.

As proud as a queen. Clarke.

To speke as lordly as a kyng. Chaucer, RT, 93.

She, who used to be so humble as a milk-maid, is now as proud as a princess. Thackeray, HE, 103.

I felt myself as proud as any prince when she promised to dance. Thackeray, BL, i. Cf. the term *prince-proud*. Princes and pride have been mentioned together for many centuries, the earliest inst. being from c. 1350: — As princes proude in pride. *Libeaus Desconus. W.*

As proud as a duchess. Lean, II, ii.

As proud as any peer. Harte, *Prose*, II, 281. Cf. "the proudest peer", Shak., KH VIa, V, i, 57. W.

His fēīther's bought 'im a new pair o' boots an ēī's as big in 'em as a little lord. Stf. EDD. *Big* = haughty, traced back to 1570.

As bug as my lord. Linc. 1877, Folk-Lore, LXIII, 408.

As bug as a lord. Halliwell. — *Bug* = proud, conceited, rec. from 1567, is obs. in st. E. but widely prevalent in dial.

As proud as a Lord's bastard. Ray.

He can be as distant as a grandee. Whiteing, No. 5, 164. Cf. A muleteer bestrides his heast of burden with the air of a grandee. Longfellow, 1833, NED.

As proud as an apothecary. Clarke, Ray. See *False*, p. 21.

He that soon grows rich from a beggarly life/ Is not for my conversation;/ He's as proud as a presbyter parson's wife, Or a newmade Corporation. A. Brome, 1664. Lean. II, ii.

He's as bug as a Queen's coachman. Lin. EDD.

As proud as lime-burners. Som. EDD. — Why Somerset lime-

burners should be stigmatized as the proudest people of the county, is very difficult to see.

His common gait is as proud as a Spaniard's. Lodge, *Wit's Miserie*, 1592, Lean, II, ii. Already Greville speaks of 'his Spanish hauteur', 1628, NED, and Addison says of a person, 'He found him a true Spaniard, nothing but show and beggary.' Cf. also Sw. 'spansk', which means something like conceited, stuck-up.

As proud as a Mulatto in a negro congregation. Bartlett, Lean, II, ii.

A boat was called to pull the "liberty men" ashore, and we sat down in the stern sheets, "as big as pay-passengers," and jumping ashore, set on our walk for the town . . . Cowan, PS, 29. A 'pay-passenger' is of course a person who pays for his passage as opposed to a "liberty man". The term is unknown elsewhere.

As bug as a lad wiv a leather knife. Nicholson, 1889, EDD.

As big as S. Chs. EDD. 'E's as big-sorted as ess. Shr. EDD. Cf. *Plain*, Ch. IV, and *Grave, Stiff*, p. 60.

To look as big as if he had eaten bull-beef. Clarke, P. P., 1639. Lean, II, ii. He looks as big as bull-beef. Walker, 1690, NED.

As big (or bold) as bull-beef. Yks. EDD. — Ei went dain dh'street əz big əz bullbeif. Stf. Current in several other counties.

As big as bull-beef at Candlemas. Denham. Lean, II, ii.

They had eaten bull beef and threatened highly. Gosson, *School of Abuse*, 1579, Lean, II, ii. Thou hast eaten bull, beef and braggest highly. Gay, *Wife of Bath*, 1713, Lean, II, ii.

Thou may'st bluster like Bull-beef so big. Wolcott, 1785, NED.

Looking big as marquesses of all beefe. Melbancke, *Philotimus*, 1583, Lean, II, ii. — "Bull's beefe is of a rank and unpleasant taste, of thick, gross, and corrupt juyce, and of a very hard digestion. I commend it unto poor, hard labourers, and to them that desire to look big and live basely." Venner, *Via Recta* &c. Lean, II, ii. The idea of bull-beef or bull's blood being unwholesome or poisonous is found already in Latin and Greek writers.

As brant as a besom. Wright, RS, 43. *Brant* = erect, stuck-up, proud, is a N. Cy word. — Does the sim. refer to the stiff uprightness of a "birkbesom"? Cf. *Fond*, p. 43, and "Drunk as a besom", Ch II.

As bug as brass. War. EDD. — Cf. By God's dine, I'll take no wrong if he had a head as big as brass or looked as high as Paul's steeple. Porter, *Two Angry Women*, 1599, Lean, II, ii. Cf. "Bold as brass".

As proud as Cole's dog, which took the wall of a dungcart, and got crushed by the wheel. H. — The phrase 'took the wall' shows that this must be a pretty old sim., although Hazlitt gives no authority. Several references to *Cole's dog* have been found:

— “The pride of old Cole’s dog, who took the wall of a dungcart, and got his guts squeezed out.” N. & Q., 4, XII, 317. “Pride and ambition were the overthrow of Cole’s dog.” *ibid.* “And so like Cole’s dog, the untutored nome/ Must neither go to church nor bide at home.” *ibid.* (said to be in Taylor, the Water Poet). — Who was *Cole*? Cf. ‘the old cole’ s. v. *cole*, sb2 NED.

As proud as a dog in a doublet. Dekker, *Shoemaker’s Holiday*, Lean, II, ii. *A dog in a doublet* is a phrase frequently used, see e. g. G. Harvey, ii, 283, also to denote something ridiculously out of keeping, Harrison, *Descr. of Engl. NSS. I*, 168, *Notes*. Killigrew writes: — “They have been at the Ape’s Academy these six months to breed them fine gentlemen and yet ther’s a cobbler’s dog in a doublet that lives in a cellar in the louvre has outrevelled them both . . .” And Swift: — “Then all this while I have been dubbled/ I thought it was a dog in doublet; The matter now no longer sticks,/ For statesmen never want dog-tricks.” Lean, II, ii. Cf. the exclamation “Oh! ‘The pride of the cobbler’s dog!’” N. & Q. 4, IV, 20.

As proud as a dog with side-pockets. N. Cy. N. & Q., 4, III, 529. See *Useless*, Ch. IV.

As fussy as a dog with two tails. A common saying in North Lincolnshire. N. & Q., 9, II, 375. *Fussy* = proud, conceited in Yks. and Lin.

As proud as a dog with two tails. Cor. W. Morning News, 22 April, 1902. Northall, FPh, 10; N. & Q., 4, IV, 20. “I do not think [it] is very commonly used in Westmoreland”. N. & Q., 4, IV, 20. “Hey’s as big as bull beyf, an’ as prewd as a dog wi’ tow teels.” Notts. N. & Q., 9, II, 144.

As proud as a bell-horse. Robinson, *Whitby Gloss*. As proud as a horse with bells. Northall, FPh. Also ‘in bells’. The horse is supposed to be conscious of its advanced position. Whitby Gl.

‘As proud as a Horse. The sailor generally regarding that creature as showing so much of the devil, with all its rearings and prancings, and “Ha, Ha’s!”’ Ed. Fitz Gerald. *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII. Sflk. In this case *proud* probably has the connotation of grand, splendid. See *Gaudy, Fine*, Ch. III.

As proud as a tame turkey. Bartlett, Lean, II, ii. As proud as turkey-cocks. Phillpotts, SW.

As any peacock he was proud and gay. Chaucer, RT, 3926. &c. Towneley Myst., Spenser; Clarke; Ray; Thackeray, *The New-comes*, W; etc.

I found him strutting about as proud as a peacock. Doyle, SF, 28c.

Men are as proud as peacocks when they put on spring plumage. Baring-Gould, RS, 78.

They are as bragge and proude as pecockes. 1560, NED.

As proud as a pea-hen. Haughton, *Grim the Collier of Croydon*. iii, 1662. Lean, II, ii. — For some further inst. see Lean II, ii.

There are numerous allusions to the pride of the peacock. "The peacock is proudest of his fair tail." *Schollehouse of Women*, 1541. "Thou art for pride a peacock which doth loathe/ To look upon her legs;" Davies, *Scourge of Folly*. Lean, IV. "Fly pride, says the peacock." Shak., CE, IV, iii. "Proud as a peacock; all strutt and show." H. &c.

Ez phrood ez a banty cock. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. He stood as brant as a bantam cock. Wm. EDD. He's as croose as a banty cock. Patterson, Antrim & Down Gloss. EDS.; Palmer, FE. 84. Cf. As conceitit as a banty. Cum. 1881.

As proud as a cock on his own dung hill. Ray. For earlier inst. see Skeat, EEP, 9. The first ref. is from *Ancren Riwle*: — "As me seith: — Thet coc is kene on his owune mixenne." Cf. "A cok is myzty on his dongehille," Higden, *Trevisa*, vii, 5. Lean, III. On his awn midden an awd cock feights hard. Yorkshire Dial. 9. A cock is crouse in his own midding. Ray. — These proverbial phrases seem to point out that *proud* must have the connotation of 'arrogantly fierce and valiant.' The mediæval Latin proverb said, *Gallus in suo sterquilinio multum potest* (*Gallus cantat in suo sterquilinio* is another form). *Hanen yfwes på sooperna*. Grubb, 311. Similar sayings in other languages as well. For modern ref. see NED and cf. "The inferior soul, arrogant always, like the dunghill cock, clamorous of the glory of dung. Masefield. CM, 31.

I was drinking in his words and smiling away, as conceited as a cock on a wall. Stevenson. TI. 98; see *Bold*.

As proud as a hen with one chick. Oxf. EDD; Lowsley, Berkshire Words, Lean, II, ii. See *Busy*. "Aggressively proud of an insignificant object." EDD.

As proud as a magpie. Lean, II, ii. Cf. the Chaucerian 'And sche was proud and pert as is a pye. ReT 3950.

As proud as a thrush. Lin. Folk-Lore, LXIII, 408.

He was as proud as a toad with a side-pocket. — "Since my boyhood I have been acquainted with [this saying]." Cuthbert Bede, N. & Q., 5, I, 18. See *Useless*, Ch. IV.

As a conceited person walks with head erect, it is said 'He walks as brant as a pissimire.' Yks. EDD.—Folk-Lore LXIX, 223 explains this as referring to the *dandelion*, which in some parts of the country is termed pissimire. But what is there erect, stiff or stuck-up about a dandelion? It is far more natural in this connexion to think of the other word, *pismire* = ant.

Mrs. So-and-so was as proud as a louse of her little girl. — Common in the West Riding of Yorkshire. N. & Q., 8, III, 388. Som.; Hewett, Dev. 12. As pert as a louse. N. & Q., 8, III, 418.

As bug as a lop. Lin. 1877, Folk-Lore, LXIII, 408. — *Lop* is now only dial.

So-and-so's as brant as a yackeron. Cleveland Gloss. 64. Of a pompous, stuck-up individual. — He rides as brant as an acorn. Yks. EDD. For other sim. with *acorn* see *Right* Ch. IV. *pey ben digne* as ditch water þat dogges in bayteth. PPl. Cr. 1394, NED. As *digne* (or *deyne*) as water in a dich. Chaucer, ReT. — By way of explanation NED says Cf. 'stinking with proud'. 'Making people keep their distance', Mayhew & Skeat, MED.

Vain.

As vain as a girl of sixteen. Lean, II, ii.

Frank is as vain as a girl, cousin. Talk of girls being vain — what are we to you? [to Colonel Esmond], Thackeray, HE, 330.

Ask Leigh here, who has but known me a fortnight, whether I am not as vain as a peacock, as selfish as a fox, as imperious as a bona roba. Kingsley. WH, 163; N. Age, 5, X. — For sim. referring to a showy appearance, see *Gaudy*, *Fine*, Ch. III.

Fastidious, Nice.

As nice as the Mayor of Banbury. H. — Where has H. found this phrase, and what is the application of it? — See p. 47.

He sat picking at it [his food] as dainty as a young lady, and the bits he didn't approve of he chucked away. *London Mag.* '15, 748.

. . . And be as nyce in a mannys hous/ As is a catt playing with a mous. *Colyn Blowbol's Test.* Lean, II, ii.

As dutch as a dog in a doublet. 1891, Yks. Fine, affected in language. EDD. Cf. To talk as Dutch as Daimport's bitch, in a more refined tongue than the ordinary dial. Chs. EDD.

" . . . some be nyse as a nanne hen/ ʒet al thei be nat soo.

some be lewde, some all be schreude/ go shrewes where thei goo." The Wright's Chaste Wife, 1462. H, where some further references are found. See also *Songs* 96.

She took thentertainment of the young men/ All in daliaunce, as nice as a nuns hen. J. Heywood, PE, ed. Spenser Soc. 43. I knewe a priest that was as nice as a Nonnes Henne, when he would say Masse. 1553, NED. Cotgrave, 1611. Slang. — In what way is a nun's hen more "nice" than other people's fowl? Cf. She held her head higher than ever, became more sententious and choice in her phrases and minced in her going, like a game hen. Phillipotts, WF, 98.

As nice as a Nanny-hen. — Very affected, delicate. Slang, Halliwell. The term *nanny-hen* is unknown to other dict. There is in NED the unexplained term *nannicock*. As an authority for

his word Halliwell quotes *nanne hen* given above. But this must either be *nan-hen* or, which is more probable, a mistake for *nonne hen* = *nun's hen*.

Ez neyce ez an otter. — "Nice in this case means dainty, particular, eating as it does only the very best part of the fish it kills, leaving the rest untouched on the bank." Blakeborough, NRY, 244.

Jealous, Vindictive.

She tightens up and becomes as greedy as the grave and as jealous as death. Phillpotts, WF, 250.

As jealous as a couple of hairdressers. Trench, *On the Lessons in Proverbs*, 1853, Lean, II, ii. "I have lately heard several times in the south of England [this] phrase. Cf. Aussi jaloux, ces deux seigneurs/ L'ung de l'autre, que deux coëffeurs. *La Batailles des Batailles, Roman Comic par C. Langlois, 1721*" N. & Q., 4, IV, 267. — Sous Louis XV et sous Louis XVI les coiffeurs ne furent moins féconde, ni moins inventifs: on façonna la tête de seigneurs à *l'oiseaux royal*, . . . à *la plus tôt fait, à la jalousie* etc. Larousse. — *Hairdresser* is not traced back above 1771.

As jealous as a barren wife. Congreve, *Old Bachelor*, I, v, 1693.

As jealous as three Bartelmy dolls in a wicker basket. N. & Q., 4, XI, 57. Cf the term *Bartholomew baby*, a gaudily dressed doll, such as appear to have been commonly sold at B. Fair. Slang. They seem to have been regarded as a type of something showy or fine, see Ch. III, but why should they also be looked upon as being jealous?

As jealous as a cat. Torriano, 1666, Lean, II, ii.

I am as vindictive as an elephant. Shaw, IK, 154. Cf. They're a varry lungeous thing is an elephant. Yks. EDD. *Lungeous* = ill-tempered, vindictive.

As jealous as a turkey. *Wit's Labyrinth*, by J. S., 1648, Lean, II, ii.

There was she, always after Adolphus, and as jealous as a hen with one chick. Phillpotts, WF, 436. See p. 84.

I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pigeon over his hen. My affectation hath an unknown bottom like the bay of Portugal. Shak., *AYL*, IV, i, 185. See *Honest, Faithful* p. 12.

She is as jealous as a crocodile. Shaw, IK, 106.

Hard-hearted. Cruel.

Did she have some past history, some unhappy complication of the affections, which made her as cold as Dian? Besant & Rice, AS, 60. *Chaste*, p. 13.

Look grim as hell; Shak., Oth., IV, ii, 65.

The man's cruel as the grave an' hard as stone. Phillpotts, P. 54.

An enemy hungry as the grave for evermore. *Ibid.* 186.

An enemy as greedy and as patient as the grave. *Ibid.* 200.

Cf. I seeke a greedy graue. Gascoigne, 1572.

Essterday he stood in the opeway an' stared out afore him so grim as a ghost, Phillpotts, AP, 244.

You're crueller than Turks. Dekker, HWh, Ia, vi.

He sang her love-songs as he sat at his work,/ But she was as hard as a Jew or a Turk. Watts, 1729, Lean, II, ii. Cf. also: As fierce as a Turke. Bale, King John, c. 1550, Lean, II, ii. Such crueltie hath not been known/ Among the Turks so rude. Philotus, B. 2, 1603, Lean, II, ii. *Turk* has for ever been the embodiment of all that is cruel and tyrannical.

As cruel as a Spanyard. (W. Cornw.) The village of Paulchurch was burnt by them. Polwhele, Hist. of Cornw. 1816, Lean, II, ii. The 16th c. relations with the Spaniards were none too pleasant, and traces are left in a great many phrases of a rather uncomplimentary character (see e. g. *Swearing*).

As hard-hearted as a Scot of Scotland. Ray, Cf. He was hard wi' me as if I had been the wild Scot of Galloway. Hislop, 1862; i. e. dealt with me rigorously and severely. The 'Wild Scots of G.' were the Highlanders of their day in a fighting reputation. See Mac Taggart, Gallovidian Encycl.; Lean II, ii. See *False*, p. 22.

As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows to pity. Tennyson, 1842. NED. A common experience.

As cold as charity. See *Cold*, Ch. IV.

Since that time my wife's as cold as the statue at Charing Cross.

I tell thee she has no forgiveness in her. Thackeray, HE, 127. — Does this refer to the equestrian statue of Charles I, which in 1674 was put up on the spot where, until 1647, had stood the cross erected by Edward I to commemorate his queen?

I know I am as hard as nails already; I don't want to get more so.

Edna Lyall, *Donovan*, xxiii. Brewer, Dict.

She takes pity and forgives. As for himself, he was as hard as nails, and the people knew it. Besant & Rice, AS, 10, RMM 25.

The old stewards of manors . . . as a class . . . were hard as nails. Jessop, 1889, NED, Benson, C. 27, 31.

Last time I left home, I felt as hard as nails. Wells, AV, 324.

He can be as obstinate as all the donkeys on Dartmoor when he pleases, and as proud as a peacock and as hard as a nail. Phillpotts, WF, 110. Cf. "The child ain't over strong and healthy, such as ort to be in the Punch Bowl, where we are all as hard as nails." — "Aye, not in physic only." Baring-Gould, BS, 195. — "Hard as nails. Stern, hardhearted,

unsympathetic; able to stand hard blows like nails. Religious bigotry, strait-lacedness, rigid puritanical pharisaism make men and women hard as nails.' Brewer, Dict. See *Healthy* and *Strong*, Ch. II.

She is as hard as steel. Shak., TGV, I, i, 135. Were thy heart as hard as steel. *ibid.* KH VIc, II, i, 201; Rich. II, III, ii, 111. "She may make a man as soft as a sponge," reflected Sapt, starting again, "or as hard as a bar of steel." Hope, RH, 272. (refers to the moon.)

What had he left on earth but a heart trampled as hard as a pavement? Kingsley, WH, 189.

Ez hard ez t'to'npike. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. What is the application of this sim.?

I believe you have a heart as hard as the nether millstone. Black, 1877, NED. He was supposed to be absolutely merciless, — as hard as a nether millstone. A. Trollope, Cald., 1879, Storm, EP, 604.

His face grew hard as the nether millstone. Besant, RMM, 136. The more flippant you are, the more you harden my heart: and I want it to be as hard as the nether millstone. Shaw, IK, 234.

Providence turns out this man weak as water, though good as gold. And another may be hard as the nether millstone and bad to the heart. Phillipotts, WF, 71. Cf. His [Leviathan's] heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone. Job, xli, 24, or as the Geneva Bible has it: His hart is as strong as a stone, and as hard as the nether milstone. NED.

As hard as a bone. Fr. 1833. — Very hard, austere, unyielding. Slang. Dubs were as hard as ony bane. Nichol, 1837, NED. See *Dry*, Ch. IV.

They were as untiring and as remorseless as bloodhounds. Doyle, AG, 329. Cf. He is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog. Shak., TGV, II, iii, 9. See pp. 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 39, 48 &c.

Ez meean ez a cat wiv a moose. Blakeborough, NRY, 242. — *Mean* is used in the sense of cruel. The way a cat plays with its victim before killing it is the very essence of cruelty. *ibid.* 244.

Ez soft-hearted ez a rezzil. — Implies absolute cruelty, the weasel lacking the smallest spark of generosity in its nature. Blakeborough, NRY, 243.

With stoute Romaynes, crewel as lyoun. Chaucer. See *Fierce*, p. 92. But you are more inhuman, more inexorable, O, ten times more, than tigers of Hyrcania. Shak., KH VIc, I, iv, 154.

There is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger. Shak., Co. V, iv, 27.

Cruel as a tiger at heart. Phillipott, TK, 101. — See *Fierce*, p. 92.

- These sim. referring to the fierceness and cruelty of tigers and lions are traditional, taken over from the classical poets.
- Mirry Margaret . . . Gentyll as faucon/ Or hauke of the towre. Skelton, 1529, Lean, II, ii, Two inst. from 1570, 1616 *ibid.*
- Thy wife is as gentle as a falcon. Heywood, PE, 293.
- Cruel as an ostrich in desert. Wyclif, 1382, NED. Denham. A reference to the bird's supposed want of regard for its young. See NED.
- Ez cruel ez a spider. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. Cf. the Sw. "*arg som en spindel*".
- Ha is hardre iheorted þen adamantines stan. 1225. Cf. They made their hertes as an Adamant stone. Coverdale, Zech. vii, 12. As in AV. For the meaning of *adamantines stan* see NED. *Adamant* is now only a poetical word, and denotes anything very hard. Cf. The young gentlemen were as adamant. Duncan, AG, 247. See p. 10.
- Have herte as harde as dyamant. Chaucer, Rom. R, 4385. An angel face, a serpent tongue, and a heart . . . as hard as a diamond. Kingsley, WH, 450. This use of *diamond* is said to be obsolete (NED).
- Hard is her heart as flint or stone,/ She laughs to see me pale. Gay, NS. [Scrooge was] Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire. Dickens, Christmas Carol, 10. My heart set as hard as flint within me. Doyle, SF, 251. — *Flint* is often used in phrases to signify unrelenting hardness of heart, e. g.; Let it be your glory/ To see her tears, but be your heart to them/ As unrelenting flint to drops of rain. Shak., TA, II, iii, 139. . . . thy flinty heart. *ibid.*, KH V1b, III, ii, 99. He . . . attempted soft disuasions. On the point, however, I was flint. Copping, GG, 69. Northall, FPh. — Cf. also: A dulness hard and cold as flints. Ford, LM, 78. It lies as coldly in him as flint, which will not show without knocking. Shak., TC, III, iii, 254. There is also the term *flint-heart(ed)*, rec. from the latter half of the 16th c. See *True*, p. 11.
- Her face looked hard as granit. Harraden, Interp. 280. The eternal facts, hard as granit and stern as nature. Phillpotts, AP, 12. See *True*, p. 11.
- Though ye ben harder then is any ston. Chaucer. An hert as hard as is a stoon. *ibid.* Occlve, Reg. Princ., see above. Marlowe, *Lust's Dominion*, v, 3, Lean, II, ii. Rome could afford no tribune like to these./ A stone is soft as wax, tribunes more hard than stones;/ A stone is silent and offendeth not,/ And tribunes with their tongues doom men to death. Shak., TA, III, i, 44. Gay, NS. You are as hard as a stone. Shaw, LA, 70. Captain F. sat smiling, and I looked on as cold as a stone. Thackeray, BL, ii.

Oh, Martin, don't be cruel: You have not kissed me once. You are as unresponsive as a stone. London, ME, 392. Cf. thy stone-hard heart, Shak., KR, III, IV, iv, 227. Moor-stone be soft compared to her. Phillpotts, WF, 342.

The following quotations may be added:

She is wilder and more hard withall/ Than beast or bird, or tree, or stony wall. Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, II, i. In MS Harl. 3277 there is almost identically the same: More fierce is my sweet love withall/ Then beast, or bird, then tree or stony wall. See Dodsley, (ed. 1825), III, 119.

Note. Some of the numerous sim. under *Hard*, Ch. IV, are perhaps also used of hard-heartedness.

Fierce, Angry, Mad.

He is down upon 'em as stern as the Lord upon the jovial Jews. Hardy, MC, 40; Cf. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. Judges, ii, 14, &c.

. . . . looketh as fers as any fury of hell. *Songs*, 74.

He'll be mad as hell [= furious, angry]. Masfield, CM, 151. To-morrow do I meet thee, fell as death; To-night all friends. Shak., TC, IV, v, 269. Cf. the most cruel passage, and more fel than eny deth. Mel. 152.

"You can tell me when I have worked through that," says he, looking as fierce as a commander. Stevenson, TI, 11.

As wrathy as a militia officer on a training day. Bartlett, Lean, II, ii. *Wrathy* is chiefly American, Irish or Scotch, rec. in Thornton from 1834.

As mad as a hatter. — Angry. *Slang*.

As mad as a piper. Cum. EDD. — *Mad* = passionate, irascible, angry is now only colloquial. In American English and in many dial. the usual word for *angry*. NED. See also Thornton.

Sence then he's been as mad as a bar-keep with a lead quarter, which ain't usual with Tim. White, BT, 180. A *quarter* is a quarter of a dollar.

Usurped power that is more fierce than a Turk. Bale, *Kynge Fohn*, c. 1550. Lean, II, ii. See *Cruel*, p. 87.

As fierce as aqua fortis. Tatham, Rump, 1660. Lean, II, ii.

As mad as a wheelbarrow. Cor. EDD. What is there *mad* or angry about a wheelbarrow? See *Drunk*, Ch. II.

As fierce as a ram-cat. Bartlett, Lean, II, ii. Cf. Like two furious rancats on the very point of clapper-clawing. Irwing, 1809. NED. *Ramcat* is an Ir. and chiefly s. w. dial. term for a tom-cat. Not traced back above 1672. Not in Thornton.

He was as mad as a Stamford bull, he was at that time, an' ripped

oot, while I thought he'd ha brussen hissen wi' bad lang-
widge. 1889, Lin., Folk-Lore, LXIII, 409. See *Mad* p. 39.
As lawless as a town-bull. R. The word *town-bull* is rec. 1597—
1709. It was a "bull formerly kept in turn by the cow-keepers
of a village." NED. But cf. "The 30th day of April in
the year of our lord 1666. — Hereafter followeth a note of
such anchant Customs as hath bin used within the parish of
St. Martin's . . . Art. I. The Parishioners of the said Parish
ought to have, by thare custom, of thare parson or his Proctor
under him, a Bull alwaie remaining upon the Gleab of the
Parsonage of St. Martin's aforesaid, for the necessary use at
all times when the occasion shall sarve." N. & Q., 5, X, 354.
— There are some proverbial phrases referring to the town-
bull: — A thing that will happen at "Latter Lammas" is to
take place when "the town-bull is a bachelor." See also *Dull*
p. 54.

Others, again, we have, like hungry lions,/ Fierce as wild bulls,
untameable as flies. Dekker, HWh, Ia, xii. Cf. Warwick
rages like a chafed bull. Shak., KH VIc, II, v, 126.

As rank as a bull. *Ymage of Hypocrisy*, 2059, 1533, Lean,
II, ii. *Rank* = violent. In some Midland counties it still means
vexed, passionate.

As fell as a bull, Lin. 1877, Folk-Lore, LXIII, 409. — *Fell* =
savage, angry. Cf. the expression 'a bull in a china shop'.
See *Ill-tempered*, p. 101.

She foameth like a boar, the beast should seem bold;/ For she is
fierce as a Lion of Cotsolde./ She frieth in her own grease,
but as for my part,/ If she be angry, beshrew her angry heart.
Heywood, PE, 44. Then will he look as fierce as a Cotsold
lyon. Udall, RRD, 68. Castus is as furious as a Lyon of Cotsold.
Porter, *Two Angry Women*, 1599, Lean, II, ii. — This must
refer to anger and fierceness of the hen-muck kind. See below.
A *Cotsold*, or *Cotswold lion* is a 'lion with a white face',
frequently seen about the Cotswold hills in Gloucester, a long-
wooled breed of sheep. The term is obsolete since the early
17th c. For some further inst. see Lean.

As mad as a tup. Derbyshire. N. & Q., 9, VIII, 501.

As mad as a tup in a halter [hauter]. Jackson & Burne, 595,
Chs. EDD. Cf. An old tup-headed ass. Scott, A, 64.

As savage as a tup. Northall, FPh, 11. — "In Derbyshire
there is no commoner saying to express anger. . . A tup is
a ram, and its furious onslaughts upon an intruder at a certain
season of the year has produced the saying." N. & Q.

As angrie as an asse with a squib in his breech. Cotgrave, 1611.
NED.

pe sargantz pat ware brem als bare. c. 1300, NED.

He come to me as breme as bere. c. 1420. NED; inst. 1550,
1650 *ibid*. As brym as a boar. 1575, Lean, II, ii. Cf. Else

will he come, — never bore so brymme, not toste so hot. Udall, RRD, 67.

As wode as wild bore. c. 1400, NED.

He was fierce as forest-boar. Butler, H., 52.

Have I not heard the sea puff'd up with winds/ Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat? Shak., TS, I, ii, 196. — *Breme* is obs. since the middle of the 17th c. except in dial. For the modern dial. sense of the word see EDD.

As angry as an ape. Montgomery, *The Cherrie and the Slaye*, 1597, Lean, II, ii.

As savage as a bear with a sore head. Marryatt, 1830, NED. See *Ill-tempered* p. 102. As savage as a bear. Lean, II, ii. And one doth whisper soft in another's eare/ And sayth this tiran is feller than a bear. Barclay, Ecl. I., ante 1530. Lean, II, ii.

As fiers as leoun pulled out a swerd. Chaucer, KnT, 740 &c. Thus Wallace ferd als fers as a lyoun. 1470, NED. But "as the Proverb sayth, The lion is not so fierce as he is painted." See also Hulme, NH, 117.

The poytevins were fel like lyons. Mel. 200.

Lyk any lyoun he was als brym and bald. Stewart, 1535, NED.

Rampand lyke any wyld Lyoun. Lyndesay, (Kissel) 35, where several similar instances are referred to fr. c. 1550. — There are many proverbial and allusive phrases that speak of the lion's fierceness &c. See NED.

Ralph being by this time as furious as a baffled tiger, made for the door. Dickens, NN, liv.

Quick and fierce as a tiger-cat, the girl sprang on the ruffian. Kingsley, WH, 379. Cf. She'd flee at me like a Bengal tegur. Fraser, 1895, Luk, EDD. Fierce persons have also been called *tigers* from Dunbar's time.

As mad as a March hare. Ant. EDD.

It pits me aye as mad's a hare. Burns, 1784, EDD. See *Mad, Crazy* p. 40 f.

As fierce as a buck-rat. 1877, NED. A buck-rat is a male rat. The term is probably not very common.

He is naturally as mad as a beaver, and will scold like a ter-magant. 1809, Thornton. See *Busy*.

They . . . managed the Dispute as fiercely as two Game-cocks in the Pit. Locke, 1693, NED. There may have been proverbial sim. resembling this phrase in the good old cock-fighting days.

As fierce as hen-muck. — Fierce but harmless. Yks. EDD.

Hot's the matter then? Why thee art so wild's a cock-goose. — A very common jeer to an irascible person. Som. EDD.

As fierce as a goose. Ray. — Probably also a very harmless kind of fierceness.

As fierce as a dig. — “The expression is used proverbially in Lan., I believe.” N. & Q., 2, XII, 309. Another cor. *ibid.* 511, says, “A *dig* is a duck in Lancashire, but I never heard the proverb.”

As mad as a coot. — A w. Cornwall saying meaning that the person was excessively angry. N. & Q., 2, II, 307. See p. 42.

Fierce as a startled adder. Pope, *Dunciad*, IV, 373.

As full of anger as a blown toad. Chs. EDD. See *Antipathy and Ill-tempered* p. 103.

As mild as a hornet. Smyth, Berkeley MSS, 1639, Lean, II, ii. Now merry as a cricket and by and by/ Angry as a wasp. Heywood, PE, 31. Gascoigne's *Steel Glass*, 1576, H.

Ez savage ez a wasp. Blakeborough, NRY, 240; in daily use.

As mad as wasp. Chs. Gl.; a common saying. — Cf. the adj. *waspish*.

He is as angry as a pissemyre,/ Though that he have all that he can desire. Chaucer, SoT 1825. Cf. *Busy*.

As mad as hops. American. Ware. “But he was angry — “madder'n hops” in his own vernacular. London, DS, 53, Such a grin! It made me mad as hops. 1884, NED.

This sim. is not known to Lean or H., and to judge from the inst. it must be chiefly American. — What is *hops*? NED gives the sim. s. v. *hop* sb. 1, but adds (? with play on *hop* sb. 2), i. e. the sim. refers to the plant but at the same time it has the connotation that a person who is ‘as mad as hops’ is also just as furious as if he were ‘hopping mad’, as the old saying has it (rec. already 1675), so enraged that he could hop and dance about. This is of course possible, but it does not tell us anything as to how the sim. originated. What has given rise to it? It must be one of these two words unless we are to believe in the existence of some third word *hop* not registered by NED (see ‘as fast as hops,’ Ch. IV.). Which is it? The expression *hopping mad* would seem to be an argument in favour of the latter word *hop*, but the very form of the word in the sim. and its use in other respects render it highly improbable that this sb. is intended. But in what way could the hop-plant come to be regarded as a type of madness or anger? It is true that the old 16th c. herbalist Lyte (see Britten & Holland, EPN, 267), called the male plant *Wild Hops*. But as *wild* in this case simply means uncultivated, it cannot have occasioned the phrase. In all sim. it is the essential nature and the inherent character and qualities of the second member rather than its more or less occasional attributes that have created the sim. There must be something in the word *hops* itself that is suggestive of madness at least in some sense of the adj. *mad*.

The “scientists” of olden times commonly believed that a great many plants, without being poisonous in the modern

sense of the word, could have a baleful influence upon human life. According to the old Latin verse *Cum faba florescit, stultorum copia crescit*, it was thought that beans, or at least sleeping in a bean-field, caused madness. A plant having this effect might itself be called *mad*, but nothing of this kind seems to be known about the hop. The word is not traced back above the end of the 15th c. This indicates that although the plant must have been known much earlier, as is witnessed by the words *humbletoft* and *humbleyard*, which are said to occur in *Promptorium Parvulorum* (N. & Q., 2, II, 335; see *Prompt. Parv.*, ed. Camden Soc. p. 245, where we read "*hops* hoppe, sede for beyre, *Humulus secundum extraneos.*"), it cannot have played any very important part in mediæval "medicine". We know that in the reign of Henry VI it was represented by physicians as being unwholesome and "noxious", which caused a petition to be made against the "wicked weed called hops", and in 1528 their use is said to have been prohibited under severe penalties. (N. & Q., 2, II, 244; according to *Prompt. Parv.*, ed. Camden Soc., no record of this prohibition has been found). Fuller, in his *Worthies*, art. Wessex, refers to this and says, "They are not so bitter in themselves as others have been against them, accusing hops for noxious; preserving beer but destroying those who drink it. Their back-friends also affirm, the stone never so epidemical in England since the general reception and use of hops in the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII." — Hops have also been supposed to induce sleep (Dyer, FLP). But nothing can be deduced from these items to explain the saying. But on the other hand "As bitter as hops, as sleepy as hops" would be pretty clear and intelligible.

But all these considerations are perhaps altogether beside the mark. If it is one of the numerous American additions to English phraseology, it can have nothing to do with 16th c. "science". It may either be a creation of the prolific American mind, and to seek anything rational about it would perhaps be just as sensible as to invite the Man in the Moon to one's next party. Or perhaps behind the sb. *hops* there is some other word, unknown and forgotten now, which has been changed by popular etymology and associated with the plant-name. See *Quick*, Ch. IV.

He's as sharp as thorn, and fretful carries hay in's horn. Herrick, 1646, NED. See *Sharp*, Ch. III.

As mad as a hedge. Yks. EDD. Cf. the extensive pejorative use of *hedge*; see p. 18.

Turnus hym self as fers as ony gleid. Douglas, 1613, NED. *Gleed* is frequently used in *sim.* in late ME and early MnE. See *Red*, Ch. III, *Hot*, Ch. IV.

As fel as any fire. Skelton, *Why Come ye not to Court*.

As wroth as the wind. *Allit. Poem on Deposition of Rich. II.* p. 20 (Camden Soc.). Lean, II ii. For further ref. to sim. phrases see *ibid.*

What sayes our sonne, how doe you finde him? — Alas my lord, as raging as the sea. Shak., *Hamlet*, IV, i, q. 1.

The time and my intents are savage-wild,

More fierce and more inexorable far

Than empty tigers or the roaring sea. Shak., RJ, V, iii, 37.

Ill-tempered, Spiteful, “Contrairy”, Obstinate.

As ill-conditioned as old Nick. Northall, FPh., 9. — On different terms for the devil see p. 31.

Shay's as nasty as the devil unknobbed. (i. e. a devil who has either never had any knobs fastened on his horns or else has succeeded in getting rid of them. “The phrase well illustrates the bovine character of the popular ‘devil.’”) Evans, *Leicestershire Words & Phrases*, 1881, Folk-Lore, XXXVII.

“This weather'd make a man mad enough to eat the devil with his horns left on”. White, BT, 76.

Sits sour as the devil, when all around him are joyous. 1824, Gall. EDD. Holloa, Bill! Hot's the matter? Maister comed out benow lookin' so hugly's the devil. W. Som. Gloss. 785.

He's as faal as the Dule. 1889, EDD. *Foul* = foul-tempered occurs in Chs. Yks. Lan. Nots. Lin.; not known to st. E.

They . . . bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at tham that keepit them on. 1827, NED. See p. 22, and *Black*, Ch. III.

As cross as a witch. *Denham Tracts*, Folk-Lore, XXXV, 84. — This sense of *cross* is traced back to 1639, NED.

As sour as Hector. — A common saying. Lakel. EDD. Cf. the verb ‘to hector’ and *Shameless*.

You are grown as crabbed as old Periwinkle, the drunken tinker. Smollet, RR, 125. — Does this refer to any proverbial figure called P.? There is in Mrs. Centlivre's play *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, 1717, a character called Periwinkle. He is ‘positive and surly’ but is said to be a ‘silly, half-witted virtuoso’, which term can hardly be applied to a tinker. — On the origin and the sense-development of *crabbed* see NFD, and for an etymological curiosity Palmer, FE, 81.

As quarrelsome as a tinker. NED; mentioned but no inst. given. Yo're as natthert as two tinkers. *Natthert* = nattered = ill-tempered. Lan. 1864, EDD.

As bluff as a midnight constable. Mrs. Centlivre, 1705, NED. *Bluff* = ‘big, surly, blustering’; earliest inst. in NED.

As ill-natured as an old maid. Congreve, *Old Bachelor*, v, 1693; *ill-natured* = churlish, spiteful fr. c. 1650, NED.

As spiteful as an old maid. Bohn. — Cf. The crossest of old maids, Sala, 1860, NED. You know the cross-grained old-maidenly sort of person that fate is. Mrs. Caffyn, 1896, NED, &c.

You are as contrarious as a woman. Mason, PK, 35.

I'd be as techy as a child. Donaldson, 1809, EDD. *Techy* = touchy.

As teedy as a child. — *Teedy* = teaty (teety) is a Sc. and N. Cy word meaning peevish, fretful, cross, chiefly used of children.

We are fretful as babies whose regimen of quiet must still be adapted to their appetite for noise. Whiteing, No. 5, 134.

Dyer turned on his heel and went out. "Sore as a boil, ain't he!" commented old Jackson Hines with a chuckle. White, BT, 69. *Sore*, = irritable, touchy, rec. fr. the end of the 17th c.

He got so touchy as proud-flesh, an' told me to run out of his sight. Phillpotts, AP, 245. *Touchy* = easily moved to anger fr. c. 1600. The term *proud flesh* is used already by Lanfranc.

As short as a Marchington wake-cake. Stf; used of a woman's temper. "A certain sort of Wake-cake has passed into a proverb. — A Wake is a local carnival coupled with the name of the village, or with that of the patron saint of the parish church or the anniversary of the church opening or consecration." Wright, RS, 305.

She is as crusty as that is hard baked. Somers. Ray. Cf. You need not be so crusty, you are not so hard bak'd. *ibid.* This is already in Lyly, *Mother Bombie*: You need not be crustie, you are not so hard backt. NED. His loaves, which are crusty, and his temper, which is not. Mitford, 1830, NED.

You two never meet but you fall to some discord: you are both as rheumatic as two dry toasts; you cannot one bear with another's confirmities. Shak., KH IVb, II, iv, 51. This is probably a misapplication of Mistress Quickly's, but we know that *rheum* and *spleen* were sometimes confounded (see Foster, s. v.). Cf. also 'as hot as a toast.'

Hoo's wurr nor a barrel o' seawr ale. Lan. EDD.

His heart was bitter as wormwood. Baring-Gould, BS. 112. Cf. If she is bitter to me, she is sloes and wormwood to the servants. *ibid.*, RS, 16. *Bitter* is applied to a person who is constitutionally unable to see anything but the darkest side of things, and who, in consequence, is extremely peevish, sour, cross-grained, and likely to let his ill-temper get the better of him, especially when his pet grievances are touched. — The phrase is of biblical origin: — For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood. Prov., V, 4.

Wormwood fig. for bitterness at least fr. Shak., LLL, V, ii.

A testy old huntsman as hot as a peppercorn. Irving. 1822, NED.

As hot as pepper, Lean, II, ii.

— Some of the numerous sim. under *Hot*, Ch. IV, are perhaps also applied to a *hot* or *violent-tempered* person.

He is as hot as Dick's pepper-box. — According to Chaffers (*Hist. of Porcelain &c.* 3rd edit. 543), this saying originated with Mr. Richard Chaffers, the eminent Liverpool potter. H. — *Pepperbox* used of a hot-tempered person, Kingsley, 1867, NED.

As peppery as Durham Mustard. — A proverbial saying extremely applicable to persons of hot temperament, especially those of feminine gender. *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXIX, 39. — The City of Durham is famous for seven things: Wood, Water, Pleasant Walks, Law, Gospel, Old Maids, and Mustard. — At no very distant epoch, Durham was highly celebrated for the manufacture and superior quality of its mustard; but now, alas! other places . . . have superseded it, and at the present day: —

Its honours are gone, and its glories are flown.

And it is no longer a fam'd mustard town!

Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore, XXIX, 51. — NED has no inst. of this sense of *peppery* before 1861, and the fig. use of the adj. is not rec. earlier than 1826. Cf. p. 32.

As sour as eysel. Lan. — I have heard Lancashire persons formerly make use of this expression. Gaskell, 1854, EDD. *Eysel, eisel* is obsolete in st. E since the early 17th c.

A man must from his beginning be crooked to his wife; be you like an orange to her, let her cut you never so fair, be you sour as vinegar. Dekker, HWh, Ib, Cf. He . . . from his sower Looks is commonly called Vinegar Jones. Hearne, 1720, NED. His house-keeper was a vinegary woman., Baring-Gould, RS, 15. Cf. Shak., MV, I, i, 54.

He is as sour as crab-varjus. Wm. Shr. EDD.

As sour as varjus. Excessively sour; fig. very ill-tempered. Lan.

As sour as wherr. Lan. See *Sour*, Ch. IV. — *Crab-varjus* (= verjuice) is the juice of crab-apples. *Wherr* (wharre) = crab-apple or crab-verjuice. *Crab-verjuice* is known from the middle of the 18th c., but cf. As a man would wryng verjuice out of crabbes. Tindale, 1536, NED.

She lookes as sowerly, as if she had beene new squeased out of a crab orange. Marston, 1606, NED.

She's forty, and as tough and as sour as this bit of lemon-peel. Thackeray, BS, xxxiii.

[Elias] Bitter as a lemon about girls. Phillpotts, WF, 152. Cf.

You ask me with a voice all lemon . . . *ibid.* 416.

As cross as Dick's hatband. Wor. EDD.

All across like Dick's hatband. — We only apply it as a comparison for what is obstinate and perverse. Shr. EDD.

As awkward as Dick's hatband. Yks. EDD.

The maister's in a way this morning, 'e's as crukit as Dick's

hatband. Used both of persons and things that are perverse or unmanageable. Burne, SF, 592 f. 1883. — The phrase has possibly also a wider application. See EDD. s. v. *Crooked*. As twistit as Dick's hatband. Shr. *Twistit* = twisted = cross. As contrary as Dick's hatband. Shr. EDD; Carruth, Kansas Univ. Quart. 1892, I.

As curst as Dick's hatband, which will come nineteen times round, and won't tie at last. Shr. EDD.

Zummet or nother had putt'n out; . . . he hardly spoke a dozen words to me, and was as queer as Dick's hatband, I. W., EDD. — This form has also a wider application, which appears from the following insts., "Anything ridiculously comical is said to be as queer &c." Lin. N. & Q., 1856, 238. I am as queer as Dick's hatband; that is, out of spirits, or don't know what ails me. Grose, 1796. NED.

As queer as Dick's hatband, that went half way round and tied in the middle. Oxf., from about 1850, N. & Q., 8, XII, 171. He's as queer as Dick's hatband; it went twice round and would not tie. — This phrase is used in the north of England of young people who are very talkative or boastful of what they can do. N. & Q., 8, XII, 37.

Queer as Dick's hatband, that went nine times round an' wouldn't tie; said of any person or thing that is well-nigh impossible to manage. Common in many counties. Linc. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 410; N. & Q., 8, XII, 37. Wright, RS, 163, has the same phrase but adds 'at last.' NED gives a Newcastle form of 1850, which has 'wouldn't meet.'

As queer as Dick's hatband, that went nine times round his hat, and was fastened by a rush at last. N. & Q., 1, I, 475. As queer as Dick's hatband, made of pea-straw, that went nine times round, and would not meet at last. Miss Baker, Gloss., 1854, p. 79. H. According to Halliwell and Brewer it was made of sand; cf. 'a rope of sand.' — Collars or chaplets of straw were formerly used by pilgrims. N. & Q., Nov. 1849, p. 25.

For the sake of convenience all the other forms of the sim. that have been found will be given here:

As fause as Dick's hatband. Shr. EDD.

As fond as Dick's hatband. Yks. Chs. EDD. See p. 43.

As tight as Dick's hatband. Pem. N. & Q., 2, II, 238.

As fine as Dick's hatband. Wilbraham, Cheshire Gl. 1836.

'Odd as Dick's hatband' is a well-known colloquial expression in New England. N. & Q., 8, XII, 96.

Dun'ee call that dressin' a child? Jest look at its cape, all awry like Dick's hatband. Nhp. EDD.

"This singular phrase, slightly varying in form and application, appears to be widely circulated and has travelled even to the United States . . ." (see Bartlett). Miss Baker, North.

Gloss., 1854. The sim. seems to be obsolete as a colloquialism in st. British English, and must belong exclusively to dial. and Am. The earliest known inst. is the one from Grose. The oldest as well as the most common form is 'as *queer* &c.', which makes it probable that this is the original form.

Taylor, OM, 52, says, "There were no Bands worn till King Henry the eights time; for he was the first king that ever wore a band in England, 1513." As a matter of fact hatbands were known at least 100 years earlier (NED). They were not altogether forgotten in Dickens's time, if we are to believe the *Pickwick Papers*: ". . . attached to his hat, which he still retained on his head, was a hatband measuring about a yard and a half in length." PP, II, 397. This also shows that a hatband going more than once round a hat is by no means a ridiculous exaggeration.

Hatbands must have been very important articles of attire to judge from the way they are spoken of by old writers. To wear a hat without a band was a mark of excentricity. See Rowland, *Letting of Humours blood*, C1, 1600, McKerrow, *Notes*, 246. Cf. ". . . to go without money, without garters, without girdles, without a hatband, without points to my hose." Nashe, III, 233, 1593. "Put off to none, unless his hatband be of a newer fashion than yours, and three degrees quainter; but for him that wears a trebled cyprus about his hat, though he were an alderman's son, never move to him: for he is suspected to be worse than a Gull, and not worth the putting off to, that cannot observe the time of his hatband, nor know what fashioned block is most akin to his head: for in my opinion, the brain that cannot choose his felt well, being the head ornament, must needs pour folly into all the rest of his members, and be an absolute confirmed fool in *summa totali*." Dekker, GH, 39. (A *trebled cyprus* was probably a hatband of cypress that went three times round the hat). "A Hat with a Black and Gold coloured Silk hatband of the new twisted fashion." 1685, NED. (The Elizabethan hat generally had a twisted band, sometimes several bands, or one band many times round the hat. See Ashdown, *British Costume*, 239, 244. During the first half of the 18th c. there were sometimes hats with a broad band of twisted black cloth surrounding them. Fairholt, *Costume in England*, 366).

This seems to make it probable that the saying originated from some actual hatband at least *three degrees quainter* than usual and worn by some character either real or fictitious (in play or ballad).

Nothing seems to be known about this *Dick*. NED thinks it must be some local character or half-wit, whose droll sayings were repeated. But this is beside the mark as none of the forms of the sim. refer to any "droll sayings". It is his *hat-*

band that is *queer* (= *quaint, twisted?*). According to Brewer, *Dick's hatband* refers to Richard Cromwell's crown that did not fit him. His elaborate account (p. 352) is rather a ridiculous construction, which does not start from *facts*. It is true that Richard Cromwell was held up to ridicule in ballads and popular rhymes, and that *Tumble-down-Dick* seems to have become proverbial, but there is not the slightest evidence of any connection between such taunts and nicknames and our phrase. What Brewer says on the subject makes it clear that he did not understand the growth of a popular phrase of this kind. "As queer as Dick's hatband" is probably the original form, from which the others developed. 'As Dick's hatband' was added first to synonyms of the different senses of *queer* and gradually also to other adjectives belonging more or less to the same sphere. The insts known are probably only a small part of the general crop of proverbial growth around 'Dick's hatband', and some may still be found, although most of it has become obsolete. The additions to the original simple form were made to explain the *queerness* of Dick's hatband.

The occurrence of the phrase in America also possibly points to its having had some other source than the allusion to Richard Cromwell. "The English ancestors of the New England folk — nearly all of them — came here in the latter part of the reign of Charles I. If they brought the expression with them, which I do not doubt, it antedates by many years R. Cromwell." J. G. W., Hartford, Conn. N. & Q., 8, XII, 96. Cf. "That's like Dick's hatband" is common enough in Craven. I think it may have originated, like many of our popular sayings, from a character in some defunct farce or opera.' N. & Q., 4, VI, 487. See above.

Thornton is as dour as a door-nail; an obstinate chap. Gaskell, 1854, NED. *Dour* = obstinate is, it would seem, chiefly a Sc. and N. Cy sense of the word (EDD, NED). See *Hard as nails*, p. 87.

As cross as the tongs. Baker, N'hants Gloss. Lean, II, ii. — A very common type of sim., in which the adj. has two meanings, a matter-of-fact sense and a fig. one. *Cross* referring to the tongs means 'having its component parts lying athwart each other'.

He's got a surface flow of suavity, but he's rough as a hoof-rasp underneath. London, SS, 164.

He is as stunt as a hamner. — Short in manner, blunt. Lin. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 411 (1866, 1877). *Stunt* = obstinate, sulky, chiefly in Yks. Lin.

As stunt as a geevelock, as stiff as a crowbar. Yks. Cf. Ston as stiff as gablock. Lan. EDD.

He's as stunt as a burnt whang. -- There's no turning him; obstinate. Halliwell.

As tough as a burnt wong. s. e. Lin. N. & Q., 2, II, 279. Thomson, 1856, EDD. — *Whang* (also weng) is the Sc. form of *thong*, OE *þwang*. If burnt and schrivelled it must be still more inflexible than otherwise.

For I know Fluellen valiant/ And, touched with choler, hot as gunpowder. Shak., KH V, IV, vii, 168.

As black as Newgate is said of a street lady's lowering countenance, or of her muslin dress, when either is changed from the natural serene. Bee, Dict. Turf. &c. 1823. Cf. *False as Newgate* p. 23.

As cross as nine highways. Bohn. Why *nine*?

Contrary as Wood's dog, that wouldn't go out, nor yet stop at home. Suss. N. & Q. 1880, Aug. 28. Cf. Like Wood's dog, he'll neither go to church nor stay at home. Ray. — Nothing seems to be known about this *Wood*.

As surly as a butcher's dog. Ray. This probably refers to the breed of dog mentioned by NED. Cf. All kind of dogges . . . Butchers dogs, Bloudhounds, Dung-hill Dogges. 1597, NED.

As caingy and cankerly as an ill-clep'd cur. Clevel. Gl. 83. *Caingy*, a N. Cy word, = ill-tempered, peevish. *Cankery* (= canky, cankered) has the same meaning. *Ill-clepped* = ill-conditioned, surly. Cf. *ill-contrived*: "I knows her, a sour-looking, ill-contriv'd old bitch. Som. EDD.

That makes the Old Fellow as sore as a scalded pup. White, BT, 180.

I am holden, quod he, as hende as hounde is in kychyne, Langland, P. Pl., V, 261. See Skeat, EEP, 44, where it is rendered: "I am considered, quoth he, (to be) as courteous as a dog in a kitchen. Cf. the Fr. *Mauvais chien ne veut iamais compaignon en cuisine*, a churl cannot endure a companion in his gainful employments. Cotgrave." Cf. *Dum canis os rodit, sociari pluribus odit*. Sellert, 12.

As cross as a cat. Lean, II, ii.

As wilful as a pig, he'll neither lead nor drive. Ray. Cf. "Neither lead nor drive". An untoward, unmanageable person. Ray. As contrary as ever was a hog. Sus. EDD. She's obstinate as a pig. Besant & Rice. AS, 40. Cf. A conthrairy pig going to market. Ir. 1842, EDD. The obstinacy of pigs is proverbial.

As surly as a bull. Ch. Gl. As surly as a cow's husband. *ibid*. See p. 90 f.

• You know my brother long ago, that he is as stiff as a mule. Burnet, 1715, NED. *Stiff* = obstinate, stubborn.

She was as obstinate as a mule on that point. Mrs. Edgeworth, 1812, NED. He can be as obstinate as all the donkeys on Dartmoor when he pleases, and as proud as a peacock

and as hard as a nail. Phillpotts, WF, 110, Fox, TG, 27. The fellow were as stubborn and stupid as a pot-mule. Yoxall, RS, 19, 189. — What is a *pot-mule*? Not in NED, EDD.

There he stood as stoont as a mule. Yks. EDD.

He's as stunt as an ass. Yks. EDD. Cf. also 'As stupid as a mule', where *stupid* means pig-headed, obstinate. — Cf. Obstinate is no word for it, for she is mulish. Ouida, 1881, EDD. "With no good grounds, the mule is a proverbial type of obstinacy." NED. Cf. *envis som en åsua*.

As savage as a bear with a sore head. Marryat, 1830, NED; (also *scalt head*), unreasonably ill-tempered. Brewer.

As cross as a bear with a sore head. Bohn; Brewer.

As sulky as a bear with a sore head. N. & Q., 4, VI, 321. Krabud-z u bac'ur wai u zoo'ur aid. — A very common expression of a person out of temper. The usual superlative absolute. Elworthy, WS. He got glum and surly as a bear with a sore head. Phillpotts, TK, 50. A businessman . . . will enter his house for dinner as crabbed as a hungry bear. Holland, 1861. NED.

As rough as a Russian bear. Taylor, *Cast Over Water*, Lean, II, ii.

You could soon have made him as crabbed as a bear. Hardy, TM, 41.

As cross as a bear. Brewer. — It is rather noteworthy that there are no earlier insts. of this sim., which must have its origin "from that nurse of barbarism and beastliness, the Bear-garden, where upon their usual days those demimonsters, are baited by bandogs, the Gentlemen of Stave and Tail, namely, boisterous butchers, cutting cobblers, hard-handed masons, and the like, rioting companions, resorting thither with as much freedom as formerly making with their sweat and crowding a far worse stink than the ill-formed beasts they persecute with their dogs and whips . . ." AR, 4; see *Clever*, 33, *Melan-choly*, *Ill-tempered* p. 55. Cf. "To speak bear-garden." Ray.

Thah'rt as fow as a vixen wi' a sore yed. Chs. EDD. *Fow*, (foul) angry, ill-tempered.

As sullen as a new-caged beast. Tennyson, 1859, NED.

As stubborn as an elephant's leg, no bending in her. Rowley, *All's Lost*, ii, 1633, Lean, II, ii.

Risty as a badger. Hewett, Dev. 12. *Risty* (reesty, reasty), a dial. form of *resty* (*restive*) meaning ill-tempered. The badger's fierce and stubborn defence of its hole is well-known.

As croos as a fitchet. Som. Jennings, 1825, EDD.

Ould Terence was waiting' as cross as a weasel up undher the hedge. Barlow, 1901. Ir. EDD. — Bidy O'Rourke did be sometimes as cross as a weasel. *ibid.* 1898. Cf. Ready in gibes, quick-answered, saucy, and/ As quarrellous as the weasel.

Shak., Cy, III, iv, 159. A weasel hath no such a deal of spleen/ As you are toss'd with. Shak., KH IVa, II, iii, 75. See p. 34.

I've grown so touchy as a rat in a trap. Phillpotts, P. 306.

He is as croose as a banty-cock. *Croose* = sharp-tempered, touchy. *Banty-cock* = bantam cock. See *Proud*, p. 84

As testy as an old cock. Ray. — *Testy* = short-tempered, peevish rec. fr. 1526.

Zo tatchee's a old broody 'en. Hewett, Dev. 12. *Broody* = inclined to sit.

As crabbed as an old cuckoo. Wm. EDD.

As awkward as a groundtoad. Peacock, Lin. Gl.; Lean, II, ii.

As fow as a toad. Der. EDD. Cf. I nivver zeed zich a tachy, ill-conceived little twoad in awl my life. Dev. 1892, EDD. Well, sos, ef yu bant the most contrary twoad I ivver met wi'. Dev. EDD. A cross-grained old woman is "a regular old toad, an ugly old toad." War. EDD. See *Stupid*, p. 52, *Strong and Healthy*, Ch. II.

He was as bitter as a hagworm. Yks. *Hagworm* is a northern word for the viper. NED.

As full of spite and ill nature as a spider with poyson. Wroth, 1621, NED. The poison of the spider is frequently alluded to in literature. Cf. From the same flower . . . whence the Spyder . . . take their poison. Lodge, 1579. NED. If you were ten times more a spider than you are, you could suck no poyson from them. Chillingworth, 1638, NED, &c.

He is as teachy as any wasp. Perkins, 1639, NED. See *Clever*, 35, *Angry*, p. 93.

As stunt as a dead worm. Lin. 1877. *Folk-lore*, LXIII, 411. For *Stunt* see above p. 100.

As sour as a rig. Cor. EDD. Very ill-tempered. — What is *rig*? No word that fits the context is found in any dict. Is it a misprint or a misquotation for *grig* or another, unregistered, form of this word?

Ez bad tempered ez a nettle. Blakeborough, NRY, 242. In daily use.

Ez rank as nettles. *ibid.* 241. Does this allude to the same thing? Cf. As surly as if he had pi . . . t on a nettle. Ray; there is a Yks phrase 'to have p . . . d of a nettle,' to be cross and ill-tempered. You are as touchy this evening as if whipped with nettles. Baring-Gould, RS, 193. Cf. the dial. phrase 'to be on nettles,' and the adj. *nettlesome*.

The renowned O'Grady was according to her account as cross as two sticks. Lover, 1842, NED. Another inst. *ibid.* of 1855. H. Hewett, Dev. 10. *Slang*, Brewer, &c. We got out of bed back'ards, I think, for we were as cross as two sticks. Dickens, Martin Ch. xxix, Lean. Her tiny chum comes home at night as cross as two sticks. Whiteing, No. 5, 235. Cf.

As cross as the tongs, p. 100 "A popular phrase." Palmer, FE, 84. Cf. (*crab*)stick as a term for a crabbed or cross-grained person.

As sharp as touch. *Touch* short for *touchwood*; as quick to fire up as touchwood, quick-tempered. Jamieson.

Joshua, as is as dour as a stone? Verney, 1868, EDD.

His countenance was black as night. Martineau, 1832, NED. See p. 58.

He'll be as teasy as fire when he hears about it. "Q", MV, 167. Cf. She was false as water. — Thou art rash as fire, to say/ That she was false. Shak., Oth. V, ii, 137.

A feaïce as grou as a thunner-cloud. Yks. 1887. As grue as thunder. Whitby 1888, *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 430. *Grue* = morose, sullen seems to be a Yks term. Cf. As dour as thunder. *ibid*.

Ill-mannered, Shameless.

As brassant as Hector. Yks. EDD. *Brassant* = brazen, bold, impudent, shameless. *Hector* as a term for an insolent, blustering fellow is rec. fr. 1655. Cf. *Hector Hellbones*, an unruly boy. See *Ill-tempered*, p. 95.

You have no more manners than a barber, Thackeray, BL, xiii; barbers "cut all other except themselves." 1625, NED.

Ye be as full of good manners as an egg of oatmeal. Whitinton, 1520, H. Lean quotes: Ye be as full good *matter* as an egge is of ote mele. — He that may have your company may be glad there of, for you are as full of manners as an egge is full of oate meal. *Dux Grammaticus*, 1633, N. & Q., 5, VIII, 164. This must be ironical. But cf. on the other hand: As full of good-nature as an egg's full of meat. Sheridan, 1777, NED. See *Full* Ch. IV.

As cheeky as old boots. Brewer, Dict. 911. Very saucy. — *Cheekiness* dates from 1847, and *cheek* = impudence from 1840. *Slang*. For other sim. with *old boots* see Ch. V.

As unmannerly as the almanac. Their manners like the wind. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, i. 115, 1509, Lean, II, ii. This must be one of the earliest insts of the word *unmannerly*, as *mannerly* = well-mannered is not known before Skelton.

As bold as brass. *Slang*; EDD; Hewett, Dev. 10, Brewer, Dict. Thackeray, VF, II, p. 12. &c. Common colloquialism of an impudent person. An impudent person is said to have *rubbed* his face with a brass candlestick. Wright, RS, 169. The earliest instance found dates from Thackeray, VF, II, 12, but it must be much older, as *brass* as a symbol of insensibility to shame is of very old standard in English. Already La-

timer has "to brazen out" = to face impudently, and *brazen-faced* and *brassy*, impudent, shameless, date from the latter half of the same century.

As bold as Corinthian brass. Thackeray, *Howel, The Widower*, 195. — This gives us a clue to the origin of the sim. and this sense of *brass*. In Greek and Latin the words for the metal were very often used as symbols of strength, hardness, and in *Cursor Mundi* (1300) we find: — þe king hert wex herd as bras (NED), quite in accordance with classical usage, and Stanyhurst, in his *Aeneis*, II, 45, speaks of a "brasse bold merchaunt" (1583), which is only a step further on the same way. Also in Hebrew poetry the same metaphor is used, and classical and biblical influence has helped to give currency to the sim. in English. See *Daring, Bold*, p. 113.

Why, he has a face like a black dog, and blusheth like the backside of a chimney. Lean, II, ii; Source not given.

If it be my fortune to meet with the learned woorkes of this London Sabinus, that can not play the part without a prompter nor utter a wise word without a piper, you shall see we shall make him to blush like a black dog when he is gravelled. Gosson, *School of Abuse*, (Arber) 75, Lean, II, ii. — What, canst thou say all this, and never blush? — Ay, like a black dog. Shak., *TA*, V, i, 121.

A black saint can no more blush than a black dog. T. Adams, 1629, Lean, II, ii; Withal, *Dict.*, 1634 has, s. v. *Faciem perfricuit*, he blusheth like a black dog, he hath a brazen face. Ray. Clarke. *Ld Sparkish* (To the maid) Mrs. Betty, How does your body politic? *Col.* Fie my lord; you'll make Mrs. Betty blush. *Lady Smart*. Blush! ay, blush like a blue dog. Swift, *PC*, 234.

As mannerly as a dog. Denham, Lean, II, ii. See *False*, 23, *Lewd*, 19, *Mad*, 39, *Stupid*, 48 &c.

To blush like red bull calf. — 'The phrase was once casually used in my hearing, and I was moved to ask when it was that the red bull calf had blushed. "A nivver blooshed but wanst," said Sam, "an' that wuur last Moonday vur a while, when Kimbulin's mule called 'im bahsta'd.'" Evans, *Leicestershire Words, Phrases and Proverbs*, 309, 1881, *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII.

They may brag as they will of their manners, they've na mair manners than a milner's horse. Yorkshire Dial., 4. — What is there unmannerly about a miller's horse? See *Busy, Hard-working*. p. 124 and *Sober*. Ch. II.

As impudent as a badger's horse. N. & Q., 4, VII, 245 (1871) Still a common proverb. N. Cy. There is said to be a Midland sim. 'as bold as a badger's horse', which probably means the same thing. See *Daring, Bold*, p. 112. — That a badger usually was provided with a horse, appears also from

these quotations: — Hungry! Thou's always hungry: thou'd eat a badger off his horse. Robinson, *Gloss. of Mid. Yorkshire*. Gip with an ill rubbing, quoth Badger, when his mare kicked. Ray. *Badger* is a corn-dealer, miller's man, or miller. Perhaps only a variant of the former sim. Is it "still common"? As impudent as a cadger hoss. Nicholson, 1890, Yks. EDD. The *cadger* is the miller's man who carries the corn to the mill to be ground. Cf. ". . . die a cadger-pownie's death/ At some dykeback. Burns, 1785, EDD. — For the use of *horse* cf. *horse-laugh*, *horse-joke*, *horse-morsel* (a large, coarse woman), and the extensive use of *horse* in names of plants and animals to denote a large and coarse kind.

You [the devil] directed Nabal . . . to be as churlish as a hog. Taylor, ST, 39. — "In our English tongue the name boar or boor do truly explain their swinish condition, for most of them are as full of humanity as a bacon-hog, or a boar, and their wives as cleanly and courteous as sows." *ibid.* TH, 35.

— *Hog* has been applied opprobriously to a person of coarse habits from Heywood's time. — *Churlish* goes back to Chaucer. As rude as a bear. Swift, *Portrait of Mrs Sheridan*, Lean, II, ii. *Rude* = unmannerly, uncivil, of persons, rec. fr. 1590.

Here you are as rough as bears, because I won't be a thief Hope, RH, 257. This sense of *rough* is rec, fr. 1530.

As wild as a Russian bear. Middleton. *A Roaring Girle*, 1611. — Cf. There were those young ladies only too anxious to do what they could for you, and you like a bear. Shaw, LA, 79; and the *fig.* use of *bear* for an unmannered person, and the phrase "to play the bear" known fr. 1570, Slang. See p. 102.

As rough as a bear's backside. Northall, FPh, 10.

. *On Resolute Bat.*

As rough as bearskins for behaviour,
A biscuit face as hard for favour,
As blunt as back of knife, as dull
As whetstone, or cramm'd capon full,
His talk as women backward flat,
And though laugh'd at he's Resolute Bat.
Rob. Heath, *Epigrams*, 1650, Lean, II, ii.

— *Bearskin* not in NED before 1677.

Ez impudent as a cock sparrer. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. Cf. the Chaucerian 'as lecherous as is a sparwe.' See p. 19.

Ez brazend ez a sunflower. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 242. There are at least seven different plants called *sunflowers*, best known among them being perhaps the common *sunflower*, *Helianthus annuus*, but what is there "brazen" about this plant? Is it because the flowers are bold enough to look

the sun in the face all day long? It may at least denote a certain absence of bashfulness.

“As coarse as hemp” is a common epithet in the Lowlands of Scotland for persons of rude and boorish manners. N. & Q., 5, V, 477.

“As coarse as bean-straw” is a common Lincolnshire saying, and is applied both to persons and things. N. & Q., 5, V, 477. For *bean-straw* NED has only one inst., fr. Chaucer.

I liked the old man well enough, though he was as rough as a hedge. Hardy, RN, 141.

As coarse as Hickling gorse. — “Often heard about Nottingham.” N. & Q., 5, V, 94. Cf. As rough as H. g. N. & Q. 12, III, 116. The common overgrown with fern, and rough With prickly goss. Cowper, 1784, NED.

As coarse as heather. — Common in the Lowlands of Scotland. See *As coarse as hemp*; N. & Q., 5, V. 216.

“As coarse as grass” is common in several parts of England. N. & Q. 5, V, 94.

Scolding, Quarrelling.

To scold like a wych-waller. — An old Cheshire proverb, not very common now (EDD). Ray; Holland, Chs. Gl. — *Wych* is a salt-works, and a *waller*, a boiler.

To rail like a rude costermonger. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Scornful Lady*, Lean, II, ii.

To scold like a cut-purse. Ray.

To scold and rail/ Like porters o'er a pot of ale. Swift, “*To M. Delany*,” Lean, II, ii. — From of old the porter seems to have been an associate of other master-scolds and doubtful characters: A dosen harlotes Of portours and of pykeporses and pylede topdrawers. Langland, PPl, (C) VII, 370; Did you overturn no porter or oyster-woman in your way? Smollet, RR. 126. Cf. also *Drunk*, Ch. II.

To scold like a tinker's wife. NED — The tinker and all that belongs to him, his wife, or rather his trull, his dog, or rather his bitch, and his budget are seen in a very unfavourable light. See *False*, p. 22, *Stupid*, 47, and *Drunk*, Ch. II.

Railing and scolding *more meretricum* worse then Cot-queanes. James, 1608, NED. To scold like a cot-quean; that's your profession. Ford, 'Tis a Pity., 1633, NED. Cf. Thou arrant butterwhore, thou cotqueane & scrattop of scoldes. Nashe, I, 299, 1592. This sense of *cot-quean* seems to belong exclusively to Elizabethan English, being rec. from Nashe to Ford, as given above.

They scold like so many butter-whores or oyster-women at Billings-

gate. Howell. p. 20, Halliwell. Cf. . . to yawn, to stretch, and to gape wider than any oyster-wife. Dekker, GH, 22. — The oyster-women (wenches, wives) must have been a particularly noisy crew, if we are to believe Massinger, who, in his *Virgin Martyr*, makes Spungius, the drunkard, reformed for the moment, break out: "O you drawers of wine, draw me no more to the bar of beggary; the sound 'Score a pottle of sack' is worse to me than the noise of a scolding oyster wench or two cats incorporating."

They abuse one another like *Fishe-wives*. Davies, 1662, NED.

To scold like a fish-wife. NED s. v. *cotquean*, no inst. given. Cf. Our womankind excel in that dish [fish] — it procures them the pleasure of scolding, for half an hour at least, twice a week, with . . . our fish-wife. Scott. A. 58. You know that I behaved like a fish-wife. London, DS, 110. — Windham, 1795, NED, refers to "the scolding of a fish-woman in Billingsgate." — In *Vinegar and Mustard*, or Wormwood Lectures for every day in the week, printed in 1673, there is a specimen of scolding performed by two fishwives, Bold Bettrie and Welsh Guintlin, whose conversation gives us a fairly good idea of what fish-wives *could* do in this line. — The language of *Billingsgate* was proverbial already in the 17th c. Pope, in his *Dunciad*, frequently alludes to it, speaking of "much Billingsgate, volumes of Billingsgate" &c. *A Billingsgate* was also a term for a scolding impudent slut. The language of B. is unfortunately still very much what it used to be.

To scold like a butter-whore. Day, *Isle of Gulls*, G2, Lean, II, ii; Cotgrave, 1611, Brydges, 1764, NED.

You scold more bitterly than any butterquean, 1650, NED.

To scold like butterwives. Clarke, Lean, II, ii. — Nashe and Shakespeare bear witness to the butterwoman's bad reputation: "Thou arrant butterwhore . . ." (I, 299); "Tongue, I must put you into a butterwoman's mouth . . . if you prattle me into these perilles." Shak. AW, IV, i, 245.

To scold like a market-woman. NED s. v. *cotquean*. No inst. given. Cf. the two following sentences: — They scold together lyke two women. Palsgrave, 1530; Some runn out to braule & scolde like women with the next enemys. Moryson, 1618, where, nevertheless, the comparison is less intensifying than descriptive.

As game as a fightin' cock. Nhb. EDD. *Game* = ready (to fight).

As fond of a raw place as a bluebottle. — Said of one always ready for a quarrel, or anxious to touch on grievances. Northall, FPh, 8. *Bluebottle* = bluebottle-fly.

Ez gam ez a cock-roach. — "No insect perhaps is so pugnacious as the common roach or black clock. The encounters which

take place on our hearths after we have retired to rest are many and deadly." Blakeborough, NRY, 242, 244. — *Game* = game, see above.

Note. "October, 1574, ordered and agreed by the whole Court, that all manner of Skoldes which shall be openly detected of Skolding or evill wordes in maner of Skolding, and for the same shall be condemned before Mr. Maior and his brethren shall be drawn at the Sterne of a boate in the water from the end of the Pearl round about the Queenes Majesties Castell in a manner of ducking, and after when a cage shall be made the party so condemned for a Skold shall be therein punished at the discretion of the maior." M'Skimming, *History and Antiquities of Carrickfergus*, 1811, p. 260. — Ducking was the usual punishment of a scold far down into the 18th c. See N. & Q., 2, I, 490, and "Q", MV, 7. But there were also other punishments, as the following quotation shows:—"A woman carried the wooden mortar throughout the town hanging on the handle of an old broom upon her sholder, one going before her tinkling a small bell for abusing Mrs. Mayoress, and saying she cared not a for her." Boys, *History of Sandwich*, p. 708, 1637, quoted N. & Q., 2, V, 505.

Swearing.

- I am so haunted/ With a swaggering captain, that swears . . .
 Like a very Termagant. Barry, RA, III, i. This would make a saint swear like a soldier, and a soldier like a Termagant. Beaumont & Fletcher, KK, II, ii. — *Termagant*, the wild Mohammedan deity of the mystery plays.
- To swear like an emperour. H.
- For they wyll say he that swereth depe swereth like a lord. Elyot, 1531, NED. To swear like a lord. H., *Slang*.
- She curses and storms at me like a trooper, Richardson, P, 201.
- To swear like a trooper. Foote, 1756. *Slang*.
- The fellow . . . swore like a trooper. 1810, NED. Jack was heard below swearing like a trooper. Lover, 1842, NED. *ibid.* inst. of 1884.
- The good bishop will be swearing like a dragoon. Mason, PK, 23. Cf. The parson sat up in his bed and swore with all the volubility of a dragoon or even of my Lord Bishop of Rochester. *ibid.* 24. Cf. also, His companion stamped and cursed and fumed like a corporal of Hussars. Doyle, AG, 291.
- To swear like a bargee. — Fairly common. C., 5 July, '14. Cf. A man who sets up for a country gentleman with the tongue of a Thames bargee. Hughes, 1861, NED.
- How did he brook that, sir? — Oh, swore like a dozen drunken tinkers. Dekker, HWh, Ib.
- To swear like a tinker. Coryat, *Crudities*, 1611, Lean, II, ii. He sware an' banned like a tinkler. *Clevel. Gloss.* — Cf. a tinker's curse or damn (dam).
- As stout and proud as he were lord of all,/ Swear like a ruffian

and demean himself/ Unlike the ruler of a commonweal. Shak., KH VIb, I, i, 182. To swear like a ruffian. Davies, *Scourge of Folly*, ix, 14, 1614. Lean, II, ii.

He cursed like a madman. Stevenson, TI, 121.

The Spaniards are swearing like Spaniards (I need say no more). Kingsley, WH, 168. Cf. Swearing like the mouth of the pit, whereby I guess him to be Spaniard. *ibid.* 169. The pious Spaniards of the sixteenth century the most abominable swearers of all Europeans. *ibid.* 376. — On the continent the opinion seems to have been a little different, to judge from the Flemish 16th c. proverb *Furer comme un Ecossois*, and the very existence of the nickname *Goddamme* for an Englishman seems to denote that also the English themselves, in spite of Acts of Parliament “passed more effectually to prevent profane swearing,” were looked upon as great swearers of oaths, and are perhaps so still — in Scotland: — She swure like twunty drunk Englishmen. Trotter, 1901, Kcb., EDD.

Swear and lie, worse than so many dogs. Taylor, KW, 5.

He was cussing and swearing under his breath like a tom cat as had met his match. Phillpotts, TK, 19. — In some midland dialects cats and dogs are said to swear when they make a snarling hissing noise.

Wanton, Wild.

They are now as Buxome as Bachus froes — revelling, dancing. Beaumont & Fletcher. 1616, NED. Cf. Some gadded vpe and down the streetes, like Bachus froes, franticke for the time. Nashe, I, 95. In this case *buxom* must mean something like wanton, wild; according to NED this sense is only contextual.

As wild as Orson. Stf. EDD. This is probably one of the heroes of the old romance of *Valentine and Orson*. The twin brothers being born in a wood, Orson was carried off by a bear, grew up with the cubs, and developed bearish qualities. (*Orson* = *ourson* = the little bear). The romance must have been very widely known.

As wanton as a young widow. Congreve, *Old Bachelor*, 1693. Lean, II, ii.

[Love is] all wanton as a child skipping and vain. Shak., LLL, V, ii, 749.

As wanton as the Englishman after a long peace. Howell, *Century of New Sayings*, 1659, Lean.

As frolick as a Dutch Tanikin. S. S., *Honest Lawyer*, i, 1616. *Frolick* = sportive, full of merry pranks. NED has no inst. of *tannakin* after 1608.

As wanton as a whelp. Draxe, 1663. Lean, II, ii.

As wanton as a cat in a bowl on the water. Massinger, *Very Woman*, iii, 1, Lean, II, ii. The kitten is otherwise a common type of wantonness.

As wanton as a calf with two dams. Ray.

Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls. Shak., KHa IV. i, 103. As wanton as a kid. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Humorous Lieutenant*, iii, 7, Herrick, *Hesperides*, 718, Lean, II, ii. Cf. Leaping like wanton kid in pleasant Spring. Spenser, *FQ*, I, vi, 14, and Chaucer, *MiT*, 74.

More wild and wanton than either buck or doe. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, i, 63, Lean, II, ii.

As wild as a buck. Clarke; Davies, *Scourge of Folly*, 1614, Lean, II, ii; Ray. As God save me, la, thou art as wild as a buck; there's no quarrel but thou art at one end on't. Beaumont & Fletcher, *KK*, II, ii.

As gamesome as a young fox. Yks., EDD.

As wild as a March hare. *Prov. in Brighthouse News*, 1889, Yks. EDD. Wild as is the hare he will stop for his mate. Wood, *Manx P.* 241. As wild as a hare. Yks. See pp. 40 f., 71.

As wanton as a wet hen. Hislop, *The Proverbs of Scotland*, 1862, Lean, II, ii.

I know her spirits are as coy and wild/ As haggards of the rock. Shak., *MA*, III, i, 35. *Haggard*, a wild hawk, has been used *fig.* of a wild, untractable person, one not to be captured. NED.

As wild as winter thunder. — Ungovernable, unruly. Cum. EDD. Cf. As wild as winter. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Pilgrim*, iv, 2, Lean, II, ii.

Bold, Daring.

As Bold as Beauchamp. Ray.

“Of this surname there were many Earls of Warrick, amongst whom (saith Dr. Fuller) I conceive Thomas, the first of that name, gave chief occasion to this proverb; who, in the year 1346, with one squire and six archers, fought in hostile manner with a hundred armed men, att Hogges in Normandy, and overthrew them slaying 60 Normans, and giving the whole fleet means to land.” Ray. — Of this Thomas of Beauchamp Drayton (*Polyolbion*, XVIII) says: —

So had we still of ours, in France that famous were,
Warwick, of England then high-constable that was,
..... So hardy great and strong,
That after of that name it to an adage grew
If any man himself adventurous happed to shew,
'Bold Beauchamp' men him termed, if none so bold as he.

— *Bold Beauchamp* is the title of one of T. Heywood's lost plays, and the term is referred to in Middleton's *A Mad*

World, in Shirley's *The Witty Fair One*, and Suckling's *Goblins*, 1645. Lean, II, ii.

As bold as blind Bayard. — Ye ben as boold as is Bayard the blinde. Chaucer, T. & C., i, 218.

Nothing is bolder than blind Bayard, which falleth oft in the mire. Bullein, *Bulwark of Defence*, 1562, (Lean, II, ii). How this horse unhesitatingly went into a "well-nigh impassable slough", and stuck there, is told by Heywood, PE, 185 s.

As bolde as blind bayerd, as wise as a woodcock.

As fine as phippence, as proude as a peacocke,

As stout as a stockefish, as meeke as a mecock.

As bigge as a begger, as fat as a fool,

As true as a tinker, as rich as an owle.

Appius & Virginia (Dodsley, xii, 348; used by Haphazard of himself).

It was an ordinary receipt among good wives to give Hellebore in powder to ii^d weight, and he is not much against it. But they do commonly exceed, for who so bold as blind Bayard? Burton, AM, II, 262. — *Blind Bayard* is referred to in Lydgate, Skelton, Atway 1681. (Lean, II, ii). For some further insts see NED. And cf. Bartholomew Bayard, that leap before you look. Rowley, MM, v, i.

Bayard is originally the name for a bay-coloured horse, rec. fr. c. 1325 but the sim refers to the "bright-bay-coloured magic steed given by Charlemagne to Renaud, one of the four sons of Aimon, famous in mediaeval romance." NED. The name became a common one for any horse, and is alluded to in many proverbial sayings. See *Blind*, Ch. II, and Skeat, EEP, 123.

Naething so bauld as a blind mear; Hislop, *Scot. Proverbs*, Skeat, EEP, 123, is a modern form of the above phrase. Cf. also "Mettle is dangerous in a blind horse." Ray.

As bold as the Laird of Whinety. — This saying, which is common in the whole district of South Tyne, originated in 1715. For its history see *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXIX, 264.

Bold as Brassy. — A famous highwayman, who with his horse would face anything. Pegge, *Derbicisms*, 135 (Ed. adds 'Hardly legible'). Probably a punning allusion to the adj. *brassy*, impudent, shameless, rec. fr. 1576, NED.

By this time the Ensign was grown as bold as an admiral. Thackeray, HE, 196.

I am as brave in the night-time as a' admiral. Hardy, RN, 32.

He used to come in as bold as a lord and drink off his glass by his father's side, at the head of the table. Thackeray, VF, 249. *Bold* in this case means not only 'daring', 'fearless', but it implies also the opposite of 'modest'.

As bold as a new made Knight. Nabbes, *Tottenham Court*, v, 4, 1638, Lean, II, ii.

I felt as brave as a sodger. Hardy, UGT, 273.

So bold's a badger. Hewett, Dev. 11. — If this *badger* is the corn-dealer, in what way can he be said to be bolder than other people? Does *bold* mean 'impudent,' referring to this huckster's forestalling of the markets, which must have made him unpopular? Or does it allude to the animal, the brock, whose fierce defence of its burrow has already been referred to? But cf. the phrase 'as bold as a badger's horse,' quoted by Lean from an unidentifiable source, See *Ill-mannered, Shameless*, p. 105.

As fearless as a drunkard. Middleton, *Mayor of Queenboro'*, ii, 3, Lean, II, ii.

As bold as a miller's shirt, which takes a rogue by the throat every morning. *Marriage of Wit and Science*, H, *Old Plays*, ii, 336. Lean, II, ii. The miller's golden thumb does not always gather the gold of honesty. — *Stout*, brave, courageous. As stout as a miller's waistcoat, that takes a thief by the neck every day. H. (no source given).

Upstanding as bold as brass on the edge of the cliff. Crocket, 1894, EDD. The sim. is used by Thackeray, Bolderwood, Alcott (W), &c. but in many cases it has, beside the sense of 'daring', also the connotation of 'audaciously forward'. See *Ill-mannered, Shameless*, p. 104, and cf. But sheppard mought be meeke and mylde, Well-eyed as Argus was, With fleshly follyes undefyled, And stoute as steede of brasse. Spenser, SK, July 1.

The parson was as brave as steel. Mason, PK, 77.

Croose as a cock in his ain cavie. Mayne, 1808, Dmf. EDD. *Croose*, bold, courageous. The *cavie* is the hen-coop. Cf. A cock is crouse in his own midding. Ray. See *Proud*, p. 84, where this and some similar phrases are quoted. — *Gallus in suo sterquilinio plurimum potest*, in Seneca. Ray.

His *Hangers-on* call him a Man of *Blood*, and by his own report he is as stout as a Turkey cock, yet he never was in any service, but building *Sconces*. *Town-Gallant*, 3.

As bold as a lion. Chaucer, KnT, 740.

The righteous are bold as a lion. Prov. xxviii, 1. — I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion. Goldsmith, SSC, 227. — She was as bold as a lioness, and feared nobody. Thackeray, HE, 43.

As brave as a lion. Lean, II, ii. Nash's. '17, April, 60.

He is as valiant as the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant. Shak., TC, I, ii, 20, *ibid.* KH IVa, III, i, 167. Cf. Father rides well enough and with the courage of a lion. Phillpotts, AP, 181; You have a heart as big as a lion. Shaw, CBP, 54. — "The lion has by the naturalists, poets, moralists, fable-writers, been unanimously crowned the King of Beasts

- and has been duly accredited with every royal virtue, such as magnanimity, courage, generosity." Hulme, NH, 116.
- As brave as a Bengal tiger. Moir, 1828, EDD. — These sim. with *lion* and *tiger* are probably oriental borrowings made familiar to the Germanic races through the medium of Latin and old Hebrew poetry.
- Zo bold's a cüte. War. Dev. EDD. Cf. "Mad as a coot." p. 93.
- As bold as a robin. *Punch*, Poutsma, I, ii, 512. See *Lively*, *Peart*, Ch. II.
- As stout as a stockfish. *Appius and Virginia*, See p. 112, and cf. What come they for, good captain Stockfish? — It seems your lordship has forgot my name. B. & Fl., KK, V, iii.
- "Fierce as a maggot" is general in England, and is short for "Fierce as a maggot with its tail cut off." N. & Q., 6, IV, 355. "Among keepers and others in the North Riding of Yorkshire some forty years ago." N. & Q., 10, XII, 148. Commonly applied to pseudovaliancy. Oxf. EDD.
- Stout as an oak. Mrs. C. Tolerably common. Cf. 'as strong as oak' and the fig. use of *oak* in such phrases as *heart of oak*, *British oak*, and *Eiche* in German.
- [The Weardale men] they have good hearts/ They are as stiff as any tree, For if they'd every man been slain'/ Never a foot back man would flee. *Ballad of the Rookhope Ryde*, Lean.

Coward, Timid, Wary.

- He was cautious as the typical Scotchman, greedy as the typical Jew, and as cunning as an old fox in a Holmshire cover. Besant, RMM, 23. — The wary sagacity and shrewdness commonly assigned to the Scotch is sometimes said to grow, or degenerate, into something akin to what is charged home to them in the old saying registered p. 22.
- His hert arwe as an hare. Rob. of Gloucester, c. 1300, Wright, RS, 43. *Arwe*, *argh*, timorous, cowardly, still lives on in n. Cy dial.
- As fearful as a hare, and will lie like a lapwing. 1606, NED. A very dishonest paltry boy, and more coward than a hare. Shak., TN, III, iv, 369. — The hare (*Lepus timidus*) is the arch-coward, and *Coward* was his name already in Caxton's *Reynard*, and numerous are the references to his cowardice throughout the range of English literature. Shak. speaks of *hare-hearts* (TC, II, ii, 48), Rowland (1614, NED) of 'Two right hare-harted coward fooles;' Addison refers to *the fearful hare* (1702), and Goldsmith thinks that 'Animals of the hare kind . . . are inoffensive and timorous.' — "Hare, a black meat, melancholy and hard of digestion; it breeds *incubus* often eaten, and causeth fearful dreams." Burton, AM, I, 250. See p. 57.

As wary as a blind horse. Bohn.

As valiant as an Essex lion. Ray. — The *Essex lion* is not of the roaring but of the bleating kind.

He's as bold as a Lammermoor lion. Bwk, 1856, EDD. — *Lammermoor* is a hill of this county, and the lions on it are lions with white faces like the Cotswold (see p. 91), and the Rumford ones.

As wary as a dogge at the bowe. Barclay, *Eclogues*, ante 1530, Lean, II, ii.

She is as timid as a mouse. Hardy, TM, 150. Cf. Thou wilt be as valiant as the wrathful dove or most magnanimous mouse. Shak., KH IVb III, ii, 151. Ye havna the spirit of a mouse in yir big body. MacLaren, YB; The Labour party . . . have scarcely the courage of mice. *N. Age*, X, 3. If we was men instead of mice, we'd rise up. Phillpotts, AP, 33. Cf. *Still, Quiet*, Ch. IV.

Afraid as a grasshopper. N. & Q., 5, I, 420. Cf. Job, xxxix, 19 f. Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible.

(You haven't the pluck of a louse. Phillpotts, AP, 214. Cf. If Arthur Pierce had the pluck of a louse . . . *ibid*, WF, 157, 193. There's lots like him about. Very brave with the women, but they curl up like a wood-louse if a man tackles them. *ibid*. 432).

Lazy.

As lazy as Lawrence. Som. Cor. EDD, N. & Q.

"Lazy as David Lawrence's dog. — Here *Lawrence* is a corruption of Larrence, an imaginary being supposed by Scottish peasantry to preside over the lazy and indolent." Brewer, *Dict.* 736. Lawrence > Larrence.

As lazy as David Lawrence's dog, that leant his head against a wall to bark. Brewer, *ibid*. Cf. the west Som. phrase 'He's like lazy Lawrence's dog, that lied his head agin the wall to bark.' Elworthy, WSG. 420.

'I know that Suffolk peasants say "as lazy as Lawrence's dog" with an example of his laziness added which is too vulgar to quote.' N. & Q., 9, V, 503.

References to (*Lazy*) *Lawrence* as the genius or personification of idleness date back to the seventeenth c. In 1670 there was printed a chapbook entitled *The Infamous History of Sir Lawrence Lazie his Birth and slothful Breeding*, how he served the Schoolmaster, his Wife, the Squire's Cook and the Farmer, which by the Laws of Lubberland was accounted High Treason, his Arraignment and Trial and Happy Deliv-

erance &c., and Taylor (NL, 11, 1627) speaks of 'Avarice, the Purser, Lawrence Delay, the Paymaster; kinsman to Tom Long the Carrier,' who both may be very close relatives of Long-Lawrence; and in *Woman is a Weathercock*, 1612, Field makes use of the phrase *beyond Lawrence of Lancashire* (H), which may be an allusion to *Lazy Lawrence*. In pr. E. this phrase is used in many counties, Lan. Yks. Chs. Nhp. Pem. Shr. Glo. Cmb. Kent. Nrf. Sfk. Hmp. I. W. Som. Dev. Cor. (EDD, N. & Q., 7, XI, *passim*). "Lazy Lawrence [is] most likely ubiquitous enough . . . I have often heard the saying in London, but know not from whence imported." N. & Q., 3, X, 39.

Some of the phrases in which it occurs are worth quoting. They all refer to enforced or willing idleness. 'To have Lawrence on one's back,' Wright, RS. 165. (cf. He's got St. Lawrence on the shoulder, N. & Q., 6, VI, 78). 'I've got a touch of old Lawrence to-day.' Cooper, *Suss. Voc.*, 1853, H. 'I see lang Lawrence hes gitten hod on thee.' *Craven Dial.* 1828. Also in modern dial. in other parts. 'Lawrence has got upon him.' *North. Gloss.* 'When a person in hot weather seems lazy, it is a common saying that "Lawrence bids him high wages."' *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1784. Also in modern dial. 'In South Yorkshire, when a man is falling asleep in his chair a friend will say "Lawrence bids."' N. & Q., 7, I, 269.

The reference is said to be to St. Lawrence, who under the fifth persecution of Valerian was burnt to death. When lying on the gridiron he is supposed to have mocked his tormentors by saying, "It is now roasted, turn me and eat." (Owen, *Sanctorale Catholicon*, ed. 1880, p. 238, see also Butler's *Life of the Saints*; N. & Q., 9, VI, 253). It is also said that his bearing the torments without a groan caused some of those standing by to exclaim, "How great must be his faith." But his pagan executioner said, "It is not his faith, it is his laziness." (*Slang*). — Legends and stories concerning saints, or supposed saints, are in a great many cases founded on a very scanty supply of truth. They have grown from an unimportant nucleus by conscious fiction or by an ignorant tradition which confuses legends or transfers them from one hero to another. This was the case with St. Lawrence.

The above burlesque stories go back to full accounts of the saint's martyrdom, probably composed in the sixth century, in which narratives a number of legends dealing with other martyrs were mixed up in a romantic and wholly legendary fashion. Parts of these legends are founded on St. Ambrose's *De Officiis Ministrorum*, where we read, Lib. I, caput XLI, *Tamen et ipse post triduum, cum illuso tyranno, impositus*

super craticulam exureretur: Arsum est, inquit, versa et manduca. But what Ambrose and his fellow-writer Prudentius say on the subject is founded rather on oral tradition than on written accounts. "It is quite possible that between the year 258, when the Martyrdom is said to have taken place, and the end of the fourth century, popular legends may have grown about this highly venerated Roman deacon, and some of these legends have been preserved by these two authors. . . . The details concerning St. Lawrence's martyrdom cannot claim any credibility." (*The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. IX).

All these legends made the saint extremely popular, as is witnessed, among other things, by the numerous churches and streets, in and out of England, that have been dedicated to him. There is a French mystery play of the fifteenth cent. (*Le Mystere de Saint Laurent*, ed. Söderhjelm & Wallensköld, *Acta Societ. Scient. Fennicae*, Tom. XVIII) where all sorts of torments are heaped upon the saint, and nothing is able to shake him until he is made to say, just as in St. Ambrose: —

O! Meschant payen Decius
 Tu as rosty une partie
 De mon corps, pren de la partie
 Et en mengue presentement,
 Mais tourne moy premeriement
 De l'autre part pour en avoir.

Decius:

Tirans, faictes tout son vouloir;
 Tournez le tost, le dolent gars
 Affin qu'il soit de toutes pars
 Rosty, ainsi comme il a dit. (vv. 6885—6894).

Of this mystery there is a Spanish and several Italian editions, which shows that it must have been very widely known. But although there is a late twelfth century Anglo-Normand poem *De St. Laurent*, no such *English* mystery play seems to be extant or known. It is nevertheless not altogether impossible that such a play has existed. Dramatical performances of this kind must have made scenes and stories representing St. Lawrence on the gridiron well-known among the rustics. From a vulgar point of view — and the majority of the lookers-on knew no other — the saint's behaviour must have appeared as a high degree of stolidity. And from stolidity to laziness there is but one step. From such sources there may have developed stories that became current in mediæval England, and made the saint the hero of tales dealing with laziness, and *Lawrence* became the designation not only of an extremely idle person but of idleness itself, and gradually, as the origin of the name was lost sight of, a mythical person, who was either the hero of tales that gave instances of monstrous laziness, or a more

or less supernatural being who "takes hold on" the lazy. In this way the additions to the original simple form may be accounted for. They are of late popular growth. As everything that belongs to this arch-sluggard must have his characteristics stamped upon it, his dog must be as lazy as its master. Cf. also below *Ludlum's dog*. In the above mentioned phrase 'beyond Lawrence of Lancashire' we have only a facetious localization of *Lubberland*, which seems to be our hero's home county, "where they have half a crown a day for sleeping" (Ray). With equal right he might have been charged home to "long, lazy, lousy Lewisham" (Ray), as his association with Lancashire does not go beyond *La*.

But there is something that speaks against this theory, viz. the occurrence of *Lawrence* in expressions and associations that can hardly have had anything to do with the martyr, at least not directly. Lawrence is the fox in Lyndsey's *Dream*, Nashe speaks of *Lawrence Lucifer* (I, 181; possibly this name was given the devil, "because St. Laurence's day fell on Aug. 10. the hottest part of the year." McKerrow, *Notes*, 108), and Taylor refers to "Sir Laurence Ling, an ancient sea-faring gentleman." (JL, 14). There is also a "lusty Lawrence", who, according to Nares, was a "mad wencher." (See also Östberg, 86). This seems to hint to a semi-appellative use of the name.

If we turn to the continent we find numerous expressions in different Germanic languages that show us that this use of *Lawrence* was by no means confined to England alone, that, on the contrary, it was, and is, far more frequent in Germany, (Holland and Flemish Belgium?). The form all but exclusively used in these terms is the familiar one of *Lenz* (*Lents*, *lent*). We have *hemedlenz* ("shirt-lawrence" of a person in his bare shirt; cf. the Sw. *barfotalasse*, "barefoot-lawrence" of a person, chiefly a child, without shoes and stockings), *bremmsuppenlenz* (of one who "feeds like a farmer." See Grimm), *trapplenz*, *bäbbelenz* (ungainly, clumsy, or stupid persons; see Martin & Lienhart, *Wörterbuch der elsässischen Mundarten*, Strassburg, 1899), *langer lenz* (a tall, lanky person; Grimm; Hertel, *Thüringer Sprachschatz*, Weimar, 1895; Fischer, *Schwäbisches Wörterbuch*); *der gut Lenz*, *der fromb Lenz*, *der arm Lenz*, &c. (Grimm). *Lenz*, alone, means in the *Elberfeld* dialect a wag, and *Lenz maken*, to make a joke; in Swabian *lents* means a lazy worker (see Fischer, *ibid.*), and the Flemish *lente*, the etymology of which is rather uncertain, means an indolent and lazy woman, (cf. *cene leêge looie lente*, a "lazy, loselly larrence of a woman", De Bo, *Westvlamsch Idiotikon*, Gent. 1892), and the chief inst. of all, *fauler Lenz*, lazy Lawrence. Of the word *Lenz* Grimm says: The frequency of the form brings about its use as an appellative in the sense of person,

fellow, fool &c. It is immaterial whether *fauler Lenz* starts from this secondary use of the name, or owes its existence to a folk-etymological interpretation and reshaping of the verb *faulenzten* (*faul-lenzten*). The thing that chiefly interests us is the way it is used, and in this respect we find a remarkable coincidence.

Some of the most interesting expressions are worth quoting: *Dem faulen Lenzten dienen* (to serve lazy Lawrence). *Ein Gespräch mit dem faulen Lenzten, welcher ein Hauptmann der grossen faulen haufen ist.* (A conversation with Lazy Lawrence, who is the captain of the large lazy crowds) . . . *mir zwar . . . ware sie* (the unusually hot weather), *die Wahrheit zu bekennen, so beschwerlich, dass ich mich unzählich mal under den hauptman Lenz underhalten musste.* *einmal commandierte mich dieser gewaltige capitain . . .* (lazy Lawrence, the mighty captain). *De faule Lenz sticht einen* (Lazy Lawrence hits one, Grimm). *Lenz* alone is used in pretty much the same way: *Lenz haben*, (Staub, Tobler und Schoch, *Schweiz. Idiotikon*; Fischer) to have, to suffer from, Lawrence, *Der Lenz kommt.* Lawrence is coming, 'Lawrence bids', *Der Lenz hat mich ^{ch}dinget*, (Fischer), Lawrence has hired me, 'Lawrence bids wages'. If anyone complains, when mowing the corn, of an aching back, he is likely to be told '*s chumt mer vor, der Lenz tüeg ich [euch] ufhocke* (Staub &c.) it seems to me that Lawrence has got hold of you. And in Holstein *Lents* is an imaginary being that produces sleep, as in the proverb *Wenn der Karmelk kunt, so nimmt de Lents Låde an*, when the butter milk comes (which according to popular belief makes people lazy), Lawrence will get people (Berghaus, *Sprachschatz der Sassen*, Berlin 1883). There are also not a few words closely resembling *Lorenz*, *Lenz* in form, and belonging to the same sphere of ideas, although their etymology is uncertain: *lenteren*, *lente et ignave agere*; *lenterer*, *cunctabundus*, *tardus* (see Verwijs & Verdam, *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek*); *loren*, to be slow and negligent, to work slowly, (Staub &c.), the same word is also in Middle Dutch, and is rendered *carptim et ignave aliquid agere* (Verwijs &c.); *Lari*, a slow stupid person &c. It must be added that there are also some sayings with *Lorenz* and *Lenz* more closely connected with the name of the saint and alluding to his day, Aug. 10, and weather prognostications concerning the following season.

All this is enough to show that the English Lazy Lawrence must have been born on the continent. The term and the bulk of the sayings referring to it must have arisen in pre-reformation times, and, if we are allowed to draw any conclusion from the evidence of the dictionaries, in the south of Germany, from whence they travelled westward, aided and upheld by the numerous legends concerning St.

Lawrence, which helped to make his name popular. There were numerous story-tellers to bring them across the Channel, pilgrims, students and soldiers who travelled in the Low Countries and up and down the Rhine. In England they became popular at an early date, and the name was soon coupled with the adj. *lazy*, probably also of continental origin, which became current about 1550, and thanks to alliteration the sim. and some proverbial phrases have been preserved, although most of the tales that gathered round the name seem to be forgotten.

It is remarkable how important a part is played by alliteration in many expressions connected with laziness. The following insts may be added to those already given: "lazy lorrels" (Harman, 1567, Halliwell), "lazy lozels . . . which do nothing all day long, but walke in the streets." (Dent, 1601, NED), and Munday speaks of a "lazy lozel Friar" (1601, NED). Cf. also "ye losel, lither and lasie," Still, GGN, V, ii;" like a loytring losell standest thow here idelye," *Resp.* 53; "a slave, a vacabund, or a lasie lubber," *Damon and Pithias*, Dodsley, 1,266; "lazy Lobkin, like an idle lout, Breton, *Old Madcappes new Gallimawfry*, N. & Q., 7, XI, 4, &c. Cf. also some of the following sim.

It is worthy of note that also on French ground there exists, or has existed, a patron saint of laziness. "The words *lozard*, *lozarde* mean slothful, and it is said of individuals who deserve this designation that *St. Losa* is their patron . . . At Douai till about 1830 this imaginary saint had his fête kept every year on Trinity Monday, the following refrain being sung among others: — *Non, Saint Losa n'est pas mort, Car il vit encore.*" Desrousseaux. *Mœurs Populaires de la Flandre française*, 1889, i, 35, N. & Q. No such word as *lozard(e)* seems to be known to the French dictionaries.

Idle as (H)Ines, that was too lazy to get his wagon and horses out of the ditch. Northall, FPh. (Glo.) — "This has perhaps some local tale to back it; but no one seems to know the telling. At first sight it strikes one as an idea borrowed from the fable of Hercules and the waggoner, which should run, "As idle as the hind, &c." But this is a chance resemblance, maybe; as *hind*, in country places at least, is still restricted in meaning." *Ibid.* 17.

As lazy as Joe the marine, who laid down his musket to sneeze. 1670, *Slang*.

Drink his bottle and live as lazy as a lord. Thackeray, BL, iii.

As lazy as the tinker who laid down his budget to fart. Ray; Peacock, Lin. Gloss. Lean, II, ii.

As lazy as the tinker who laid down his wallet to let him down. 1811, *Slang*; Jackson, Shropsh. Wdbk, Lean, II, ii.

- Ez lazy ez a stee. — *Stee*, ladder. A ladder generally leans against a wall. — “In daily use.” Blakeborough. NRY, 240.
- As idle as Dain’s dog as laid it deawn t’bark. Ch. Gl.
- As lazy as Larriman’s dog. Ch. Gl. Connected with Lawrence?
- As lazy as Kittenhallet’s dog; ‘e laned ‘is yed agen a wall to bark. Jackson & Burne. *Kittenhallet?*
- As lazy as Ludlam’s dog, that leaned his head against a wall to bark. Ray. Southey, *The Doctor*, As lazy as Ludlam’s dog, who laid himself down to bark. Pegge, *Derbicisms*, 135. As lazy as Ludlum’s dog as laid him down to bark. S. Yks. “This comparison is so general and familiar in South Yorkshire (Sheffield especially) as to be frequently quoted under the first half.” N. & Q., 1850, 382.
- As laazy as Ludlam’s dog that leän’d his sen ageän a door to bark. Linc. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 409.
- “He’s as lazy as Lumley’s dog that leant up against a wall when he wanted to bark.” Suffolk. N. & Q., 7, IX, 328. — *Ludlum’s dog* is referred to in Cotton’s *Scarronides*, 1670, where Aeneas reposing on the *toro alto* is likened to “Ludlam’s cur on truckle lolling.” (N. & Q., I, IV, 165).
- Who was Ludlum, Ludlam, Lumley? The question was asked already by Southey in his *Doctor* and has been repeated since more than once. According to Brewer Ludlam was the famous sorceress of Surrey, who lived in a cave near Farnham. She kept a dog noted for its laziness.
- As idle as a foal. Linc. 1886, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 409.
- He be as lazy as a gowk or a howlet, as don’t make no nest. Berrow, 1888, Wor. EDD.
- As lazy as a toad at the bottom of a well. Lean, II, ii.
- As thrang as a cobbler’s Monday. — It is generally supposed that a cobbler has to rest over Monday to work off his week’s-end debauch; hence the sim. is one of ridicule. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. See Ch. II, *Drunk*.

Eager.

- Hot as a piper. Suf. EDD. “Very hot, as hot as can be.” *Ibid*. Does it refer to any kind of hotness or heat, or does it mean the same thing as “mad as a piper,” p. 90. Cf. “piping hot.”
- And turn as eager as pricked wine. Butler, H, II, 70. Another instance of the same play on words as is illustrated in “as cross as the tongs.” *Eager*, of wine, sour, obs. since 1727. In the sim. it means ‘impetuous’ rather than ‘ardently desiring’.
- As keen as mustard at the uptake. DNL, 5, IV, ‘13. Titterton, my new publisher, is tremendously taken with the scheme of the thing — keen as mustard about it. Pinero, BD, 15. *Keen*, eager, ardent. Cf. p. 32.

He was as keen as a terrier on his task. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 175.

As fierce as a dog. — Eager, N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As fess as Cox's pig. *Fess*, eager. N. & Q., 11, V, 434, *Fess* is a word used in some s. w. and Midland counties, and means perhaps originally fierce, and then lively, active, over-zealous &c. (EDD).

As prest as a sperhauke. Langland, PPl, VI, 199 (B). *Prest*, prompt, eager, keen, obs. since 1697. Cf. the following sim. His face was dark and as keen as that of a hawk. Doyle, AG, 294. *Keen*, of the face or looks, "suggestive of mental acuteness" (NED). It means more, it is suggestive of swiftness in decision and eagerness in grappling with a task. See below.

Jock was . . . keen-bitten as a wind of March. Crocket, 1899, Gall. EDD. Cf. His face was keen as is the wind/ That cuts along the hawthorn-fence. Wordsworth. 1798, NED. — *Keen-bitten*, eager, sharp, ready to take advantage.

Note. Some of the numerous sim. under *Hot*, Ch. IV, may perhaps also be used in the fig. sense of eagerness.

Busy, Hard-working.

As busy as the devil in a high wind. Fuller, 1731.

As busy as the devil in a (high) gale of wind. Denham; W. Scott's *Pirate*, 1821, viii. xxviii. — 'The following extract from the legend of St. Michael . . . printed by Caxton about 1479 . . . will, I think, serve to illustrate that adage so common among the vulgar, "as busy as the devil in a high gale of wind." Mychaell and his angellis fought with Lucyfer in heven . . . and with help of God, Michael had the better, and drove out the dragon and all his felyshyp into the ayre, between heven and erth; and so they be there yet as thycke as motis in the sonne. And for Christ come to heven in a blast of thonder; and, therefore, yet whan they here thonder, they fall downe to the erth for fere, and thenne they go not up ayen tyll they have done some harme, for thene they make bates, stryves, and manslaughter and make great wyndes both in londe and in water, and do moche harm.'" The *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1811, 505 They [spirits or devils] cause whirlwinds on a sudden, & tempestuous storms. Burton, AM, I, 218.

As busy as the devil. Suff. EDD.

The men of the driving crew worked like demons. White, BT, 329.

Morrison he comes up to run things some. He does. Tim he's getting the drive in shape, and he don't want to be bothered,

but old Morrison he's as busy as hell beatin' tan-bark. White, BT, 180. — Mr. Morrison is the head of the firm that employs Tim, who has undertaken to bring the timber-drive down. M. is 'used to bossin' clerks and such things, and don't have much of an idea of lumber-jacks.' Consequently *beating tan-bark* must either be an Americanism referring to the ways of a busybody or be applied to *hell* to point out one of its busiest moments, an occupation that is a bit startling and, as far as records go, rather unusual at the place down below.

Working like a Trojan. Newman, 1846, NED. N. & Q., 10, II, 168, Gissing, CL, &c. *Trojan* is a more or less colloquial term for a person who sticks to his task faithfully and perseveringly. Consequently the sim. is only partially intensifying. As "a vague term of commendation" (NED) it is current in English at least from the Elizabethan period, and it is now used in st. E. as well as in dialects, and especially in Irish, where *like a Trojan* is "a term of comparison for an active sturdy person." (EDD).

He'd lately been slaving away like a Turk. Barham, IL, 504.

To work like a Turk. Baker, North. Gl. War.

Nicht and day toil like a Turk. Nicholson, 1895, Lnk. EDD.

As hard as a Turk. Of one who is indefatigable in work.

Yks. — *Like a Turk* has passed into some sort of general intensive to qualify anything that is violent and excessive. See Ch. V.

As busy as Batty. Dev. N. & Q., 1, I, 475. [The sim.] "was often heard by the present writer in his youth, as signifying that the one who has been 'as busy &c.' has indeed had his time fully and entirely occupied in the duties performed . . ." N. & Q., 11, IV, 250. There is also a Dev. phrase *Beat as Batty* meaning 'as tired as B'. *ibid.* (quot. fr. *Dev. Association Transactions*, 1910). — "I remember well the phrase 'busy as Batty' in eastern Cornwall forty years ago; but I always took it to have a satirical suggestion, it being applied to those who . . . were bustling rather than busy." N. & Q., 11, IV, 314. — Who or what *Batty* was, no one seems to know. Has it anything to do with the word *bat*, beat?

As busy as Beck's wife. — A popular phrase. N. & Q., 7, VIII, 368.

As throng as Beck's wife. — A common comparison for a busy person. Wm. South. Notts. EDD.

As thrang as Throp's wife when shoe hanged hersell in her garter. *Craven Gloss.*, 1829.

As thrang as Thrap's wife as hanged hersell i't' dishclout. *Teesdale Gloss.* 1849, Dur. Current in practically the same form in Yks. (*Folklore*, LXIII, 411), Cum. Lin. Nhb. Wm. Shoo's as thrang as Throp's wife when shoo clouted Dick wi' a dishclout. N. & Q., 11, IX, 13. Is *Dick* Throp's wife's husband?

As throng as Throp's wife. "See *Academy* July 21, 1883. The author never heard the suicidal portion of this in Linc." 1877. *Folk-Lore* LXIII, 411.

As busy as Throp's wife. Yks. Der. N. & Q., 11, VIII, 468. — See also *Denham Tracts* (*Folk-Lore Soc.* XXXV), and Southey, *The Doctor* (ed. Longman, 1849), 310. — This sim. is generally (for an exception see N. & Q. 1850, 485) used of a woman busying herself about domestic affairs, but whose house and surroundings are nevertheless always in a mess. Peacock's Gloss. (Lin.). "Whoever [Throp's wife] may have been she is reported to have hung herself in her dishclout, care and anxiety having preyed too much on her mind." Dickinson & Prevost, *Cumberland Gloss.* "Dr. James Hardy, who edited [the *Denham Tracts*] possessed a unique acquaintance with northern traditions, and he passed this adage without annotation. We may thus conclude that its origin was unknown to him, and that the proverb continued current long after the incident giving rise to it had been forgotten." N. & Q., 11, IX, 13.

As busy as a good wife at oven, and neither meal nor dough. Ray. I. e. more fussy than busy.

As busy as country attorneys at an Assizes. Dekker, *Seven Deadly Sins* &c. Lean, II, ii.

As busy as inkle weavers. Cum. EDD. See *Intimacy*, and cf. She slav'd all the Day like a Spitalfield Weaver. Anstey, 1766, NED. The name of Spitalfield is well known in connexion with the silk industry established here by French refugees after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Enc. Brit.

He would labour like a thresher. Beaumont & Fletcher, *The Custom of the Country*, III, iii. — "The calling of the thresher has gone . . . There remain, however, some sayings in which 'like a thresher' occurs, but the use of these grows less and less . . . it may be mentioned that the sayings 'sings like a thresher', and 'works like a thresher' came from that occupation and are 'as old as Adam'. Th. Ratcliffe, Worksop (Yks). N. & Q., 9, IV, 106. Cf. 'to pull like a thresher', to pull strongly. Yks. EDD, and See *Hungry* Ch. II.

I've been toiling like a convict. Thackeray, VF, xxiv. Cf. Fr. *travailler comme forçat*.

She expects me to work for him like a galley-slave. Baring-Gould, BS, 86; Lean, II, ii.

Don't she work like a slave? Baring-Gould, BS, 49. Jane Perkins worked at him two months like slave. Hardy, MC, 84. *To slave*, work very hard, rec. fr. 1709. NED.

To work like a negro. Overheard. Cf. Fr. *travailler comme un nègre*.

Ez thrang ez a woman's tongue. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. Cf. A woman's tongue wags like a lamb's tail. Three women and a goose make a market. Ray.

- Busy as an English oven at Christmas. *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXXV, 91.
- As busy as a dog in dough. Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, 1883. Common colloquialism. Chs.—Cf. Like dogs in dough, i. e. unable to make headway. Northall, FPh. 19.
- [I] have been toiling more like a dog than a man. Scott, RR, II.
- As busy as a cat in a tripe shop. Northall, FPh. Cf. the Lancashire phrase "As happy as a cat in a tripe-shop." EDD.
- You are as busy as a cat in pattens. — A common comparison when one is needlessly busy about trifles. Nhp. EDD.
- They toil like mill-horses, and turn as round. Heywood, WKK, 22. Would you have me stalk like a mill-jade,/ All day for one that will not yield us grains. Jonson, *Alch.* III, ii, 216. I was obliged to drudge on like a blinded mill-horse. Johnston, 1781, NED. — *Mill-horse*, used for working a mill. The word rec. fr. 1552. For *mill-jade* NED has only this inst. Cf. the *fig.* use of the word *mill-horse* in phrases like, You are the mill-horses of mankind. Dryden, 1673. It cost Turner forty years of mill-horse toil. Ruskin, 1881. NED. See p. 80.
- To work like a dray horse. Lean, II, ii. She is condemned to do more drudgery than a dray-horse. Foote, 1756, NED. I worked like a team of horses. Phillpotts. WF, 443, 124. Toiling like a horse. Scott, A, 237.
- To work so hard as a horse. Phillpotts, SW. — The sim. mentioned by NED, but no inst. given. Cf. As strong as a horse. Cf. Fr *Travailler comme un cheval*. Also in Sw.
- I have been labouring in your business like any moyle. Dryden, 1679, NED. *Moil* is an eighteenth c. form of mule. Is this a play on the verb *to moil* and the corr. subst.? Cf. Their life for that space was . . . hard travail or moyle. Hammond, 1659, NED. Fr. *Travailler comme un mulet*.
- They are as busy as beavers among the underwood. Doyle. R. 347. Men with spiked boots ran here and there from one bobbing log to another, . . . working like beavers to keep the whole mass straight. White, BT, 211. See p. 54.
- As busy as a hen with one chicken.; Shirley, *Witty Fair One*, ii, 2. Ray, &c. Busy's a hen with one chick,. Yoxall, RS, 83. As busy as a hen that hath but one chicken. Clarke. Il est plus embarrassé qu'une poule qui n'a qu'un poulet. J. Fleury, *Literature Orale de la Basse-Normandie*, 1883, 375, N. & Q., 12, III, 276. — Brewer has "as fussy &c.", which must be a later form, the adj. not being rec. before 1831.
- As busy as a hen with ten chickens. Lean, II, ii.
- As busy as a hen with fifteen chickens in a barnyard. Bartlett.
- Zo busy's a rüke. Hewett, Dev. II. This probably refers to the endless swarming of the birds outside a rookery.

- Ez thrang ez bees in a sugar cask. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.
 As busy as bees in a bason. Toone, 1832.
 Ez busy ez bees on t' moor. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.
 As busy as a bee. Chaucer.
 Now art tha maid als bissie as ane be. Stewart, 1535.
 Be in my house as busy as a be. John Harrington, *Epigr.*
 (Burton, AM, II, 141).
 As busy as a bee, I grant. But her hum is dreary and bitter.
 Phillpotts, WF, 317. As busily as the bees. Alcott, *Little Men*, 57, W. Some further insts in Lyly, 1579, Cogan, 1589, Davies, 1610 (Lean, II, ii). — The *busy bee* is frequently referred to in English literature. Well-known are Watts's lines "How doeth the little busy bee Improve each shining hour". Also in Thackeray, Dickens, Alcott &c.
- My girl is as good as gold and as thrifty as the bible ant. Phillpotts, SW, 193. Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise. Prov. vi, 6, or, as the Geneva bible has it, "Goe to the pismire, o sluggard," and Wyclif has, "O.' thou slowe man, goe to the amte." (gloss. pissemeyre). The *ant* (emmet, pismire &c) has ever been the type of unremitting industry: — Pissemers in somere are besy and rennyn fast aboute. 1440, NED. The busy emmets cease. Dryden, Oed. VI, 226. Men as so many emmets, busy, busy still. Burton, AM, I, 317. Emmaks be busy'l things, they be never idle. Pem. EDD.
- As busy as a bag of fleas. — Very common. Suf. EDD
- As busy as a body louse. Clarke.

Miserly, Stingy, Self-denying.

- As greedy as Death, until his last breath, His method he ne'er failed to use; When interr'd a corpse lay, Amen he'd scarce say, Before he cry'd Who pays the dues? Ditchfield, PC, 60.
- As freely as St. Robert gave his cow. Ray. — This St. Robert was a Knaresborough saint. "The old women there can still tell you the legend of the cow." Ray. "The reputation of the saint is perhaps fresher to-day than that of a different sort of local celebrity, Eugene Aram". H. There is a metrical life of St. R. (ed. Roxburghe Club, 1824). Cf. Saints themselves will sometimes be Of gifts that cost them nothing, free. Butler, H, I, i, 496.
- A man of strict religious habits, self-denying as a lenten saint. Hardy, GND, 161. Cf. such expressions as lenten provisions, lenten fare, lenten face &c. See p. 66.
- That benchwhistler, (quoth I) is a pinchpenny,/ As free of gift as a poor man of his eye./ I shall bet a fart of a dead man as soon,/ As a farthing of him. Heywood, PE, 37.

- As free as a blind man (is) of his eye. Withals, 1568, Lean, II, ii.
 Ray — A poor man can give away neither hand nor eye, but a blind man can freely give his eye, because it is of no use to him.
- As free as a Jew of his eye. Denham, Lean, II, ii. A *Jew's eye* is a proverbial expression for something valued highly (NED, rec. fr. 1592) A souerain Rule, as deare as a Iewes eye. Harvey, 1592, NED.
- But he was cautious as the typical Scotchman, greedy as the typical Jew, and as cunning as any old fox in a Holmshire cover. Besant, RMM, 23.
- The deacon was thight as the skin on his back; begrudged folk their victuals when they came to his house. *Widow Bedott Papers, Slang.*
- As mean as tongs. Sheffield. — "The association of . . . meanness with a pair of tongs is curious. The same association appears to occur in the words *pinch*, to save money penuriously, *pincher*, a niggard, *nip-cheese* or *nip-fig*, a miser, and in such phrases as *nip*, *scratch and bite*, as applied to the struggle to make ends meet. I suggest that these words and phrases arose from the old practise of clipping money." N. & Q., 9, IV.
 Is it not rather connected with the sim. "as lean as tongs"? *Mean*, penurious, stingy, is of late development, being rec. fr. c. 1800, which makes it possible that *mean* in this case goes back to some of the older senses of the word, and the meaning that most readily suggests itself is that of 'inferior, badly off, poor'. *Mean as tongs* meaning about the same thing as *bare as tongs*, would without difficulty assume the modern meaning and application of *mean*.
- She's got the money, and she's close as a mouse trap, and very hard on Adolphus. Phillpotts, WF, 143. *Close*, close-fisted, or close-neaved, as the half-Swedish Yorkshire man says, dates from 1654.
- Ez grasping ex a toll-bar. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. Cf. As hard as the turnpike. p. 93. *Toll-bar*, fr. 1794, Grose, EDD. *Grasping*, avaricious, from 1748, but the word is associated with greediness much earlier. Cf. Like a miser 'midst his store, Who grasps and grasps 'till he can hold no more. Dryden, 1700, NED, and "Gredy grasping gat it." Heywood, 1546, NED.
- As close as wax. — "A sim. derived mainly from *close* = hidden or reticent". Slang. See *Secretive, Reticent*. p. 130.
- As near as nip. Very niggardly; too greedy to be honest. Yks. *Near*, niggardly, stingy, rec. fr. 1616, is in general colloq. use. There are some other sim. with *nip*, as *clean*, *nice*, *tight*, *white* as *nip*. In *as white as nip*, *nip* is supposed to be the herb cat-mint, and *clean*, *nice as nip* may have developed out of the former sim. But this is hardly possible with *tight*, *near as nip*. There is in several dialects a verb *nip*, to be niggardly and parsimonious, and a *nip* is "a near split-farthing house-wife"

or generally a niggard, who is also called nip-curn, nip farthing, nip-kite &c., all derived from the original sense of *nip*, pinch, which must also be the meaning of the word in the sim. Cf. *as near as touch*, and see above *as mean as tongs*.

As free as a dead horse is of farts. Ray. See above *as free as a poor man of his eye*. — *Dead horse* (dead-horse) occurs in several other proverbial expressions.

As narrow in the nose as a pig at ninepence. Antrim prov. of a stingy person. N. & Q., 3, II, 304. *Narrow*, parsimonious, is a very old sense, but it is now obs. in st. E. although living in some dial. It is only as it should be that "the gentleman what pays the rint" has given rise to some Irishisms.

Ez greedy ez a fox in a hen-roost. — The fox having gained an entrance, not only kills the birds he intends to carry away for food, but any he can lay hold of; then, picking out the best, leaves the rest. Blakeborough, NRY, 244. — This has probably a wider application than simply to greedy animal hunger. — This sim. does not exactly fit in with the following quot. I managed to keep clear of debt, by living so hard as a fox lives. Phillpotts, WF, 135.

As greedy as an otter. Blakeborough, NRY, 242. See above, and cf. *Fastidious, Nice*, p. 86.

As kind as a kite, all you cannot eat you'll hide. Ray.

As kind as a kite. Clarke; H. — There are sixteenth c. insts of *kite* standing for a rapacious person, and it is still used as a term of reproach to a greedy individual. See EDD and *Slang*. The difficult thing about this sim. is the rendering of the adj. *kind*. None of the senses given to it in NED seem to suit the phrase. Neither is the treatment of the corresponding adverb fully satisfactory. It is given the sense 'heartily' in such phrases as 'to take kindly to', 'to thank kindly'. But it must have the same, or a closely related, meaning in other phrases as well. EDD has 'to drink kindly', and there is in Blackmore, LD, 40, 'I was kindly inclined to eat a bit.' Cf. 'being always in kind appetite.' *ibid* 70, which elsewhere in the same book is called 'a hearty appetite', in accordance with modern usage. Thus, *kind* must mean something like 'heartily hungry, greedily avaricious' &c. This tallies perfectly with the common sim. in which the kite (gled) symbolizes the heartiest appetite possible. Cf. The Jew (as busy as a kite over his prey). Dekker, PW, 201.

As keen as a kite. Bronte, *Shirley*, I, 13, W. *Keen*, looking sharply after one's interests, avaricious, in Sc. and some n. Cy dial.

This worthy couple was sharp as needles and saving as magpies. Besant, RMM, 22. *Saving*, parsimonious, fr. 1581. The magpie's habits of pilfering and hoarding are proverbial. NED. *Magpie* is also a Birmingham term for a collector.

Secretive, Reticent, Close.

She's secret as the grave and very cunning. Phillpotts, P, 363; Motley, 1874, NED. Make him swear to be silent as the grave, Twain, HF, 352.

As secret as a confessor. Gay, *Wife of Bath*, ii, Lean, II, ii.

Primero. But I must swear you to be secret, close. *Frippery*. As a maid of ten. *Pri*. Had you sworn but two years higher I would ne'er ha' believed you. *Fri*. Nay, I let twelve done, For after twelve has struck, maids look for one. T. Middleton, *Your five Gallants*, I, i, 1608. Lean, II, ii.

And therefore, prythee, let thy heart to him/ Be as a Virgin, close. Tourneur, RT, I, iii.

As a rule women are looked upon as unfit receptacles of secrets, as is amply shown by numerous proverbial phrases, of which some are worth quoting: They [women] bene as close and covert as the horn of Gabrielle That wylle not be harde but from hevyn to helle. MS. Laud. 416, *Rel. Ant.* ii, 27, c. 1460. Wymen ar no kepars of counsell. It goeth through them as water through a syve. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, Lean, IV. There was never man yet hoped for Either constancy or secrecy from a woman. B. & Fl. WGC, II, i. Tell nothing to a woman or a pie, unless thou wouldst have all the world know it. Lean, IV (source not identifiable), and see Beaumont & Fletcher, WGC, II, i; Greene, FBB, 227. — The magpie is commonly looked upon as just as great a divulger of secrets. Cf. Conceive the agony of suppressed speech when a man is as garrulous as a magpie by nature. 1891, NED, and the old Sw. *Han haar äthet skatägg*, he has eaten magpie eggs, he can't be silent (Grubb, 294). The loquacity of the magpie (H. More, 1664, NED) is a doom for its having kept chattering at the crucifixion while all the other birds sat silent with drooping heads. Sloet, *Dieren*, 232.

What I am and what I would are as secret as maidenhead. Shak. TN, I, v, 203.

You must be secret. — As your midwife, I protest, sister, or a barber-surgeon, Dekker, HWh, Ia, ii. Cf. As secret as your midwife or barber surgeon, madam. Sharpman, *Fleire*, ii, 1607. Lean, II, ii. This must be a conscious borrowing from Dekker. It is to be feared that "your midwife" was something of a gossip, and the barber-surgeon was probably a fitting repository only of "public secrets." Cf. the following quotations from Sharpham: But harke you, *Fleire*, are you capable of a secret? *Fl*. As your common cockatrice, that receiues the secrets of eury man. Sharpham, F, I, 282. Will thy tongue be secret? — As the clapper of the Mill, my Lord. — Is that not alwayes going? — I my Lord, but I hope it sayes

nothing. Sharpham, F, III, 206. Cf. The tongue of that confounded woman will wag in her head like the clack of a mill. Scott, W, LXII.

He's as close as a iron biler, he is: but I'm a 'cutish chap. Eliot, MF, 436.

As close as a close stool. Melbancke, *Philotinus*, 1583, Lean, II, ii.

As close as wax. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Love's Pilgrimage*, III, iii, Lean, II. Not much chance of drawing Sim Sharples when he's alone. He's as close as wax, and so is Sam Rogers. Gould, 1898, *Slang*, Hardy, DR, 276, Yoxall, RS, 45. The sim. has also other applications, as has already been shown, p. 127, and cf. also the following inst: Then commenced a long and steady struggle, conducted with Spartan dignity and self-command, and a countenance close as wax. Reade, 1863, *Slang* Mark stayed more at home, kept to his three-legged stool as close as any wax. Harris, 1901, NED.

As close as a wilk. Very reticent. Ir. EDD. *Wilk*, willock, periwinkle. See p. 27. Cf. His mouth as close shut as a clam. Harrison, A, 47. I am closed up here like an oyster. Scott, A, 397, 'as close as a cockle'; see *Tight*, Ch. IV.

As close as a flea in a blanket. *Yea and Nay Almanac*, Pt II, 1680, Lean, II, ii.

I will be secret, lady, close as night. Heywood, WKK, 41.

Knowledge.

I knowed un as well as my brother. Hardy, JO, 24. See *Intimacy* Ch. IV.

To know as well as the beggar knows his dish. Pilkington, *Burning of St. Paul's*, 1561, Lean, II, ii. That these young foxes knew as well as the beggar knowes his dish. Nashe, II, 94, 1593. Fynes Morrison's, *Itinerary*, 1617, H; Day, BBB, 1659. *Lady Answ.* Do you know him, Mr. Neverout? *Neverout*. Know him! Ay, as well as the beggar knows his dish. Swift, PC. Your old remembered guest of a beggar becomes as well acquainted with you as he is with his dish. Scott, A, 44. — As to this particular form of the sim. it must be mentioned that Scott sometimes seems to refashion the old phrases. Cf. I would as soon wish my hand to be as callous as horn. *ibid.* A, 120. Move . . . with safe and noiseless step . . . soft as the pace of a cat, and docile as a spaniel. *ibid.* 57. — Instead of *dish* we have *clapdish* in Crown, *Fuliana*, v. 1671, (Lean, II, ii), *clapperdish* in *Paradise of Dainty Devises*, 1576 (Lean), and *bag* in Heywood, PE, 67. — *Clapdish*: A ragged gowne that trailed on the ground,/ A dish that clapt and gave a heavy sound,/ A staying staffe, and wallet and therewith all/ I bear about as witness

of my fall. Churchyard's *Challenge*, 1593, Dodsley, III, 387. "The beggars two or three centuries ago used to proclaim their want by a wooden dish with a movable cover, which they clacked to show that the vessel was empty." Dodsley, *ibid.* The article as well as the word have been out of use for more than a century. Only the name survives in e. An. in a sim. applied to a great prater: 'his tongue moves like a beggar's clapdish.' EDD.

To know a thing as parfitely as my Paternoster. Palsgrave, *Acolastus*, L3, Lean, II, ii.

I know him as kuyindeliche as a clerck doth his bokes. Langland, PPl, VI, 29 (A). To know a thing (a person) like a bok. Lean, II, ii. He knew the Northland like a book. London, FM, 17.

Familiar in his mouth as household words. Shak. 1599, NED. [Beggar's Opera heroes] were familiar in our mouths as household words. Scott, RR, iii. Cf. When I was a little child I was a great auditor of them [aged mumping beldames] and had all whichcrafts at my fingers' ends as perfect as Goodmorrow and Good-even. Nashe, 1594.

Ramon, whose knowledge of an immense variety of things was as deep as a draw-well, and as placid. Conrad, *Romance*, 57. See p. 35. and *Deeph*, Ch. III.

For sim. referring to constant association and intimacy see *Intimacy*, *Familiarity*, Ch. IV.

Ignorance.

But which of the folks/ Had managed to make them the but of their jokes, . . . they both knew no more than Jack Nokes. Barham, IL, 442. *Nokes*, A Ninny or Fool, also a noted droll. B. E., *Dict. Cant. Crew*, 1694. It must also be remembered that John-a-Nokes and Tom-a-Stiles are two fictitious names commonly used in law proceedings. *Slang*.

As learned as Dr. Dod(d)yppoll. Howell, 1645. Lean, II, ii. — *Doctor Dodypoll* as a proverbial name for a foolish or ignorant minister or doctor, is a term frequently found in Elizabethan and Stuart English. For some inst. see H. and Lean. Otherwise *doddypole* simply means a stupid person, rec. in NED fr. 1401 to 1767.

To know one no more than does the pope of Rome. Ray. He knew less than the pope of Rome. Butler, H, II, iii, 874. Nor do I know what is become of him more than the pope of Rome. *ibid.* I, iii, 264 "I have often heard persons when professing entire ignorance of a subject, exclaim "I know no more than the pope of Rome about it," and I have noted

the expression to be especially current among the middle class, and the better educated portion of the lower order in Pembrokeshire." N. & Q., 3, III, 471. The same cor. thinks that the sim. is "the outcome of sheer Protestant antipathy", and another writer *ibid.* 3, IV, 217, takes it to be a corruption "I know no more than of the Pope of Rome." Neither is probable. Does it not rather express the idea that the pope of Rome, being so far away and in such a high position, cannot possibly know anything about twopenny halfpenny things in a Pembrokeshire village. — "A simple fellow being arraign'd at the bar, the judge was so favourable to him, as to give his book, and they bid him read. 'Read, truly, my lord,' says he, 'I can read no more than the Pope of Rome.'" *Oxford Fests*, 1706, p. 93, (N. & Q., 3, IV, 318). [The heralds would] prove you was descended from the Pope of Rome. Phillpotts, WF, 61. What can you do for the Turk? What can you do for the Pope of Rome? Barry, RA, IV, i. These insts are enough to show that *the Pope of Rome*, from being a type of something far off, has come to be used in phrases to denote an attempt at achieving the impossible.

Which he knows no more than the Man in the Moon. Marvell, 1676. Then you don't know how things are settled? — No more than the man in the moon. Marryat, 1840, NED. She had no more idea than the man in the moon that she had married a beast of prey hid in a gardener. Phillpotts, TK, 102. N. & Q., 3, III, 517. — *The man in the moon* is known from very ancient times in most European countries. In English he is alluded to in Shakespeare and Chaucer, and NED has an inst. of 1310 (see below), but there was already in Plutarch this very interesting treatise *περὶ τοῦ ἐμφαινομένου προσώπου ἐν τῷ κύκλῳ τῆς Σηλήνης*. It is also said to be a reference to what is told in Numbers, xv, 32. Numerous are the stories that describe the man in the moon, and tell us how he came to be there. Already the very earliest reference in English says "Mon in the mone stond ant strit, on is bot forke is burthen he bereth." And in *A Strange Metamorphosis of Man*, § 3, 1634, we read "For if it be true there is a man in the moon with his dog, he is not without his bush with him, which is our bramble." (Lean, II, ii). He is usually represented as carrying a torn-bush on his shoulder, and very often he is also given a lantern (Shak., MND). According to many legends he was engaged, when on earth, in gardening work, or carrying home, in most cases on a Sunday, a bundle of stolen thorns. As a punishment for his theft and for breaking the sabbath he was sent to the moon. In the *Roxburghe Ballads* there is a poem that ascribes to him a rather unusual occupation: —

Our man in the moon drinks claret
 With powder-beef, turnep and carret.
 If he doth so, why should not you
 Drink until the sky looks blue? (N. & Q., 7, XI, 490).

A German, Westphalian, legend provides him with a wife, who is churning. Another popular belief has it that every woman that is found spinning between Christmas and Epiphany is sent to the moon with her wheel.

The man in the moon, no more than the man in the moon is used in other sim. and proverbs as well to denote something that is beyond expectation and possibility. Cf. He is no more my kinsman than the man in the moon. Parker, 1572, NED. She would think of marrying a Popish Spaniard as of marrying the man in the moon. Kingsley, WH, 188. See pp. 35, 54. Cf. also, You may as soon shape a coat for the moon. Ray. If the contents please thee, and be for thy use, suppose the Man in the Moon, or whom thou wilt, to be the Author. Burton, AM, III.

(For references see Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ed. Hazlitt; Thiselton Dyer, *English Folklore*; Folkard, PL, 174; Timothy Harley, *Moon Lore*, 1885; Sloet, *Planten*, 31, N. & Q., 1, XI, 82, 334, 7, XI, 490 &c.)

As ignorant of your relation to her as an unborn babe. Hardy, GND, 252.

I am as ignorant as a child how many glasses grog a woman . . . is expected to consume. Hardy, MC, 382. See p. 4.

To know no more how to play than a post. *Shuffling, Cutting, and Dealing*, 1659, Lean, II, ii. Cf. I can dance no more than a post. See also *Stiff*, Ch. IV, *Deaf*, Ch. II.

To know no more than Gib, our cat. Fulwell, *Like will to Like*, 1568, (H, *Old Plays*, iii, 336), Udall, RRD, Prol. Cf. p. 56.

As good a scholar as my horse Ball. Clarke, Lean, II, ii. Origin unknown.

As well taught as my Lord Mayor's horse when his good lord is at the sermon at the cross. Lean.

To know no more of it than my Lord Mayor's horse. *Poor Robin, Progn.*, 1678, Lean, II, ii. — For the Cross see Wheatley's note on St. Paul's Cross, p. 337.

He knows as much as my horse. Wilson, *Cheats*, iv, 5, 1671, Lean, II, ii. Cf. The stars I'm sure can tell no more than a horse. Butler, H, II, 23.

To have as much skill in it as a horse. Fulwell, *Ars Adulandi*, D2, 1576, Lean, II, ii. Cf. p. 105 f.

You're as ignorant as a cow. Masfield, *Multitude*, 186.

They are as ignorant as the kyloes ye used to drive to market. Scott, RR, xxxiv; *kyloe*, small Highland cattle. Cf. *Han är full med lärdom| som en Koo med Muskåt. Er steckt voll Kunste| als die Kuh voll Muschaten*, Grubb, *Ordseder*, 309. (As full of learning as a cow of nutmeg).

I was as ignirant as a pig. Eliot, MF, 360.

The people are as ignorant as goats. Caine, D, vii.

Thou knowst no more of a woman's heart than does a Norfolk gosling. Scott, *Fortunes of Nigel*, xxi. Cf. p. 50. Cf. When the rayn rayneth and the goose wynketh, Lytil woteth the gosling what the gose thinketh. 1523, NED. See p. 50 f.

I have heard several times used the phrase "As ignorant as a carp." Origin? N. & Q., 4, IV, 134. Walton would hardly have used this phrase, as he thought that the "Carp is the Queen of Rivers: a stately, a good, and a very subtle fish."

O gull! O dolt! As ignorant as dirt! Shak., *Oth.* V, ii, 166. Cf. p. 9.

Agreement.

I can make black white, and white black again./ Tut, he that will be a lawyer must have a thousand ways to feign;/ And many times we lawyers do one befriend another,/ And let good matter slip: tut, we agree like brother and brother. R. Wilson, *The Three Ladies of London*, 1584, H, *Old Plays*, vi, 283 (Lean).

To agree like 'prentices. Taylor, (WP), *World's Eighth Wonder* (Lean). — Did they always agree more than other people? It is true that they did agree as a rule when there was a riot or a fight against the City authorities, but internal dissensions were not altogether unknown, e. g. the fight between the butchers and the weavers in 1664. Meiklejohn, 113.

To agree like lent and fishmongers. Marston, *Malcontent*, 1604.

They agree like pick-pockets in a fair. Ray.

To agree like finger and thumb. (Source not identified) Lean, II, ii.

Disagreement.

They agree like the clocks in London. — "I find this among both the French and Italian proverbs for an instance of disagreement". Ray. Also in Fuller.

The Preachers of England begin to strike and agree like the Clockes of England, that never meet iumpe on a point together. Nashe, I, 84, 1589; in *Notes*, 57, there is an earlier inst. from *Misogonus*, 1560.

To agree together like bells. *Knack to Know a Knave*, H, *Old Plays*, VI, 533, 1594. They agree like bells; they want nothing but hanging. — Does not this rather refer to persons of whom one can say "neither barrel better herring"; irrespective of minor differences, they are just as great scoundrels both of them. If they are hanged the similarity is complete.

The Lords supper and your peevish, popish, private masse doe agree together . . . as the common proverbe is, like harp and

- harrow. Becon, 1563, NED. L. Wright, 1614; Lean. Cf. These things hang together like harp and harrow, as they say. Gataker, 1624, NED. [Bethlehem] Bedlam . . . whether the Name and Thing be not as disagreeable as Harp and Harrow. T. Brown, 1700, NED. — Harp and harrow are utterly different though the words alliterate. See *Dissimilarity* Ch. IV.
- To agree like wax and the wick of a candle. Percival, Span. Gram., 1599. Lean; i. e. about as much as the Kilkenny cats.
- To agree together like dogs and cattes and meet as just as German lips. Gosson, *School of Abuse*, 1579, Lean. Such young brats/ Would gree together, euen like dogs and cats. Heywood, CGW, 77, To agree together like cats and dogs. Draxe, 1633, Harvey, (Lean, II. ii). 'To lead a cat-and-dog life' is the modern phrase. Sw. *leva som hund och katt*.
- They two agreed like two cats in the gutter. Heywood, PE, 54.
- To agree like tykes and swine. Hislop, *The Proverbs of Scotland*, 1862, (Lean II, ii). *Tyke* (tike), a chiefly Sc. and n. Cy word for a mongrel cur.
- To agree like hare and hound. Becon, 1563, Lean, II, ii. Cf. 'To hold with the hare and run with the hounds', rec. already in Heywood. *Hare* and *hound* have been coupled in alterative phrases from Gower and onward. W.
- To agree like lambs together. Heywood, PE, iv, 33. Of the bleating; every one in a several note. Lean, II, ii.
- To agree like pikes in a pond, ready to eat up one another. T. Adams, 1629, Lean, II, ii.
- Some champions agree/ As wasp doth with bee. Tusser, *Husb.*, 1557, Lean. Did mediæval quackery believe in any special antipathy between the insects? See *Hatred, Antipathy*, p. 138.

Love, Sympathy.

- Obs!* For sim. referring to close association and intimacy, see *Intimacy, Familiarity*, Ch. IV.
- A right woman, either love like an angel or hate like a devil. *Rare Triumph*, 1599, H, *Old Plays*, VI, 214 (Lean, III).
- Plantagenet, Which held thee dearly as his soul's redemption. Shak., KH VIc, II, i, 102. I love Valentine, whose life's as tender to me as my soul. Shak., TGV, V, iv, 37. My father loved Sir Rowland as his soul. Shak., AYL, I, ii, 214. I loue you both/ As deare as my owne soule. Dekker, SM, 20. The love I bear my husband is as precious/ As my soul's health. Heywood, WKK, 41. Cf. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. I Sam. xviii, 1.

- Loued hym as moche as fadir myght loue the child. *Three*, 22.
 To love as well as suster and brother. Occleve, *Reg. Princ.*, ante 1450, (Lean, II, ii).
- As dear to me as my own dear brother. *Marriage of Wit and Science*, H, *Old Plays*, II, 338 (n. d., Lean, II, ii). Cf. I love her better than a brother ought. Beaumont & Fletcher, *KK*, III, i. Cf. *Intimacy, Familiarity*, Ch. IV.
- As dear as any darling. Cawday, *Treasure of Sim.*, 217.
- To love as a Welchman does toasted cheese. Day, *Humour out of Breath*, iii, 1608, (Lean). — There are many ref. in early MnE to the Welshman's love of cheese: — Andrew Boorde makes his Welshman say "I do loue cawse boby, good rosted chese." *Introd.* 126. "In Wales *lacticiniis vescuntur*, as Humphrey Luyd confesseth, a Cambro-Briton himself." Burton, *AM*, I, 264. "Heaven defend me from that Welsh fairy, lest he transform me to a piece of cheese". Shak., *MW*, and *ibid.* II, ii, 270. "As infamous as a Welsh harper that plays for chese and onions. *Robin Goodfellow*, II, 1628, (Lean, II, ii).
- She much more than her own life him lov'd. Spenser, *FQ*, II, x, 28. Her honor dearer then her life. *ibid.* IV, i, 6, and I, i, 54; I, vi, 17. A wife/ Which is to me as dear as life itself. Shak., *MV*, IV, i, 278. My honour, that the Romanes hold/ As dear as life. *VW*, 28. Cf. Her honor, which she more then life prefard. Spenser, *FQ*, III, viii, 14. The which as life were to each other lief. *Ibid.* IV, iii, 52. A good fellow that lou'd a harlot as his lyfe. Nashe, II, 64, 1593. To your care I give/ My love; ten thousand times more dear,/ Than life and liberty. Dryden, *Oed.* (VI, 224). [Chastity] That is her only virtue. Dearer than life she holds it. Longfellow, *SS*, I, i. The Body which is as dear to me as life itself. Hocking, *MF*, 11.
- His money, which he loved as living breath. Spenser, *FQ*, III, x, 2. The best of sisters, dearer than my breath. Beaumont & Fletcher, *KK*, III, i.
- I love you as dear as the heart in my bosom. Day, *BBB*, IV.
- He swore that he did hold me dear/ As precious eye-sight, and did value me above this world. Shak., *LLL*, V, ii, 444. He esteems you/ Even as his brain, his eye-ball, or his heart. Heywood, *WKK*, 40; cf. your company is as my eye-ball dear. *ibid.* p. 29. — Her mother loved him as the apple of her eye. Hardy, *LLI*, 275. The child became as precious as the apple of her eye. Hardy, *W*, 292. — *Eye-ball* is rec. fr. 1592. *Apple of one's eye*, as a symbol of what is most cherished or loved, dates from King Alfred. Cf. He lead him about, he instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. Deut., xxxii, 10. See also Prov. vii, 2; Zech., ii, 8. Cf. *Iemand zoo lief als zijn oogappel hebben, beminnen, liefhebben als den appel zijner oogen. Aimer quelqu'un comme la*

prunelle de ses yeux. Stoett, NS, 38, 505. *Quam plus ille oculis suis amabat.* Catullus. In Sw. *ögonsten* is used in the same way.

To love as hot as coals. Palsgrave, *Acolastus*, 1540, Lean, II, ii. As louyng to him as the turtle to her make. Hall, 1548.

Does she draw kindly with the captain? — As fond as pigeons. Sheridan, R, I, i. They got to be as loving as turtles. Malkin, 1809, NED. — The *dove* or *turtle* as a symbol of affection already in OE. As a term of endearment (*turtle*)*dove* is used since Chaucer. Cf. Fr. *tourtereaux*, G. *Täubchen*, Russian голубушка, and the Latin verb *columbari*. It must be remembered that the dove was the sacred bird of Aphrodite.

I love not many words. — Not more than a fish loves water. Shak., AW, III, vi, 75.

Ez friendly ez a bram'l bush. — "The way in which the bramble catches hold and clings to one is well known to all those who had to force a passage where they grow". Blakeborough, NRY, 243.

As dear as daylight. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Sea Voy.* I. i. Lean, II, ii.

Ez friendly ez yan's shadder. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

Hatred, Antipathy.

To love it as the devil loves holy water. Ray. I own I love Mr. Neverout, as the devil loves holy water; I love him like pie, I'd rather the devil had him than I. Swift, PC, 295. "We are very old-fashioned folks, and in spite of the reformation say, when we want to express extreme dislike, 'He loves him, as the devil loves holy water.'" Hampshire. N. & Q., III, ii, 258. Cf. The devil loves no holy water. T. Adams, *England's Sickness*, 1624, Lean, IV. Hys companye chyldren forsoke everychone. They did flee from hym, as the devyll fro holy water. *Lyfe of Robert the Devyll*, 173 (H, *Engl. Pop. Poetry*, i, 226; Lean, II, ii). — All the fonts of the country were formerly locked to prevent people from stealing the holy water, which they used to undo spell. Lean. See Wright, RS, 205.

I do hate him as I do the devil. B. Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour*, I, ii. Porter, *Two Angry Women*, (H, *Old Plays*, vii, 338, Lean, II, ii). I hate burning as I do the devil and a dry proverb. Shirley, *Honorina and Mammon*, IV, iii, 1659. Lean II, ii. Swift, 1699, NED. Colonel was an Englishman, and so hated ridicule worse than the devil. Mason, PK, 162. He feared her caustic tongue worse than the devil. "Q", MV, 14.

Cupid's wanton snares/ As hell she hated. Spenser, FQ, I, x, 30.

J. Davies, *A Select Second Husband &c.*, 1616, Lean, II, ii.

This deed hateful as Hell. Day, BBB, 1852.

I do hate him as I do hell-pains. Shak. Oth., I, i, 155.

Now I hate thee worse than my sin. Beaumont & Fletcher, KK,

III, iii. A chap she hates like sin. Phillpotts, AP, 244. Cf.

Worse than any of the seven deadly sins. Day, *Isle of Gulls*, 1606, Lean, II, ii.

I hate it as an unfilled can. Shak., TN, II, iii, 6.

He hateth me like poyson. Palsgrave, 1530, NED. Milton, 1645,

NED, s. v. Toad, Mason . . . hated it like poison. Barham,

IL, 71. I hate him worse than poison. Dickens, NN, I, ix.

He hated my cousin Mick like poison. Thackeray, BL, i.

NED calls it a modern colloquialism.

To love it as a dog loves a whip. Ray.

To love it as a cat loves mustard. Ray, Clarke.

To love as an ape loves a whip. Lean, II, ii.

As fond of it as an ape of a whip and a bell. Ray. Cf.

How likst thou this? — As schoole boy Ierkes, Apes whips,

as Lions Cocks,/ As Furies do fasting daies, and divells

crosses,/ As maides to haue their marriage daies put off:/ I

like it as the thing I most do loath. Heywood, CGW, 1245 ff.

Dire antipathies

'Tween scaly snakes and ashen-trees,

'Tween toad and spider, frog and mouse,

'Tween cat and cur in empty house,

'Tween wolf and sheep-guts made in thermes,

'Tween charms and proper counter charms,

Greater antipathy than these

'Tween bishops is and presbyters.

Thomas Ward, *England's Reformation* C. III, 1716, Lean.

Although strictly speaking these lines contain no *proverbial* sim. they are well worth being chronicled here, as they refer to ideas widely current during many centuries. It was commonly believed that there was an inherent contrariety of disposition and nature that made one animal or thing hostile and destructive to another, which was looked upon as its natural opposite. This sort of antipathy was thought to prevail between elephant and dragon, between cock and lion &c. A lion, it was said, could not stand the crowing of a cock. (See above). And the above-quoted lines furnish some further insts of the same idea.

Snakes and ash-trees. "The leaves of this tree [ash] are of so great vertue against serpents, that they dare not so much as touch the morning and evening shadows of the tree, but shun them afar off, as Pliny reports. He also affirmeth that the serpent being penned in with boughes laid round about, will sooner run into the fire, if any be there, than

come neare the boughes of the ashe; and that the ash floureth before the serpents appare, and doth not cast its leaves before they be gon again . . . Gerarde, 1597, (Folkard, PL, 232 f). This belief is said to still exist in Cornwall (*ibid.*). In Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* XVI, xiii) we read that a blow from an ash-stick kills an adder at once, "so that it does not linger till night." (Lean, II, ii, 601). There are some other superstitious beliefs connected with the ash-tree. In Somerset an ash-faggot is perhaps still used to cheer the Christmas hearth, and Ashen faggot Balls are perhaps also held in the county to this very day. In many parts of England the ash occupies the same position as the rowan in Scotland. As it is a tree that brings good luck we find ash-saplings mentioned as remedies, and tool-handles must be made of ash-wood. Is this a reminiscence of primitive Germanic tree-worship, and connected with the belief in the primeval Ash, Ygdrasil, "the greatest and best of all trees"?

Toad and spider. "As Pliny saith" was the *ἀντὸς ἕφα* of sixteenth and seventeenth c. scientists. If a popular belief had the verdict of Pliny in its favour it was hopeless to attack it. Nevertheless, there lived in the seventeenth c. in England a man who was bold enough to do so, Sir Thomas Browne, whose work *Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Enquiries into . . . Vulgar and Common Errors*, 1646, is worthy of the profoundest interest, as he is one of the first to introduce modern scientific methods. And this is what he says on *toads* and *spiders*: "The antipathy between a toad and a Spider — and that they poisonously destroy each other — is very famous, and Solemn Stories have been written of their combats, wherin most commonly the Victory is given unto the Spider. . . . But what we have observed herein we cannot in reason conceale; who having in a glass included a Toad with severall Spiders, we beheld the Spiders without resistance to sit upon his head and passe over all his body, which at last upon advantage he swallowed down and that in a few houres unto the number of seven." Hulme, NH, 94 f. Cf. "The toad being smitten of the spider in fight and made to swell with her poison, recovereth himself with plantain." Withals, *Dict.*, 1616, (Lean, II, ii, 637).

Mouse and frog. Some corrupt Judge, that like the kite in Aesop, while the mouse & frog fought carried both away". Burton, AM, I, 68.

Cat and cur. See dogs and cats, *Disagreement*, p. 135.

Wolf and sheep. "Nature has planted so inveterate a hatred atweene the wolf and the sheep, that being dead, yet in the secret operation of nature appeareth there a sufficient trial of their discording natures, so that the enmity betweene

them seemeth not to dye with their bodies." Old Heraldic Author, Hulme, NH.

To whom the French nacion was more odious than a tode. Hall, 1548. NED.

To hate a person like a toad. Wager, *The longer thou livest* &c., c. 1560 (Lean, II, ii). We would hate it as a toad and fly from it as an Adder. Nashe, II, 112, 1593. I do hate a proud man, as I hate the engenderings of toads. Shak., TC, II, iii, 153. To hate one another like a toad or poison. Milton, 1645, NED. More odious to the eyes than toads and adders. Dryden, SF, (VI, 497). Cf. also the following sim.: — It behoueth also that he abhorre flatterie as a Toad. Day, 1586, NED. Here is the babe, as loathsome as a toad/ Amongst the fairest breeders of our clime. Shak., TA, IV, ii, 67.

A foul mis-shapen stigmatic,/ Marked by the destinies to be avoided, As venom toads, as lizards' dreadful stings. Shak., KH VIc, II, ii, 136. As foul as a toad, as awkward as a toad, see p. 103, and *Ugly*, Ch. III.

The toad is the type of all things hateful and loathsome. It was the creation of the devil and the shape in which he sometimes appeared (Sloet, *Dieren*, 345, 353), and as his servant and confederate it is intimately connected with witchcraft. It is represented as swelling with poison: A toade swels with thick troubled poison. (Nashe). And numerous are the references, in English and other languages, to its venomous and spiteful nature. It was dangerous to look at it, and to be looked in the eyes by a toad meant death. Hence persons and things that were looked upon as loathsome, hateful, and miserably worthless were called toads, and are often so still. (Rec. fr. the middle of the sixteenth c.): A cursed toad of a horse. 1774, Lean. I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantankerous toad in all Christendom. Goldsmith, SSC, 242. He said uncomplimentary things, called us sons of toads, and damned us from hell to breakfast. London, R, 272. &c. — The belief in the poisonous nature and the baleful influence of the toad lived on far down into the nineteenth c., and is perhaps not yet quite extinct. See N. & Q., 8, VII *passim*.

And all that else the vaine world vaunten may, I loath as dounge. Spenser, FQ, III, x, 31.

CHAPTER II.

SIMILES CHIEFLY REFERRING TO THE HUMAN BODY.

Dead.

He that died half a year ago is as *dead* as *Adam*. Bohn.
As *dead* as *Pharao*. Bret Hart.
As *dead* as *Julius Caesar*. *Slang*, Modern. Stevenson, NAN, 308.
As *dead* as *Queen Anne*. — Mrs Winifred Pryce was as dead as Queen Anne. Barham, IL, 44. N. & Q., 2, IX, 488. Speaking of the proposed revival of some parliamentary measure Mr. Jo. Chamberlain, some twenty years ago, declared it to be "as dead as Queen Anne." N. & Q., 11, I, 430. Cf. the proverbial saying "Queen Anne is dead", which signifies that a person to whom it is used is imparting stale news. "In reply to your letter and Fanny's, Lord Brougham . . isn't dead, — though Queen Anne is." Barham, IL, 214. In Sussex there is said to be a proverb "My Lord Baldwin's dead", which means precisely the same thing. (N. & Q., 11, I, 430). Swift has a similar phrase: *Lady Smart*. . . . What news, Mr. Neverout? *Neverout*. Why, Madam, Queen Elizabeth's dead. PC, i. It is to be noticed that *Queen Anne* also denotes an old-fashioned tale (n. Yks) "Tell us some o' your aud Queen Anners." (Wright, RS, 189). Cf. And then Quen Anne, that's dead, gie the chief bits of pension. Scott, RR, xxvi. — There has been a good deal of controversy as to the origin of these phrases. No inst. before Barham has as yet been discovered, and the circumstance that the sim. in question is included in no collection of proverbs that has been consulted, seems to indicate that it cannot be very common. It must have originated shortly after the Queen's death. When in July 1714 the Queen was on the point of death it was not yet settled, in spite of the Settlement Act of 1701, who was to be her successor. The final chapter of *Henry Esmond* gives us a hint as to the intense interest with which her demise was awaited, and the perilous intrigues that threatened to bring about a civil war. Hence the country must have been full of rumour and expectation. The news of her actual death was regarded as of the utmost importance, and was anxiously and eagerly told by those who had heard it to their neighbours and friends, and so, perhaps, everybody went on telling it to everybody else until it was generally

known, and became stale news. Being decidedly colloquial and perhaps looked upon as somewhat disrespectful, it did not find its way into books until rather late. It is nevertheless possible, though there is no evidence for it, that Swift's *Queen Elizabeth* really stood for *Queen Anne*.

The man is as *tead* as my *great grand ffather*. Smollet, RR, 237. The spirit of action is as *dead* in Alsatia as is my old *grannum*. Scott, *Nigel*, xvii.

As *dead* as *charity*. Field, *Woman is a Weathercock*, IV, ii. Lean, II, ii. See Matt. 24, 12. Cf. Ch. IV, *Cold*.

As *dead* as a *Biscuit*. — Used by a gamekeeper near Lowestoft of some game. *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII, 157. Cf. As dry as a biscuit. p. 48.

He had ended his earthly career,/ — He had gone off at once with a flea in his ear;/ The black Mousquetaire was as *dead* as *small beer*. Barham, IL, 258. *Dead*, flat, vapid, of wine and beer, is rec. in NED 1552—1747. Cf. Plucking Elderton out of the ashes of his Ale, and not letting him inioy his nappie muse of ballad making to himselfe, but now when he is as *dead* as *dead beer*, you must be finding fault with the brewing of his meeters, Nashe, I, 280, 1592.

As *dead* as *mutton*. Brady, *Var. of Lit.*, 1826. Selby, 1835, *Slang*. Common. Brady explains the phrase as pointing to the fact that mutton is always *dead* sheep. The phrase is also used of persons and things very dull, inanimate. Suff. EDD.

The old gentleman was plum colour, and as *dead* as *pork*. Phillpotts, WF, 357. Feathers of the Sun will be as *dead* as a *dead pig*. London, SS, 227. What is said of mutton also applies to pork.

Dead as the *mitten*. A sea-phrase. Suff. *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII, 157.

He's quite *dead*, you said, Dick? — *Dead* as a *ninepin*. Besant, RMM, 127. Cf. It's a cold I caught last year as has tumbled my ninepins over, and lef me a-dyin' here. Sims, 1878. *Slang*. The sim. may have some connection with phrases like, When his Holiness rolled on the green like a king of the nine-pins. Scott, 1819, NED. Little urchins . . tumbled about like ninepins. Musgrave, 1864. Cf. *Small*, Ch. III.

As *dead* as a *hommer*. Laycock, 1866, EDD. — I chucked my stick at that ther rat, an' killed un as 'dead as a hammer'. Brks. He's here I tell you — sunk down into some hole at the bottom — and *dead* as a hammer by now. Phillpotts, AP, 364. Som. Dev. Lan. "In daily use." Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

You . . snatched the knife, and jammed it into him just as he fetched you another awful clip, and here you've laid *dead* as a *wedge* till now [says Indian Joe]. Twain, TS, 81. What is there particularly *dead* about a wedge? Is it because it is so often knocked on the head?

For but ich haue bote of me bale I am *dead* as a *dorenail*. Will.

Palerme, 1350, NED. Fey withouten fait is febelore þen nougt,/ And ded as a dorenail. Langland, PPl, A, I, 161. Weele strike it as dead as doore naile. Nashe, I, 258, 1592. If you will needes strike it as dead as a dore naile. G. Harvey, *Pierce's Super., Slang*. He's as dead as a doornail; for I gave him seven knocks on the head with a hammer. Farquhar, 1700, *Slang*. Gay, NS. When I lie dead as a door-nail, Ode of 1791, N. & Q., 8, V, 196. The boat of Charon will push a difficult furrow through innumerable bodies, brick-bat-laden, of purless, soulless dead-as-doornail cats. Thompson, 1864, *Slang*. Besant, RMM, 96. Poe, TMI, 30. Yks. *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 429. Lean has some further inst. 1579, 1596, 1599, 1608, 1614, 1633, 1638. In W. there are later inst. fr. Bulwer, Besant & Rice, Twain, Bolderwood, Wells.

What, is the old king dead? — As nail in door. Shak., KH IVb, V, iii, 119. The canon's head lies on the bed — his Niece lies on the floor:/ They are as dead as any nail that is in any door. Barham, IL, 323. — The sim. is also used of other things: "Of a troth", quoth she, "this is but bad wine, it is even as dead as a doore naile." Deloney, *Gentle Craft*, c. 1610, ed. Lange, I, 85. The Congo treaty may now be regarded as being as dead as a doornail. *Pall Mall G.*, 1884, NED.

As *jed* as a *dur nail*. Chs. *Fed*, dial. form of dead. Current in some midl. counties.

"This proverbial expression is oftener used than understood. The *door nail* is the *nail* on which in ancient *doors* the knocker strikes." Steevens (Foster). So also *Slang* &c. But on the other hand NED maintains that there is no evidence that this nail is the striking-plate of the knocker. The above inst. in Shak., Farquhar, and Barham make it clear that, unreflectingly, English writers have associated the word with the nails with which doors are still studded for strength, protection or ornamentation. Such nails in doors are frequently referred to. Cf. the proverb, 'He that will make a door of gold must knock in a nail every day'. (H). and, *Via lactea*, a confused light of small Stars, like so many nails in a door. Burton, AM, II, 59.

However, there always remains the question how the word has come to be a symbol of extreme 'deadness'. According to Skeat, 'dead as a door-nail' is a secondary development, 'dead as a door-post, door-tree' being the original form. He is of the opinion that a substitution of *door-post (tree)* for *door-nail* would make the sim. somewhat more intelligible, as the wood of which it was formed was once part of a live tree. "The proverb was then transferred from the door-post itself to the nails that studded the door without any great care as to maintaining the sense of the expression.

There are other sayings in the same plight.” (N. & Q., 3, XI, 177). This is an attempt at a rational solution of the problem, but as such it is too rational as it presupposes logical reasoning and intelligibility as necessary governing principles in phrase-making, and, on the other hand, it is not rational enough, as, to a certain extent, it takes for granted what is to be proved. Why should the proverb be “transferred” to the *nails*? There are other parts of the door to which it might have been transferred with just as much reason. And why *was* it transferred?

The problem before us is why precisely the *nails* should be selected, and that question he has left just as unanswered as it was before. It is true there is in Langland the sim. “as dead as a dore-tre”, but our form of the sim. is still older, which makes it possible that ‘as dead as a door-nail’ was the original form. The word occurs in several other sim.: ‘as daft &c.’, (p. 48) as dour &c. (p. 100), as deaf &c. (p. 173), as dumb (p. 177), as stunt’ (Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275) &c. Although we have ‘deaf as a door(-tre, post)’, ‘dumb as a door’ we cannot suppose *door-nail* to have replaced *door-tree* in all these sim. We must start from the word *door-nail* itself. Dickens was perhaps not altogether wrong in what he said of this sim., Christmas Carol, “Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail. Mind! I don’t mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile, and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the country’s done for.” Now, what did “our ancestors” see in the door-nail? To judge from the above sim. it is the symbol of what is *daft, dour, deaf, dumb, dead*. And we have further “as hard, as dead, as deaf, as stiff as a nail.” This shows that the word is used as a symbol of all that is extremely hard, stiff, stark, lifeless, these words being taken in a more or less loose or wide sense.

Now, why is *door-nail* preferred to *nail* in most of these sim.? The answer is quite simple. For the sake of alliteration. We have “as dead as a nail”, but the other form is far more common. The same thing also applies to “deaf as a door-nail” and “deaf as a nail”, and the only possible rendering of the dial. phrase “as dour as a door-nail” is not “hard as a door-nail” but “hard as a nail.” Wherever alliteration is impossible, the simplex is preferred. It is chronologically interesting that the forms with the simplex *nail* occur very much later than the others, being rec. only from about the middle of last century. (see p. 87, p. 163, and *Hard*, Ch IV). But this is no serious obstacle to the view that the sim. owes

its origin to the idea of the nail as something stiff, stark, and lifeless. On the contrary, it is only as it should be. On the whole, alliteration plays a more important part on the earlier stages of a language than later on when speakers and hearers are less dependent on outward means. It is therefore quite in accordance with general principles that the earliest insts should be found in the alliterative poems of the fourteenth century.

Noäks or Thimbleby — toäner 'ed shot 'um as *deäd* as a *naäil*. Tennyson, 1864, EDD. Oh my God! all up with poor master'. Dead as a nail, an' drowned in his own blood. Phillpotts, AP, 472.

As *ded* as a *dore-tre*. Langland, PPl, B, I, 185. There is said to be an inst. in a curious book "Letters from the Living to the Living, written by several hands" and published anonymously in London, 1703. N. & Q., 8, II, 66. According to NED *door-tree*, *door-post*, is obs. since 1377.

As *dead* as a *door-post*. Roget. Storm, EP, 592, mentions this sim. without giving any reference, and says that it is very old. — The relations between the sim. with *door-nail* and *door-post (tree)* have already been discussed above. It must be added that *door-post* and the simplex *door* are used in other alliterative sim.: "as deaf as a door, or door-post", "as dumb as a door." Just as any post or block was looked upon as a symbol of stiffness and insensibility, the door-post could be used to denote the same thing, whether it was the complete immobility and insensibility of death or the more partial and special one of deafness or dumbness. See p. 48, and *Deaf*, p. 173, and *Stiff*, Ch. IV.

As *dead* as a *tent-peg*. Slang, modern. The word *tent-peg* seems to be a modernism, being rec. fr. 1869. In the early part of last century people had tent-pins, but NED does not seem to tell us what they had before that time. In Bible language *tent-nail* is used. See *Tall, Long*, Ch. III.

Dead as *Chelsea*. Grose, 1788, H. *National Magazine*, 1833, N. & Q., 5, XII, 29. H. quotes the proverbial expression 'to get Chelsea', to obtain the benefit of that hospital. H.

As *dead* as a *dog* that lieth in a ditch. Rowlands, *Good Newes* &c., 1622, Lean, II, ii. Cf. the name *Houndsditch*.

[The rabbits were] as *dead* as *moles*. Eliot, MF, 29.

Ez *deead* ez a *mauky ratten*. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

As *dead* as a *rat*. N. & Q., 4, I, 434. This probably applies to the dead rats that one sometimes sees lying about. A *mauky ratten* is perhaps such a dead rat that is infested by mawks. Cf. 'cold as a rat.' Suf. EDD.

Cf. the German *So däud as'ne Méus*, and *mèusedäud*. Wander. Cf. *Drunk* p. 207

Toryism is as *dead* as a *dodo*. DNL, 5/3, '13. Cf. It will be as obsolete as the dodo. Harraden, *Interp.*, 449. He belongs to the Dodo race of unmitigated Toryism. Lisle, 1874, NED. [The reddleman] was one of a class rapidly becoming extinct in Wessex, filling at present in the rural world the place which, during the last century, the dodo occupied in the world of animals. Hardy, RN, 10. The following verses on the dodo becoming extinct are worth quoting. —

Do-do, Vasco di Gama
Sailed from the Cape of Good Hope with a crammer
How he had met, in the isle of Mauritius,
A queer bird what was not very vicious,
Called by the name of a Do-do,
And all the world thought what he said was true.

Do-do! Alas, there are left us
No more remains of the *Didus ineptus*:
And so, on the progress of science, all prodigies
Must die, as the palm-trees will some day at Loddigies',
And like our wonderful Do-do,
Turn out not worth the hullabaloo.
Prof. Forbes, *Fugitive Verses connected with Natural Sciences* (1869).

It is followed by a ditty intended to be sung in opposition to Prof. Forbes's verses on the Do-do., at one of the dinners of the Red Lion at Oxford, 1847,: —

Of all the queer birds that ever you'd see,
The Dodo is the queerest of Coumbidae,
For all her life long she ne'er sat on a tree,
For when the Dutch came, away went she.
Tee-wit, tee-wo, I'd have you to know
There ne'er was such a bird as our famed Dodo.

See N. & Q., 9, VII, 16. For some further notes on the discovery of the bird, its natural history, and the origin of its name see Enc. Brit. and N. & Q., 1850 *passim*, where it appears that the bird attracted a good deal of interest about the middle of last century.

As *dead* as a *salmon*. C. Anstey, *N. Bath Guide*, 1830, Lean, II, ii. Salmon dies very soon when taken out of the water.

As *dead* as a *smelt*. Yks. EDD. Used of a horse. — We are not told what this smelt is. Probably the *salmon-smelt* or smolt, a word found chiefly in Sc. and n. Cy dial.

There you are now! The three minutes' fight has completely taken the wind out of you. That's the last flap of your tail; the widow has killed you 'as *dead* as a *mackerel*'. T. Norris, *Amer. Angl. Book.*, Cowan, PS, 139. See *Dumb, Mute* p. 178.

As *dead* as Herring, *Stock-fish*, or Door-nail. Otway, 1680, NED.

As *dead* as *herring*. — The earliest allusion to this sim. is found in Shak., MW, II, iii, 12, where Caius, the Frenchman is made to say, "De herring is no dead, so I vill kill him." Insts in T. Nabbes, *Tottenh. Court*, 1638, (Lean, II, ii), Butler, H, II, 42;

Gay, NS. Smollet, RR, 16; Burns, 1785, *Slang*; Reade, 1856, NED; *Cassel's Mag. of Fiction*, 156, '14; Wood, *Manx P.*; Cowan, PS, 33. — It occurs also in slightly different forms: As dead as a herring in a straw. Kingsley, WH, 241; Dead as herrings — herrings that are red. Rhodes, 1790, *Slang*; There is no more life in you than in a picked herring. Barham, IL, 106. — Herrings die sooner on leaving the water than most fish. Cowan, l. c., is of another opinion, "To the masses, the herring is known only as a dead fish in the market and stores; and presumably the simile has arisen from this fact."

Ez *dead ez a red lobster*. — "As the lobster must be boiled for some time before assuming the red colour, we may with some certainty conclude that the crustacean has ceased to exist (?) ere it dons its red jacket." Blakeborough, NRY, 244.

Ez *deead ez a teead's skin*. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.

Dead in a minute as a *Nit*. Wolcot, 1789, NED. It wud o' kilt me us deead us o' nit in e had. Lan. 1819, EDD. Down he fell as dead as a nit. Thackeray, 1838, NED. "Is he dead?" asked Rose, shuddering. "Iss, fegs, dead as nits'." Kingsley, WH, 107. It was the packman; his box behind him; his face smashed in, and as dead as nits. Lin. Also in Glo. Ken. Dev. Shr. Northall, FPh, 8. Killed as dead as a nit. Hardy, TM, 258. [All will] die as dead as nits. Hardy, FMC, 156. — One of the regular sim. commonly used as the superlative absolute of dead. Elworthy, WSG, 514. — The above insts seem to point out that the sim. is chiefly used to denote violent death.

What ails my watch? She's faintit clean away, / As *dead's a mawk*, her case is such, / Her pulse she winna play. A. Scott, 1805, Rxb, EDD. Our bonny tortoise shell cat, Tommy, . . . as dead as a mawk. Moir, Sc. 1828, EDD. My mither's as dead as a mawk. Graham, Lnk, 1883, EDD. See *Sick*, III. p. 164.

As *dead* as a *maggot*. — Applied only to animal and man. Som. EDD.

As *dead* as a *block*. D. Rogers, *Naaman*, 1642, Lean, II, ii. Cf. *Sleeping*, p. 169.

Heroude . . . he sleep his leches *deed* as *cole*. *Cursor Mundi*, 1340, NED. No doubt refers to a piece of charcoal in which there is no spark of fire.

My poor dumb brain gets as *dead* as a *clot*. Hardy, MC, 117. *Clot*, a clod of earth, obs. in st. E since 1647, now dial. See *Cold*, Ch IV, and cf. the German *Todt wie eine Sode*. (*Sode*, piece of sward or peat.) Wander.

He only dislocated his verterbrae — but that did quite as well. He was as *dead* as *ditch-water*. Barham, IL, 56. Zo dead's ditchwater. Hewett, Dev. 11. *Dead*, of water, still, stagnant. Cf. *Dull*, 54. — As dead as *ditches*. Lean, II, ii. Source not identifiable.

Well, *he's* dead now, he is — *dead* as a *bilge*. Stevenson, TI, 93.
 — *Bilge*, bilge-water, the foul water that collects in a ship's bilge, or the lowest part of its hull, is rec. fr. 1829.

Wrinkled and Withered from Old Age, Of Low Vitality.

He was quite bald, and as *wrinkled* as an old *russet apple*. Phillpotts, AP, 38. *Wrinkled*, at least fr. Shak., MV, IV, i, 270. As *wisened* as a *winter apple*. Yks. EDD. Cf. *wizzen-faced*. *Wizzen*, often applied to small withered and shrivelled apples. Lakel. EDD. There is also an adjective *wizen*, 'a gay little wizen old man.' Mme D'Arblay, 1791, CD.

Imagine a thin but extremely wiry man, past middle age, brown and *bloodless* as any *crab-apple*. Hornung, TN, 101. I am *withered* like an old *apple john*. Shak., KH IVa, III, iii, 3. Her face (like an old Apple-john) all shrivelled. Mabbe, 1623, NED. Cf. Poor Jemmy — he is but a withered little apple-john. Iving, 1811. NED.

[Cares, sorrows] attenuate our bodies, dry them . . . rivel them up like old apples, make them as so many anatomies. Burton, AM, I, 323.

The body of an old man is weak and wearish and as *full of wrinkles* as a *raisin*. Baret, 1580, Lean, III.

If a man was as *cold* as a *wagon tire*, provided there was any life in him, she'd bring him to. J. Hall, 1833, Thornton. It is also used of animal or man when quite dead: 'You're no account, to be afraid of a dead bear. He's as cold as a wagon tire. *ibid.*

But he is old and *withered* like *hay*. Spenser, FQ, III, ix, 5. Cf. Coarse as grass, p. 107.

His body leane and meagre as a rake, And skin all *withered* like a dryed *rooke*; Thereto as cold and drery as a snake. Spenser, FQ, II, xi, 22. What is the precise sense of *dreary*?

As *cold* and *starved* as a *whinnard*. Cor. One who is looking very cold, is said to be 'looking like a whinnard'. *Whinnard*, red-wing, *Turdus iliacus*.

A creature like you, so thin as a herring and as *cold* as a *frog* rising up to such fierce heat. Phillpotts, WF, 344. See *Cold*, Ch. IV.

As miserly and *dry* as a *kex*. Bernard, *Terence*, 1580, Lean, II, ii. You're so thin, a Body may see through you, and as dry as kecks. Bailey, 1725, NED. *Kix*, *kex*, fig. for a dried-up, sapless person, rec. 1611—1711. *Kickes* the drie stalke of humblockes. Palsgrave, 1530, NED. See *Thirsty*, p. 190.

Old.

For the sake of convenience all sim. referring to remote, as well as high, age have been collected here.

"The Signora Brandi is not young. She is old. She is as *old* as —" "Methuselah? *Sin*? The Hills? suggested John. Harland, MFP, 89.

He speaks of things more *ancient* than *chaos*. H — *Chaos*, the "formless void" of primordial matter out of which cosmos was evolved, rec. fr. 1440, NED.

By many a temple *half as old* as *Time*. Sam. Rogers, *Italy*, 1842, A rose-red city half as old as time. Dean Burgon, *Petra*, 1845, A city that might well be "half as old as time." *Morning Post*, 18/VII '13.

A woman drawn across a man's trail. The trick is as *old* as the *ages*. Caine, EC, 103.

A great name, *ancient* as *history*, and no income. A gorgeous palace, as old as the pyramids, and no cook. Caine, EC, 131.

As *old* as *Adam*. Northall, FPh. 9. "Generally used as a reproof for stating as news something well known." Brewer, Dict.

3if a Mon may libben heer As long as dude *Matussale*. 1380, NED. As *old* as *Methuselah*. Roget; Northall, FPh, 9.

'Twill never fade from me If i live to be as old as a dozen Methuselahs. Pinero, BD, 76. Cf. Were I to live to the age of Methusalem. Smollet, RR, 8. — This sim. is found in many languages: German, *Alt wie Methusalem*, Fr. *Vieux comme Mathusalem*, *Zoo oud als Methusalem*. For several Sw. insts fr. 1716 to modern times, and a Danish of 1682 see Hjelmquist.

Ez *au'd ez my grandfather's hat*. — In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 244. Cf. 'an old hat', a Cum. expression for an old person.

As *old* as the *itch*. H. *Itch* is rec. in E. since c. 800. NED.

As *old* as *Paul's*, or *Paul's steeple*. Ray. She's as old as Poles. Swift, PC, 258. "Different are the dates of the age thereof, because it had two births or beginnings, one when it was originally confounded by King Ethelbert, with the body of the church, anno 610, another when burnt with lightening, and afterward rebuilt by the hishops of London, 1087." Ray. These words are of interest because they make it evident that Ray did not think of the actual St. Paul's and the spire he knew when penning these lines. When the first edition of his book appeared St. Paul's was nothing but "a sad ruin", to quote one of his contemporaries, as it had been badly damaged by the Great Fire. Of the ancient steeple Ray had seen nothing, as it was burnt down more than a century before, and the flat trunk that remained had aptly given rise to the sim. "as blunt as St. Paul's". But what he remembered

best was Inigo Jones's turret, a poor substitute for the lofty spire that had taken so firm a hold upon the imagination of the Londoners of the 16th century as to occasion not only this sim. but numerous other proverbial phrases. By his dates Ray gives a hint that the sim. itself must be old, and as a matter of fact it is found already in Nashe, II, 172. (See Stow, *Survey of London*, Wheatly, *Mediaeval London*, p. 334 f., Loftie, *London Afternoons*, 71 ff.).

As *old as Charing Cross*. Webster, *Westw. Ho!* II, i, 1607. Ray, *Slang*, The old cross was finished in 1294. Wheatly.

As *old as Knock Cross*. "A Westmoreland comparison, bespeaking extreme antiquity. Parallel with the above is that of Canny Newcastle, to wit — 'as awde as Pandon Yatts'. [See below]. Knock, anciently Knock Shalock, is a pretty good village in the parish of Long Marton." *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore* XXIX, 207.

As *old as Panton Gates*. H., Brewer, Dict. 938. "As old as Pandon, P. Yatts. The first form of the proverb is given by Grey, 1649. The latter is used in the southern portion of the Bishopric and the county of York. Pandon was anciently spelled "Pampdene". Nothing is more general than the above saying when anyone would describe the great antiquity or anything . . . Pandon was anciently a distinct town from Newcastle, but was united thereto by a charter of Edw. I. "*Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXIX, 300.

As *old as Glastonbury torre*. Ray. This is what he says, "This torre, *i. e.* tower, so called from the Latin *turris*, stands upon a round hill in the midst of a level, and may be seen far off. It seemed to me to have been the steeple of a church that had formerly stood upon that hill though now scarce any footsteps of it remain." H. gives the sim. in this form: 'as old as Glastonbury Tower.' He says of Ray that he has copied all the childish errors of his predecessors. It is to be feared that H. himself has done something of the same kind this time. He might have had another of his cheap triumphs over Ray if he had only looked up Halliwell, where he would have found *Tor*, a hill, *Devon*. — It is not at all Latin, but a Celtic word meaning a high rock, used according to NED in proper names in Cornwall, Devon, and sporadically other counties, e. g. Glastonbury Tor in Somerset. "The late abbot of Glastonberye . . . was drawn thorough the town upon a hurdyll to the hyll called the Torre. Pollard, 1539. NED. For several modern insts of the word, partly in appellative uses, see Phillpotts, AP, and cf. "Near the town [Glastonbury] is the Tor, on which stands the ruined church of St. Michael". *Cambr. County Geographies, Co. Som.* p. 183. But on the other hand, we do find *Gl. Tower*. Burton has this form (AM, II, 79), but it is perhaps a misunderstanding owing to the

close resemblance between the early seventeenth c. pronunciations of *tower* and *tor*. — History and tradition agree to assign a high old age to Gl. “Mr. Camden doth quote the ancient historian, William of Malmesbury, to write these words following concerning Glastonbury. That it was the first land of God in England, the first land of saints in England, the beginning and fountain of all Religion in England, the tomb of Saints, the mother of Saints, the church founded and built by the Lords disciples.” Taylor, WV, 8.

At Honiton, and in the country round, “as *old* as *Dump’n*” used to be, and perhaps still is, a popular expression, the reference being to a British or Roman earthwork conspicuously visible on Dumdon Hill, close by. [In Devon]. N. & Q., 5, VI, 364.

As *old* as *Cale Hill*. Kent, five miles n. of Ashford. Clarke.

As *old* as *Pendle Hill*. Lanc. Howell, 1659. See p. 27.

Why, he is as *old* as the *Hills*. 1819. NED. The superstition . . . is almost as old as the hills. 1898, NED. “One of them, the young one, is uncommonly pretty, too,” he vouchsafed. “The other’s as old as the hills, and as rugged . . .” *Cassel’s Mag. of Fict.* ’14, 182; Hardy, W, 282; Hewett, Dev.; Brewer, Dict., 913; Northall, FPh., 10. For a punning application of the sim. see Jackson & Burne, 472. — The reference is said to be Gen. 49, 26, Prov. 8, 25, Job, 15, 7. If so, it is remarkable that no earlier inst. has been rec. It has been found in a Norw. dial. also, “*Skrine er gamalt som alle haugar,*” Haakon Garaasen, *Tungsjöaetta*, 163. (The box is as old as all hills).

As *old* as a *serpent*. Lean; H. — This sim. is given without any reference, which, as has already been said p. 77, means that the phrase in question is borrowed from Bohn’s *Complete Alphabet of Proverbs*. This applies at least to our sim. It is given by Bohn, who refers to Ray in his own reprint p. 190. It is given there, but only as a translation of the Port. *Velho como serpe*. Consequently we are entitled to doubt the indigenous character of this “English” Proverb. In Port. it is possibly a reference to Rev. 12, 9, that old serpent &c.

Note. Er ist so alt wie der Bremer Wald. Il est vieux comme les pierres. Cf. Germ. Steinalt. Zoo oud als de weg van Rome. Zoo oud als de weg, de straat. Vieux comme les chemins, les rues. Gamal som gatan. Wander, Stoett, NS, 515.

Healthy, Hardy.

Note. For sim. with *Brisk* and *Peart* (pert) see the following section.

“As *hard* as the *devil’s forehead*” is another expressive phrase I have heard on more than one occasion.” N. & Q., 9, IV, 478.

Hard as *Wrag lad*. — Spoken of a person whom nothing can

hurt. *Wrag* was a baker of Chesterfield; and sending his prentice over the moors with bread the boy was overtaken with a severe snowing night, and was forced to lodge on the moors all night, where with his panniers and saddle, he contrived to save himself, but the horse perished. (*Wrag* = *Wrag's*). Pegge, *Derbicisms*, 104.

He looked as *robust* as a *ploughboy*. Besant & Rice, AS, 11. This sense of *robust* fr. 1549, NED.

Then he descended, *fresh* as a *boy*. Bennet, BA, 43. Cf. His skin was fresh and healthy as a *lad's*. Hardy, DR, 354. As hale and hearty as a three-year-auld bairn. Per. 1897, EDD.

The sick, the weake, the lame also, A coach for ease might beg; When they on foot might rightly goe, That are as *right's* my *leg*. *Coaches' Over throw, Roxb. Ball.* III, 338.

To look as *big* as *bull-beef*. Cf. *Straight*, Ch. III. *Right*, Ch. IV. To look very stout and hearty, as if fed on bull-beef. Common colloquialism at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth c. *Slang*; Brewer; Halliwell. See p. 82, *Proud*.

When asked how he was getting on . . . he replied that he was '*right* as *ninepence*', 'cepting a bit of rheumatism in his left shoulder. *Slang*, 1882. I'll be as reet as ninepence in the morn. Dur. 1900. EDD. For othet insts of this sim. see *Right*, Ch. IV.

Sound as a *dollar*, thank you, and no kick to register, either. London, DS, 32.

As *fit* as a *fiddle*. Haughton, *Englishm. for my Money*, IV, i (1616; H). "Is Salathiel pretty fresh?" asked the baron. "As fit as a fiddle." Braddon, 1882, NED. Inst. of 1886, *Slang*. Vachel, WJ, 215. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

Looking fit and taut as a fiddle. Stevenson, TI, 109. — "We presume the reference is to the fact that a fiddle is strung up to the adequate pitch before it is used." N. & Q., X, 10, 188. *Fit*, in good health, perfectly well, from the racing term, fit, in good form, rec. fr. 1869. But the earliest inst. is more than 250 years older than that. Was the sense originally *proper, suitable, welcome?* Cf. *Right* as a fiddle. *Right*, Ch. IV.

They be people commonly healthy, and as *sound* as a *Bell*. Newton, 1576, NED. From that time forwards, he remained well and lusty, and as sound as a Bell. 1608, NED. For a fig. use, see Shak., MA, III, ii, 11. Fortune did so happily contrive, That we (as sound as bells) did safe arrive at Dover. Taylor, DS, 7. Gay, NS. Insts in NED of 1865, 1898. After all, he was a strong man — his doctor had assured him he was as sound as a bell. *London Mag.* June, '15, p. 412. I don't much like the look of those sheep. — Don'ee, sir? I'll warn 'em soun's a bell. Som. EDD. Ez soond ez a bell. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. See also *Right*, Ch. IV.

As *reet* as a *wooden clock*, as far as yelth is concerned. Lan. EDD.

In what way is a wooden clock more 'right' than any other clock?

I hope you are well, sir. — *Right* as a *trivet*. Dickens, PP, II, 372. *Ibid.* 1843, *Slang*. How are you? — Right as a *trivet*. Taylor, 1855, *Slang*. For other applications of this sim. see *Right*, Ch. IV.

This is his third day's rest, and the cob will be about as *fresh* as *paint* when I get across him again. Yates, 1864, *Slang*. Though nearly seventy years of age, he is still hale and 'fresh as paint.' 1881, NED. Why, yow look as fresh as paint this morning. Nrf. EDD. See *Bright*, Ch. III. Used everywhere. U.

Every muscle rendered as *tough* as *whipcord* by constant exercise. Scott, W, x. My flesh is as stringy as whipcords, and as bitter and mean as the bite of a rattlesnake. London, SB, 135. Cf. All skin and whipcord, of one in good condition. *Slang*. The bishop [was] wonderfully hale and whipcordy. Wilberforce. *Tough*, capable of great physical endurance, dates fr. 1330. For other senses of the word, see *Tough*, Ch. IV.

Hard as *nails* in condition. Horlock, 1862, NED. He stood it for a week or two without flinching — being at that date hard as nails, as he expresses it. *Slang*. The men look as hard as nails and fit for anything. *The Times*, 1885, NED. Physical training had made this youth as hard as nails. Whiteing, No. 5, 142. You're not strong enough for sea life. Why, man, these sailor fellows are as hard as nails; and even they can hardly stand it. Shaw, CBF, 40. Used of sailors also in DNL, 22/vii, '13. Rathbeal . . . struck me as hard as nails not long since. 1891, *Slang*. Hardy, DR, 149, White, BT, 190, &c. Ahr young Ben's as hard as neels, yõ may run a pin into him, an' hey wunna showt. nw. Der. EDD. In a fortnight I shall be as *right* as *nails*. Astley, 1894, NED. See *Hard-hearted*, 87, *Dead*, p. 142 ff. and *Hard*, Ch. IV.

He's an oily bluff. And the bunch he's got with him . . . real seadogs, middle-aged, marred and battered. *tough* as rusty *wrought-iron nails* and twice as dangerous. London, SS, 164.

He was a short, stiff chap, *hard* as *iron*. Jacobs, MC, 82. Cf. Men whose Wits are Lead, whose bodies Iron-hard. Sylvester, 1591, NED.

He was splendidly muscled, and as *hard* as *steel*. London, FP, 21. See p. 88. Every man as hard as a bar of steel. White, SE, 85.

Lean, wiry, and as *hard* as *adamant*, the miser lived in this fastness. Phillpotts, AP, 15. See p. 89.

As *tough*, or *tiff*, as *Billy Whittlam's dog*, that barked nine times after it was dead. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

Very kind simple creatures. Another thing. They're *strong* as *colts*. Masefield, CM, 218. Cf. Young Chirrup wur a mettled cowt.

Vaugh, 1858. EDD. *Colt*, fig. for a man of strength, stature, and activity.

She was sthrong an' *wholesome* as a well-fed *year out*'. Don. EDD. As *fierce* as a *four-year-old*. War. EDD. *Fierce*, brisk, lively, in good health. EDD.

As *fresh* as a *four-year-old*. Surtees, *Handley Cr.* 1843 (Lean II, ii). Not unfrequent. Of an active old man. U.

I was 36 ere I pressed to that service; and am now as *lusty* and *sound* at heart . . . as my yoke of *bullocks*. *Snow Storm*, 8.

As *hardy* as a *forest pig*. Glo. Northall, FPh. 9.

As *hearty* as a *buck*. Roget. *Hearty*, in sound health, fr. 1553.

As *hearty* as a new sprung *hare*. Lan. 1865.

Making thee young and *lusty* as an *eagle*. Ps. 103, 5.

The tea will take the muddle out of our heads, and we shall be as *fresh* as *larks*. Hardy, JO, 484. See p. 71. Common. U.

And man were *hayll* as *birde* on bowgh. *Songs*, 89. *Hale*, in good health, is Sc. and n. Cy only, according to NED. The current literary sense, robust, vigorous, fr. 1734. — See p. 72.

They [two girls] were trim creatures, good to the eye, . . . they were *fresh* as fresh-caught *cod*. London, GF, 84.

As *fresh* as an *eel*. *Towneley Myst.* (Cowan, PS, 34).

Roches . . . are esteemed . . . incapable of any disease, according to the old Proverb, As *sound* as a *Roach*. Moufet & Bennet, 1655, NED. Till some judicious Dolphin might approach, And land him safe and sound as any Roach. Denham, 1667, NED. I hope you are not wounded? Sound as a roach, wife. Vanbrugh, 1697, *Slang*. My father . . . turned of seventy, and yet he's as sound as a Roach still. T. Brown, 1700; Gay, NS; Smollet, 1751 (Cowan, PS, 36); Bohn; Neal, 1825, NED; Der. Not. Lei. War. EDD; Brewer &c. Sickly . . .? Not a bit of it — sound as a roach. Anstey, 1895, NED. 'As sound as a roach' is a very common expression in this county and perhaps elsewhere. Boston. N. & Q., 5, II, 274. '[A heart] as sound as a roach's.' Is not this a novel expression? N. & Q. 11, X, 468.

EDD and Brewer explain this *roach* as meaning *rock*, and Brewer gives the rendering 'as sound as a rock'. But already the earliest inst. of the sim. makes the meaning quite clear, and Cotgrave settles the matter, "*Plus sain qu'un gardon*", more lively and healthful than a *gardon* (roach), than which there is not any fish more healthful nor more lively." The sim. is also Sw. '*kry som en mört*'.

Note. In Lean and Cowan, PS, 34, there is the phrase 'As hale as a rock fish whole (rock-fish).' This is a very curious instance of misquotations and misprints. It hails from Bohn's *Complete Alphabet*, where we have 'as hale as a rock-fish whole, 189.' But l. c. there is 'as hail as a roch fish whole,' which is a misprint for 'as hail as a roch, fish-whole.' Ray, ed. 1768, has, 'As hail as a roch, Fish whole.'

pou shal be *hool* as any *troute*. *Cursor Mundi*, (Skeat, EEP, 21). *Fests of Widow Edyth*, 1525, Lean, II, ii.

As *sound* as a *trout*. Skelton, 1518; Cogan, *Haven of Health*, 1589, Lean, II, ii. "That it is passing wholesome our vulgar proverb accordeth: 'As sound as a trout,'" and another phrase "Fish whole", I think is most mentioned of the trout. Buttes, *Dyets Dry Dinner*, 1599. Ray. Yks, EDD.

As *healthy* as a trout. Nrf. EDD. — 'Whole, sound as a trout' are obsolete according to NED.

What, are they broken? — No, they are both as *whole* as a *fish*. Shak., TGV, II, v, 15. *Tom Tyler and his Wife*, 1661 (Cowan, PS, 38). Cf. also the term fish-whole, rec, already in the thirteenth c. — The sim. is found in other languages as well. Dutch, *Zoo gezond als een visch (in het water)*; Germ. *gesund wie ein Fisch im Wasser*. Cf. the Fr. *Se porter comme le poisson dans l'eau*. (Stoett, NS, I, 242); It. *Sano come un pesce*. (Ray). Other fishes, beside the trout and the roach are taken as symbols of excellent health. Cf. *Frisch wie ein Hecht*; *Perca Rhenana sanior aut salubrior*. Wander.

As *hard* as a *ground-toad*. Pegge, *Derbiccisms*, 137. There was Devil Lee too, and his imp, a great big rodney fellow, as hard as a groundsel toad. N. & Q., 9, XII, 514. Staf. Lin. Yks. w. Midl. EDD.

He's as hard as a woodpile twoad. Glou. Gl., 186.

He's as hard as a fell teahd. Cum. Of a particularly stout and hardy nature. — For other sim. with *toad* see *Foolish*, p. 52, *Fierce, Angry*, p. 93, *Ill-tempered*, 103, *Hatred, Antipathy*, p. 140. In the Ch. Gl. there is a phrase 'as hard as a north toad', which is said to be 'as hardy as a north-country fox,' *toad*, meaning *toad*, fox.

Forth they walked . . as *fresh* as an *oyster*. 1815, Barret, NED. I feel as *fit* as a *flea*. Not. Yks. See *Lively, Peart* p. 161.

As *sound* as an *apple*. Romance of Gaufrey, cited by Wright, *Domestic Manners* 1862, p. 279; H.

I'm twenty years older than you, and my head's as *hard* as a *nut* still. Phillpotts, WF, 263. Cf. I've had my plump time. I be near five-an-forty. Yet I was round once, an' so milky as a young filbert nut. *ibid.* AP. 45, and the Shakespearean 'Kate . . is . . as brown in hue/ As hazel nuts, and sweeter than the kernels. See *Sweet*, Ch. IV. Cf. the Sw. *frisk som en nötkärna*, and the Fris. *sa frisk as in nut*. Stoett, NS. I, 412.

As *sound* as an *achern*. Ch. Gl.; Lan. 'As sound as an ackern, is a local proverb, applied to everything from a horse to a nut. Wor. EDD. Northall, FPh, 11. See *Proud*, p. 85, and *Right*, Ch. IV.

I am certain he looks very pale, and when he came here, he was as *fresh* as a *rose*. Scott, A, 99. They see him emerge

from his carriage, after a long journey, 'fresh as a rose.' Russel, 1885, NED. Roget. See *Fresh, Bright*, Ch. III.

As *fresh* as a *daisy*. Barret, 1815, Marryat, 1833, NED. Hope, PZ, 42. Of anybody who looks untired. Common. U.

I'm a regular tornado, *tough* as *hickory* and long-winded as a nor-wester. 1846, Thornton. General Andrew Jackson was first called Tough, then Tough as Hickory, and lastly Old Hickory. Brewer, RH, 491. Lots of good men, regular old standards, tough as hickory. Masefield, CM, 108. Colloquially hickory has been employed as a nickname for persons and objects partaking of the qualities of the wood of this tree . . . so hickory shirts for their strength. Farmer, 1889, NED (Amer.).

My heart is as *sound* as an *oak*. Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, V, i. When I was your age I had one suit of underclothes. I was riding with the cattle in Colusa. I was *hard* as *rocks*, and I could sleep on a rock. London, SB, 25. Cf. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect, *Whole* as the *marble*, founded as the rock, As broad and general as the casing air. Shak., Mb, III, iv, 21.

Calidore rising up as *fresh* as *day*. Spenser, FQ, VI, iii, 13. Cf. The morrowe appeared with joyous cheare . . . Then she, as *morrow fresh*, her selfe did reare Out of her secret stand . . . Spenser, FQ, III, xii, 28.

Now *fresh* and youthful as the *month of May* I'll bid my bride good-morrow. Barry, RA, V, i (twice).

Rise with the lark, which makes us *healthful* as the *spring*. *Snow Storm*, 7.

Wellwyn. . . All well now, Constable — thank you; *Constable*. First rate, sir! That's capital! *Right* as *rain*, eh my girl? Galsworthy, P, 77. See *Right*, Ch. IV.

Lively, "Peart", Agile.

Note. For the sake of convenience all the sim. with *peart* (pert) have been placed here although many of them with equal justice might have been given under the previous head. It is often difficult to ascertain its exact meaning.

As *pert* as *tailours* at a wedding. Dekker, *Seven Deadly Sins* &c. II (Lean II, ii). What does this refer to? "In olden time the man who made the wedding garments was always supposed to see his employer safe through the ceremony, hence the best man is still called the tailor." Raine, *Torn Sails*, 1898, EDD. But cf. An affected phantastical carriage, a tailorlike spruceness, a peculiar garb in all their proceedings. Burton, AM, II, 166.

Here pricketh forth this hasty Defender, as *peart* as a *pearemonger*. Harding, 1565, NED. Pert as a pear-monger I'd be, If Molly were but kind. Gay, NS; *Lady Answ.* What! I see 'tis raining again. *Ld Sparkish.* Why, then, madam, we must do as they do in Spain. *Miss.* Pray, my lord, how is that? *Ld Sparkish.* Why, madam, we must let it rain. (*Miss* whispers). *Neverout.* There's no whispering, but there's lying. *Miss.* Lord! Mr. Neverout! You are as pert as a pearmonger this morning. Swift, PC, 254. Lan. Oxf. Bucks. N. & Q., I, XI, 114, 232. Thomson, 1856, Lin. EDD.

As *peart* as a *pearmonger's mare*. Ray. — The three insts of the first form of the sim. have different applications. In Harding it means brisk, active; in Gay, cheerful, glad, and in Swift, sharp, clever. Why the pearmonger and his mare should be more *peart* (*pert*) than other tradesmen and their horses, no one seems to know. H. thinks it 'is a mere piece of alliteration, without any special significance.' Further information required. Cf. 'the miller's horse,' p. 105, 'the cadger horse' p. 106.

As *light on his foot* as *ragman*. Antrim Prov. N. & Q., 3, II, 304. 'As *lively* as a *Red-Shank*' is still a proverbial saying. Taylor, PP, 49. *Red-shank*, a contemptuous appellation for Scottish Highland clansmen and native Irish, with reference to their naked hirsute limbs. Ed. Cf. To run like a Red-shank &c., common in Ir. and some border counties. See *Swift*, Ch. IV.

As *lithe* as a *lass* of Kent. Drayton, *Dowsabell*, 5; Pegge, *Kenticisms*; the sim. is already in Spenser, *Shep. Cal.* Feb., where it is applied to a bullock's dewlap.

When he was cherry-cheeked, and *light in the foot* as a *girl*. Hardy, WB, 260. See *ibid.* HE, 270, TM, 127.

W'y, John, yo' getten younger instid o' owder — yo' gwun along as *limber* and as *lissom* as a *lad o' nineteen*. Shr. EDD. *Limber*, *lithe*, *nimble*, fr. 1582.

As *limber* and *soople* as a *lad* Gall. 1862. See *Healthy*, p. 152. He's as *lish* a *young 'un* i't' spite ov his seventy year. Yks. EDD. *Lish*, *lithe*, *nimble*, *agile*, chiefly northern.

J. was a Jones, still as *brisk* as *champagne* is. An Old London Theatr. Alphabet, N. & Q., 5, V, 46. *Brisk* used of champagne already in Butler, 1664, NED.

As *brisk* as a *cup of wine*. Greene, FBB, 203. Cf. A cup of wine, that's brisk and fine. Shak., KH IVb, V, iii.

As *sound* as old *wine*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Rule a Wife* &c., Lean, II, ii. *Brisk*, sprightly, lively, fr. the latter half of the sixteenth c., now chiefly dial., according to NED.

She is *brisk* as *bottled ale*. Gay, NS. Bottle, v., rec. fr. first half of seventeenth c. NED.

As *lively* as *buttermilk* — Dashing about in the churn? Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As *nimble* as *ninepence*. Elworthy, WSG. 513. — “Silver ninepences were common to 1696, when all unmilled coin was called in. These n. were very pliable or nimble . . .” *Ibid.* There are several sim. with ninepence, and according to NED and EDD the allusion is not to the coin, but to the sum of money. See *Healthy, Hardy* p. 152. *Beautiful, Fine, Gaudy*, Ch. III; *Right*, Ch. IV. Cf. also the prov. “A nimble ninepence is better than a slow (or dead) shilling”, which by a cor. of N. & Q., Sept. 1851, p. 234, was called an old proverb. The reference is to rapid circulation and brisk trade.

As *peart* as a *spoon*. Wright, RS, 11 f.

As *active* as a *Norfolk tumbler*. Dekker, *Westw. Ho!* A tumbler is a dog like a small greyhound, formerly used to catch rabbits. “Dogs are no longer trained as ‘Norfolk tumblers’, to attract the rabbits on the warrens by their quaint antics.” 1897, NED. *Active*, agile, nimble, fr. 1597.

As *nimble* as a *blind cat* in a barn. Smyth, Berkl. MSS, III, 30, 1639 (Lean, II, ii). One would rather expect *wary* than *nimble*. Cf. *Wary* as a blind horse, p. 115. Ironical?

Nimble as a *cat on a hot bake-stone*. Brewer, *Dict.* 889. Rec. in NED fr. 1828. Lan. Yks., EDD. York. 1876, *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 430. “In a great hurry to get away. The bakestone in the north is a large stone on which bread and oat-cakes were baked.” Brewer *ibid.* Cf. We’st ha’ to look as *wakken* as a cat on a wot backstone. Lan. EDD. For *wakken*, see p. 34.

The official, *agile* like a *wild cat*, leaped back. White, BT, 21. She was as *lish* as a *cat*. Lan. 1869. EDD. For *lish*, see p. 157.

As *nimble* as a *cat*. “Clarke. (Lean, II, ii).

As *brisk* as *tunder*. Lin. N. & Q. 12, III, 274. *Tunder*, tinder.

As *nimble* as a *nag*. Ym. of Hypocr. v. 36, 1533 (Lean, II, ii).

As *limber* as a *cowt* at fifty. Lan. 1886.

As *kipper* as a colt. Whitby Gloss. *Kipper*, nimble, lively, n. Cy. EDD.

‘Poor and *peert*, like th’ *parson’s pig*’ is a common proverbial saying . . . It probably refers to the times when the parson collected his tithe in kind. The pig reserved for him, being a small one and not overfed, was consequently brisk and active. Chs. EDD. Cf. ‘as mad as a tithe pig.’ p. 40.

Silver, *agile* as a *monkey*, even without leg or crutch, was on the top of him next moment. Stevenson, TI, 55.

Mr. M. came running as *nimble* as a *buck*. Smollet, 1771, NED. A fine big strappin’ fallah/ As *lish* an’ *yal* as ony *deer*. Kcb. 1890. EDD *Yal*, yauld, lithe, supple, agile, Sc., n. Cy. Two long and lean Clovelly men, *active* as deer from forest training. Kingsley, WH, 380. He [a horse] was superb: tall, broad, strong, and yet as graceful and *agile* as a deer. Doyle, AG, 121.

As *light of foot* as an *hind*. Melbanche, 1583 (Lean. II, ii).

As *nimble* as a *doe*. Porter, *Two Angry Wom*, 1599, (Lean, II, ii).

As *lyth* [light] as a *ro*. *Cov. Myst.* (Lean). Cf. A footfall light as a roe's. Hardy, W, 326.

He's as *supple* as a *hare*. Ant. 1892, EDD. Cf. "Clever as a hare" p. 34.

I mus' run so *shuttle* as a *rabbit*, an' exercise my ho'ses. Som. 1896. Yours is a rare pony, nif he idn so shuttle's a raabit. *Shuttle*, shittle, quick, lithe, active. Som.

As *nimble* as a *squirrel* in a Bell-cage. Head, 1673, NED. *Bell-cage?*

As nimbly as a *squirrel* will *crack nuts*. B. Jonson, *T. of a Tub*, III, vii, (Lean, II, ii). Cf. They climbed high trees, as nimbly as a squirrel. Swift, GT. As nimble as a squirrel. Rog. Ez *lish* ez a squirrel. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

He's yet as *soople* as a *whittrick*. McLaren, 1894, EDD. *Supple*, quick, nimble, agile, Sc., n. Cy, Irel., EDD. See *Hard-hearted*, p. 88, *Clever*, &c. 34.

Tom was as *piert* as a *gamecock*. Kingsley, 1863, NED. Cf. 'as fiercely as two game-cocks,' p. 92. *Gamecock* rec. fr. 1677.

How is Dolly this morning? O, Shay's as *perky* as a *poll-parrot*. Lei., EDD. *Perky*, brisk, lively.

The risen body . . shall be more *nymble* . . then is any *swallow*. Fisher, 1509, NED. Cf. Gleger than a swallow bird. Lth. EDD. *Gleg*, brisk, nimble, swift. See also p. 33.

As *brisk* as a *lark*. Rog. Cf. p. 71, and 154.

In a week or two yer'll be as *peert* as a *cock-robin*. War. EDD. Her's so peart's a cock rabin, for all the cheel idn drie weeks old. Som. EDD. "One of our every day similes." Elworthy, N. & Q., 9, IV, 461.

Her was liiking za *peart's* a *rabbín* theäse marning. Dev. Yks. EDD. Cf. By Saint Rogue, our Mistres is as *light* as a *Robin-ruddocke*. Shelton, 1620, NED. See p. 71, and *Bold*, p. 113. — *Peart*, which has occurred already in several sim., is in general dialect use. "A delightful word, which positively sounds: brisk, lively, cheerful, in good health, sharp, and intelligent. It has nothing to do with *pert* either in form or meaning." Wright, RS, 11, f. It is used in speaking of women and children, and sometimes of birds. Applied to temperament and health, and never to dress or manner. Elworthy, WSG, 560.

Dick is as *dapper* as a *cock wren*. Ray. *Dapper*, little and active.

As *pyert* as a *bullspink*. Glegg, 1895, Lan. EDD. *Bull-spink*, Yks. Lan., bullfinch, chaffinch, already in Grose.

Kate was in the house, *lively* as a *finch*, Baring-Gould, RS, 237. Cf. Brisk as any finch He twittered. Browning, 1878, NED.

And she was proud and *pert* as is a *pye*. Chaucer, *Reves T.* 3950 (Lean, II, ii). *Ym. of Hypocr.* 2533. Well, an heav arto gettin' on, Dan, owd lad? Oh! peeort, lad; peeort as a *pynot*. Lan., 1867, EDD. A reg'lar little dandysprat, an' so pert as a *jay-pie* in June. "Q", *Troy Town*, xi, 1888, Cor. EDD. "As pert as a *maggot*" and "As pert as a *jay*" are common similes. Bdf. EDD. See Jackson & Burne, 598. As *perke* as a maggot. (West of England) Pulman, *Local, Nomencl.* (Lean, II, ii). As lively as a maggot. Jackson & Burne, 528.

As *pert* as a *sparrow*. *Christm. Prince*, II, 1607, (Lean, II, ii). See *Lecherous*, p. 19.

Her's as *peart* as ar' a *bird*, that's what her is. Wil. EDD. Sue, in her summer clothes, flexible and *light* as a *bird*. Hardy, *JO*, 366. Cf. Every elf and fairy sprite, Hop as light as bird from briar. Shak., *MND*, V, ii, 382.

As *nimble* as a feather. Lean, II, ii. Cf. Oh the times, when my heels have capered over the stage as *light* as a *Finches* feather. *SC*, 4. For other insts of the sim. 'light as a feather' see *Light*, Ch. IV.

As *nimble* as an *eel* in a sand bag. Ray. Cf. Wriggle in and out, like an eel in a sand-bag. Middleton, *The Roaring Girl*, I, i. But Ben Jonson has something quite different, "All the Ladies and Gallants lie languishing . . . And (without we returne quickly) they are all (as youth would say) no better than a few Trowts cast ashore, or a dish of Eeles in a sand-bag." (*Cynthia's Rev.* II, v, NED).

I was as *yauld* as an *eel*. Scott, *A*, III.

As *wick* as an *eel*. Blakeborough, *NRV*, 242. "In daily use." *Folk-Lore*, XLIII, 411. 1877. Lin. *Wick*, quick, lively, in most n. Cy dial. and some midl.

As *nimble* as an *eel*. — Cf. To wriggle like an eel. Cf. 'slippery as an eel', p. 24 f.

He was *lithe* and *slippery* like a *fish*, and his muscles gave and tightened like a steal spring. Mason, *PK*, 39.

As *gleg* as a *puddock* after a shour. Dmb. *Puddock*, paddock, a toad or frog, now chiefly in Sc. Ir. and n. Cy dial. from fourteenth c. See *Cold*, Ch. IV.

As *pert* as a *frog* upon a washing-block. Ray. *Washing-block*, or stock, is a kind of bench on which clothes were formerly laid and beaten with a kind of bat. — It is said of a little man on a big horse that 'e looks like a frog on a weshin'-stock.' Shr. EDD. What is the meaning of our sim.?

As *brisk* as a *bee in a tar-pot*. Cf. As nimble as a bee in a tar-barrel. *Slang*. Ray. Cf. Thou shalt keep him waking with thy drum;/ Thy drum, my Dol, thy drum, till he be tame/
As the poor blackbirds were in the great frost,/ Or bees are with a *basin*. Jonson, *Alch.*, III, ii, 255 f. As *busy* as

bees in a *basin*. Lei. 1834. NED. To be like a fly in a glue pot, in a state of nervous excitement. Wright, RS, 161. 'It moves like a fly through a gluepot, as the Irishman says.' Scot, A, 19. Like a bee in a bottle. Used of a booming or humming sound. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As *wick* as *bees*. Yks. EDD.

As *brisk* as *bees*, if not altogether as light as fairies, did the four Pickwickians assemble on the morning. Dickens, PP, II, 18. The old Woman perk'd up as brisk as a bee. Barham, IL, 411. Roget; Norris, *Fim*, 136. For further insts see W.

As *quiet* as as *wasp* in one's nose. *Slang*. Very much alive.

My uncle . . bolted through the window as *nimble* as a *grass-hopper*. Smollet, 1771, NED. Look at me, fifty-five and *lively* as a *grass-hopper*. Tracy, *Pillar*, 207.

A teaspoonful of that ar, morn and night, and in a week you'll be right again, as *pert* as a *cricket*. Stowe, *Dred*, 1856, Thornton.

Zo *lively's* a cricket. Hewett, Dev. 11. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, "in daily use." See *Merry*, p. 76.

And home she went as *brag* as it had ben a *bodelouce*. GGN, II, iii (Dodsley, I, 149). Lusty like a herring, with a bell about his neck, Wise as a woodcock: as *brag* as a *bodylouse*. *Marriage of Wit and Science*, II, i. (Dodsley, ed. Hazlitt, II, 336).

As *brisk* as a *Body-louse* in a new Pasture. Brome, 1653, NED. Gay, NS. *Brag*, brisk, lively, rec. 1300—1610, NED. *Body-louse*, only these insts in NED.

As *crowse* as a *new washen louse*. — This is a Scotch and northern proverb. Ray. Cf. 'As fresh and as crous/ As a new-washed lous.' *Clev. Gloss*. *Crouse*, brisk, lively, fr. c. 1400, NED. As *croose* as a loose or lop. Yks. 1889. EDD.

As *pert* as a louse. Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

I's as *lish* as a *biddy*. *Biddy*, louse or flea, in some n. Cy dial.

As *cobby* as a *lop*. York., 1876, *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 429. *Cobby*, nimble; *lop*, flea, now dial., fr. 1460.

As *crouse* as a *lop*. *Whitby Glos*. 1855.

Nimmel as a *lop*. Nhb. 1843, EDD.

The feithor says wi' pride 'the bairn's *peart* as *lop*.' Nhb. Yks. Used of a person nimble and active in his movements. *Clev. Gloss*.

As *wick* as a *lop*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. "In daily use."

Zo *dapper's* a *vlay*. Hewett, Dev. 11.

As *nimble* as a *flea*. Nhb. 1843, EDD.

As *limber* as a *willow* wand. *Whitby Gloss*. As *lember* as a willow. N. & Q., 7, V, 57. *Limber*, lithe and nimble, fr. 1582, NED.

With winged feet as *nimble* as the *wind*. Spenser, FQ, IV, vii. 30. Cf. As *quick* as air. Brome, *Epist.*, xxiv, (Lean, II, ii).

Who told me that Hipolito was dead? He that can make any man dead, the Doctor. But my Lord, he is as *full of life* as *wildfire*, and as quick. Dekker, HWh, Ia, xii.

Sick, III.

He's as *dowly* as *death*. Ill, depressed, so ill, and he looks it. *Cleavel. Gloss. Dowly*, in bad health, delicate, sickly, in Grose; n. Cy.

I am as *ill* as a *witch*. Very ill. S. Chs. Wright, RS, 211. Cf. p. 8.

I am as *queer* as *Dick's hatband*. Grose, 1796, NED. See p. 97 ff. *Queer*, out of sorts, ill, fr. 1800 in NED.

As *sick* as a *cushion*. Ray. *Miss* . . . I'm sick and hungry, more need of a cook than a doctor. *Lady Answer*. Poor miss, she's as sick as a cushion, she wants nothing but stuffing. Swift, PC, 253. No modern inst. seems to be found. There are several more or less proverbial phrases in which the subst. enters: 'to deserve the cushion, to miss the cushion, to kill a man with a cushion, beside the cushion', but none of them give any hint as to the origin of our sim. Does it refer to the limp and loose character of the cushion, or is it elliptical: as sick as (to need) a cushion, as is suggested by a cor. of N. & Q., 12, III, 116. He goes on to say, "This is an idiom which is quite common in ordinary conversation, though I have never seen it in a book. For instance, to someone who complains of feeling unwell, the question may be put: "Are you as ill as bed?" meaning "Are you as ill as (to go to) bed?" Further information required.

As *washed out* as a *dish-clout*. Said of appearance. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

If . . . he should chance to be fond, he'd make me as *sick* as a *dog*. Vanbrugh, 1705, NED. Poor Antony Blog Is as sick as a dog. Barham, IL, 225. You'll be as sick as a dog if you give way to it. Masefield, CM, 71. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, "in daily use."

Zo sick's a 'ound. Hewett, Dev., 12. — The cp. sim. *dog-sick* is rec. already in 1599, Buttes, *Dyet's Dry Din.*, where we read, "He that saith, he is Dog-sicke, as sicke as a Dog; meaneth a sicke Dog, doubtlesse. NED. The sim. is also found in Sw., *sjuk som en hund* (Ehrenswards Brev, ed. Gunhild Bergh, I, xxiii). The dog figures in numerous sim. chiefly of an unfavourable character.

As *waffy*, or weak, as a *cat*. *Waffy*, weak or suffering from an undefinable feeling of *malaise*. Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As *sick* as a cat. Brewer, Dict. 1139.

As sick as cats with eating rats. N. & Q., 4, XI, Dec. 5, '68.

The cor. of N. & Q. says, "As sick as a cat". No phrase more

familiar; but . . . the phrase always puzzled me, till I stumbled upon it with the addition of a second part [given above]. Here the fitness of the illustration comes out, for, however senseless it may seem to compare a sick [person] to [the cat], that same animal is all but invariably "sick" (in every sense of that word), if rashly permitted to eat the rat . . . How strange that this second line should have so entirely disappeared from common speech when it has not only reason but the more powerful help of rhyme to keep it in remembrance." But this scarcely settles the question, for there is in Dutch a sim. *Zoo siek, misselijk als en kat*, and in English as well as other languages, there are numerous phrases with *cat* applied to a person who is 'sick' in the special sense of this word, 'to cat (dial.), to jerk, shoot, whip the cat', some of which go back to the early seventeenth c., all meaning 'to vomit', especially from too much drinking. In a Sw. dial. the saying runs 'to skin cat' with exactly the same sense. In Dutch, *een kater hebben* (literally, to have a tom-cat) to suffer from the effects of over-night drinking, in Germ. *Katsenjammer haben*, with the same meaning, which, nevertheless, originally refers to the cat's vailing and catervauling in early spring (see *Melancholy* p. 56), *besoffen wie ein Kater* ('as drunk as a tom-cat'), *zuipen als en kater*. (drink like a tom-cat), *katsendick*, very drunk, *katsendreckig*, ('cat-dirty') unwell. (Stoett, NS, I, 394, Wander, Muret-Sanders, Rietz). The simplest explanation of most of these phrases is perhaps that the cat not unfrequently does 'cat', i. e. is sick, whether from eating rats or owing to other causes. Thus, it is quite possible that the second line of the couplet given above does not belong to the original sim. at all, but is only a nonce-phrase, invented to explain the saying. The sim. is probably much older than our insts.

I am as *sick* as a *horse*, quoth I, already. Sterne, 1765. "A common vulgar sim. used when a person is exceedingly sick without vomiting." Baker, Northampt. Gloss. 1854. Grose, quoting the sim. says, "Horses are said to be extremely sick from being unable to relieve themselves by vomiting." But on the other hand, "A woman hath nine cats liues, a woman hath more liues than a horse hath diseases". Sharpham, F., IV, 259. For a list of them, see Shak., TS, III, i, and also in Nashe. As *sick* as a *chick*. Melbancke, *Phil.* 1583; Dunton, *Ladies' Dict.*, 1694, (Lean, II, ii).

As *sick* as a *rat*. *Slang*. See *Hungry, Lean, Drunk, and Poor*, Ch. IV.

As *wisht* as a *winnard*. Cor. "A stock phrase. The redwings reach Cornw. late in autumn, and in winter are very thin and miserably weak." EDD., See p. 148.

He was sick to death, and had gone to a lonely place to die. I took him in hand, and though he was as *venomous* as a *young*

snake, . . . I got him all right. Doyle, SF, 374. *Venomous*, full of poison, poisoned.

Sick as a *toad*. Brewer, Dict. 1143. On the other hand, see p. 155. As hardy as a ground toad.

As *sick* as a *newt*. Lin. 1877. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 410.

As *white* as a *marwk*. Sickly looking. Yks. Lin. EDD. See *Dead*, p. 147.

I turned as *sick* as a *peet* an spewt. Wm. T'trees gang fleeing by o' ya side, an' t'wa'as on tudder, an gars yan be as sick as a peate. Southey, 1848, Cum. EDD. Cf. A heart as great as peat. Ready to burst with sorrow.

Note. It is remarkable that in all these sim. dealing with illness, the adj. *ill* occurs only once, *sick* being all but exclusively used.

Lame.

As *lame* as *St. Giles's Cripplegate*. Ray. Bohn reprints, . . . St. Giles, Cripplegate. Middleton, *Father Hubbard's Tales*, 1604, (Lean, II, ii) has, As lame as St. Giles of Cripplegate, and Ware, ' . . . as St. Giles Cripplegate'. — St. Giles was the patron saint of cripples, and a church dedicated to him was built near the gate, in 1090. "Cripplegate was so called before the Conquest, from cripples begging of passengers therein." Ray. For another etymology, see Wheatley p. 26. "Cripplegate must be formed from some personal name, just as its neighbour, the modern Aldersgate derived its name from a certain Ealdred". W. F. Prideaux, N. & Q., 9, I, 1. "This proverb may seem guilty of false heraldry, lameness on lameness; and in common discourse, is spoken rather merrily than mournfully, of such who, for some slight hurt, lag behind; and sometimes it is applied to those who, out of laziness, counterfeit infirmity." Ray. According to Ware, it is applied to a badly-told untruth. "The church being frequented . . . by cripples in great numbers — many of them being fraudulent limpers — the gate came to be called Cripplegate [wrong; see above!]; and this phrase suggested a lame excuse." Further information required.

As *stiff* as *Barker's knec*. — Once upon a time there was a miner called Barker, who was foolhardy enough to say that he did not believe there were any knockers. In revenge for this insult, a crowd of Knockers waylaid him, and pelted him with their tools, causing him lifelong injury, whence grew up the proverb. Knockers are the sprites that haunt the tinmines of Cornwall. Wright, RS, 199. EDD. Application? Still used?

He's dead foundered, man, as *cripple* as *Eckie's mear*. Scott, *Red-gauntlet*, v. (Narrat.) *Cripple*, as an adj. dates fr. the thirteenth c. Is anything known about this mare? *Eckie*, Hector.

Ez *lame* ez a *three-legged dog*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. "In daily use". 'Lame as a dog' is the constantly used expression to denote severe lameness, whether in man or beast. Elworthy, WSG, 202. Lin. N. & Q. 12, III, 275.

As *lame* as a *cat*. Lin. 1877. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 409, EDD.

Zo *lame's* a *crow*. Hewett, Dev. 11. *Lame* as a *crow* with the gout. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 223.

I shall be *lame* as a *tree*. Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schoold.* I, vii. N. & Q., 3, XII, 376. Lin. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 409. H.

Clumsy.

As *awkward* as a *barrow with a square wheel*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. — Does it refer to a person's physical qualities?

As *numb* as a *besom*. — *Numb* is dull mentally; slow, awkward, unready in action, physically. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As *num* as a *post*. e. An. EDD. Cf. 'as stiff as a post'.

He's as *num* as a *hagstock*. Yks.

As *foul* as t'hagstock. Lan. EDD. — *Hagstock*, a large wooden block on which fire-wood &c. is chopped. *Foul*, clumsy, in Yks. Not. Lin. Cor. EDD.

As *numb* as *wood*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As *nimble* as a *new-gelt dog*. Ray.

As *nimble* as a *cow in a cage*. Ray. Cf. Tell me, I pray you, was ever Pegasus a cow in a cage, Mercury a mouse in a cheese, Dexterity a dog in a doublet? Nashe. For another sim. with 'cow in a cage' see *Unfit, Unsuitable*, Ch. IV.

Dost look as *handy* wi' that as a *pig do wi' a musket*. Glouc. Gloss. 1890. *Handy*, dexterous, fr. 1662, common in many dial.

Each of his joints against other justles, / As *handsomely* as a *bear picketh* muscles. Heywood, PE, 66. *Handsomely*, dexterously, rec. 1553—1655. NED.

Till he's as *fawl* and *clumsy* as a *hippopotamus*. Yks. 1866, EDD. *Clumsy*, rec. fr. c. 1600. Cf. the adj. *hippopotamic*, huge, unwieldy, fr. 1785.

Hoarse, Breathing hard.

I have sich a hoast. My *throttle's* as *reawsty* as a *bone-house-dur-lock*. Vaugh, 1874, Lan. EDD. *Hoast*, Sw. *hosta*, cough, a Sc. and n. Cy word. *Reawsty*, rusty. *Bone-house-dur-lock*, charnel-house-door-lock.

He *puffeth* and *bloweth* like a *short-winded hackney*. MM, 30. *Puff, blow, hackney* already in ME.

He's as *stuffy* as an *auld nag*. Wm. *Stuffy*, unable to breathe properly, partially choked. EDD. *Stuffy* voice. CD.

As an *horse* he *snorteth* in his sleepe. Chaucer, 119/4163. Fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse. Shak., KH IVa, II, iv, 505.

He sometimes paused, and *panted* like a *chased deer*. Tyndall, 1860, NED.

You'll cry yourself as *hoarse* as a *corbie*. Scott, A, 208. *Corbie*, raven, chiefly Sc. Ir. and n. Cy.

As *roupy* as a *raven*. *Whitby Gloss*. *Roupy*, roupit, hoarse.

I would *croak* like a *raven*; I would bode, I would bode. Shak., TC, V, ii, 188. Cf. The hoarse Raven . . . By croaking from the left presag'd the coming Blow. Dryden, 1697, NED. The raven has always been a bird of ill omen.

Ez *hoarse* ez a raven. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. "In daily use." Bell, WM, 271.

He was now as *hairse* and *roopit* as a *craw*. Service, 1887, Ayr. EDD. *Roopit*, see above. Cf. He had a voice like a roupet crow. 1897, Edb. EDD.

Charles Kemble is at present as *hoarse* as a *crow*. Mitford, 1826, NED. He was not only red in the face, but spoke as hoarse as a crow. Stevensson, TI, 55.

He *cawed* like a *craw* with a scalded throat. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As *hoarse* as a *cuckoo*. Chs. Gl.

She *fetches her breath* as short as a *new-ta'en sparrow*. Shak., TC, III, ii, 32.

Peggy stood stock-still . . . *snorting* like a *stranded grampus*. Barham, IL, 525. — They hunt in packs and attack whales, and when chased sometimes throw themselves ashore to escape their persecutors. Enc. Brit.

To *blow* like a *grampus*. To breathe audibly, as one might after a violent exertion. Cowan, l. c.

To *puff* like a *grampus*. — Said *e. g.* of an old woman who runs hard to catch the bus. C.

Coughing like a *grampus*. Dickens, 1848, NED. I gasped and coughed like a *grampus*. Shaw, IK, 42. — The 'snuffing grampus' is referred to already in Wood, 1634, NED.

Amos Pently, *gasping* like a *stranded catfish*. London, FM, 164.

Catfish, a North-American freshwater fish, *Pimelodus catus*.

Fast asleep and *snoring* like *thunder*. Jacobs, MC, 82. See *Loud*, Ch. IV.

Perspiring.

Ah *sweats* like a *brock*. *Cleavel. Gloss*. 73. He sweats like a brock. (*Cicada spumeria*, which surrounds itself with a white froth commonly called cuckoospit) Linc. 1877, 1885, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 411.

Tired.

As *beat* as *Batty*. Dev.; see p. 123.

"But you look weary." — "Yes, I shall be as *limp* as a *rag* for a week." Doyle, SF, 284. *Weary*, at least fr. Maundeville, CD. *Limp*, rec. fr. 1706, and in fig. use fr. the middle of last c.

We went to bed as *tired* as *dogs*. Hardy, WT, 18. Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 275. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, "In daily use." Hewett, Dev. 12. NED. Cf. dog-weary, dog-tired. The Germ. *Müde wie ein Hund*, Wander, Heine.

As *tired* as a *jade*. Lean, II, 11. A jade is a wearied or worn-out horse. Cf. So *mā'un* as an *Péárd* (as tired as a horse). Wander.

He . . . looked as *faint* as a *spent stag*. Besant, RMM, 19. *Faint*, feeble through exhaustion, fr. fourteenth c. *Spent*, tired by exertion, fr. 1591. "The hart, Stag, Hinde, Buck, or Doe, is spent." Hexham, 1647.

Sleeping.

Smoke the justice, he is as *fast* as a *church*. Foote, 1762, NED. Jackson & Burne, 594. Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 275. *Fast*, fast asleep, rec. fr. 1592, is obsolete in st. E.

"Whether it was so or no, asleep she did fall, *sound* as a church." Dickens. Cf. 'as safe as a church.' Ch. IV.

Down he went, legs and head, Flat on the bed, / Apparently *sleeping* as *sound* as the *dead*. Barham, IL, 234. Byron, 1819, NED.

He . . . *slept* more *soundly* than an *alderman* after a civic feast. Oxenham, MS, 71. See *Dull*, p. 53.

To *sleep* as *soundly* as a *constable*. Braitwait, *Whimsies*, 1631, Lean, II, ii. Cf. I wil assure you, he can sleep no more Than a hooded hawk; a centinel to him, Or one of the City constables are tops. Fletcher & Massinger, 1616, NED.

How can you say all this, when you were *sound* as a *trooper*. Sc. 1891, EDD. *Sound*, elipt. for sound asleep.

'*Sound* as a *watchman*', [he] hears nothing. Maxwell, 1884, NED. See above, and three lines further down.

Stukeley *slept* like an *infant*. Masefield, CM. 220. Cf. Sleep she as sound as careless infancy. Shak., MW, V, v.

Twere was a watchman, who always turned in and *slept* like a *graven image*. Twain, TS, 125. Cf. *Graven* and molten *images*. Pusey, 1860, and *Graven images*, Ex. 20, 4.

[He] fell as *soon's* a *peerie* in less than a meenout. Ayr. 1887, EDD. *Soon*, sound; *peerie*, peg-top.

Sleep like a *humming-top* you will, if you come. Jacobs, MC, 145. In two minutes I was as *fast* as a top. Mrs. Sheridan, 1763, NED. I trow I took a nap, . . . As *sound* as a tap. Ramsay, 1711. Cld. EDD. Sleeping as sound as a top. Hardy, Lao. 334.

To *sleep* like a *top*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Two Noble Kinsm.* (Lean, II, ii.) Cf. the above quoted passage in Fletcher & Massinger. — Should he seem to rouse, 'tis but well lashing him, and he will sleep like a top. Congreeve, 1693; Gay, NS; *Gent. Mag.* 1793, (NED); Byron, 1819 (NED); N. & Q.

Some people, not knowing more than the most common form of this sim., found themselves unable to understand it, and casting about for an explanation hit upon the French *dormir comme une taupe* (sleep like a mole) and the It. *dormire come un topo*. (sleep like a rat). As a matter of fact, we have in Fr. exactly the same sim. as in E. *dormir comme une toupie* (a spinning top), or more common *dormir comme un sabot*, (an ignorant translator has been known to render *nous dormirons comme deux sabots*, we shall sleep like two wooden shoes! N. & Q., July, 1852, p. 51). Cf. also *il ronfle comme un sabot, une toupie*, he snores like a top. Prof. Malvoisin, Paris, N. & Q., 3, XII, 345. Consequently we do not owe the sim. to any misunderstood foreign *word* but to an *idea* common to English and French. A top is said to sleep when it moves with such velocity, and spins so smoothly, that its motion is unperceptible. Baker, North. Gloss., 1854; and cf. It is the case of a common spinning-top, . . . not sleeping upright, nor nodding. Thomson & Tait, 1879. It's [a perfect life's] quiet is that of a sleeping top, — the ease of an intense well-balanced activity. Tyrrel, 1909, NED. See Hardy, UGT, 68.

To *sleep* as *sound* as a *horn*. Cai. EDD. In what way can sleep be applied to a horn? See *Fond*, 44.

As *sleepy* as a *giv'd cat*. Wilson, *Cheats*, I, iii, 1663, Lean, II, ii. See *Melancholy*, p. 55; *Sick*, p. 162. Cf. Do not awake the sleeping cat. Woodroutpe, 1623, NED. Cf. *Er schläft wie eine Katze*. Wander.

He . . . *slept* like a *dog*. Oxenham, MS, 90. Cf. the Sc. proverbs 'to sleep like a dog in a mill, to sleep as dogs do when wives sift meal'. Hislop, *Prov. of Scotland* (Lean, II, ii). Dogs will sleep when the women are sifting. Wood, *Manx P.*, 253. Do they sleep at all in such cases? "A dog's sleep" is otherwise never considered to be a very profound one.

To *sleep* like a *sucking pig*. Chapman (Lean, II, ii, where?). To sleep like a *pig*. Northall, FPh, 30. Don't take too much grog! And don't fall aslepp, if you should, like a *hog*. Barham, IL, 237. Cf. the Chaucerian 'sleep as a *swyn*', LawT. 647, and Shak. 'in swinish sleep Their drenched natures lie as in a death.' Mb, I, vii, 67. When you where in bed you lay snoring and snorting like a swine as you are. *Vinegar & Mu.*, 9. — To sleep as snug as pigs in pea-straw. Heywood, WK, 69.

He *slept* as sound as a *sebem-sleeper*. Som. EDD. The *sebem-sleeper*, seven-sleeper, is the dormouse, an animal that has been looked upon as a very heavy sleeper indeed at least fr. Skelton, who says, *Dormiat in pace*, like a dormouse. (1528, NED). Cf. And striue the dormowuses themselves in sleeping to excell. Googe, 1570, NED. Them that sleep, like so many dormice. Burton, AM, I, 287. Players lay asleep like Dormouses. Hall, 1646, NED. The subst. has been used fig. for a sleepy person fr. 1568, NED. See *Dull*, p. 52. Cf. Germ. *Schlafen wie Maulwürf und Ratten* (= *Siebenschläfer*). *Zu schlafen wie eine Ratze*, Fr. *dormir comme un loir*.

As *sleepy* as a *bat*. Lin., N. & Q. 12, III, 275. Cf. *Blind* p. 171. Zo *sleepy* ez an *owl*. Hewett, Dev. 13. That must be the day-time owl. *Sleepy* as an *October wasp*. H.

I *slept* like a *log* of *wood*. Stevenson, TI, 74. I must have dozed a good deal from the first, and then slept like a log. *ibid.* 31. Cf. also 'I am in the most magnificent health and spirit, eating like a bull, sleeping like a tree'. *ibid.* 30. Cf. Germ. *Er schläft wie ein Stock*. Wander. Sw. *Sova som en stock*, which in Wenström-Harlock is rendered 'sleep like a log'.

Sleeping as sound as a *rock*. Hardy, LLI, 251.

Note. She's as fast *asleep* as if she were in *Bedfordshire*. Scott, *Heart of Midl.*, XXX. This is a very old joke of the mild kind in which our ancestors indulged. 'I'm going to the land of Nod. — Faith, I'm for Bedfordshire.' Swift, PC, 301. Each one departs for Bedfordshire, and pillows all securely snort on. 1665, *Slang. Sheet Alley* and *Blanket Fair* are localities in the same imaginary county. The following is a good inst. of the same sort of pun. He that fetches a wife from Shrewsbury, must carry her into Staffordshire, or else he shall live in Cumberland. Cf. also "Little Witham" p. 46.

Sharp-sighted, Awake.

His een *lookit* at me as *sharp* laek as *preens*. Sh. I., 1892, EDD. See *Beautiful* &c., Ch. III. Cf. His eyes had lost none of their keenness, they bored like *bradawls*. Baring-Gould, RS, 13. *Bradawl*, a very small tool, used for boring, rec. fr. 1823.

Eyes as *sharp* as a *lynx*. Bullein, *Bulw. of Def.*, 1562, Lean, II, ii. Cf. The boys, who are quick-sighted as lynxes. Smollet, 1755, NED. Half of the Prussian Force lie, vigilant as lynxes, blockading here. Carlyle, 1865, NED. A best that men Lynx calles, That may se thurgh thik stane walles. Hampole, 1340, NED. Cf. I can see as far into a millstone as another man. H.

A was as *wakrife* as a *bakbearaway* i't' gloaming. Atkinson, 1891, Yks, EDD. *Wakrife*, wakeful, Sc. Ir. n. Cy. *Backbearaway*, or back, a very old name for the bat.

- He *slepte namoore* than dooth a *nyghtyngale*. Chaucer, 3/98 C.
 His *eye*, As *bright* as is the *eagle's*, lightens forth Controlling
 majesty. Shak., KR III, iii, 68. The keen vision of the eagle
 is proverbial. Cf. Can I make my eye an eagle? Browning,
 1878, NED, and, [his eye] *keen* as that of a *bird of prey*.
 Hardy, RN, 10. Cf. *Eager*, p. 122, and *Miserly*, 128.
 His *een* were as *sharp* as an *houlat's*. Snowden, 1896, Yks,
 EDD. I've served you faithfully as a dog", said Mrs Veale.
 "Faithful as a dog", she repeated; "watched for you, wakeful
 as an owl." Baring-Gould, RS, 303. I will take a nap by
 day, and be lively as an owl by night. *Ibid*, 159. Cf. 'as
 sleepy as an owl' p. 169.
 These eyes that now are dimm'd with death's black veil, Have
 been as *piercing* as the *midday sun*. Shak., KH VIc, V, ii, 16.

Blind.

- pai blusted as *blynde* as *bayard* watz euer. E. E. A. P., c. 1325.
 I am Bernardus, non vidit omnia, as blind as blind Bayard,
 and have the eyes of a beetle; nothing from them is obscure.
 Nashe, III, 220. Who is so blind as bold Bayard. Breton,
 1609. As blind yet as bold as Bayard. 1625, NED. Cf.
 Bayard must ever be as bold as blind. Fairfax, 1674, NED.
 See *Bold*. p. 112.
 As *blind* as *ignorance*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Lover's Progr.*, III,
 iii, (Lean, II, ii).
 The old scholar . . . is as *blind* as a *brickbat*. Dickens, Dav. Cop.
Slang. A facetious simile for very blind. *ibid*. Cf. 'Blind as a
 bat' below.
 If I hadn't been as *blind* as a day-old *pup*. Voxall, RS, 26. *Pup*,
 fr. 1589.
 For all your sharp tongue you are as *blind* as a three-day *kitten*.
 Marchmont, CF, 22.
Blinde as a *modewart*. Bruce, 1589, NED. Blind of eye like a
 grey mowdiewarp. Gall. 1895. As blind as a modeywarp.
 Not. Cf. The marmisset the mowdewart couth leid, Becaus
 that nature had denyit hir sicht. Henryson, 1470, NED.
 They may well holde vs as Battes and Moulwattes that cannot
 see. Broughton, 1604, NED.
 As blind as a *want*. Withals, 1586 (Lean, II, ii).
 As blind as a *mole*. Ray. This form of the sim. is rec. in
 NED 1563—1713. It is also used in a transferred sense: In
 heavenly things you are more blind than Moals. Sylvester,
 1598, NED. To judge fr. the insts. it must be obs. except
 in dial. — This erroneous idea of the mole's blindness is
 very old. Already in Gr. τυφλότερος ἀσπίλακος, and *talpa*

caecior is a Latin sim. used by Erasmus. Dutch, *Zoo blind als een mol.* Germ. *Blind als ein Maulwurf* (obs.), Stoett, NS, I, 88.

As *blind* as a *bat* at noon. Clarke. Ez blind ez a bat i' daayleet. Blakeborough, NRY.

As blind as a *bat*. Ray. W. Hewett, Dev. 10; Hope, PZ, 62; Lyall, DV, 95; Hardy, LLI, 131. The bishop was blinder than a bat without [his spectacles]. Caine, D, vi. — "A bat is not blind, but when it enters a room well lighted it cannot see, and blunders about. It sees best, like a cat, in the dusk. Brewer, Dict. 146. The following is then perhaps the most scientific form of the sim.: Men of meditative faces, lined foreheads, and weak-eyed as bats with constant research. Hardy, JO, 95. — The sim. is not rec. in NED, but there are the cpp bat-blind, bat-eyed, bat-minded(ness), none of them earlier than the beginning of the seventeenth c. The simplex is rec. fr. c. 1575. — It may be of some interest to add that, according to Sloet, *Dieren*, 77, popular belief maintained that the eye of a bat could make those who wore one, invisible.

As *blind* as an *owl* at noonday. Clarke. "Nay, madame, I were blind to think that. Blind as a noontide owl," said Amos. Doyle, R, 76. See p. 169.

Blind as an *owl*. Brewer, 146. What is said about the bat also applies to the owl. Cf. Our subtle Schoolmen . . are obscure, defective in these mysteries, and all our quickest wits, as an owl's eyes at the sun's light, wax dull. Burton, AM, I, 205. Rab lookit as bleart as a houлит, When tryin' to glour at the sun. Rnf., 1861, EDD.

As *bleynde* as a *betylle*. 1420, NED (s. v. blind). Udall, 1584; We cease not to bee brute beasts, as blinde as betles. Tomson, 1579, NED. In earthly things we have Lynces eyes; but in spirituall things we are blind as beetles. Barkley 1598, NED. Knolles, *Hist. of the Turks*, 1603. Wright, *Displ. of Duty*, 1614, (Lean, II, ii); Burroughs, *On Hosea*, 1652; Ray; Baker, 1757, NED. No modern lit. insts have been found, but cf., No, Larry, I am not a shot, and like a beetle at night. Baring-Gould, RS, 123. It occurs in some dial., Som. and Nhb., where it is said to be very common. EDD.

Now, what is this *beetle*? NED affirms that it is the insect so called. EDD, on the other hand, thinks that it is the wooden implement, a heavy mallet. There have been some rather dogmatical discussions about it in N. & Q., (see 'deaf as a beetle') with a good deal of speculation on the character of these two things. But the only safe plan is to start from the sim. itself and its context. The above insts show us that our word could be coupled with the name of other animals. Cf. also 'bats, buzzards, and beetles' (see

below), 'another compareth a Bytell with an Egle' (Bell, 1581, NED), and, the most interesting of all, 'Thou nor no flie is so beetle-blinde.' Heywood, 1556, NED, which may be rendered: 'You are the blindest being imaginable, consequently you ought to be taken as the type of blindness, and not a fly (as we do in beetle-blind).' In these expressions the insect must be alluded to. It is further worth noticing that, except 'as blind as ignorance,' 'as blind as a brickbat,' and 'as blind as a stone' all the other sim. take some animal to illustrate a high degree of blindness. This makes it almost certain that in this case also an animal is referred to, and Ray, who is the first to explain the sim., says expressly, "A beetle is thought to be blind, because in the evening it will fly with its full force against a man's face, or anything else which happens to be in its way; which other insects, as bees, hornets, &c. will not do." Cf. also the following sim.

As *blind* as a *buzzard*. Draxe, 1633, (Lean, II, ii); Grose, 1790, EDD. The cp buzzard-blind is rec. fr. 1619, and the term blind buzzard is already in ME, the earliest insts in NED being these: I rede eche blynde bosarde do bote to hymselue. Langland, PPl. b. X, 266. But of other thou blundyrst as a blynde buserde. 1401, *Pol. Poems*, ii, 98 (ed. Wright). Blind buzzard Sir John. c. 1550, Bradford, Wks, ii, 43 (ed. Parker Soc.) as a contemptuous title for a priest. According to NED this buzzard is the bird of that name, an inferior kind of hawk, *Buteo vulgaris*, whose dullness and stupidity made it useless for falconry. Cf. Those blind bussardes, who . . . would neyther learn themselues, nor could tech others. Ascham, 1571, NED, and the proverb 'to make a falcon of a buzzard.' And in Germ. *Aus einem Bussard macht man keinen Sperber*. (Wander). Consequently *blind* is used fig. or, as Skeat asserts, means dull of sight. But on the other hand, Swainson, BB, 133, is of opinion that the sim. and the terms mentioned do not refer to the bird, "which is extremely quick-sighted, but rather to the beetle, from the buzzing sounds of its flights." According to EDD it is a moth or butterfly. Different kinds of beetles are called buzzard-clocks, or buzzard-bats, -battles or -beetles (EDD). Nares says that "all night-moths and beetles were thus called [buzzards] familiarly in his childhood." Swainson, l. c. This would take us back to the end of the eighteenth c. But the great difficulty about this idea is that no earlier undoubted inst. of this sense of the word has been found. The oldest quot. in NED dates only fr. 1825. As a *possible* reference the following question is cited: — O owle! hast thou only kept company with bats, buzzards, and beetles in this long retirement in the desert? Gayton, 1654, and in Shak., TS, II, 209 there is perhaps an allusion to this sense of the word. The passage in Gayton

gives excellent sense if *buzzard* is rendered *cockchafer* or *moth*, which suits the context better, it seems, than if it is given the other sense. But to be perfectly sure we must have unquestionable insts some 200 years older than that. But although it is very tempting to regard our sim. as only another form of the preceding one, we must admit that *blind buzzard* is used, or may be used, of the bird. Further information required.

As *blind as a bee*. *The Smyth and his Da*. [H., *Engl. Pop. Poetry*, iii, 209]; Nashe. The bee is not now looked upon as blind, whatever may have been the case formerly.

As *blind as a stone*. Chaucer, MaT; Ro. of R.

Deaf.

Deaf as a trunk-maker. Roget. Cf. Trunk-makerlike, i. e. more noise than work. *Slang*. Does the noise make him deaf?

I'm as blynt as a mowdiwart and as *deaf* as a *bumbaily*. Lan. 1884, EDD. *Bumbaily*, the bumbailiff, who probably had to be deaf, professionally, to all sorts of prayers and entreaties.

As *deaf as a door*. Breton, 1606, NED. Still dialectally, NED. Cf. *Dumb*, p. 177. In the sim. itself as it stands here, there is nothing that speaks against the supposition the *door* means *dor(r)*, an appellation for various insects, such as bumblebees, hornets, and several kinds of beetles. See below 'as deaf as a beetle', and the term *dorr-head* for a stupid or blundering fellow. (1577, NED). But the following sim. make the sense unquestionably clear. Cf. *door-deaf*, Edb, 1811, EDD.

Deaf as a door-nail. Cotgrave, 1611, as a rendering of the Fr. *Sourd comme un tapis*. Urquhart, 1693, NED. Yks. *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 429. It is possible that the passage in *Alexander*, 4747, Dom as a dore-nayle & defe was he bathe, (1400—50) contains an allusion to this sim. — See p. 177, and note the expression *door-nail deafness*. Rnf. 1813, EDD.

She was deaf as a *nail* — that you cannot hammer/ A meaning into for all your clamour. Hood, 1845, NED.

Deaf as a door-post. Formerly and still dialectally. NED. Door-pōst, rec. fr. 1535. No other inst. of the sim. found. Cf. Ye deafe dore postis, coulde ye not heare? Crowley, 1551, NED.

Mr. Hilton was *deaf* as a *bed-post*. Mason, PK, 111. *Bed-post* rec. in NED fr. 1598. It is hard to see in what way a *bed-post* is deafer than any other post. There has been some discussion about the word in connection with the saying 'in the twinkling (twinkle) of a bed-post, bed-staff.'

As *deaf as a post*. Sheridan, SS, I, i. Scott, A, 15. She was as deaf as a post . . . And as deaf as twenty similes more,

Including the adder, the deafest of snakes. Hood, 1845. "Then you are most immensely and outrageously deaf," said Mr. Mantalini, — "as deaf as a demnition post." Dickens, NN, xxxiv. He might have been as "deeve" as a post. 1858, Thornton. Northall, FPh, 8. Blakeborough, NRY, 239 "common." Hewett, Dev. II, Roget. *Slang*. &c. This sim. rec. in NED fr. 1845, is probably much older than Sheridan, as allusions to the unimpressiveness and the insensibility of the post are found already in ME: in such phrases as 'to talk, or preach to a post', to talk to deaf ears. *Slang*. And see Shak., AYL, IV, i, Why, 'tis good to be said and to say nothing. — Why, then, 'tis good to be a post.

As *deaf* as a *block*. Buckland, 1875, NED. Cf. *Block*, and *block-head* as types of "blockishly" ignorant and stupidly dull persons into whose heads nothing ever enters, rec. fr. the middle of the sixteenth c. Cf. You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things. Shak., JC, I, i, 40. *Döv som en stock* in Sw. means exactly the same thing. Cf. *Sleeping*, p. 169.

As *deaf* as a *white cat*. — It is said that white cats are deaf and stupid. Brewer, Dict. 336.

As *dombe* and *deaf* as a *doted doo*. *Chest. Plays*, II, 41. (Lean, II, ii). *Doted*, stupid, foolish. This makes it probable that the *doo* in question is not the doe, but the dove, which already then may have been used as a term for a simpleton. In late ME the words were often spelt in the same way and are not unfrequently mixed up. Witness NED, where the same passage is used to illustrate both words. — It is interesting to find that in other languages birds are taken as types of deafness. There is the Lat. phrase *surdior turdo*, more deaf than a thrush. In Dutch '*zoo doof als een kwartel*,' a quail, see *Well-fed, Fat*, p. 184. Fris. '*so dôf as in ekster*,' a magpie; '*sa dôf as in snip*,' a snipe. Stoett, NS, I, 158. The author finds it difficult to explain these sim. The circumstance that the quail is usually too frightened to rise if a person approaches, he thinks, may have occasioned the sim. Cf. I stood as styll as dased quaille. *E. E. Allit. Poems*, 13 . ., NED, and the Chaucerian, Thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille. See *Still*, Ch. IV.

Pleasure and revenge/ Have ears *more deaf* than *adders* to the voice/ Of any true decision. Shak., TC, II, ii, 172. I am as deaf as an adder. Dryden, A, VI, 108. Ye are deaf as adders upon that side of the head. Scott, W, xxxvi. To all entreaties . . Ralph was deaf as an adder. Dickens, NN, xlvii. Hood, 1845. — The deaf adder is met with over and over again in lit., folk-rhyme, and popular belief. Some insts may be given. What! Art thou like the adder waxen deaf? Shak., KH VIB, III, ii, 76. God speaks once or twice . ., but man hears like the adder with a deaf ear.

Rogers, *Naaman*, 1642, Lean. You are like the adder that stops her ears, and will hear nothing at all. *Vinegar & Mu.*, 13. See also O. E. Homilies 2nd Ser., EETS, 1873, pp. 196, 198, and, Als of a neddre def allswa þat stoppand es his eres twa. c. 1300. NED. This is a reference to Ps. 58, 4 f., they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely. On this passage one of the old commentators says, *Serpens senex absurdescit una aure; alteram vero pulvere aut terra obdurat ne audiat incantationem. Aspis autem utramque obdurat, alteram in terram defigendo, alteram extrema sua parte contingendo atque ocludendo.* (N. & Q., 7, II, 317).

According to Wood, *Biblical Animals*, p. 549, it was a widespread popular belief in the Orient that some individual serpents were very obstinate and self-willed. (N. & Q., 7, II, 152). As snakes have no external ears the biblical saying is a zoological absurdity. The only tenable explanation is that the moral monsters, so graphically described by the psalmist, are comparable to such an exception 'as a deaf adder' &c. Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. serpent. Nevertheless it was generally believed in literally far down into the seventeenth c. The idea of the adder's deafness is perhaps still living. "Amongst various familiar country beliefs lasting even to the present day is the one summed up in the well-known expression 'deaf as an adder'." Hulme, NH, 303. "Look under the deaf adder's belly, and you'll find marked, in mottled colours, these words: 'If I could hear as well as see, No man of life should master me.'" N. & Q., Febr. 1853, 153. "If I could hear as well as see, Nor man nor beast should pass by me," is said to be a Kentish form of the same folk-rhyme. For still another form see Northall, FR, 281. That deafness could be cured by adder's fat, is only what we can expect from the good old homoeopaths who followed the principle of curing a dog's bite with "a hair of the dog that bit you." — The sim. is also found in Germ. *So taub wie eine Otter.* Cf. also *Bist du wie die Natter taub geworden?* (Wander; MS).

Th'art so *deerve* as a *haddick* in chongy weather. *Exmore Scolding*, 6. Hewett, Dev. II. Cor. "The regular superlative absolute is always 'so deaf's a 'addick', though why a haddock should be deafer than other fish . . seems quite inscrutable to any but the bucolic mind." Elworthy, WSG, 187.

Now there is the shad, I believe, they have no ears, for they don't mind noises a bit; and when a feller is hard a-hearin', we say he is as *deaf* as a *shad*. *Sam Slick's W. Saws*, p. 79, (Cowan, PS, 33). But others think otherwise: "Aelian again tells us, that the chad is allured by the sound of the castanets. Rennie, 1833, NED. See *Thin, Lean*, p. 189.

As *deaf* as a *beetle*. Rog. Lean II, ii; Kent, EDD. That there horse is as deaf as a beetle. Sur. EDD. N. & Q., 3, XI. *passim*. — Most of the correspondents seemed to be perfectly sure that this beetle is the mallet. But no conclusive evidence is given. A writer says, it is true, of the insect that "if speedy flight on the approach of a footstep be a sign of hearing, they possess that sense acutely". But that does not matter. We cannot expect zoological accuracy in these sim. more than to a very limited extent, and numerous mistakes in that respect have already been chronicled. The mole is not blind, neither is the white cat deaf, and the adder's deafness is a good inst. of a zoologically absurd tradition that lasted for more than three centuries. The insect of which Tucker says as follows, "The beetle, whose characteristic is stupidity and unwieldiness of limbs, beats himself down against a tree, or overturns himself in crawling, and lies sprawling upon his back" (1765, NED), may very well be regarded as a type not only of stupidity and blindness but also generally of insensibility and unimpressiveness. Just as a haddock is a symbol of what is stupid (p. 52), melancholy (p. 58) and deaf, the beetle may be looked upon as being blind, stupid, and dull of hearing, and no more is wanted to make it the symbol of extreme deafness.

But it must in fairness be added that all this can be applied, with about equal justice, to the mallet. The insts known to the compiler offer no sufficient ground on which one could found any opinion. The *fig.* uses of the words have coincided to such an extent that it is often extremely difficult to say which of them is meant. In *beetle-eyed* NED sees the insect, but in *beetle-brain* the implement. What is alluded to in 'A blockhead, yea a numskull, not to say a beetle' (Tucker, 1765)? Most unprejudiced persons would perhaps think that it is the same word as in *beetle-brain*, but NED wants it to be the insect. Cf. *Dull*, p. 53, and the Shakespearean "There is no more conceit in him than in a mallet." KH IVb, II, iv, and the sim. 'as sad (i. e. dull) as any mallet' in Milton, *Colast* (NED).

As to our sim. EDD is positive that it refers to the implement, NED thinks it probable. As no actual facts are known we are reduced to speculation. The insts known make it probable that the sim. is used chiefly in dial. Now, which of the two words is more likely to have made an impression upon the rustic mind? It is true that the names of some 15 insects occur in the sim. already given, but on the whole they play an unimportant part in English phrase-making. Implements and tools have far more commonly occasioned sim. and proverbs. It is worthy of note that the name of the insect is scarcely mentioned in EDD, (but cf. buzzard-beetle) whilst

about a column is given to the other word. The dull thuds of the ponderous machine frequently heard about the countryside must have made it a familiar object to every one, and has perhaps given rise to more sayings than those collected in our dictionaries. And just as the post is dull, and deaf, and dumb, this heavy wooden thing is also dull, and deaf, and dumb.

As *deaf* as *nuts*. Herrick, *Epit. on M. Ursley*, ante 1648, Lean II, ii. Cf. Whoever hath not observed this is nut-deaf and sand-blind, 1836, Not.

As *deaf* as a *stone*. Occleve, *Reg. Princ.*, ante 1450; Herrick, ii, 25, 1648, Lean, II, ii.

High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire, In rage as *deaf* as the *sea*, hasty as fire. Shak., KR II, I, i, 18.

Dumb, Mute.

Note. For some closely allied sim. see *Secretive* p. 129, and *Silence* Ch. IV.

Doumbe as *deth*. Langland, PPl. b, X, 137. See *Silence*, Ch. IV.

As *mute* as *Mumchance*, who was hanged for saying nothing. Swift, PC. The poor creature sat as silent as mum-chance. Mackenzie, 1786, NED. Cf. To sit like 'Mum-chance', who was hung for saying nowt. Hutton, 1781, Yks. EDD. — *Mumchance*, originally a masked serenade or dumb show, hence a person who acts in a dumb show, quasi-proper name. NED. [A] stupidly silent [person], silence. EDD.

Old Lord Mumble, who is as toothless as a three-months-old baby, and as *mum* as an *undertaker*. Thackeray, BS, xix. Cf. p. 55.

Why don't you say something occasionally when it's needed, instead of sitting *dumb* as a *sphinx* and getting into all sorts of trouble. White, BT. 371.

Be thou eke as *mewet* as a *mayde*. Gascoigne, 1571, NED. See *Modest, Bashful*, p. 67. *Mute*, rec. fr. 1374.

As *doumbe* as a *dore*. Langland, PPl, a, XI, 94. See *Deaf*, p. 173. *Domme* as a *dore gon he dwell*. c. 1440. NED.

Dom as a *dore-nayle* & *defe* was he bathe. *The Wars of Alexander*, 4747, EETS. See *Deaf*, p. 173. Rog.

Damme, sir, if he wasn't as *mute* as a *poker*. Dickens, 1844, NED. See *Grave, Stiff*. 59.

As *mum* as a *post*. e. Ang. EDD. Cf. *Deaf*, p. 173 f.

As *mute* as a *statue*. Middleton, *Changel.*, iii, 3. 1653, Lean, II, ii. Cf. *statua taciturnius*, Horace, Ep. II, ii. See *Still, Motionless*, Ch. IV.

"Sam, be quiet," said Mr. Pickwick. "*Dumb* as a *drum* with a hole in it, sir." replied Sam. Dickens, PP, I, 360. Cf. *Dumb* as a *drum*. Benham. Meaning?

As *dumb* as a *dog*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Woman Pleased*, III, ii. Lean, II, ii. A well-known Swedish work of art represents a boy kneeling on the ground looking up into the face of a big dog, and saying, "Can't you speak?"

All the time the scheming, deceitful young missy sat by, as *mum* as a *cat* in a pantry. Yoxall, RS, 27. Cf. Getting people and things all shipshape and comfortable, and making no more sound than a cat. Twain, HF, 234.

Miss Marian Marsh, a rosy-cheeked laughter-loving imp of some six years; but one who could be as *mute* as a *mouse* when the fit was on her. Barham, IL, 91; Dickens, *Cop.* 53 (W); Northall, FPh. 9; mentioned in NED but no inst. given.

As *mum* as a *mouse*, Thackeray, *Pend.* I, 341 (W). What's wrang wi' thi, thoo sits as mum as a moose. Lakel. EDD. I can tell you fine though they be mum as a mouse. 1899, Per. EDD. Phillpotts, SW. In NED, but no inst. given.

He sat *mum* as an *owl* after a night at the mice. Edb. 1897. EDD. You'm *dumb* as a *newt*, and 'tis uncomfortable work talking to you. Phillpotts, WF, 16.

Fell upon the floor as *mute* as a *flounder*. Smollet, RR. 456. See *Flat*, Ch. III. Said of a man who was dead-drunk.

We are as *mute* as *mackerel* for exactly seven minute and a half. 1819, NED. You can be secret as well as serviceable? — Mute as a mackerel. Foote, 1760, NED. Cf. *Dead* p. 146.

A whole family *dumb* as *oysters*. Foote. 1770, NED. The fellows who *can* talk haven't anything to say, and those who have something to tell are dumb as oysters. White, BT, 337. See *Secretive* p. 130.

As *dumb* as a *fish*. B. Jonson, *Staple of News*, III, ii, 1631.

As *mute* as a *fish*. Clarke, 1639, Lean, II, ii. *Two Lanc. Lovers*, 1640, (Cowan, PS, 35); [a lawyer] must be feed still, or else he is as mute as a fish. Burton, AM, I, 93. Gataker; 1654, NED; My man was as mute as a fish, for I remember not that he proposed so much as one question to me. Howell, *State Trials*, 1656, Cowan, l. c. Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish. Congreve, 1700, NED; Gay, NS; The Nabob's friends . . had stood all this while as mute as fishes. Johnston, 1781, NED; 1807, NED; Marryat, 1840; Thackeray, BL, xvii. — Cf. *Magis mutus quam piscis; plus muet qu'un poisson*; Germ. *stumm wie ein Fisch*, already in the sixteenth c.; Wander. Sw. *stum som en fisk*.

And she for sorwe as *doumbe* stant as a *tree*. Chaucer, 163/1055, *pai wex doumbe as stane*. *Cursor Mundi*, 1340, NED.

Also *domb* as any *stone*. Chaucer, HF, II, 148. Styl as an ymage of tree, Dome as a stoon. *ibid.* RR, 2408.

They be as *Muet* as a *stone*, Lydgate, 1407, NED. A tunge I haue, but wordys none, But stonde mut as any stone. c.

1440, NED. — Cf. As senceless as a stone. 1629, Wks. p. 944, Lean, II, ii. Astonied, both stand senceless as a blocke. Spenser, FQ, I, ii, 16.

Bald.

I am *shave* as *nye* as any *frere*. Chaucer, *Compl. to his Empty Purse*, 19. The shaven monks and priests are frequently referred to in early MnE. Heywood speaks of 'pylde preest', and Becon, 1553, of 'y^e pilde-pate Priest'; sometimes also in modern authors; 'black baldicoots' is Kingsley's name for monks with shaven crowns.

His head was as *bald* as the *palm of your hand*. Barham, IL, 155. See *Bare*, Ch. III.

As *bald* as a *blether o' same*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 274. *Blether*, bladder; *same*, saim, lard, fat.

As *bald* as a *billiard ball*. Lean, II, ii.

To look as *bald* as a *blackfaced wedder*. Lean, II, ii. *Wedder*, dial. for wether, which word is rec. at least fr. Chaucer, CD.

Round was his face, and camois was his nose, As *pyled* as an *ape* was his skulle. Chaucer, RT, 3935. *Miller of Trumpington*, Wright's *Anect. Lit.*, p. 24 (Lean, II, ii). As *pilled* as an *ape* was his crown. *Hyeway to the Spital House*, H, *Engl. Pop. Poetry*, iv, 28; Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). See *Bare*, Ch. III.

And yet he was as *balde* as is a *coote*. Lydgate, 1430. The body . . . is made as bare as Job, and as bald as a coot. Tindale, 1536, NED. I have an old grim sire to my husband, as bald as a coot. Burton, AM, III, 307. Ray, Lei. 'a common sim.' Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.

They poled him as *bare* as a coot, by shaving off his Hair. 1687, NED.

"In North Wilts and the Gloucestershire border and probably also in Northamptonshire the word *balsh* is used to express absence of feathers, and from that it is applied to a completely bald head, e. g. 'as *balsh* as a young coot', or, as might be said with equal force, as a young blackbird . . . I have sometimes thought that *balsh* is merely a contracted pronunciation of baldish, though it has come to be used in an intensive sense." N. & Q., 5, X, 97. No word *balsh* is found in any glossary of the counties in question or elsewhere. "The coot has also the name Bald coot and Bald duck from the white bare spot above the bird's bill." Swainson, BB, 178. Cf. *Bare*, Ch. III, *Mad*, p. 42, *Stupid*, p. 52, *Fierce*, 93.

Hungry, Eating.

To *feed* like a *freeholder of Macclesfield*, who has neither corn nor hay at Michaelmas. Fuller, 1662, *Worthies*, (Lean, II, ii), Ray. — No information seems to be obtainable about these persons. In Brayley & Britton, *The Beauties of England and Wales* Vol. II, we find mentioned a set of doubtful characters called Flashmen, who lived about M. From being chapmen or pedlars of rather hawklike business principles they took to farming, but as their farms were held by no leases they were left at the mercy of the lords of the soil, who made them pay for their impositions on others. As they were no “freeholders” they can scarcely be referred to in the sim. Otherwise M. is chiefly known for its button-making, and seems to have been, as far as records tell us, a quiet, peaceful, and industrious place. “When this came to be a proverb, it should seem the inhabitants were poorer, and worse husbandmen than they now are.” Ray. What did the sim. really refer to?

To *feed* like a *freeholder*. Ray. Meaning?

To *feed* like a *farmer*. Taylor, PP, 6. Ray. Madam, your ladyship eats nothing. — Lord, Madam, I have fed like a farmer; I shall grow as fat as a porpoise; I swear my jaws are weary of chawing. Swift, PC, 288. *Feed*, to eat, of persons, is now only colloquial. NED.

I *eat* like a farmer. Smollet, 1771, NED. The baron ate like a famished soldier, the laird of B. like a sportsman, Bullisegg of K. like a farmer, Waverly himself like a traveller, and Bailie Macwheeble like all four. Scott, W, xi.

How well you came to supper to us last night! . . . ask these gallants if we staid not till we were as *hungry* as *serjeants*. Dekker, HWH, Ia, ix. — This military sense of sergeant fr. 1548.

William Lamb laughs and *eats* like a *trooper*. Lady Granville, 1812, NED.

I am as *hungry* as a *trooper*. Harraden, I., 341. Cf. *Swearing*, 109.

As *hungry* as a *tired foot post*. Rowley, *Witch of Edm.*, 1658, (Lean, II, ii).

Though hee bee as *hungry* as a *hunter*. Trapp, 1650, NED. Hewett, Dev. 11; Yks. Northall, FPh, 9. I am as a hungry as a hunter, whatever *you* may be. Gissing, FC, 33. Caine, EC, 93. Cf. *Il est affamé comme un chasseur*. Wander. Wander has also *Er ist so hungrig wie ein Scheundrescher*, (thresher, see *Busy*, 121), *etn asn Smid* (eat like a smith). See Wander, *Drescher*.

He felt as *empty* as a *drum*. Oxenham, MS, 91. *Empty*, hungry, rec. fr. 1593, now only col. See *Empty*, Ch. III.

As *hungry* as a *graven image*. Bartlett. See *Sleeping*, p. 167.

Ez *greedy* ez a *rake*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, “in daily use.”

Does this refer to an avaricious person or a "greedy-gut"?
'To rake and scrape', to appropriate all one can get hold of.
I was *ravenous* as a *hound*. De Foe, 1724, NED. This sense of
ravenous fr. 1719.

As *hungry* as a *foxhound*. Lean, II, ii.

As hungry as a *tired hound*. *Christmas Prince*, 1607, Lean,
II, ii. Cf. the fig. use in Sc. of hound for a greedy, avaricious
person.

As *greedy* as a *dog*. Clarke, 1639 (Lean, II, ii).

As *hungry* as a dog. Brewer; Lin. N. & Q. 12, III, 275.
Blakeborough, NRY, 242, "in daily use." Cf. Dick's got a
digestion like a dog. Phillpotts, P. 23. Cf. To have a stomach
like a dog. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii).

As *hungry* as a *horse*. Clarke, 1639 (Lean, II, ii), Ray.

He *eats* like a *horse*. 1707, NED.

As *greedy* as a *hog*. Rog.

As greedy as a *pig*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. He feeds like a boar in
a frank. H. Like boars in a franck, pining themselves into
lard. Sanderson, 1621, NED. *Frank*, a place to feed boars in.
Crabb, 1823, NED. Hazlitt's sim. must be pretty old as the
word frank is obs. now.

As *greedy* as a *wolf*. Rog. Cf. As greedy after their prey as a
wolf. Hutchinson, 1767, NED. I don't believe he ever had an
appetite except for pounds, shillings, and pence, and with
them he's as greedy as a wolf. Dickens, NN, xlvi. The *greedy
wolf* is found already in the *Blick. Hom.*, þa fynd heora gripende
wæron swa swa grædig wulf. (NED).

As *ravenous* as a wolf. Rog. Cf. They be like so many horse-
leches, hungry, griping, corrupt, covetous, *avaritiae mancipia*,
ravenous as wolves (princes or great men). Burton, AM, I, 90.
The black wolves, in their ravenous hunger, took no notice
of the distant group of horsemen. Irving, 1835, NED.

As *hungry* as a wolf. Palsgrave, *Acol. E.*, 1540 (Lean, II, ii);
Ray; Brewer. — Since time immemorial the wolf has been the
instance of a voracious eater, as is witnessed by numerous
phrases and proverbial expressions in English and other
languages: He got away from his women-folk into a corner
all by himself, and went for the strawberries and cream like
a wolf. Phillpotts, P, 294. To wolf means in some dial. to
eat ravenously and the person to whom this can be applied
is a wolver or has a wolf in his stomach. Fr. *manger comme
un loup, avoir un faim de loup*; Germ. *Er hungert wie ein
Wolf in den Zwölfen* (Dec. 25—Jan. 6), Wander; *Wolfshunger,
wolfsmagen*; Sw. *hungrig som en varg, glupsk som en varg* &c.

I am as *hungry* as a *churchmouse*. Ray. *Er ist hungrig wie eine
Kirchenmaus*, Wander, 1840. See *Poor*, Ch. IV.

I am as *hungry* as a *bear*. Shaw, IK, 267.

As *greedy* as a *cormorant*. *Ymage of Hyp.*, 1164, 1528, (Lean,

II, ii). There are numerous references to the voracity of this sea-bird. The hot cormeraunt of glottonye. Chaucer, *Parl. of Foules*, 362. The Callis cormorants from Dover roade/ Are not so chargeable as you to food. 1610, NED. Also often in a transferred sense. He is an insatiable cormorant, or rather hornvorant, a bottomless Barathrum, a mercillesse money-monger. MM, 27. Men that would haue all in their owne hands . . . Cormerauntes, gredye gulles; yea, men that would eat vp menne, women and children . . . Crowley, 1550. A modern inst. in Oxenham, MS, 70.

About June and July, should there be a drought of long duration, rooks suffer terribly; hence the proverb, 'As *hungry* as a June *crow*'. Swainson, BB.

I am as *hungry* as a *glad*. Scott, W, xlii. — The greedy rapacity of the glede is mentioned already in ME times. It is still a symbol of a very hearty appetite. *Greedy gled* is an appellation for the kite, but also fig. the name of a voracious feeder. There are also the phrases 'to gape with greed like a gled', 'a pack of young gleeads' of children whose appetites attest their health. EDD.

As *greedy* as a *gull*, and as rank as a bull. Skelton, 1528, NED; Armin, *Two Maids of M.*, 1609 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. the hungry sea-gulls . . . clamorous for the morning banquet. Longfellow, 1855, NED.

As *hungry* as a *hawk*. Taylor (WP), 1652, *Christm. In and out* (Lean, II, ii); Ray; Walton, CA, 130; Stevenson, TI, 27. W has some further insts fr. Stevenson, Bulwer, and Ruffini; Ant. EDD; Brewer, Dict. 637.

Keen as a *kite*. Perhaps also used in this sense. See p. 125.

As *ravenous* as a *shark*. Cowan, PS, 46. Its voraciousness is often alluded to, chiefly in a fig. use. "There are the new verbs *rooke* (plunder) and *sharke* (prey). Thomas More, 1590, *Slang*.

A'm as *holler* as a *humlock*, said by one to another, when he is hungry. Tyneside. N. & Q., 12, III, 277.

Fat, Well-feeding.

As *fat* as a *farmer*. Kingsley, *Water Bab.*, W. See *Hungry*, p. 180.

As *fat* as a *fool*. *Appius and Virginia* (Dodsley, XII, 348), see p. 112, where the whole passage is quoted; Ray; As fat as a *füle*. Hewett, Dev. Cf. the term fool-fat (feeding), 1593, 1613, NED. Does this refer to the easy comfortable life of the ancient court-jester?

He looked as *plump* as a *pincushion*. Mrs Carlyle, 1875, NED. Cf. A little short, round, pincushiony woman. Stowe, 1852, NED. *Pincushion* rec., fr. 1632.

- We went where we had boiled beef and bake mutton, Whereof I fed me as *full* as a *tun*. Heywood, PE, 45. Cf. 'a tun of a man' used of Falstaff.
- As *big* as one *end of a house*. Said of anyone very stout. Oxf. EDD. *Big*, stout, strong, rec. 1300—1600. See *Big, Large*, Ch. III.
- As *slender* as a *milne-post*. Clarke (Lean II, ii). *Mill-post*, the post on which wind-mills were formerly often supported. Often in similitative phrases as a type of something thick and massive, especially of legs. NED. The word is still used in Lin. EDD.
- Could I but see a cook's shop painted, I would make mine eyes *fat* as *butter*. Lyly, AC, I, ii, (Dodsley, 1825). A gross fat man — As fat as butter. Shak., KH IVa, II, iv, 488; [mice are] found sleeping under the snow in the dead of winter, as fat as butter. Burton, AM, II, 114. Ray; Gay, NS; Rog.; Mrs. Purton has had twins; dear little fellows they are, fat as butter. Jacobs, MC, 63.
- Plump* as a *dumpling*. Rog. Cf. He lookt like a Norfolk dumpling, thicke and short. Armin, 1608, NED. A person 'as broad as long' has been called a dumpling fr. 1617. The subst. is rec. fr. 1600. Cf. The Captain's name was Hercules Dumlin, a Norfolk gentleman. Taylor, NL, 21. See *Bare*, Ch. III. Cf. Round as a dumpling, see *Round*, Ch. III.
- As *round* and as *plump* as a *codling*. J. Cleveland, *Poems*, 1667, (Lean, II, ii). Codling, a kind of apple, the word known fr. 1440.
The stout little Friar, as *round* as an *apple*. Barham, IL, 442. *Round*, plump, stout, corpulent, fr. c. 1300. See *Round*, Ch. III.
- As *plump* as the *cherry*. Herrick, 1648 (Lean, II, ii). See *Red*, Ch. III.
- As *plump* and juicy as a *damson*. Ned Ward, *Nupt. Dial.*, II, xi, (Lean, II, ii). *Damson*, a kind of plum first brought fr. Damascus, *Prunus communis damascena*.
- As *plump* as *grapes* after a shower. Killigrew, *Thom.*, i, 41, 1664 (Lean, II, ii). What are the last three sim. applied to?
- As *plump* as a *peach*. Dickens, *Great Exp.*, II, 309, W.
- As *fat* as *brawn*. Davies, *Sc. of Folly*, 1614 (Lean, II, ii). Rog. This seems to go back to Coverdale, Ps. 118, 70, Their herte is as fat as brawn. Geneva and Auth. and Rev. Vers. read grease. Other editions differently.
- Very large like calves . . . and as *fat* as *porks*. Collins, 1682, NED.
- As *fat* as *bacon*. Rog.
As *fat* as a *bacon-hog*. Suf. EDD. As fat as a *hog*. *Contention betw. Liberality and Prodig.*, V, i, 1602 (Lean, II, ii). He will grow not only to be very large, but as fat as a hog [the bream]. Walton, CA, 202.
As fat as a *bacon pig* at Martlemas. Denham. An old Germ. proverbial sim. said 'so reich wie ein Sautreiber an Martini'

(as rich as a sow-driver at Martlemas). At this season pasture is usually over, and the killing and curing begins.

As fat as a *pig*. Rog. Bacon and pigs have probably been taken as types of fatness from time immemorial. Cf. Mara ic eom and lættra þonne amæsted swin, c. 1000, NED. See *Hungry, Eating*, p. 181.

As stalled as a *dog*. Lin. There is in Cum. a saying 'plenty of butter wad sto [stall] a dog', i. e. satiate, surfeit.

As fat as an *ox*. Nashe.

As slender in the middle as a *cow* in the waste. Ray. A sim. used of a very stout person. Lei. EDD.

Plump as a *barndoor chicken*. Wolcott, 1783, NED.

As fat as a barndoor fowl. Congreve, *Old Bachel.*, IV, viii (Lean, II, II). I. e. reared at the barndoor.

Cram's with prayse, and make's As fat as *tame things*. Shak., WT, I, ii.

As *trig* as a *mouse*. — Used of anyone who has overeaten himself. Lin. N. & Q. 12, III, 275. *Trig*, full, stuffed to the utmost, in some n. Cy and w. Cy dial. For another word *trig* see *Beautiful, Fine*. Ch. III.

As fat as a *modiwarþ*. Not. EDD.

Zo *plim's* a want. Hewett, Dev. 12. See *Blind*, p. 170, and *Smooth*, Ch. III. In Germ. the *badger* plays the same part, 'so fett wie ein Dachs'. Wander.

As fat and *plump* as a *plover*. Nashe, 1594. Which of the plovers this is, may be left to ornithologists. The golden plover was believed to live on air. Opinions may differ as to whether that could make it very fat. See Swainson, BB, 180, 182.

All as a *partridge plump*, full-fed and fair. Pope, D., II, 41. Ray; Gay, NS; A fine, jolly dame, as plump as a partridge. Smollet, RR, 364. Hewett, Dev. 12. Plump as any partridge was each Miss Mould. Dickens, 1844, NED. Already Chaucer speaks of the 'fat partrich', Prol. 349.

As fat as a *quail*. Rog. See *Deaf*, p. 174 and *Still*, Ch. IV.

I have twenty lambs . . . as *plump* as *puffins*. Sheridan, 1736, NED. He is as fat as a puffin. Wood, Manx Prov., *Folk-Lore*, XXXIV, 238. Cf. The puffyn . . . whose young ones . . . being exceeding fat. Carew, 1602, NED.

Ffat as a *whale*, and walking as a swan. Chaucer, 391/1930. Sic fartingail lis on flaggis als fatt as quhailis. Dunbar, 1520, NED. (*flag*, an opprobrious term applied to a woman; Sc. obs. NED). Zo fat's a whale. Hewett, Dev. 11.

As fat as a *mereswine*. Jamieson. 'As a vast quantity of fat surrounds the body of this animal, it has given occasion to the proverbial allusion'. Mereswine now obs. NED.

What kind of creature is he? — You must know, the man and his wife are coupled like rabbits, a fat and a lean; he is as fat as a *porpus*, and she's one of Pharaoh's lean kine. Swift,

PC, 294. As fat as a porpoise. Hardy, UGT, 55. A very fat man is in Lin. called a porpoise.

As *fat* as a *Kentish oyster*. Greene, *Tu Quoque*, 1614, (Lean, II, ii). See *Secretive*, 130.

An' when it had feenished it was jist as *fou's* a *wulk* [a dragon that had eaten its fill]. Bell, WM, 157. *Wulk*, *wilk*, see p. 130.

As *fat* as a *marwk*. Lakel. Yks. EDD. See *Stupid*, p. 52, *Sick*, p. 164. So fat as a *maggot* he is, and so happy as a coney. Phillpotts, WF, 451.

As *full* as a *tick*; having eaten one's fill; said of an animal, whether man or beast. Som. Dev. EDD. Cf. A waterleche or a tyke haue nevere ynow tyl it brestyth. 1440, NED. *Full*, having eaten and drunk to repletion, now arch. or vulgar, NED.

As *fat* as *mud*. N. & Q. 12, III, 275. Does it apply to a fat person?

Thin, Lean.

But now will canker-sorrow eat my bud/ And chase the native beauty from his check/ And he will look as *hollow* as a *ghost*/ And dim and meagre as an ague's fit. Shak., KJ, III, iv, 84.

As *thin* as *changelings* are. *Seven D. Sins of London* (Lean, II, ii.). The fairies have been represented as famous for stealing the most beautiful and witty children, and leaving in their places such as were either prodigiously ugly and stupid or mischievously inclined. EDD.

As *lean* as a *cradda*. Cum. EDD. *Cradda*, a lean person or animal, in Cum. Lan. Wml. This is perhaps the Gaelic *craidneach*, a skeleton, a gaunt figure. See Macbain, *Etymolog. Gaelic Dict.*

He's *thin* as a *natamus*. Cor. *Natamus* is one of the many forms into which anatomy has been changed. Anatomy, skeleton with the skin left, fr. 1586. Cf. More like an anatomy than a living person. Southey, 1824, NED. Poor J. is reduced to a natomy. Nfld. Similar phrases common in many parts of the country.

As thin as a *notomize*. *Whitby Glos.*

Poor's u *raeumz*. Elworthy, WSG; thin as a skeleton. The word *raymes* &c. chiefly in sw. counties. Cf. Germ. *Er ist so mager wie ein Todtengerippe*, *He is so mager as en Riff*. Wander. *Poor*, thin, lean, fr. 1537.

As *thin* as a *groat*. Gay, NS. She's as thin as a groat. Yks. 1890. EDD.

As *poor* as a groat. Yks. EDD.

As *thin* as a *Banbury cheese*. Heywood, PE. Cf. More fine than any Banbury cheese. G. Harvey, *Letter Book*, 1573, (Lean). Put off your clothes, and you are like a Banbery cheese, Nothing but paring. 1601, NED. For *Banbury* and things

connected with it, see *Stupid*, p. 47, and *Drunk* 199. Bardolph in Shak, MW, calls Slender, 'You Banbury cheese', I, i, 115.

As *thin* as a *wafer*. *Christm. Prince*, I, 1607 (Lean, II, ii). Thy lips, with age, as any wafer thin. Drayton, 1593, CD. *Wafer* rec. at least fr. Chaucer and Langland.

As *thin* as *halfpenny ale*, 2d a quarter. Northall, FPh. Application? Zo *thin's* a *griddle*. Hewett, Dev. *Griddle*, gridiron, already in Grose.

Ez *fat ez* a *tailor's goose*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242. The tailor's iron. The term is known fr. c. 1600.

You look 'bout as *fat* as a *stall-fed knitting needle*. White, BT, 179.

He was as *thin* and *spare*, too, as *pair of tongs*. James, 1845, NED.

Tongs a term for a tall lanky person. *Slang*.

Slender as a *thread*. Rog. See *Thin*, Ch. III.

The phrase '*lene* as a *lanterne*' occurs in an alliterative poem on the destruction of Jerusalem, MS Laud. 656, fol. 16 b. Cf. 'loked as a lantern al hus lyf after.' Langland, PPl, IX, 174. (Skeat's Notes). Cf. the modern lantern-jawed, and 'a pair o' cheek like lantern-leeghts', thin even to transparency. Yks. EDD.

As *thin* as a farthing *rushlight*. Northall, FPh. Rushlight fr. 1710.

She's as *thin* as *threadpaper*. Thackeray, BS, xxxiii. A withered wiry creature thin as a threadpaper. Phillpotts, WF, 281. She's wasted to a threadpaper. *Ibid.* 435. *Threadpaper* rec. fr. 1761, and fr. 1824 it is used of a person of slender or thin figure. I was tall for my age but slightly built, and so thin as often to provoke the application of such epithets as hop-pole, 'thread-paper' &c. 1850, *Slang*. The threadpaper Duchess of Kendal, poor old anatomy. Carlyle, 1862. I was a threadpaper of a boy myself. Huxley, 1881.

As *fat* as a *match with the brimstone off*. Northall, FPh. 8.

As *thin* as a *match*. Wenström-Harlock. Cf. *matches* as a term for a tall and lanky person. *Slang*.

Ez *slim ez* a *barber's powl*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, "in daily use". Barber's pole mentioned since 1684. *Slim*, slender and gracefully thin, fr. 1657.

They shall live on hard labour un spoon-meyt, whod they ged as *fat* as *rakesteyls*. Lan. 1895, EDD. Their biggest bwoy . . . was as lang and as lane as a rake-stael. Wil. EDD. *Rakesteyl*, the handle of a rake.

As *poor* as a *rake*. Yks. EDD.

Zo *thin's* a *rake*. Hewett, Dev. 12; Suf. EDD. "Not an unfrequent sim. with us".

Lene was his horse as is a *rake*. Chaucer, Prol. 287. His bones crake lene as a rake. Skelton, 1529, NED. I wex as lene as any rake. *Songs*, 120; His body leane and meagre as a rake/ And skin all withered like a dried rooke; Thereto as cold and drery as a snake. Spenser, FQ, II, xi, 22. Cotgrave, 1611, NED; Withals, 1616; Browne, *Brit. Past.*, 1616, Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685 (Lean, II, ii); Ray; All these sorts of birds

grow in an instant as fat as hogs, tho' they came as lean as rakes. Motteux, 1694, NED; Gay, NS; Rog.; Yks, 1883; He was a big man though as lean as a rake. Masefield, *Multitude*, 124.

I am almost as *thin* as a *lath*. Foote, 1763, *Slang*. Brewer, Dict. 1220; Rog. As thin as a lat. Cum. Glos.

She hath plainly starved herself, and now she is as *lean* as a lath. Heywood, WKK, 89. Northall, FPh, 9. Cf. the term *lath-legs*, *Slang*. Cf. *Zoo vet als een lat*. Stoett, NS, II, 3.

Making an indenture twixt God & my soule, to consume my bodie as *slender* as a *stilt* or *broome-staffe*. Nashe, III, 134, 1596. *Broomstaff* rec. in NED fr. 1613.

As *fat* as a *country whipping post*. Bailey, 1756 (Lean, II, ii).

I assure that, for many weeks afterwards, I was as *thin* as a whipping-post. Kingston, *The Three Admirals*, vi; I shall grow as thin as a whipping-post. *ibid.*, xi; Brewer, Dict., 1220.

She was wax *lene* as a *tre*. 14 . . . NED. *Tree*, staff, stick. This survives in Sc. Various other senses of *tree* in the dial. may fit the context about equally well. — Cf. ful longe were his legges and ful lene, Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene. Chaucer, 17/591. If I were saw'de into quantities I should make four dozen of such bearded Hermites staues, as Master Shallow. Shak., KH VIa, V, i, 71. — Some of the above sim. have equivalents in Germ. Er ist so mager wie ein Zaunstecken (lath), mager wie e Bohnestang, Hoppe-stang (bean-stick, hop-pole); Er ist so mager wie ein Kienstock. (The trunk of a felled fir-tree).

A poor draggle-tailed, heart-broken wisp of a woman, and *flat* as a *board* she she was. Phillpotts. WF, 162. The same sim. also in Polish: The man was as thin as a board. Benecke, PA, 104. *Il est maigre comme une planche*. *Er ist so mager wie eine Schindel* (wooden tile). Wander.

Poor as *wood*. Linc. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 409. Them beäs o' Butterwick Haale's all as poor as wood. Der. EDD. Cf. *Er is so mager as'n Stück Holt*. Wander. *Zoo mager als en hout*. Stoett, NS, II, 3.

As *small* [in the waist] as a *wand*. Wager, *Repentance of Mary Magd.*, 1566 (Lean, II, ii); My sister . . . is as white as a lily, and as small as a wand. Shak., TGV, II, iii, 23. Cf. Kate, like the hazel-twig, / Is straight and slender. Shak., TS, II, i. For nearly related sim. see *Straight*, and *Tall*, Ch. III. Cf. the Dutch *Zoo mager als een steksken* (lean as a slip).

Slender as an *ash*. Overheard in Oxford. Said to be tolerably common.

Too much work and too little meat, made him as *gaunt* as a *greyhound*. Taylor, WV, 5. Too much hard over rid and under meated/ That he as gaunt as any greyhound was. *ibid.* SL, 2. Ray; Gaunt as a grewnt, Lan. 1750, *ibid.* 1873. What,

Harry, my boy!" my lord said good-naturedly, "you look as gaunt as a greyhound. The small-pox hasn't improved your beauty. Thackeray, HE, 91, *ibid.* VF. "The dog that is for the folde must neither be so gaunt nor swift as the Grayhonde, nor so fatte nor heavy as the masty. Googe, 1577, NED.

Colonel Cramley (who is as *lean* as a greyhound and has jaws like a jack). Thackeray, BS, xliv.

As *lean* as a *dog* in *lent*. Clarke, 1639 (Lean, II, ii). Lent as the time of fasting is naturally connected with leanness. There is also in Shirley, *Const. Maid*, II, ii, the sim. As lean as Lent (1640). Cf. also He is half-starved in the lent of a long vacation. Fuller, 1642, NED. Cf. the Dutch *hondemager*, *zoo mager als een hond*. Stoett, NS, II, 3.

Fair was this younge wyf, and ther-withal/ As any *wezele* hir body gent and *smal*. Chaucer, MiT.

As *lean* as a *whitterick*. Linc. Glos. See *Lively*, "*Peart*", p. 159. and cf. *Ill-tempered* p. 102, *Hard-hearted*, 88, *Clever*, p. 34.

While an Austin friar was jolly and fat/ A monk of la Trappe is as *thin* as a *rat*. Barham, IL, 161. The churchmouse may be hungry and poor also in this sense of the word, but as to rats opinions seem to differ. Bale, 1583, NED, says, 'The monkes were fatte/ And as ranke as a rat.' *Rank*, too grossly fat, highly fed, obs. since 1631. See *Drunk*, p. 208 and *Wet*, Ch. IV.

She begins to grow fat. — Fat! Ay, *fat* as a *hen* in the forehead. Swift, PC, 297. Already in Ray. Cf. Germ. *So mager wie eine Zinshenne*. (Lean as a tithing hen); cf. *Lively*, "*Peart*", p. 158, on the tithing-pig.

As *poor* as *Job's turkey*, that had to lean against a fence to gobble. As poor as Job's turkey, that had but one feather in his tail. As poor as Job's turkey. Uneda. N. & Q, Feb. 1853, 181. As Job was exceedingly poor everything that belonged to him, or once had belonged to him, must be so too. Why in this particularly American sim. the turkey is chosen from among the rest, appears from the following lines. "At some seasons of the year, from their excessive wanderings and the scarcity of food, turkeys, in a wild state, become exceedingly thin. This circumstance has given rise to a proverb in the Indian language. An Omahow, who wishes to make known his poverty, says . . . which means 'I am as poor as a turkey in summer.'" *The Eggs of British Birds*, p. 7, N. & Q., 5, XII, 175. See *Proud*, 83, and *Red*, Ch. III, *Poor*, Ch. IV.

But there he is — so *thin* as a *newcome snipe*. Phillpotts, WF, 8. A *snipe*, a thin thing, male or female. In Amer. a small child. "in a Candlemas blast" is sometimes added. N. & Q, 12, III, 275.

Poor as a *craw*. Very thin. Lin. 1877. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII. "A crow is the apparent climax of leanness. 'Poor's a crow' is the regular simile, though 'poor's a rames' is sometimes heard. 'Poor's a rake' is a phrase used by 'genle vokes' very often,

but not by the working class." Elworthy, WSG, 587. Used also of an animal (horse?). He couldn't eät, an' as poor as a crow, soä missis had him shutten. Der. EDD.

As *thin* as the last run of *shad*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). Cf. He was kind o' mournful and thin and shad-bellied. Mrs. Stowe, 1871, NED. *Shad-b.*, having an abnormally thin and flat belly. See *Deaf*, p. 175.

As thin as a *shotten-shad*. Amer. Cowan, PS, 140. *Shot, shotten* is applied to a fish that has shot or cast its spawn; rec. fr. 1451.

As *thin* as a *shotten-herring*. Cowan, PS, 140. Cf. Upbraid me with your benefits, you pilchers,/ You shotten-soul'd, slight fellows. Fletcher, 1614, *Slang*. His conceit [was] as *lank* as a shotten herring. Harvey, 1593, NED. *Shotten (herring)* applied to an exhausted, thin, or emaciated person fr. 1596. If thou wert half starved like a shotten herring. Gay, *Wife of B.*, III, i, (Lean, II, ii).

Poor as a *herring*. The usual description of any very lean animal. Elworthy, WSGr, 23.

A creature like you, so *thin* as a herring and as cold as a frog rising up to such fierce heat. Phillpotts, WF, 344. A very small, dapper man, thin as a herring. Doyle, R, 60. Cowan, PS, 37; mentioned in NED, but no inst. given. — Although no early insts have been found, the sim. is probably pretty old. Germ. *Er ist magerer als ein Hering. Er ist so mager wie ein Pökling* (pickled herring); Fr. *Elle est maigre comme un harang saur*. Wander.

As *narrow* as a *drink of water*. Nhb. EDD. Of an excessively thin person.

As *thin* as a *rasher of wind*. Common Lond. Ware, *A. rasher of wind* is a term for a thin person and also for anything of little or no account. *Slang*.

I shall be *leaner* than the *new moon*, unless I can make him horn-mad. Dekker, HWh, Ia, ii. Cf. *Er ist fett wie der Mond im ersten Viertel*. Wander.

Thirsty.

Weer'n'ee got the bottle, lads? fur I'm *dry* as a *ragman's prentice*. Shr. EDD. *Dry*, thirsty, now only in vulgar use, rec. fr. 1406, NED. It is the word in nearly all the following sim. See also *Dry*, Ch. IV. — The *ragman* is some sort of old clothes man. The term known fr. 1586.

My mouth is as *dry* as a *limeburner's mouth*. 1842, NED.

My mouth is as *dry* as a *limeburner's wig*. Lover, 1842, NED. I's as *dry* as a *turd-bed* — or as a *limeburner's clog*. Cum. EDD.

- Have a glass of beer? asked Thorpe. — *Dry* as a *tobacco box*, confessed Hines. White, BT, 180.
- I've pegged along ever since, *dry* as a *powder-horn*. Twain, HF, 278.
- Ez *tho'sty* ez a *sponge*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. *Sponge*, an immoderate drinker, a soaker, is already in Shak. Cf. *Er hat einen Schwamm im Magen. Hij heeft eene spons in zijne keel.* (a sponge in his stomach, throat) Wander. Sw. *Dricka som en svamp.*
- As *dry* as a *whistle*. Ant. 1892, NED. The sim. with *whistle* are very puzzling; see *Clean*, Ch. IV.
- I am as *dry* as a *whetstone*. Yks. EDD. Cf. *Dull*, p. 53.
- It's damn hot. I am *dry* like a *stove*. London, SS, 266.
- That infernal swanky has left me as *dry* as a *limekiln*. Hume Nisbet, 1892, *Slang*. His throat was *dry* like a *kiln*. Masefield, CM, 291.
- He wished he might be basted if he warn't as *dry* as a *limebasket*. Dickens, 1838, *Slang*. I used to eat a lot of salt fish afore going, and then by time I got there I was as *dry* as a *limebasket*. Hardy, FMC, 68.
- A's as *dry* as a *fish*; a cud al'es be drinking amost. Yks.; Cowan, PS, 139. Cf. *Drinking*, p. 212.
- Walkin's made me as *dry* as a *kex*. Yks. Der. EDD; Hardy, T, 139; My throat's as *dry* as a *kex*. Hardy, W, 455; Lin. EDD. See *Dry*, Ch. IV.
- I shud like a drap o' drink, fur I feels as *dry* as a *puck fyst*. SE. Worc. Gl. EDD. *Puckfeist*, *-fist*, the devil's snuffbox, *Lycoperdon Bovista*.
- I'm as *dry* as *dust* along of such a walk. Phillpotts, WF, 106. See *Dry*, Ch. IV.
- Our throats are *dry* as a *desert*. *Cassel's Mag of Fic.* '14, 209. For other insts of the sim. see *Dry*, Ch. IV.

Sober.

- The Spaniard was as *abstemious* as any *monk*, and drank little but water. Kingsley, WH, 184. *Abstemious* in this sense fr. 1624.
- Derriman is as *sober* as a *judge*. Hardy, TM, 78. *ibid.* LLI, 258. Never fear, I am as *sober* as a *judge* now. Shaw, IK, 280. Kcb. Yks. EDD. "Drunk as a lord' and 'sober as a judge' have ceased to have any recognisable application to the nobility and the Judicial Bench. Judges, in these later days, are as a *sober* as other folk . . . no more and no less, and the same applies to the Peerage. D. *Telegr.* May 27, 1888 (Ware).
- Can seem as *sober* as a *Millers Mare*, |And cannot blush at any villany. 1606. Probably ironical. See *Ill-mannered*, 105.

(Bouzer I am not, but mild, sober Tuesday, / As catt in cap-case, if I light not on St. Hewsday. *The Christm. Prince.*, 1607, H. See *Mild*, p. 64. What is said there also applies here.)

Drunk, Drinking.

These two sections are of interest as they give us an idea of what is preferably intensified by sim. There are only two or three sim. with *sober* but some fifty illustrating a high degree of drunkenness. This must not be regarded as indicating any great prevalence of drunkenness. With equal justice one might infer from the fact that there are some 15 sim. speaking of deafness but not a single one dealing with a good sense of hearing, that deafness is remarkably common in England. This shows that it is rather the deviation from the normal state of things, that which strikes us as something remarkably out of the common, that is intensified by sim. Sobriety is, and has always been, the normal state of things, and only when it strikes us as something unexpected or unusual do we feel called upon to emphasize it by a sim. But the fact that there are some fifty sim. with *drunk* och *drinking* does tell us something as to the frequency of these aberrations from the normal.

This is not the place to give anything like the history of English drinking, but the following quotations and reflexions may be pertinent to the matter in hand.

This heavy-headed revel east and west
 Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:
 They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
 From our achievements, though performed at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute. Shak., *Hamlet*, I, iv.

Cas. 'Fore Heaven, an excellent song. *Iago.* I learned it in England, where, indeed, they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander — Drink, ho! — are nothing to your English. *Cas.* Is your Englishman so exquisite in his drinking? *Iago.* Why, he drinks you with facility your Dane dead-drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be filled. Shak., *Oth.*, II, iii. "For [the Englishman] when he is at it, doth not sip and drink by halves, or demur upon it by pauses as the [German] doth, or by eating some salt quelque chose between, but he deals in sheer liquor, and is quickly at the bottom of his cup without intervening talk." Howell, *Parley of Beasts*, 1660 (Lean, III). *Spungius* . . . when I was pagan, and kneeled to this Bacchus, I durst outdrink a

lord; but your Christian lords outbowl me. I was in hope to lead a sober life when I was converted; but now amongst the Christians, I can no sooner stagger out of one ale-house, but I reel into another; they have whole streets of nothing but drinking rooms, and drabbing chambers, jumbled together. Massinger, VM. In Lansdowne MSS, No. 49, art. 28, Mr. William Georges mentions a statute in the 5th and 6th Edw. 6th concerning alehouses, and adds: — "Since making this statute the number of ale-houses are so many throughout the whole realm, and many of them placed in such unfit and inconvenient places, that they are hurtful to the state and body of the commonwealth." He further complains that the justices neglect to enforce the recognizances when forfeited, and make no presentment of those who forfeit them. (N. & Q., 2, III, 4). [Drunkenness] a sinne, that euer since we haue mixt ourselves with the Low-countries is counted honorable: but before we knew their lingering warres was held in the highest degree of hatred that might be. Nashe, I, 204. *Hoc tamen non praetereundum, Anglos qui ex omnibus septentrionalibus gentibus minime fuerunt bibaces et ob sobrietatem laudati, ex his Belgicis bellis didicisse immodico potu se proluere, et aliorum saluti propinando suam affligere. Adeoque iam inde ebrietatis vitium per universam gentem proserpsit ut legum severitate nostro tempore primum fuerit cohibitum.* Camden, *Annales Rerum Anglicarum*, (1581) ed. 1717, II, 389. What immoderate drinking in every place! . . . How they flock to the tavern! as if they were *fruges consumere nati*, born to no other end but to eat and drink. . . . As so many casks to hold wine . . . *Et quae fuerunt vitia, mores sunt*: 'tis now the fashion of our times, an honour: . . . 'tis now come to that pass, that he is held no gentleman, a very milk-sop, a clown, of no bringing up, that will not drink, fit for no company; he is your only gallant that plays it off finest, no disparagement now to stagger in the streets, reel, rave, &c, but much to his fame and renown. . . . 'Tis a credit to have a strong brain, and carry his liquor well: the sole contention who can drink most, and fox his fellow soonest. . . . They have *gymnasia bibonum*, drinking-schools . . . Burton, AM, I, 260f. Mr. Runt was exceedingly husky in talk and unsteady in gait. A young lady of the present day would be alarmed to see a gentleman in such a condition; but it was a common sight in those jolly old times when a gentleman was thought a milksop unless he was occasionally tipsy. Thackeray, BL, xvi. It was a merry place, London in those days . . . A man could drink four times as much as the milksops nowadays can swallow: but 'tis useless expatiating on this theme. Gentlemen are dead and gone. The fashion has now turned upon soldiers and sailors. *ibid.* xvii. (This refers to the earlier part of the reign of King George III)

The Englishman of those days, whether soldier or sailor, was an incorrigible drunkard. Without drink he was a brave and good man. But if drink were laid before him it was a perfect madness — nothing could induce him to take it with moderation. Doyle, AG, 365 (during the Napoleonic wars).

From these and numerous other quotations we gather that immoderate drinking became very common in the sixteenth c. It is repeatedly said that this is owing to Dutch influence. But to make the Dutch wholly responsible for it is probably very one-sided. The sixteenth c. was a period of change, upheaval, and revolution. It was the discovery of a new world of continents and ideas, the breaking down of old traditions, habits and customs. It was a time of adventure and enterprise, of individual life strongly asserted and recklessly enjoyed, a time when fasting and mortification more than ever became a dead letter, passing away with the religion that imposed it upon an unwilling humanity. The 'severe laws' referred to by Camden were probably altogether powerless to suppress the evil, and so was also the statute of 4 James I, C 5, S 4, which directed that "any person convicted of being drunk shall pay five shillings, or be set in the stocks during the space of six hours." (Dodsley, V, 421, 437). Other forces were now at work, and they brought about a reaction. The drunken cobbler turned parson and a holder forth of the mortification of the sinful flesh. The Civil War and the Commonwealth did not encourage jollity and convivial habits. But the Restoration to a large extent also meant a restoration of excessive drinking, especially as, with the Dutch king, distilling was made perfectly free, 1689, until Methodism came and put some check to the debaucheries, at least among the lower classes. The licensing policy of 1751 also helped to reduce the drinkbill. But only the "milk-sop times" of the nineteenth c. have realized that drunkenness is a social crime. When abstinence becomes the general rule, as it is bound to do, all the following similes will gradually drop out of use or be applied only figuratively, possessing chiefly historical interest as dead witnesses of the manners of by-gone times.

One of the causes that contributed to bring about an increase of drunkenness during the sixteenth c. was no doubt the introduction of new kinds of liquors. "The Vintners sold no Sacks, Muscadels, Malmseys, Bastards, Allegants, nor any other wines but White and Claret, till the 33 year of King Henry the eighth, 1543, . . . all those sweet wines were sold till that time at the Apothecaries for no other use, but for Medicines." Taylor, OM, 26 f. "And though I am not old, in comparison of other auncient men, I can remember Spanish wine rarely to be found in this kingdome. Then hot burning feavers were not knowne in England, and men lived more

yeares. But since the Spanish sacks have beene common in our tavernes, which, for conservation, is mingled with lime in its making, our nation complaineth of calenturas, of the stone, the dropsie and infinite other diseases, not heard of before this wine came in frequent use, or but very seldome. To confirme which my believe, I have heard one of our learnedst physitions affirme, that he thought there died more persons in England of drinking wine and using hot spices in their meats and drinckes, then of all other diseases." And what is said of beer is well known from the old couplet "Hops, reformation, baise, and beer/ Came into England all in a year."¹ Bere is made of malte, of hoppes and water: it is a naturall drynke for a Dutche man. And nowe of late dayes it is much used in Englande to the detryment of many Englysshe men; specyally it kylleth them the which be troubled with the colycke &c. A. Boorde, *Dyetary*, 1542, EETS, es. 10, 256.

[He] bibbes þer of Tyl he be *dronken* as þe *deuel*. 13 . . ., NED. As *drunk* as *devils*. Pepys, *Diary*, Sept. 1666, (Lean, II, ii). As drunk as a devil. Wilson, *Belpheg.*, i, 1691, (Lean, II, ii). A man is said to be . . . when he is very impudent, as drunk as the devil. 1816, NED. "The Doctor's as drunk as the D— —", we said. Barham, IL, 83. The "Demon Drink" is closely related to the evil one, even if one does not go so far as to say, with the temperance preacher, that alcohol is the devil in liquid form.

As *drunk* as *hell*. *Slang*.

As *drunk* as *blazes*, (Blazers, Blaize's?). *Slang*, N. & Q., 6, II, 92. "One of the commonest expressions." *Blazes*, generally supposed to mean the flames of hell, stands for the infernal region and things connected with it. *Old blazes* is an evasive for the devil, and *like blazes* a general intensive, vigorously, with ardour. Similarly *blazing* both as adj. and adv., (see *Slang*) especially *blazing-fou'*, so drunk as to become uproarious, and *blazed* (bleezed), under the beginning influence of drink. EDD. Consequently the phrase must be developed from 'to drink like blazes'. But 'it is quite a fashion now to trace everything to some saint or mediaeval custom.' (N. & Q., 6, II, 92). The saint in question is St Blaize, the patron saint of wool-combers. His day, the 3rd of February, appears to have been celebrated by the followers of this trade. "There was also a general popular observance of this day in England. Apparently for no better reason than the sound of the bishop's

¹ It occurs in different versions, and, according to those hitherto found, *Greek*, *carps*, *turkey-cocks*, and *pickerel* also "came hopping into England all in a year". These data are only very approximately correct. See Northall, FR, 539. The period popularly referred to is 15 Henry VIII.

name, it was customary to light fires on this day or evening on hill-tops . . .” Chambers, BD, I, 219. A good deal of drinking is said to have taken place at these occasions and *Blaizers* is said to refer to those who celebrated St. Blaize’s day. See *Slang*.

As *fou’* as a *witch*. — Very drunk. Mactaggart, 1824, EDD. *Full*, having eaten and drunk to repletion, now only arch. or vulgar; see p. 185 and cf. p. 8, and *Ill, Sick*, p. 162. Are the witches supposed to participate in libations with the devil, their master?

Tight as *sin*. Ware.

But Christmas scooped the sheriff,
The egg-nogs gathered him in;
And Shelby’s boy, Leviticus,
Was, New Years, tight as sin.
And along in March the Golyers
Got so drunk that a fresh-biled owl
Would ‘a’ looked ‘longside o’ them two young men
Like a sober temperance fowl. Col. Hay, U. S. A. Amb. to England
in 1897.

Tight, drunk. tippy, rec. in NED fr. 1853. It seems to be a synonymous intensive of *drunk*, or at least of *full*, as appears from the following quotation, ‘But although he was full, he denied that he was tight.’ *Slang*. ‘But cf. ‘No, sir, not a bit tippy’, said Harding, interpreting his glance, ‘not even what Mr. Cutbills calls “tight”!’ — The inst. is American, and perhaps the sim. hails from the States. *Scooped*, on the scoop, on the drink, a round of dissipation, “Christmas scooped the sheriff means it got away with him, laid him out, as we say, he was beaten by the egg-nogs; gathered him in, we use it frequently; when anybody is a loser he is gathered in.” (C. J. Stephansen, Worthington, Min., U. S. A., in a private letter).

As *drunk* as *buggery*. *Slang*. Does it mean, so drunk as to commit buggery? It is worth noticing that the adj. is a vulgar pejorative intensive of the same type as *blamed*, *bloody*, *blasted*, &c.

As *drunk* as *Bacchus*. *Slang*. *Bacchus* rec. in English fr. c. 1500. — Bacchus, the god of brew’d wine and sugar, grand patron of rob-pots, upsy-freesy tipplers, and super-naculum takers; this Bacchus, who is headwarden of Vintner’s Hall, ale-conner, mayor of all victualling houses, the sole liquid benefactor to bawdy-houses; lanceprezade to red noses, and invincible adelantado over the armado of pimpled, deep-scarleted, and car-buncled faces . . . Massinger, VM, 7, a passage intended to ridicule the drinking customs of the age.

A certain Count Herman, / A highly respectable man as a German, /
Who smoked like a chimney, and *drank* like a *Merman*.
Barham, IL, 177. Probably only a nonce-phrase, invented

- for the sake of rhyme. The *merman*, a he-mermaid, to quote Swift, is rec. fr. c. 1600. Cf. below 'to drink like a fish.'
- As *wise* as *Solomon*. One of the 80 expressions for drunkenness given in *Gentleman's Mag.*, 1770, 559. Does it refer to the assertive self-sufficiency of the early stages of drunkenness?
- St. Perran communicated his discovery [of tin] to St. Chiwidden . . . Great was the joy in Cornwall . . . Mead and metheglin . . . flowed in abundance; and . . . '*Drunk as a Perraner*' has certainly passed into a proverb from that day. Cor. EDD.
- Drunk as Chloe*. Brewer; Baumann. "Chloe is the cobbler's wife of Linden Grove, to whom Prior the poet was attached. She was notorious for her drinking habits." Brewer. It is true that Prior's Chloes and 'nut-brown maids' were of a very humble social status, and his own standard of morals can hardly have been a very elevated one, but as long as we know nothing of the period when the sim. was used we are justified in doubting every bare statement not borne out by literary evidences. See below.
- "*Drunk as Floey* (Peoples'). Who it appears was dead drunk — may be a corruption of Flora, but probably a confusion between that comparatively familiar name and 'Chloe.' If the latter, good instance of the power Swift had to popularize. In the Dean's poems Chloe is always more or less under the influence of drink." Ware. — It is to be observed that Ware was a comedian, and no philologist. We know nothing about the phrase.
- As *drunk* as an *emperour*. Grose, *Slang*. A common phrase, used as an intensive of 'as drunk as a lord.' *ibid*.
- As *happy* as a *king*. One of the 80 expressions for drunkenness referred to in *Gent. Mag.* 1770, 559, f. *Happy*, 'inspired, jolly' from drink, rec. fr. the date mentioned. Cf. You can *tipple* like a *king* upon his throne. Baring-Gould, BS, 34. A king like Henry VIII may have given rise to a sim. of this kind. We are told that he was "marvellously excessive in eating and drinking." Brooks-Adams, 225.
- As *drunk* as a *prince*. Fulwell, *Like will to Like*, 1568, Wesley, *Maggots*. 1685. Lean, II, ii.
- The Gentlemen are most of them very intemperate, yet the Proverb goes, '*As drunk as a Lord*.' Evelyn, 1651. [As drunk as a beggar] This proverb begins now to be disused, and, instead of it, people are ready to say, As drunk as a lord: so much hath that vice (the more is the pity) prevailed amongst the nobility and gentry of late years. Ray. Flatman, 1681, NED. I'm always sharp set towards punch; and am now come with a firm resolution, though but a por cobbler, to be as richly drunk as a lord; I am a true English heart, and look upon drunkennes as the best part of the liberty of the subject, Coffey, 1731, *Slang*. *Gentleman's Mag.* 1770, 559. Combe,

Syntax, I, vii, 1812. (Lean, II, ii). Zo drunk's a lord. Hewett, Dev. 11; Hardy, UGT, 12; "And where is Koho?" Grief asked. "Back in the bush and as drunk as a lord." London, SS, 145. He's going to make old Berrow's chaps as drunk as lords. Jacob's, MC, 128. In *Slang* insts. of 1678, 1719, 1734.

She ran screaming through the galleries, and I, as *tipsy* as a *lord*, came staggering after. Thackeray, BL, xviii.

To *drink* like a *lord*. Middleton & Rowley, 1623, NED. — You had rather be a civil, well-governed, well-grounded, temperate, poor Angler, than a drunken lord: but I hope there is none such. Walton, CA, 143. Dear kindhearted Walton! The young dandies of the early seventeenth c. probably gave rise to the sim. Their drinking habits are illustrated by the following invocation: — Awake, thou noblest drunken Bacchus! thou must likewise stand to me, if at least thou canst for reeling; teach me you sovereign skinker, how to take the German's upsy-freeze, the Danish rowsa, the Switzer's stoop of rhenish, the Italian's parmizant, the Englishman's healths, his hoops, cans, half-cans, gloves, frolics, and flap-dragons, together with the most notorious qualities of the truest tosspots, as when to cast, when to quarrel, when to fight, and where to sleep: hide not a drop of the moist mystery from me, thou plumpest swill-bowl; but like an honest red-nosed wine-bibber, lay open all thy secrets and the mystical hieroglyphic of rasher o'th' coals, modicums, and shoeing-horns, and why they were invented, for what occupations, and when used. Dekker, GH, 7, f. Cf. also 'doing the lord', 'to make a gentleman of a person', to make him drunk. Hmp, EDD; and the Sw. Dricka Watn som en oxe/ och Wijn som en Herre. (drink water like an ox, and wine like a gentleman) Grubb, 155. — "Drunk as a lord" and "sober as a judge" have ceased to have any recognisable application to the nobility and the Judicial Bench. Judges, in these later days, are as sober as other folk, take them as a class, no more and no less, and the same applies to the Peerage.' D. T., 27 May, 1889.

"Mr. Justice Darling said he remembered when he joined the Staffordshire Sessions they had in a hall there a thing called a beerometer which contained all the expressions by which one could tell exactly how drunk a man was. He need hardly say that at the top was 'as drunk as a lord', and at the bottom was 'as sober as a judge'." DNL. — It is a pity that this valuable document is not obtainable now.

As *drunk* as a *M. P.* (can't stand upright), Northall, FPh. — If this phrase has any currency it gives us a strange idea of electioneering customs, but Eatansville testifies to the possibility of strong liquors being present on such occasions.

Drunk as a *pope*. — Benedict XII, a glutton and a wine-bibber, gave rise to the expression, *Pibamus papaliter*. *Slang*.

As *drunk* as a *parson*. (War.) Northal, FPh., 8. "The ministers of religion in every country and age have been popularly accounted *bon-vivants*. . . Our bishops are currently supposed to be at least as fat as aldermen." N. & Q., Oct. 1852, 425. Cf. "Conger — conger eel — fine, ladies — fresh, ladies — and bellies as big as bishops!" Caine, D., xvi. The Sw. *prost* (dean) is popularly supposed never to shirk a bumper, a jolly good fellow, lazy and round as a cheese, as the Sw. sim. has it. The Germans think that a parson will drink St. George to death, or that a priest never died from thirst or fasting. Wander, s. v. *Pfaffe*.

"As *drunk* as a *hatter*" has long since passed into a proverb. There were some sober hatters in the times of which I write, but there were also many drinking ones. The hatters from out of town brought their rum by the keg or barrel, while those on Grassy Plains kept a man whose almost sole duty it was to go to and from the store and shops with . . . bottles . . . Life of P. T. Barnum, 1855, p. 57. The time referred to is 1826. See *Mad*, p. 36 ff.

As *drunk* as a *porter*. Field, *Woman &c.*, II, ii. (Lean, II, ii). I have had the honour of seeing his Royal Highness the Chevalier Charles Edward as drunk as any porter. Thackeray, BL, xiii. See *Scolding*, p. 107.

As *drunk* as a *cobbler*. Ware. — "The Pole, for drinking comparisons, has long held in France the position maintained in England by the cobbler. — 'drunk as a cobbler'. *ibid.* — The "gentle craft" has long been associated with drinking. He is already in Langland's tavern in the company of 'Tymnie the tynkere' and other more or less disreputable persons. In 1486 (NED) we meet 'a dronkship of coblers' and Nashe (I, 116) is of the opinion that "if there were censors in Rome [shoemakers] would get more and drink less." And the folk-rhyme says that 'cobblers and tinkers are the best ale-drinkers'. 'It is a custom in Ireland among shoemakers, if they intoxicate themselves on Sunday, to do no work on Monday; and this they call making a St. Monday.' Edgeworth, 1804, NED, which was known in England about two hundred years earlier, and it is to be feared that the Cobbler's Monday is not yet altogether extinct. "The gentle craft are gentlemen every Monday by their copy, and scorn (then) to work one true stitch." Dekker, HWh, Ia, x. — But Puritan England knew a different sort of cobbler (see p. 193), You may see Cobblers and Tinkers rising from the very Dunghill, beating the pulpits as conformably, as if they were the King's professors of divinity. CC, 3. The sim is also in Russian.

They chat together, drink and fill/ And like two *inkle-weavers*

swill. *Poems on Several Occasions*, by N. Amhurst, 1720. See *Intimacy*, Ch. IV.

As *drunk* as a *Gosport fiddler*. Rog. — This may have originated in earlier times when Gosport was an important place "owing to its position at the mouth of Portsmouth Harbour, and its convenience as a victualling station" (Enc. Brit.). As the town was very prosperous during the American and Peninsular Wars it is quite probable that it became renowned among sea-faring people as another 'Fiddler's Green.'

As *drunk* as a *fiddler*. *The Puritan*, 1609, (Lean, II, ii). *Slang*, 1832; Blakeborough, NRY, 241, "in daily use". Towards daylight he crawled out again drunk as a fiddler, and rolled off the porch. Twain, HF, 38. — The scarcity of early insts is remarkable. — The fiddler was of old a frequent guest in taverns and ale-houses, as appears from numerous passages in Elizabethan writers: — Those liuings which now maintaine so many schollers and students would in two or three years be all spent in a Tauerne amongst a consort of Queanes and fidlers. Nashe, III, 391. [In a description of a tavern scene] And he has not head/ To bear any wine; for what the noise of the fiddlers,/ And care of his shop . . . he was fain to be brought home. Jonson, *Alch.*, III, ii, 410. And 'meat, drink, and money' is proverbially the fiddler's fare. (Swift, PC, 295). Our musicke that was held so delectable and precious that they scorned to come to a tavern under twenty shillings salary for two houres, now wander with their instrumentes under their cloakes, I mean such as have any, to all houses of good fellowship, saluting every roome where there is company with *will you have any musike gentlemen*. Such was the consequence of the severity of puritan discipline. AR.

As *drunk* as a *fiddler's bitch*. War. EDD. Northall, FPh. (Glouc.) 8. See p. 201, tinker's bitch.

As *full* as a *piper*. Frf. Ayr. EDD. *Slang*.

As *drunk* as a *piper*. *Gent. Mag.*, 1770, 559. Graves, 1772, *Slang*; Stf. 1816; Per. 1835; ne. Sc. 1896, EDD. Northall, FPh. Is this originally a northern sim? The Highland bagpiper is not above a drop, and Scotch whisky is known to have made people 'piper-fou'.

As *drunk* as a *tapster*. Cf. Ther's Tom the Tapster peerless for renowne, That drank three hundred drunken Dutchmen down. Parkes, 1612, NED.

As *drunk* as a *brewer's fart*. *Slang*.

As *drunk* as a *tinker at Banbury* or nurses at a christening. *The London Chanticleers*, V, 1659. — Banbury tinkers have already been mentioned p. 47. Cf. At a poor ale-house I was glad of entertainment, and had the company of a tinker who made pretty music with his Banbury kettle-drum. Taylor, ST, 12. What this originally alluded to, does not appear to be known.

The people of B. seem to have enjoyed the same sort of reputation as the Gothamites, owing to their zealous puritanism. This is the generally accepted idea, and undoubtedly it must have had something to do with their ill-fame, but as a matter of fact Latimer's *Banbury Glosses* is earlier than Puritanism, and a strictly and severely puritan country town would hardly be the right place for drunken tinkers. The following quotation has something to say on this point. 'Tinkers cannot have been encouraged to stay at this very strongly puritan town, as we read in Beesley's *History of Banbury*, p. 458, a reference to a newspaper of 1641 in Lord Spencer's library at Althorp, which has the following passage: "Since the memorable execution of Tinkers in this towne, no severity of any itinerant Judge hath been filed upon our Records."' (N. & Q., 2, III, 200).

As *drunk as a tinker*. Bohn. Benham; mentioned in NED, but no inst. given.

To *swill* like a *tinker*, 1694. *Slang*. Tom the Tynkere was already in Langland's tavern, and there he has been at home ever since. And considering the fact that he has a very black book indeed the scarcity of early insts is remarkable. See the above sim., and cf. the following passages: "'Tis rare to be a tinker boy: Work enough, wench enough, drink enough." Armin, *Two Maids of Morecl.*, 1609, (Lean). [tobacco] is commonly abused by most men, which take it as Tinkers do Ale. Burton, AM, II, 264. We meet him as a champion drinker in the following verses: —

There was a jovial tinker,
 Who was a good ale-drinker;
 He was never a shrinker,
 Believe this is true.
 And he came from the Weald of Kent,
 When all his money was gone and spent,
 Which made him look like a Jack-a'-Lent.
 And Joan's ale was new,
 And Joan's ale is new, my boys.

The cobbler and the broom-man
 Came up to the room, man,
 And said they would drink for boon, man.
 Let each one take his due!
 But when the liquor good they found,
 They cast their caps upon the ground,
 And so the tinker he drunk round,
 Whilst Joan's ale &c.
 Chappel, *Popular Musik of the Olden Time*, 18, (temp. Charles II).

See Hardy, DR, 374. — He himself and his wife, or trull, and dog, or rather bitch, have always been regarded as very bad company: 'all base handicrafts, as coblers, and curriers and tinkers' (Nashe, II, 232, 241); 'the veriest botcher, or tinker or cobbler' (*ibid.* 298). If peat keeps the warmth in

my carcase, 'twill do the like for him — king or tinker. Phillpotts, AP, 14. See also MacLaren, YB, 119, 121. — The Anabaptist was a tinker and brazier, and a tinker and brazier is ever a gipsy. Yoxall, RS, 126, gives an explanation of this low repute of the kettlemender's. — The sim. is also in Dutch. *Kunnen drinken als een keteleer*. In Nord Brabant, *zuipen als een ketelbuter*. Stoett, NS, I, 171. Germ. *Kesselflicker leiden an viel Durst*. Wander.

As *drunk* as a *tinker's bitch*. E. Ang. Forby, 1830 (Lean, II, ii). Like master, like man, or dog. The tinker's dog is often spoken of. Like a tinker that neuer trauailes without his wench and his dog. Nashe, III, 110, 1596; He was none of those rascally base Tinkers, that with a bandog and a drab at their tayles will take a purse sooner than stop a kettle. Dekker, Wks, I, 141 (*Notes*); Whats a tinker without a wench, staffe, and dogge? Armin, *Two Maids of Morecl.*, II, 745, 6 (*Notes*).

As *drunk* as a *beggar*. Massinger, VM, III, iii. Draxe, 1633 (Lean, II, ii). Ray. According to Ray, quoted above p. 185, the sim. was obsolescent in his time. It is no doubt earlier than the *Virgin Martyr*. It probably arose in the latter half of the sixteenth c. when the wholesale eviction of yeomen, the dissolution of monasteries, and the return of disbanded soldiers had filled England with a beggar-proletariat of truly formidable dimensions to become, as Kingsley calls it, a fourth estate, which must have occasioned a great many proverbial phrases, more perhaps than what has found its way into literature and modern collections.

As *drunk* as a *fool*. Northall, FPh., 8. Does this refer to the same thing as is hinted at in connection with 'as fat as a fool', or is it simply an intimation that anyone that exceeds a certain modicum must needs become a fool or act as stupidly as a fool?

Strait staggers by a Porter or a Carman/ As *bumsie* as a fox'd *flapdragon* German. Taylor (W. P.), 1630, NED. — *Bumpsy*, intoxicated, tipsy, rec. in NED 1611, and 1630. It is said to occur in dial., but EDD does not know it. *Flapdragon* (also *snap*, or *slap dr.*), a raisin, or the like, set on fire in a glass of liquor, also a contemptuous appellation for a German or Dutchman. For German drinking customs see Taylor, TH, 4 f. quoted below. Cf. also, And though the Germans did bear away the bell for drinking, yet it was rather long than much, being content to pelt his enemy at a distance; whereas we are after the modern way of fight, altogether for down blows, being impatient till the opposite have a total rout. Trenchfield, *Cap of Grey Hairs &c.*, 1678 (Lean); Der Engländer isst das meiste, aber der Deutsche trinkt das meiste. Hesekiel, *Land und Stadt im Volksmunde*, Berlin, 1867, (Lean).

The German popular saying is probably correct if we think of the Bavarians.

One of the faithful, as they profanely terme him . . . he will *drink* many degrees beyond a *Dutchman*. 1609, s. v. *faithful*, NED. Our drunken ship *reeled* like a Dutchman. Dekker, HWh, Ia, ii. Falling into a swinish trick of *swilling* like the *Hollanders*. Kingsley, WH, 85. — As Dutch drinking has already been referred to, p. 193, only some few quotations are necessary to show how profoundly the Dutch drinking habits had impressed themselves upon the English mind: The pleasant worke *De arte bibendi* a drunken Dutchman spued out few yeares since. Nashe, III, 277. With the Dane and the Dutchman I will not encounter, for they are simple honest men, that with Danaus daughters doe nothing but fill bottomless tubs, and will be drunk and snort in the midst of dinner. *ibid.* II, 301. The Englishman is wise, but cannot show it; the Italian both is wise and seems so, and the Dutchman would be wise but for the pot. Copley, *Wits, Fits, Fancies*, 1614, (Lean). To smoke with the Indian, quarrel with the Frenchman, court a lady with a Venetian, plot villany with the Italian, be proud with the Spaniard, cog with a Jew, insult with a Turk, drink down a Dutchman, and tell lies with the devil, — for a wager, are work for wolves, not for lambs. T. Adams, *Physicks fr. Heaven*, 1629, (Lean). The Dutchman would still be the perfectest soaker. 1652, NED. The heavy Hollanders no vices know/ But what they used a hundred years ago./ Like honest plants, where they were stuck they grow./ They cheat, but still from cheating sires they come; They drink, but they were christened first in mum. Dryden, SF (VI, 412). Well-known are also the terms 'upsee Dutch, upsee Freeze', 'Dutchman's headache', 'Dutch courage' (still used, Shaw, IK, 36) &c. — *Sou comme un Anglois* was the French rendering and experience, at the time of Rabelais.

And she has been chuckin' the heel taps to the hog, and made him as *drunk* as a *Christian*. Baring-Gould, BS, 93, which means 'as drunk as any human being could be'. See p. 32, as cunning &c. as a Christian. Cf. Fr. *saoul comme trente mille homme*. *Slang*.

As *drunk* as *cloy*. Robinson, *Whitby Gloss*. *Cloy*, to surfeit, is known since Palsgrave. As a subst. only in the dial. of Cum. and Yks. 'So drunk as to feel nausea.' Cf. 'as sick as a cushion.' p. 162.

Drunk as a *polony*. (London). Ware. *Polony*, a kind of pork sausage, but probably a corruption of the Fr. *soût comme un polonais*. (Ware). This sim. is also in Flanders *drinken, zuipen gelijk en Polak*. Stoett, NS, I, 171; and the Germ. proverb says *Der Pol' an einem Tag oft mehr vertrinkt, als was ein Deutscher im Leben erringt*. Wander, which, according to the

author, is a reflection on the social habits of the Polish nobility. "In Poland, he is the best servitor, and the honestest fellow . . . that drinketh most healths to the honour of his master." Burton, AM, I, 263.

As *full* as a *beer-barrel*. Overheard in Oxford.

Blue as a *razor* from his midnight revel. Thornton. Cf. the phrase 'to look blue' from depression and discomfiture; and the old phrase 'to drink till all is blue.' They drink . . . Vntil their adle heads doe make the ground Seeme blew vnto them. 1616, NED. I have nothing to do; And 'fore George I'll sit here, and drink till all is blue. Barham, IL, 162. *Till all is Blue*: carried to the utmost — a phrase borrowed from the idea of a vessel making out of port, and getting into blue water. Smyth, *Sailor's Word-bk*, 1867, NED.

As *drunk* as a *besom*. Northall, FPh. When t'supper wer ower we set teah, an' hadn't we a smelt noo — we all gat as drunk as besoms. *Nidderdill Olm*. 1870. Yks. EDD. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. 'The besom shares with the beetle the distinction of being an emblem of insensibility.' *ibid*. Does it refer to the stage of drunkenness when the sensory nerves are paralyzed, and the drunkard is insensible to hurts and blows? But see also the following sim. and cf. *Fond*, p. 43.

As *drunk* as a *mop*. Said of a sot that cannot stand without support. Northall, FPh. 9. Is it because a mop always falls down unless put in a corner or some stand?

As *drunk* as a *top*. Lean, II, ii. See *Sleep*, p. 168.

As *drunk* as a *drum*. Farquhar, *Sir H. Wildair*, IV, ii, 1701 (Lean, II, ii).

Besides, if he such things can do,/ When *drunk* as *drum* of *wheelbarrow*,/ What would not this god of October/ Perform, I prithee, when he's sober. Cotton, 1675, *Slang*.

As *drunk* as a *wheelbarrow*. Ray. Cotton, *Burlesque*, 1674. S. Wesley, *Maggots*, p. 77, 1685 (Lean, II, ii).

As *drunk* as a *wheelhead*. Yks. Lan. EDD. As drunken as a *wheel*. Yks. EDD. — The allusion of the last five sim. is a little obscure. Is a wheelbarrow 'drunk' because it is always more or less staggering? The drum of a wheelbarrow, the wheel and the wheelhead because they turn round? And do the *drum* and the *wheelhead* refer to the same thing? Cf. the *fig.* use of *drunken*, uneven, unsteady, reeling.

To *drink* like a *funnel*. H. — A funnel can drink no end of liquids. In Sw. the corresponding word *tratt* is used in very much the same way. *Fylltratt* is a usual designation of a drunkard.

As *full* as a *jade*, quoth the bride. Ray. What is the application of this sim.?

As *drunk* as an *ass*. E. Suff. EDD. Cf. *Saoul comme un âne*. *Slang*. See also below 'as drunk as a swine'. Northall, FPh.

27, has 'to drink like an ass', and explains 'i. e. when thirsty only'. Probably not correct. Does it not rather mean 'to drink oneself as stupid as an ass'?

As *drunk* as *David's sow*. Ray; Gay, NS; Bailey, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 1725; Swift, PC, 294; *Gentleman's Mag.*, 1770, 559; Scott, *Pirate*, xxxiv, *Redgauntlet*. xiv; Marryat, *P. Simple* (W).

Had he not come home as *tipsy* as *David's sow*? Barham, IL, 443. — The current explanation of this sim. is well-known. It is said to refer to a Welshman, David Jones, whose wife on a certain occasion was found dead-drunk in the pig-sty. The story seems to emanate from the *British Apollo*, I, 527, 1711. Where it had it from, has not as yet been discovered. As the sim. is at least some 40 years older all traditionary tales concerning its origin must be taken with caution. This particular story has very much the look of one of the numerous tales invented to explain a place-name, a proverb, or a phrase. Until still earlier insts and actual facts have been found, no opinion can be pronounced. See also N. & Q., 6, III, *passim*.

As *drunk* as a *sow*. B. Jonson, *Every Man out of his H.*, V, v. Cf. the cp sim. *sow-drunk* found already in Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, i, 96 (Lean); Yet there ye drest the drunken sow. GGN, III, ii (Dodsley, I, 157).

Drunk as *Essex hogs*. — Whence is this proverb derived? asked R. C. Hope, N. & Q., 6, III, 469. Is it impossible to think that *Essex hogs* is a county nickname, and the saying, rightly or wrongly, a reflection on the drinking habits at some period prevailing, or supposed to prevail, in Essex?

And in the morenning by viii. was his houre/ To be as *drunk* as any *swyne*. *Colyn Blowbol's Test*. c. 1500, N. & Q., 6, III, 394. As *dronken* as are *swyne*. E. More, *Def. of Wom.*, 1557 (Lean, II, ii); *Dronkenner* than *swine*. Barclay, *Ecl.* ante 1530 (Lean, II, ii). Stf. EDD. This sim. is perhaps better known in the cp form *swine-drunk*, *swine-dronken* (Halliwell).

Swine-drunk is the third degree, or perhaps rather kind, of drunkenness, according to old traditions. This is how Nashe puts it: Ape drunk and he leapes and sings and hollowes and daunceth for the heavens; the second is Lion drunk, and he flings the pots about the house, calles the hostess whore, breakes the glasse windwes with his dagger . . .; the third is swine drunk, heavie, lumpish, and sleepeie, and cries for a little more drink and a few more clothes: the fourth is sheep drunk, wise in his own conceipt . . .: the fifth is Mawdlen, when a fellow will weep for kindness in the midst of his ale and kisse you . . .; the sixth is Martin drunke when he drinkes himself sober ere he stirre; the seuenth is Goate drunk, when

in his drunkenness he has no mind but on lechery, the eighth is Foxe drunk, when he is crafty, drunk as many of the Dutchmen bee, that will neuer bargain but when they are drunke. (I, 207, 8).

Brewer has another tradition concerning the different degrees or kinds of drunkenness: ape-drunken, lion-drunken, swine-drunken, sheep-drunken, Martin-drunken, goat-drunken, and fox-drunken. The old mediaeval saying gives us only four stages of drunkenness, in which a man resembled successively a sheep, a lion, an ape, and a sow. The *Calendrier des Bergers*, 1493, distinguishes by their effects on the brain of four wines as *Vin de lyon*, *Vin de singe*, *vin de mouton* et *Vin de pourceau*. Lean. *Di agnello, porco, scimia, leone tiene il vin la complessione*. Lean. There is an old tale of Bacchus planting the vine, and using the hollow bones of different animals as receptacles for the seed and the tiny plant, but a bird and an ass take the place of the sheep and the ape. — An interesting impersonation of animals to denote various stages of drunkenness is found in Linné's *Dissertatio de Inebriantibus*. Cf. also the following passage, which at the same time gives us an insight into German drinking habits of the early seventeenth c.: — And being at dinner, because I was a stranger, I was promoted to the chiefest place, where to observe an old custom, every man did his best endeavour to hance me for my welcome, which by interpretation is, to give a man a loaf too much out of the brewer's basket, in which kind of potshot, our English are grown such stout proficients that some of them dare bandy and contend with the Dutch, their first teachers. But after they had hanced me as well as they could, and I pleased, they administered an oath to me, in manner and form as followeth; *Laying my hand on a full pot*, I swear by these contents and all that is herein contained, that by the courteous favour of these gentlemen, I do find myself sufficiently hanced, and that henceforth I shall acknowledge it; and that whensoever I shall offer to be hanced again, I shall arm myself with the craft of the fox, the manners of a hog, the wisdom of an ass, mixed with the civility of a bear. This was the form of the oath, which as near as I can shall be performed on my part; and here is to be noted that the first word a nurse or a mother doth teach her children if they be males, is drink or beer: So that most of them are transformed to barrells, firkins, and kilderkins, always freight with Hamburgh beer. Taylor, TH, 4 f. — Cf. Sw. *full som ett svin*.

Note. Martin-drunken. The feast of St. Martin, Martinmas, occasionally also called Martinalia, is said to have taken the place of an old pagan festival, the Vinalia, and inherited some of its usages. Cf. this passage, Martinalia (St. Martin's day),

which they call the day of broaching new wines. Withals, 1608. (Lean). By this circumstance is probably to be explained the fact that Martin is the patron of publicans and tavern keepers, of drinking and jovial meetings, as well as the protecting saint of drunkards to save them from danger. (Chambers, BD, II, 568). As Martinmas witnessed a good deal of drunkenness this vice is termed St. Martin's evil. Cf. the Latin *Post Martinum bonum vinum*; Fr. *faire la Saint Martin*; Germ. *Sankt Martin feiern*.

There is nother greate nor small but then they will drink wine,
If they should lay their cote to gage to drink or it fine.
(Quot. in Hazlitt, DFF).

Therefore *Martin-drunk*, in all probability, means very drunk indeed, suffering from St. Martin's evil, as one must be that celebrates Martinmas too liberally. *Martin* is also used (by Baxter) as a term for a noisy tippler. This gives a fully satisfactory explanation of the cp. sim, and the rendering proposed by NED, martin, a kind of monkey, seems rather unfortunate, especially as it implies that Nashe in the same passage should speak of one person as ape-drunk, and of another as monkey-drunk, which would be a distinction without a difference. (See further Enc. Brit., Brewer, Hazlitt, DFF).

I was *drunk* as a *pig* when I put my name down. Phillpotts, SW, 48. You were both as drunk as pigs. Oxenham, MSS, 55. Northall, FPh. Perhaps the modern rendering of the above sim.

"*Full* as a *goat*. (Tavern, 18 cent). Drunk. This phrase is evidently 'Full as a goitre', the word often used for the huge throat wen, which, common in the last century, is now rarely seen. The word having no distinct modern meaning, has been naturally changed to goat. The idea of fullness is complete in contemplating a huge goitre, which always looks upon the point of bursting. — *New Arrival*. 'I want a bed.' *Clerk*. 'Can't have one, sir; they are all full.' *N. A.* 'Then I'll sleep with the landlord.' *Cl.* 'Can't do it, sir. He's full too; fuller than a goat, and has been for three days.' *N. Y. Mercury*, 1888." Ware. — This has been quoted in full as an instance of Ware's 'philology'. Why 'evidently'? What is there strange and impossible about the saying to necessitate an interpretation of this kind? *Goat-drunk* (see above) may originally have designated the sexually excited stage of drunkenness, but a transition and development to mean a high degree of intoxication in general is perfectly natural.

Ar *drongen* as an *ape*. Grange, *Golden Aphrod.*, 1577. *Colyn Blowbols Test.* (H, E. P. Poetry, i, 104), Lean, II, ii. N. & Q., 1, XII, 123; As drunk as an ape. Northall, FPh. As *fuddled* as an *ape*. *Gent. Mag.* 1770, 559. 'The Ape of all thing cannot abide a snail, now the ape is a drunken

beast, for they are wont to take an Ape by making him drunk, and a Snail well washed is a remedy against drunkenness. John Baptist Porta, *Naturall Magick* (ed. dated 1658, Hulme, NH, 154). Cf. the cp sim. ape-drunk, and the term 'wine of ape' (I trow that ye haue dronken win of ape, Chaucer) and the corresp. Fr. *vin de singe*. In Leopold Dukes, *Rabbinische Blumenlese* (Leipzig, 1844, p. 192) there is a passage to the point. Satan came to Noah as he was planting his vineyard. On hearing what he was about to do, he brought a lamb, a lion, a pig, and an ape; slaughtered them in the vineyard, and let the earth drink up their blood. Thereby he signified that man, before he had tasted wine is innocent as a lamb . . . When he drinks moderately, he is as a lion, and supposes that there is none like him on the earth; if he drinks above measure, he becomes as a pig, and rolls about in nonsense. But if he is thoroughly drunk, he becomes as an ape; he hops about and jabbbers, knowing neither beginning nor end of his speech. (N. & Q., I, XII, 123).

As *drunk* as *ten bears*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. the old Sw. proverb 'Drucken, om aftonen som en Björn, Om morgonen som en skjuten Örn (drunk, in the evening like a bear, in the morning like a shot erne). Grubb, 157.

Mon cher, he was drunk — *drunk* as a *beast*, with his nose beaten in. Shaw, LA, 280. Cf. beastly drunk (rec. fr. 1803); The beastly vice of drinking to excess. Swift, 1709; to make a beast of oneself; Till Morn' sends stagg'ring Home a Drunken Beast. Steele, 1709, NED.

As full as a blow'd mouse. Northall, *Warwick Wdbk*, 276. *Blowed*, swelled.

When that he is as *dronke* as a *dreynt mous*. Ritson, *Ancient Songs, The Man in the Moon*. The connection between drowning and drunkenness appears from the following quot. "What's a drunken man like, fool? — Like a drowned man, a fool and a madman: one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him, and the third drowns him . . . he's in the third degree of drink, he is drowned. Shak., TN, I, v, 121. — There are some proverbial expressions in which *drowned mouse* occur: 'to look like a drowned mouse', which is already in Shakespeare; They [the English] want their porridge and their fat bull-beeves! Either they must be dieted like mules/ And have their provender tied to their mouths/ Or piteous they will look, like drowned mouse. (KH VIa, I, ii, 12). 'Pour not, or to pour, water on a drowned mouse', (Clarke, Ray) "to cast out spite on one past vengeance". Northall, FPh. 29. Therefore the sim. perhaps originally referred to one that lies all of a heap on the ground hopelessly and pitifully drunk.

We faren as he that *dronke* is as a *mous*. Chaucer, KT, 403. Monckes drynk an bowl after collacyon tell ten or xii of the clock and cum to mattens as dronck as myss. R. Beerly to Cromwell. Ed. Wright, p. 133. (N. & Q., 5, V, 222). Dronken as a mouse, At the ale-house. Skelton, *Colyn Clout*, 8034. And I will pledge Tom Tossopot, till I be as drunk as a mouse-a. Dodsley, *Old Plays* (ed. Hazlitt, iii, 339). *Doctor Doubleale*, (H, E. Pop. Poet. iii, 308), *C. Blowbol's Test*. (ibid. i, 98, 103); *Disobedient Child*, (H, Dodsley, ii, 300, Lean, II, ii). *Songs*, 113. Hauf on us was as drunk as mice. Lin. EDD. — This sim. has also been found in MLG of the reformation period, in Daniel von Soest's *Spottgedichte, Ein dialogon, darinne de sprok Esaie am ersten Kapitel &c.* printed in 1537, l. 1616. *Sô druncken als ein mûs*, F. Holt-hausen, *Anglia*, VIII, 454.

I am a Flemmyng, what for all that/ Although I will be *dronken* other wyles as a *rat*. Borde, *Introduction*. Wilson, 1553, NED. Stubbs, *Anat. of Abuses*, 1583. You may not say he is drunke. . . For though he be as drunke as any rat He hath but catcht a fox, or whipt the cat. Taylor, (W. P.) 1630, NED. Drunk as a Rat, you'd hardly wot That drinking so he could trudge it. 1661, NED. It is given as still living, but no later inst. has as yet been found. — In the seven-teenth and eighteenth cc. a 'rat' was a drunken man or woman taken up by the watch (Grose). Whence (in pl.), says *Slang*, *d. t.'s*, 'to see or have rats'. By way of explanation of the sim. Skeat says, "The explanation is very simple. A mouse is a small animal, and it takes very little to make him extremely drunk. (N. & Q., 5, V, 315). This "simple explanation" is so simple that it tells us nothing. Why should the rat or mouse be chosen preferably to any other small animal? A cat is also a small animal, and it would probably take very little "to make him extremely drunk". The rat or mouse is in English and other lanugages often used as a symbol of what is valueless, miserable, or otherwise in a pitiable condition. We have 'hungry, poor, wet, weak &c. as a mouse or rat', and a person in a sufficiently advanced state of drunkenness is just as pitiable and as 'wet' as any rat or mouse. As opprobrious epithets mouse, rat are used fr. the end of the sixteenth c.

The noise which made me as *drunk* as an *owl*. Walpole, 1764, NED. *Gentleman's Mag.*, 1770. Marryat, 1840, NED. "A common sim." Elworthy, WSG, 549. They must still be drunk as owls. Stevenson, TI, 90.

As *drunk* as a *boiled owl*. Peacock, *Lin. Gloss.*, Northall, FPh., 13. *Daily Telegr.* 13 Dec., 1892 (Ware). See also 'tight as sin'. p. 194.

Tight as a *biled* (or boiled) *owl*. Ware. — For 'boiled owl'

cf. also the following lines 'Never had there been so much money in the treasury, nor so much gin in circulation. "Well pleased am I with Fulualea", he concluded. "Have a drink!" — "We've got to get out of this *pronto*," Grief whispered . . ., or we'll be a pair of boiled owls. Also, I am to be tried for arson, or heresy, . . . in a few minutes, and I must controll my wits.' London, SS, 220. — As to the date of the latter form of the sim. Ware says 'Eng.-Amer., 1880 on'. Peacock's Gloss. dates fr. 1877, and the sim. is probably a good deal older. Although the unadorned form of the sim. is not found earlier than 1764 the association of owl with drinking and drunkenness is much earlier. In Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, Old Merrythought sings many snatches of old songs and among others the four last lines of the following poem. It is in *King Henry's Mirth or Freeman's Songs in Deuteromelia*, 1609, (see Chappel, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*): —

Of all the Birds . . .

Of all the birds that ever I see
 The owl is the fairest in her degree.
 For all day long she sits in a tree,
 And when the night comes away flies she.
 Tewhit, tewhoo! to whom drinkest thou?
 Sir Knave, to you.
 This song is well sung, I make you a vow.
 And he is a knave that drinketh now:
 Nose, nose, jolly red nose!
 Cinamon, ginger, nutmegs, and cloves,
 And that gave me my jolly red nose.

But what has brought about this association? What has occasioned the sim.? The earliest inst. perhaps gives some sort of a clue. The noise made the person in question 'as drunk as an owl'. 'Drunk' in this case must mean something like 'stupefied, dizzy, giddy', and the sim. perhaps refers to the strange antics and the stupefied unsteady behaviour that characterize the noontide owl especially when surprised or mobbed by other birds. Cf. They all scornfully wondered at me, like so many buzzards and woodcocks about an owl. Taylor, SL, 19. (As buzzards, widgeons, woodcocks, and such fowl, Do gaze and wonder at the broad-faced owl. Taylor, PP, 7. *Narren är bland annat folk som Vgglan bland kråkor. Noctua inter cornices haar Erasmus sagt| när han haar velat beskrifwa en Giäck.* Grubb, 562. The fool is among other people as the owl among the crows. Cf. *Es ist ein Eul vnnder den Krähen; dat is een uil onder de kraaijen; il était la chouette de la compagnie.* Wander). But it is also possible that it refers to the washed-out owlish appearance of one who, 'wakeful as an owl,' has kept late hours over his cups. Cf. Why do you look like an owl? Vachell, WJ, 24. His face was as vacant as an owl's. Harrison, A, 83. This especially

applies to 'boiled owl'. 'Both were admirably made up, and Twiss had just the boiled-owlish appearance that is gained by working all night in a printing-office.' *Ref.*, 31 May, 1885, Ware. Cf. His boiled-looking eyes. Galsworthy, IP, 153. But this only tells us something about the sense and application of the term 'boiled owl'.

But if these remarks and considerations satisfactorily explain the first form of the sim. there still remains to be explained the strange fact that the drunkard is said to resemble a *boiled owl*. No serious attempt at a philological treatment of the saying has come to the compiler's knowledge. Of the sim. Ware says: 'Drunk — as a boiled owl. Here there is no common sense whatever, nor fun nor wit, nor anything but absurdity. Probably another instance of a proper name being changed to a common or even uncommon word. May be drunk as Abel Doyle — which would suggest an Irish origin like many incomprehensible proverbs too completely Anglicised.' He goes on to quote the following passage: 'It is a well-known fact in natural history that the parrot is the only bird which can sing after partaking of wines, spirits, or beer; for it is now universally agreed by all scientific men who have investigated the subject that the expression, 'Drunk as a boiled owl' is a gross libel upon a highly respectable teetotal bird which, even in its unboiled state, drinks nothing stronger than rain-water.' D. T., 12 Dec., 1892. This only shows that the would-be facetious journalist knew nothing whatever of the subject. Ware, who was a writer of comedies, found a ready solution of phraseological problems in his beloved name-word theory. A phrase or expression he did not understand was a 'corruption' of a proper name; 'dead as a door-nail' was a corruption of 'dead as O'Donnel,' 'smithereens', 'Smither's ruins' (for smithereen, shivereen, shibbereen, skatereen, kittereen, &c. see Eva Rotzoll, *Die Deminutivbildungen im Neuenglischen*, Heidelberg, 1910, p. 305 ff.), and trivet in 'right as a trivet' a 'corruption' of Truefit &c. His explanation of our sim. is impossible simply because it does not mention the earlier rec. form.

We must start from the words *owl*, *boiled owl* as we have them. Although the following considerations offer no solution they may be of some interest. — Has any one ever heard of people boiling owls? Strange to say this seems to have happened, as we read that owl-broth in many rural districts of England has been regarded as valuable in whooping cough (Hulme, NH, 247). In Tyrol there is, or was, a belief that broth in which a magpie has been boiled will make him who drinks it crazy (Swainson, BB, 79). Has some similar idea prevailed at some time in England concerning

the owl? But owls and drinking are connected in a another way: "The egges of an owle broken and put into the cups of a drunkard, or one desirous to follow drinking, will so work with him that he will suddenly lothe his good liquor and be displeased with drinking," (Swan, *Speculum Mundi*, N. & Q., 5, I, 504; the idea is mentioned in Rion, *Erreurs, Préjugés populaires*, 1869, see Lean). In Spain it is a popular belief that a stork's egg is a certain cure for dipsomania (N. & Q., 5, I, 504). Some other cures of dipsomania may be mentioned. "Take swallows and burne them, and make a powder of them; and give the dronken man thereof to drinke and, and he shall never be dronken hereafter." (Hulme, NH, 249). The eating of cabbage leaves is a "preservative of the stomache from surfetting and the head from drunkenesse . . . the Vine and the Coleworts be so contrarie by nature that if you plant Coleworts neare to the rootes of the Vine of itself it will flee from them, therefore it is no maruaile if Coleworts be of such force against drunkenesse." (Hulme, NH, 47; Folkard, PL, 264; Burton is of a different opinion; he speaks of the great sympathy 'betwixt the vine and the Elm, betwixt the vine and the cabbage.' AM, III, 16). There is also some connection, rather far-fetched perhaps, between the owl and another specific, or at least potential specific, for dipsomania, the ivy, as is witnessed by the proverbs 'to look like an owl in an ivy-bush' (Ray), All wonder at him like an owl in an ivy-tree (Draxe, 1633, Lean, II, ii); I sit like an owl in the ivy bush of a tavern (Middleton & Rowley, *Spanish Gipsy*, IV, iii, 1653, Lean, II, ii). The ivy was dedicated to Bacchus, who is represented as crowned with its leaves. 'Probably the Bacchanal's chaplet and the ivy-bough formerly used as the sign of a tavern both derived their origin from the belief that ivy in some form or other counteracted the effects of wine. On this point Coles says: "Box and ivy last long green and therefore vintners make their garlands thereof; though, perhaps ivy is the rather used because of the antipathy between it and the wine. . . . This antipathy is so great that a drunkard will find his speediest cure if he drunk a draught of the same wine wherein a handfull of ivy-leaves had been steeped.'" (Folkard, PL, 389 f.) The idea is found already in Pliny. What has occasioned the proverb 'to look like an owl in an ivy-tree'? a simile for a meagre, or weazle-faced man, with large wig, or very bushy hair. Grose. 1875, *Slang*. Do owls build their nests in ivy-trees? Cf. the following verses 'Once I was a monarch's daughter. And sat on a lady's knee: But am now a nightly rover, Banished to the ivy tree. (Swainson, BB, 123; otherwise we have Shakespeare's testimony that the owl was a baker's daughter). Just as the ivy, which like its berries is

a "potent medicin" for drunkenness, is the sign of a tavern, so the owl, which perhaps like its eggs was looked upon as some sort of specific for dipsomania, may have been used in phrases connected with drinking and drunkenness. In this case the rendering might perhaps be 'so drunk as to be fit for an owl-broth cure.' See 'sick as a cushion.' But much depends upon the age of the second form of the sim. If it does not go beyond the middle of last c., it may be, as Ware seems to suggest, of American origin and belong to the class of sim. alluded to p. 94. Cf. also Busy as hell &c. p. 122 f. and see Ch. VI on American sim. Cf. the Americanism, boiled crow (Thornton).

As *drunk* as a *thrush*. — This is rather a French proverb. It refers to the alleged habit which the bird has of surfeiting itself on the juice of the grape in the south of France during its temporary sojourn there. H.

As *drunk* as a *loon*, Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). See *Crazy*, p. 42.

As *drunk* as a *fish*. B. Jonson, *New Inn*, III, ii, (Lean, II, ii). Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish. Congreve, 1700, NED.

A *zwill*s like a vish. Brks. EDD.

To *drink* like a fish. Roget. He's the drinker that verily 'drinks like a fish.' Hood, 1837. Haliburton, *Sam. Slick's W. Saws* (Cowan, PS, 98). They say he drinks like a fish, and doesn't pay his debts. Chicago Record, 1894, (Cowan, PS, 99), See *Thirsty*, p. 190.

As *merry* as a *grig*. — One of the 80 expressions for drunkenness in *Gentleman's Mag.* 1770, p. 559. See *Merry*, p. 72.

As *drunk* as a *fly*. Northall, FPh. — What is the allusion in this sim.? The fly plays a certain part in mediaeval demonology, and in Sw. *att se flugor* (to see flies) means 'to have, or to see rats'. Is there any point of resemblance between a drunken person and a fly?

As *drunk* as *muck*. s. Sc. Nhb. — Our parson he got drunk as muck. Cum., 1808, EDD. Applied to a drunken man on both sides of the border. EDD. Cf. 'wet as muck' Ch. IV. *Muck*, dung, manure especially in a wet state, also anything dirty or disgusting. Perhaps of one in the advanced stage of drunkenness when he has made a filth of himself. The drunken filth — that's as mucky as a weet soot-bag. Lan. 1886, EDD.

As *drunk* as *soot*. Northall, FPh. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. — Probably a development of the sim. 'as dry as soot', meaning 'very thirsty'.

Fu's Balty, the Baltic. — Cf. To fill him as drunk as the Baltic sea. Scott, *Peeverill of the Peak*, xxvii; Nanty Ewart could steer through the Pentland Firth though he were as drunk as the Baltic Ocean. *ibid.* *Redgauntlet*, xiii. Another instance

of Scott's way of quoting proverbial sim. See p. 130. "As full as the Baltic' denotes in a most forcible way the extreme of intoxication. The phrase is still in use among the seafaring population of the east of Scotland; and its origin is evidently traceable to the long-existing trade between Scotland and the Baltic ports." *Edinburgh. N. & Q.*, 9, IV, 336.

CHAPTER III.

SIMILES OTHERWISE REFERRING TO FORM, TO COLOUR, SIZE, THE SURFACE AND SUBSTANCE OF THINGS.

Beautiful, Fine, Gaudy.

As *beautiful* as *heaven* [of a face]. Day, *Isle of Gulls*, II, 1606, Lean. *Beautiful* rec. fr. 1524.

As *fair* as *heaven*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Valentinian*, I, i (Lean, II, ii). *Fair*, beautiful, already in King Alfred. According to NED no longer in colloquial use, in lit. slightly arch.

Should a damsel *lovely* as an *angel* enter first . . . Young (the historian) quot. *Whitby Gloss.*, p. v. — *Lovely*, exquisitely beautiful fr. c. 1300.

Fair as the Angel that said 'Hail!' Tennyson, 1864, NED. Cf. O speak again, bright angel! for thou art/ As glorious to this night . . . As is a winged messenger of heaven . . . Shak., RJ, II. ii. Le ciel, ainsi que dit la chanson bretonne, était joli comme un ange. Jean Richepain, *La Glue*, XI.

A livery as *glorious* as *new Jerusalem*. Hardy, *Lao*. 54. *Glorious*, splendid in beauty fr. the 14th c.

Ripples, currents, deeps, and shallows . . . lay as *fair* under the sun as a New Jerusalem. Hardy, *HE*, 273. Cf. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Rev, 21, 2. See Song of Sol., 6, 4.

The count of Hentzau was handsome, *handsome* as the *devil*. Hope, *RH*, 225. *Handsome*, having a fine form or figure; beautiful with dignity, fr. 1590. Beauty is often ascribed to the devil, or at least to Lucifer. Cf. *Beauté du diable* (which they say is always to be seen at "sweet seventeen") *parceque le diable était beau quand il était jeune*. Lean, III. And, 'Lucifer with legiouns lerede hit in heuene;/ He was louelokest of siht after vr lord.' Langland, *PPl*, i, 109. Tha wes thes tyendes hades alder swithe feir isceapen, swa that heo was gehoten leoht-berinde. Homily of c. 1220. "No doubt this is all derived from a misapplication of Isaiah 14, 12." Skeat, *N. & Q.*

She is beautiful, very beautiful," she suggested. "Do you not think so?" "As *beautiful* as *hell*." London, *DS*, 113.

- The lilies which are *braver* than *Solomon*. Smith, 1593, NED.
 A reference to Mat. 6, 29.
- She was . . . as *comely* as the *tents of Kedar*. Hardy, DR, 336.
 A reference to Song of Sol., 1, 5, I am black, but comely,
 O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the
 curtains of Solomon. — The compiler is told by a person
 who has travelled in Palestine that the black tents of the
 nomads, often mentioned by Bible encyclopedias, really look
 pleasant.
- As *fair* as *Lady Done*. Chesh. The Dones were a great family
 in Cheshire, living at Utkinton, by the forest side. Nurses
 there use to call their children so, if girls; if boys, Earls of
 Derby. Ray. "At Utkinton Hall near Tarporley, there once
 lived a certain Lady Done, whose character and manners
 seem to have rendered her very popular amongst the country
 people, and whose memory appears still to be cherished. So
 that, when wishing to praise a woman, it is not uncommon
 to say to her, 'There's a Lady Done for you.'" In Pennant's
 Journey from Chester to London we are told that this lady
 is Dorothy, the wife of Sir John Done, forester and keeper of
 the forest of Delamere, Cheshire, who died in 1629. H.
- So *fine's Billy Rūke's wife*. Hewett, Dev. 11. *Fine*, smartly
 dressed. Billy Rūke's wife?
- As *fine* as *Forty Poke's wife*, who dressed herself with primroses.
 A Newcastle comparison. Denham, *Folk-Lore*, XXIX, 294.
- As *gaudy* as a fine *maid Marion*. Taylor, (W. P.) *Trav. to
 Prague*, (Lean, II, ii). Maid Marian, the character of the
 morris dance, originally performed by five men and a boy,
 dressed in girl's habits. The morris dance seems to have
 lived on till about the end of the eighteenth c. It is alluded
 to by Shak. and many other Elizabethan and later seven-
 teenth c. writers.

It was my hap of late, by chance,
 To meet a country morris dance,
 When chiefest of them all, the foole
 Plaied with a ladle and a toole;
 When every younger shak't his bells
 Till sweating feet gave fohing smells;
 And *fine Maide Marian*, with her smoil,
 Shew'd how a rascal plaid the roil.
 Rablet's *Cobbes Prophecies &c.* (Hazlitt, DFF, s. v. morris dance).

Churchwardens' accounts and similar documents show us that
 the dancers were decked out very gaily. Cotgrave refers to
 some articles of their costume: —

How they become the morris, with whose bells
 They ring all in to Whitsun ales, and sweat
 Through twenty scarfs and napkins till the hobby horse
 Tire, and the Maid Marian, resolved to jelly
 Be kept for spoon meet. *Engl. Treasury of Wit &c.*, 1655 (Hazlitt,
 DFF).

For some further notes on this originally Whitsun festival see Chambers's BD, I, 630 ff, where there is an engraving representing a morris dance. It is interesting to notice that the ladle mentioned before is in this case carried in the mouth of the hobby horse.

[A good horse] Tayled as a foxe, *Comly* as a *kyng*, *Nekkyd* as a duking, Mouthed as a kliket. 1592, NED.

To go more gayer and more *brave*, Than doth a *lord*. 1568, NED. Some brave as lords. Jonson, *Alch.* V, i, 2. Walked about as *fine* as lords. Swift, TT, 66. On Sundays and holidays I turned out in a velvet coat . . . as fine as any lord in the land. Thackeray, BL, i. — *Brave*, finely dressed, fine, handsome, rec. fr. 1568. Rare in 18th c.; in 19th c. apparently a literary revival, or adopted from dialect speech. NED.

As *fine* as a *lord's bastard*. Ray. See *Proud*, p. 81.

He's as *fine* as a *prince* and as gim as the best of them. Vanbrugh, 1705, NED.

As *fine* as a *princess*. *Belphegor*, II, iv, 1691, (Lean, II, ii).

As *brave* as any *countess* thou doest go. Cranley, *Amanda*, 1635 (Lean, II, ii).

Fine as a *col'nel of the guards*. 1730, NED.

As *brave* as any *Pensioner* or Noble man. Nashe, I, 173, 1592. *Pensioner*: "In the moneth of December were appointed to waite on the kings person 50 gentlemen called pensioners or speares . . ." Stowe, *Annals* (an. 1539), NED. I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all: and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners. Shak., MW, II, ii, 68.

As *smart* as a *master sweep*. Northall, FPh.

Zo *fine's* a *füle*. Hewett, Dev. 11. Does this refer to the gaudy dress of a court-jester?

Making themselves as *spruce* as *bridegrooms*. Hardy, HE, 149. *Spruce*, smart in appearance fr. 1599.

The parson's daughters are as *nice* as my *nail* and as clean as a penny. Mrs. Robinson, 1796, NED. *Nice*, trim, elegant, smart, did not outlive the sixteenth c.; the prevailing modern sense, that which one derives pleasure and satisfaction from; a pretty and agreeable appearance, rec. fr. 1769. NED.

When I put my new smock-frock on this mornin aw felt aw wer' as *foin* as *Dick's hatband*. Chs. EDD. See p. 97 ff.

"*Gay* as the *King's candle*. — A French phrase, alluding to an ancient custom, observed on the sixth of Jan., called the Eve or Vigil of the Kings when a candle of divers colours was burnt. The expression is used to denote a woman who is more showily dressed than is consistant with good taste." Brewer, Dict. 505. *Gay*, showy, showily dressed, fr. Chaucer, now rare.

As *fine* as *Bartholomew babies*. *Poor Robin's Alm.*, May, 1702.

(Lean, II, ii). *Bartholomew baby*, a gaudily dressed doll, such as appears to have been commonly sold at Bartholomew fair. Also applied to a gaudily dressed person. *Slang*. Cf. Her petticoat of sattin,/ Her gown of crimson tabby,/ Lac'd up before and spangl'd ore,/ Just like a Bartholomew baby. *Slang*. "It also tells farmers what manner of wife they shall choose, not one trickt up with ribbens and knots like a Bartholomew baby, for such an one will prove a Holy-day wife, all play and no work. *Poor Robin's Alm.* 1695, (Hazlitt, DFF). Men . . . were dressed up like fantastical antics, and women like Bartholomew babies. Brooks, 1670, NED. For these over-dressed dolls and the fair in general see Chambers, BD, II, 263 ff. See *Jealous*, p. 86.

As *fine* as *Phillyloo*. Chs. EDD. — There are several notes on the word *Philliloo* in N. & Q., 9, V, 372, 485, from which it appears that in Mid-Derbyshire it has the form *pilliliew*; in an Irish ballad of 1845 the form is *Pillalu*, in London and Huntingdonshire *fill-a-loo*, *fillyloo* (other spellings as well); in Yorkshire *lillilow*, or *pillilew*, which latter form is also found in the Hull Advertiser, 1796. It means 'neighbours' quarrels, family jars, woful lamentation (Irish), a scene or a disturbance of a private nature, a jolly row, a sudden blaze or flare-up in a fire; and last, any jollification.' It is found in Pembroke and Glamorgan as well, and a cor. thinks it must have been in use for at least 200 years. — But what is actually alluded to in the sim.? The compiler of the Cheshire Glos. says: ". . . the meaning of which I am totally unable to explain."

As *fine* as a *Maypole* on a *Mayday*. Denham (Lean, II, ii). See *Tall*.

As *bug* as a *cheese*. Yks. *Bug*, fine, gorgeous, spruce, in Yks. Lei. Cf. the use of *cheese* for anything first-rate or highly becoming, rec. fr. 1835, *Slang*.

As *fine* as *spice*. Yks. EDD. Handsomely dressed. — Does this refer to the fine and dainty appearance of confectionery, one of the current Yorkshire senses of *spice*?

He soon spied on the stream/ A dame whose complexion was *fair* as *new cream*. Barham, IL, 260. Probably a nonce-phrase, but see *White*, p. 230.

Trig as an *apple*. Cum. EDD.

As *spruce* as an *onion*. Ray.

As *smart* as a *carrot new scraped*. Grose; Northal, FPh. 11.

As *smart* as a *carrot*. Pegge, *Derbicisms*, 135.

As *foin* as a *new scrap'd carrot*, as folks sen. 1879. A common expression used to describe anyone who has dressed himself up smartly for any occasion. Cf. What with one thing or another, I never knowed a married man yet was fit to die whereas your cheerful bachelour comes up clean as a carrot. "Q". MV. 173.

Zo butivul and zo *purty* like *baynes* (beans). Hewett, Dev., 11. Refers perhaps to a flowering bean-field. *Like beans* see Ch. V. *Fine* as the *crusado*. Gascoigne's *Supposes*, 1566, H. *Crusado*, a Portuguese gold coin, mentioned fr. 1544. For further references see H.

As *fine* as a *ducket* in Venice. Chaucer, *H. of Fame*, iii, 285. (Lean, II, ii). This is the earliest inst. of Ducat in NED. For the Venetian ducat see *ibid.*, and cf. the term ducat gold, of fine gold or brilliant gilding.

As *fine* as *phippence*. *Appius & Virginia*. (Dodsley, XII, 384). See p. 112. Whilst his mistress is as fine as fippence, in embroidered sattens. Wycherly, 1672, *Slang. Grim, the Collier of Croydon*, 1662, (Lean); Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685. As fine as five-pence is her mien. Gay, NS. Pray, how was she drest? Why, she was as fine as fi'pence. Swift, PC, 294. *Antidote against Melancholy*, 1749, H. They [the Jews] continue to sit 'all of a row' with their daughters dressed 'all in green', or all in pink or salmon-colour, and as fine as five-pence on their ceremonial days. Sala, 1866. *Slang*. To dress as fine as fivepence is to dress very smartly. — The ancient Saxon shilling was a coin worth 5d. It was a far better coin than those made of tin, lead, and other inferior metals. Brewer, Dict. 462.

There's . . . the lot of 'em all sitting as *grand* as *fivepence* in madam's drawing-room. Trollope, 1857, *Slang*.

As *fine* as *sixpence*. *Poor Robin*, May, 1700 (Lean, II, ii).

As *smart* as sixpence. Dickens, *Oliv. Twist*, W.

She . . . sent her children, *neat* as *ninepence*, to school and church on Sunday. King, 1886, *Slang*. Hewett, Dev.; Northall, FPh. Lin., N. & Q. 12, III, 275. See *Easy: Complete*, Ch. IV.

As *nice* as *ninepence*. Very nice. Lei. EDD. "Silver nine-pences were common until the end of the seventeenth c. They were often given as love tokens, and I fancy the expression "as nice (or as nimble) as ninepence" has some reference to this custom." N. & Q., 7, X, 315. The allusion is most probably to the brilliant appearance of the new silver coin.

As *grand* as ninepence. Dickens, *Mut. Friend*, I, ix, NED.

As *clean* as a *new penny*. *Antidote against Melancholy*, 1749, H. *Clean* as a *penny* drest. Gay, NS. Yks. Der. Nhp. EDD. So I will go as I am; for, though ordinary, I am as clean as a penny. Richardson, P., 294. The sim. is used of one neatly and cleanly dressed.

As *neat* as a *bandbox*. *Slang*, n. d. Cf. Brewer, Dict. 880. A bandbox thing, all art and lace, Down from her nose-tip to her shoe-tie. Moore, 1852, NED.

A' things *feat* as a *new prin*. Per. EDD. She aye gae'd fait as a new prin. Ramsay, 1721, Lnk, EDD. *Feat*,(fait), neat, tidy,

pretty. *Preen*, pin. My ingle she keepit as *neat* as a preen. Nicoll, 1837, EDD. Their mither looks after the roguies/ An' keeps them as neat as a preen. Calder, 1897, Bwk., EDD. Lizzie proceeded to make the child as neat as a new preen. Bell, WM, 57.

Busk ye *trig's* a new-made preen. Abd. 1853, EDD.

Every corner as *clean* as a new preen. Lth. 1891. — Cf.

The hoose was shinin' like a new preen. Dmf. 1898, EDD.

A' things are polished like ony new preen. Lnk, 1838, EDD.

I didn' know th' old Dame Morgan's darter; her was a-dressed off so fine, and so *nate's* a *new pin*. Elworthy, WSG, 504.

A blue-eyed girl, as neat as a new pin and as smart as a steel trap. Seba Smith, 1866, Thornton. *Slang*.

As *bright* as a new pin. N. & Q., 12, III, 116; *Slang*.

Nice as a new pin. 'First class'. *Slang*.

One day when I came into the kitchen there sat Jack looking as *smart* as a new pin. Emerson, 1893, *Slang*.

Trig as new pins, and tight's the day was long. Clare, 1821.

NED. Trig as a new pin. Lin. EDD. *Trig*, trim or neat in dress, smart. NED.

The galley which he kept as *clean* as a new pin. Stevenson,

TI, 41. She was a good cook, and as clean as a new pin.

Phillpotts, WF, 42. Cf. There's a cabin like a new pin for you to sit in — for cleanness, I mean. Jacobs, MC, 145.

As *handsome* as *paint*. Lean, II, ii.

As *pretty* as paint. Northall, FPh. 10. *Paint*, meaning the thing that is painted, is a comparatively late word, being rec. fr. 1650.

Pretty as a *painted picture*. Phillpotts, SW. *Pretty*, having beauty without stateliness or majesty, fr. 1440.

You'm so *butivul* as a painted picture. Phillpotts, AP, 160.

As *handsome* as a *picture*. Harrison, A, 43.

'*Pretty* as pictors.' Alcott, *L. Wom. W.* Cf. She's a perfect beauty — a — picture, a statue, a — a — upon my soul she is. Dickens, NN, I, xxvi. She is just like a saint in a picture. Benecke, PA, 85. This sim. probably goes back to mediæval times, and the ref. is perhaps to the extremely neat and often very beautiful miniature paintings.

The house is as *neat* as *print*. Lei. War. EDD.

As *clean* as print. Midl. 1896, EDD. EDD renders both sim. 'in order, neat, clean, tidy.'

Trim as a *trencher*. Bale c. 1540. H.

As *neat* as *wax*. *Slang*, Brewer, 880. "Certainly the waxen cells of bees are the perfection of neatness and good order." *ibid*.

He had a skin as *fair* as *alabaster*. Smollet, 1771, NED. Does not *fair* in this case mean 'of light complexion'? Different in the following inst. Thar ben't no good-looking girls about now; when I was your age I was fair as aliblaster. Oxf. EDD. See *White*, p. 232.

Weeping ful sore with face as *faire* as *silver*. Byrd, 1589, *Lieder*, 29. See *Bright*, p. 223.

You are as *proud* as a *gardener's dog* with a nosegay tied to his tail. — This prov. is common in Dev., and applied to one wearing a flower, especially a large one, in his button-hole. N. & Q., 6, II, 377.

As *fine* as a *horse* in bells. Jackson & Burne, 595.

As *fine* as a *fore-horse*. Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As fine as a *horse*. Lean, II, ii. — They took place in the wagon (for Chester) and quitted London early on May-morning; and, it being the custom in this month for passengers to give the waggoner, at every inn, a ribband to adorn his team, she soon discovered the origin of the proverb 'as fine as a horse', for before they got to the end of their journey, the poor beasts were almost blinded by the tawdry, party-coloured, flowing honours of their heads. *Life of Mrs Pilkington*, quoted in Brady's *Var. of Lit.*, 1826. *Horse in bells*, bell-horse: 'Formerly it was common, and even now it is sometimes seen, that the leader of a team carries a board with four or five bells hung under it, attached to his collar by two irons: these irons hold the bells high above the horse's shoulders. The bells, which are good-sized and loud-sounding, are hidden from sight by a fringe of very bright red, yellow, and green woollen tassels; as the horse moves the jangle is almost deafening. Elworthy, WSG, 58. A reference to such bells is found in Hardy, W, 118, where we are told that there "were sixteen bells to the team, carried on a frame above each animal's shoulders, and tuned to scale, so as to form two octaves, running from the highest note on the right or offside of the leader to the lowest on the left or near-side of the shaft-horse. Melbury [the owner] was among the last to retain horse-bells in that neighbourhood." On a less pretentious scale, English horses are still "fine" with tassels and bells. The leader of the team, the fore-horse, is not unfrequently referred to in Elizabethan E: A flaunting unsauory fore-horse nosegay. Nashe, I, 268, 1592. They wore besoms of thrift in their hats like fore-horses. Green, *Upst. Courtier*, 1592, NED. Heere Bedlam is: and here a Poet garish,/ Gaily bedecked, like fore horse of the parish. G. Harvey, 4 Let., Wks, I, 173, 1592. Have I not borrow'd the fore Horse-bells his Plumes and Braverics. Sampson, 1638, NED. See also *ibid.* quot. 1824.

Mrs. and Miss — han just gone by wi' ribbints and fithers as *fine* as *flying pigs*. Jackson & Burne, 595. Cf. the proverb, Pigs may fly, but they are not very likely birds.

Trig as a *lennard*. Spruce as a linnnet. Nhb. EDD. Is this an allusion to the fact that in summer the breast and crown of the cock become crimson or rose-coloured?

- As *gaudy* as a *peacock*. Roget. See *Proud*, p. 83, *Vain*, 85.
- As *gim* as peacocks. Thornton. *Gim*, (jim), neat, spruce, smart. The peacock being the most imposing and magnificent of birds it is treated as a type of ostentatious display or vain-glory. NED.
- She is *fairer* than the *dolphin's eye*. *A Merry Knack to Know a Knave*. (Hazlitt's Dodsley, vi, 14). The dolphin was often introduced metaphorically in descriptions of beauty. Cf. Parting day/ Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues/ With a new colour . . . The last still loveliest. Byron, 1818, NED. See note to Jonson, *Alch.* IV, i, 160, dolphin's milk.
- Beautiful* as a *butterfly*, and as proud as a queen, Pretty little Polly Perkin of Paddington Green. Ballad, overheard.
- As *gaudy* as a *butterfly*. Roget. *Butterfly*, as a term for a vain, gaudily attired person fr. 1605 in NED.
- But he'll dress her as *dink* as a *daisy*, as ye see. Scott, *Bride of Lam.*, xii. *Dink*, neat, finely dressed. Cf. the slang use of daisy to denote anything first-rate of its kind.
- As *brave* as *holly*. Rowley, *Shoemaker &c.* V (Lean, II, ii). See *Red*, p. 248.
- Emelye þat *fairer* was to sene Than is the *lylie* upon his stalke grene. Chaucer. As fair as a lily, as white as a swan. Old Song. Northall, FR, 409, Diaphenia, like the Daffodowdilly, White as the sun, fair as the lily. Constable, 1594 (Lean II, ii).
- As *clean* as *nip*. Very clean or tidy, smart. Cum. Chs. EDD. See *White*, p. 233.
- Jaëne who war as *smart* as a *peeny*. Glo. 1890, EDD. *Smart*, neat, trim, neatly and trimly dressed, fashionable, elegant, fr. the earlier part of the eighteenth c. NED. *Peeny*, peony. See *Red*, p. 248.
- And she was *faire* as is the *rose in May*. Chaucer, Leg. I, 34. As *fair* as a *rose*. Phillpotts, SW. As white as the lily, as fair as the rose. Northall, FR, 409. From OE till to-day the rose has been the type of matchless beauty. See *Bright*, *Fresh*, p. 225.
- "You'm a bowerly maiden," she said, with extreme frankness. "So *lovely* as the *bud o'the briar* in June. Phillpotts, AP, 45. Cf. As fair as flowers in June. Dunbar, *Twa Marriit Wemen* (Lean, II, ii). Women who are lovely as flowers in their June. Phillpotts, P, 31.
- As *gaudy* as a *tulip*. Roget. Cf. Beauty, thou active passive III! . . . Thou Tulip, who thy Stock in Paint dost waste. Cowley, 1647. My little blossom, my Gilliflower! my Rose! my Pink! my Tulip! Cibber, 1701, NED.
- So *faire* and fresh, as *freshest flowre in May*; [of a beautiful woman]. Spenser, FQ, I, xii, 22. As fresch as flouris that in May vp spredis, Dunbar 1508, NED.
- Fayre* as *floure in felde*. *ante* 1350. W.

þu art *swetture* þane eny flur. 1275, NED.

As *fair* as any flower. Tennyson, W.

For *flower* applied to a person as a symbol of beauty, see NED. 'Fair flower' is a formula frequently found in ME and early MnE. 'Flower in fields' and similar combinations in Spenser and Shakespeare, see W.

As *fine* as a *hedge in May*. Wesley, *Maggots* (Lean, II, ii).

As *fair* as the first look of *May*. Sheppard, 1651, (Lean, II, ii).

Lasses . . . gay as May-morning, tidy, gim, and clean. Tennant, 1812, NED. May Tresham . . . was lovely as the morning of her namesake month, and as sweet. Warren Bell, *London Mag.*

The king, young and happy, and as *beautiful* as the *dawn* that was stealing into the room. Mason, PK, 139. She came out to meet me like a queen, as young and charming as a flower, and as beautiful as the dawn. Benecke, PA, 85.

And she is *faire* as is the bryghte *morwe*. Chaucer, *Leg.*, III, 277. For though Poëana were as faire as morne. Spenser, *FQ*, IV, ix, 3. Bright as the day and as the morning fair, / Such Chloe is . . . Prior (Lean, II, ii).

And she is fair too, is she not? As *fair* as *day in Summer*, wondrous fair. Shak., *Per.*, II, v, 35. Kate is As fair as day. *Ibid.*, LLL, IV, iii, 86.

A young lady, as *fair* as the *sunshine*, sir. Kingsley, WH, 123. The lady . . . who they say is as *beautiful* as the *noonday sun*. Dickens, PP, II, 164. Cf. All in arms . . . Glittering in golden coats, like images; As full of spirit as the month of May, And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer. Shak., KH, IVa, IV, i, 101.

As *fair* as the radiant *Northstar*. Lean, II, ii.

A violet . . . Fair as a *star*, when only one Is shining in the sky. Wordsworth, 1799, NED. Cf. But harts of Kings are showred in the fame, Fairer then Sunne, Moone, Starres, or Planets seaven. *Arber* 29, 42.

He was painted all over . . . all sorts of colours, as *splendid* as a *rainbow*. Twain, HF, 197.

Note. The last 15 sim. probably represent only a very small portion of the number of sim. in which flowers, celestial bodies, and parts of the day are taken as symbols of exceeding beauty. See the following Section.

Bright, Fresh, Shining.

Go, attire yourself *Fresh* as a *bridegroom*, when he meets his bride. Dekker, HWWh. Ia, xii. A certain lord, neat and trimly dressed, Fresh as a bridegroom. Shak., KH, IVa, I, iii, 33.

Ez *breet ez a bald head*. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. It was *bright as glory* and . . . dark as sin again in a second.

Twain, HF, 71.

For *brighter* was the schyning of her hewe Than in the Tour the noble *i-forged newe*. Chaucer.

As *bright as a new penny*. Northall, FPh. — Common, used everywhere. Refers to anything that shines, e. g. a copper kettle. U. Cf. such slang terms as 'shiner', a coin, especially a gold piece. 'shino, shinary', about the same thing, 'a glisterer,' a sovereign. *Slang*.

As *fresh as farthings* from the mint. Swift (Lean, II, ii).

As *bright as a button*. Lean, II, ii; Lousia M. Alcott, *Little Men*, W.

Ez *breet ez seeing-glass*. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 242.

Cf. Ideas bright as mirrors and just as unsubstantial. Hardy, HE, 19. *Seeing-glass* chiefly in n. Cy dial.

Ez *breet ez a newmade pin*. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. See the previous section.

Ez *fresh ez pent*. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 242. You'd see it come fresh as paint, without a stone stirred or a course sprung. [of a newbuilt bridge]. Phillpotts, WF, 51. [Odo is] fresh as paint. [on the Baieux tapestry]. DNL, 5/11, '12. The sim. is applied to objects and persons that have the brightness and freshness of things new and unsullied. See p. 219.

To *shine* like a *goldsmith's shop* in Cheapside. Nabbes, *Covent Garden*, 1638, (Lean, II, ii).

As *golde I glister* in gere. WCh, 316. Cf. the proverb, 'All is not gold that glitters.'

Si gode beleave licht and is *bricht* ine tho herte of tho gode manne ase *gold*. First half of 13th c. With nales yolwe, and bright as eny gold. Chaucer, KT, 1283. In habyte gaye and glorious, Brychter nor gold or stonis precious. Lyndsay, 1552. NED. As bright as gold. Huloet, 1552, NED.

Crul was his heer, and as the *gold* it *shoon*. Chaucer.

The water *glittered* like burnished *silver* as it fell to the cobbles.

Strand, 89, '17. Cf. Thou moon that shinest/ Argent clear above. Longfellow, SSt, II, x.

Out goon the swerdes as the *silver bright*. Chaucer, KT, 1750. As bright as any syller, . . . & straight as any pyller. GGN, II, i. Spenser, FQ, I, ix, 4. Brewer, Dict, 1143. Roget. The spade . . . had been so completely burnished that it was bright as silver. Hardy, W, 418.

A burde in a bour ase *beryl* so *bryth*. C. 1300, NED.

As bright as beryl. *Coventry Myst.* (Lean, II, ii). Cf. such expressions as 'beryl of beauty' applied in admiration to a woman. See *Clear*, Ch. IV.

The last rays . . . shining *bright as jewels*. Stevenson, TI, 100.

. . . Her goodly eyes like *Saphyres* shining bright,
 Her forehead yvory white,
 Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
 Her lips lyke cherryes charming men to byte,
 Her breast lyke to a bowle of creame uncrudded,
 Her paps lyke lyllies budded,
 Her snowie neck lyke to a marble towre.
 Spenser, *Epith.*, 172 ff.

Tears/ That like to orient *pearls* did purely *shyne*/ Upon her
 snowy cheeke. Spenser, FQ, III, vii, 9.

For as the *crystal* glorious ye *shyne*, And lyke ruby ben your
 chekes rounde. Chaucer, 1396, NED. Laomedia like the
 christall sheene. Spenser, FQ, IV, xi, 51.

The waves, *glittering* like Christall glas. Spenser, FQ, IV,
 xi, 27.

Mary, as *bryght* as crystal stone. *Songs*, 5.

She's *fresh* as foam and crystal clear. Vachell, WJ, 94.

His heed was balled, pat *shone* as any *glas*. Chaucer, Prol. 198.
 And all embrewd in blood his eyes did shine as glas. Spenser,
 FQ, I, vii, 7.

With wawes grene, and *bryght* as eny glas. Chaucer, KT,
 1100. Gascoigne, *Voyage to Holland*, 1587 (Lean, II, ii).

Pearled tears as bright as glass. Rob. Greene, *Never too
 Late*, ed. Dyce, 296 (Lean). See also Spenser, FQ, IV, x, 39.

Her face/ Like the faire *yvory shining* they did see. Spenser,
 FQ, VI, viii, 37. See *White*, p. 232.

Their shooes shined as *bryght* as a *slike stone*. Nashe, II, 226,
 1593. — This is probably no proverbial sim., but it deserves
 to be quoted, because it is *misquoted* in Lean. He has, As
 bright as a *fleck stone*, and expl. this as a 'flikestone' — a
 small stone used in spinning. No such word known to any
 dict. The 'slike stone' of the original is the slick or sleek
 stone, a smooth stone with which paper, linen, leather, &c.
 and in some parts the floor were smoothed and polished.

Is *shines* like *Holmby*. Northampton. A comparison that may
 have originated in the glittering appearance which Holmeby
 House presented when gilded by the sun. Miss Baker, North.
 Gl. Cf. Fuller: As for civil structures Holdenby House lately
 carried away the credit, built by Sir Christopher Hatton, and
 accounted by him the last monument of his youth. If Flor-
 ence be said to be a city so fine that it ought not to be
 shown but on Holy-days, Holdenby was a house that should
 not have been shown but on Christmas day. But alas! Hold-
 enby-house is taken away, being the emblem of human hap-
 piness, both in the beauty and brittleness, short flourishing
 and soon fading thereof. Fuller, W., II, 499. Cf. The ironical
 sim. It shines like Holmby mudwalls, i. e. the village hovels
 contrasted with the mansion. Lean.

As *bryght* as *butterflies*. Byron, DJ, 3, 27, W. See p. 221.

As *bryght* as bugyl or ellys *bolace*. Lydgate, c. 1430, NED. As breet as a bullace. *Folk-Lore*, LXIX, 223, *ibid.*, 1876, 429, Yks. An e'e 'at's as breet as a bullace. Cum. EDD. A cor. of N. & Q., 5, XI, 247 has come across this sim. in the form, As bright as bullhus, and asks what 'bullhus' is. In one of the replies we are told that a 'bullhus' is the large-spotted dogfish, which is called bull huss on the Sussex coast. This probably indicates that the sim. is perhaps not generally known. 'Bullhus' is of course *bullace* (*Prunus insititia*), a variety of the wild plum, or a large sloe. The sim. might be rendered 'as bright as a sloe'. See *Black*, p. 245. In Yks. the word is the synonym for what is bright, black, or sour. EDD. Cf. also The sparkling bullies of her eyes/
Like two eclipsed suns did rise. Cleveland, 1659, NED.

She was as *fresh* as a *daisy*. Marryat, 1833, NED.

As fair and *fresh* as a *rose* on thorn. P. Robin. 1772, (Lean, II, ii). There was Fanny, as fresh as a rose on its stalk; And Annie, as bright as the dawn. Besant, RMM, 223. Her neck schan like unto the roise in May. Douglas, 1513, NED.

Faire Canacee, as fresh as morning rose. Spenser, FQ, IV, iii, 51.

She looks as *clear* as morning roses newly wash'd with dew. Shak., TS, II, i, 171.

I koude walke as fressh as is a rose. Chaucer. Without words Sergeant B. smelt the fish carefully; then his face shone. "Fresh as a rose!" he said. Phillpotts, AP, 357. *Slang*. See *Beautiful* &c. p. 221. *Red*, p. 249, and *Sweet*, Ch. IV.

As *bright* as *blossom on breve*, *The Smith and his Dame*, H., *Early E. Poetry*, iii, 207 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. An angelle . . . As blossom bright on bough. *Townel. Myst.* 136.

As *fresh* as *flowers* in May. WCh. He had a daughter fresh as floure of May. Spenser, *Colin Cl.*, 107. Gay, *Shepherd's Week*, 1714. Fresh as the flowers of Spring. Dickens, L. Dor., III, 179, W.

She returned to the great city . . . as fresh as a country flower. Malvery, SM, 237.

Fressher than a flower. Chaucer, Gower, W. As fair and fresh as any flower. *Marriage of Wit and Science* (H, *Old Plays*, ii, 342, Lean, II, ii). A complexion as fresh as a flower. Hardy, GND, 219. Given a young girl, fresh as a flower, young, innocent, not without feeling. Merriman, LH, 312.

As *fresh* as *meadow* in a morn of May. Lean, II, ii.

Emelye pat fairer was to sene/
Than is the lylie upon his stalke grene/
And *fressher* than the *May* with floures newe. Chaucer. That fressher was and Iolier of arry/
As to my doom, than is the Month of May. *ibid.* And all the ground was strow'd

with flowres as fresh as May. Spenser FQ, IV, x, 37. Now is my Cloris fresh as May. Weelkes, 1598, *Lied.*, 187. In Lean insts of 1600, 1611. Did she look troubled? Not in the least — bright and fresh as a May morning. Hardy, HE, 436. Eliza *flourishing* like May. Dekker, OF, 53.

It was a fine spring morning, and the sun *bright* as a *midsummer day*. Mason, PK, 34.

In halle sitte this January and May/ As *freissch* as is the brighte *someres day*. Chaucer, MaT.

To shine as bright as is the sunny day. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, ii, 274, 1509 (Lean, II, ii). A rich throne as bright as sunny day. Spenser, FQ, I, iv, 8.

Hir forhead schon as bright as eny day. Chaucer, MiT. Making Trueths dungion brighter then the day. *Arber*, 29, 54. In armour bright as day. Spenser, FQ, V, ix, 24. That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day. Macaulay, 1832, NED. A full moon was beginning to rise . . . all would be as bright as day. Stevenson, TI, 21. [The candles] each with silver backs which reflected their light until the room was bright as day. Doyle, R, 138. Twain, TS, 146. Roget.

She would awake, fresh and hopeful and *radiant* as the *rosy-fingered dawn*. Besant, RMM, 307. As *bright* as the dawn. *ibid.* 223.

See above. Cf. the Greek *ῥοδοδάκτυλος ἠώς*. Faire Marian, . . . Whose beauty *shineth* as the morning cleare, With silver deaw upon the roses pearling. Spenser, *Colin Cl.*, 507.

Briers, Upon whose leaves are drops of new-shed blood/ As *fresh* as *morning dew* distilled on flowers. Shak., TA, II, iii, 199.

As sweet a face as a young man ever deserved to see. It was fresh and clear as the morning dew. Mason, PK, 74.

To *shine* as *Phoebus* doth on a May morning. Barclay, *Cast. of Lab.*, 1506 (Lean, II, ii). All the walls within of fynest golde . . . *Glistering* as Phoebus orient. Barclay, 1514, NED.

Flakes of fire, *bright* as the *sunny ray*. Spenser, FQ, V, v, 8. Cf. The bright metal *shining* like *sunne rayes*. *ibid.* VI, ii, 39. As bright as the *Sumbeam*. Gay (Lean, II, ii).

As *breet* ez *sun-leet*. In daily use. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. Cf. A satin kimono, shining-red as a sunset's heart and glittering-gold as bright as a sunset's fringes. *Nash's*, April, 12, '17. As *bright* as the *sun at noonday*. Roget.

þonne *scinað* ða rihtwisan swa swa *sunne* on hyra faeder rice. c. 1000, NED. Hire nebscheft schininde al as schene as þe sunne, 1225, NED. His brydel as the sonne schoon, or als the moone light. Chaucer. Cf. And that was yellow and *glitered* as the sunne. *ibid.* KT, 1308. — It is remarkable that no later inst. has been found.

Berhtre þonne se leoma sie *summan* on sumera. c. 1000, NED. Seofesiðe brihtre þene þa sunne. 1175, NED. Vp riseth fresshe Canacee hir selue/ As rody and bright as dooth the yonge

sonne, That in the Ram is four degrees vp ronne. Chaucer. And ye welle me beholde [I am a thousand fold] Brighter then is the son. *Townel. Myst.*, p. 3, said by Lucifer.

Her glance is as the razor keen,/ And not the sun is brighter. Gay, NS. A most sweet Demi-nun,/ Her cheek pensive and pale; tresses bright as the Sun. Barham, IL, 248.

I have a lovely lemman,/ As *bright* of blee as is the *silver moonc*. *George a Greene*, Dodsley, I, 218.

• My Sovereaine, my deare, Whose glory *shineth* as the *morning starre*. Spenser, FQ, II, ix, 4. [My beauty] that did then shine as the morning starre. *ibid.* I, ii, 36.

As *bright* as doth the morning starre appear/ Out of the East, with flaming locks bedight, to tell that dawning day is drawing neare,/ And to the world does bring long-wished light: So faire and fresh that Lady shewd herself in sight. *ibid.*, I, xii, 21 Cf. Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear, As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere. Shak., MND, III, ii, 60. Hise eyen twynkled in his heed aright As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 267.

As *bright* as *stars* in winter. Chaucer, *Ct. of Love*, 82, Lean, II, ii. Let her eyes shine as bright as *stars*, her neck/ Bloom as the rose, her hair outshine pure gold,/ Her honey lips display the ruddy blush,/ Let her in all her glory outdo Venus/ And all the goddesses, &c. Burton, AM, III, 243. Fr. L.: — *Candida sideriis ardescant lumina flamis,| Fundant colla rosas, et cedat crinibus aurum,| Mellea purpureum depromat ora ruborem;| Fulgeat, ac Venerem caelesti corpore vincat,| Forma dearum onnis, &c.* *Petron. Satyr. Fragm.*

My accoutrements *shining* like the *seven stars*. Hardy, RN, 171. Scowres it [a knife] so *bright* as the *firmament*. Nashe, III, 265, 1593.

Glistening armes . . . That *shone* as *bright* as doth the *heaven shene*. Spenser, FQ, V, viii, 29.

Two burning lampes she set In silver sockets, shyning like the *skies*. Spenser, FQ, III, viii, 7. Then gan her beautie shine as brightest sky. *ibid.* I, vi, 4.

Two Paynim knights, al armd as *bright* as *skie*. *ibid.*, II, vii, 10. He hath a sword that *flames* like burning *brond*. Spenser, FQ, II, iii, 18. Cf. the Dutch sim. *Zoo helder, schoon, zuiver, als een brand*. This is by Stoett, NS, I, 120., expl. as referring to the blade of a sword. He quotes the Dutch cp. sim. *brandhelder, brandrein, brandschoon*, and the LG. *brandfûl, brandbitter, brandsalt* &c. Cf. the E. bran(d)new, and the dial. brandfirenew; the Dutch and G. words must refer to the same thing.

She hadde hir handes vnder hire sides, and hire eyen *glowyng*e as *gleedes*. 1430, NED. The eyes that beene in his head, they *glister* as doth the glead. c. 1650, NED. To *glitter* as a glead, mentioned in NED, but no inst, given. See *Red*, p. 249, *Hot*, Ch. III.

A starne as *bright* as *fyre*. *Townel. Myst.*, 126.

That limpud water, chill and *bright* as an *iceberg*. Blackmore, LD, 40.

Ugly.

- As *ugly* as the *devil*. Fielding, *Tom Thumb*, ii, 7 (Lean, II, ii). Hewett, Dev. 12. Huug'lē'e'z dhu daev'l. "This is the usual superlative of *ugly*, and the aspirate forms part of the comparison." Elworthy, WSG. See *Beautiful*, p. 214. He's as *faal* as the Dule. Yks 1889. *Foul*, *ugly*, rare in lit. use but in many dial. the current sense. NED.
- As *ugly* as the *devil's dam*. Flecknoe, *Diar.*, 1656 (Lean, II, ii). *Devil's dam* already mentioned p. 81. The term is rec. fr. Langland, and no inst. later than 1783. It is stated to be obsolete. Query correct? Heywood has some speculations as to the origin and birth of the devil's dam: When was the devil's dam create, the withered old jade?/ The next leap-year after the wedding was first made. PE, vii, 46. But this does not tell us much. Milton makes Sin the devil's wife, and according to a legend the personage in question was Lilith, Adam's first wife. Cf. For God is held a righteous man, And so is his dame. *A Merry Geste of Robin Hood*. (Lean, III). Does this refer to Christ and the Virgin Mary? The devil has not only a dam but also a wife, according to the phrase, 'The devil was beating his wife behind the door.' Swift, PC.
- As *ugly* as *sin*. Brewer, Dict. 1257. Northall, FPh., 11. As *ugly* as *sin* and not half as pleasant. Lean, II, ii. Though I am *ugly* as *sin*, I would not have you think me an ass. Scott, 1821, NED. Cf. Sin is a creature of such hideous mien/ That to be hated needs but to be seen. Pope.
- Handsome* as a last year's *corpse*. *Slang*. A sarcastic compliment.
- As *ugly* as an *old hawd*. Congreve, 1693 (Lean, II, ii).
- Plain* as *parritch*. Fif. 1899, EDD. *Ugly* in appearance. This sense of *plain* rec. fr. 1749. Some of the numerous sim. under *Plain*, Ch. IV, are perhaps also applied to a plain, i. e. ill-favoured, appearance.
- As *ugly* as a *horse's head*. A sim. for anything shapelessly *ugly*. Som. EDD.
- As *ugly* as *bull-beef*. *Slang*. See *Proud*, p. 82.
- As *fine* as an *ape in purple*. Clarke (Lean, II, ii). Cf. The fayrest of apes is fowle. Cf. also the old couplet, 'An ape will be an ape, by kinde as they say,/ Though that ye clad him all in purple array. Puttenham, 1589, NED, and the more modern form, 'An ape's an ape, a varlet's a varlet, though they be clad in silk or scarlet. Bohn. In Dutch, 'Al draagt een aap een gouden ring, het is en blijft een leelijk ting. Stoett, NS, I, 12, where we are told that these and similar sayings go back to the Latin, *Simia est simia et si aurca gestet insignia*. Similar sayings in G.

- No, no, I am as *ugly* as a *bear*. Shak., MND, II, ii, 94. Cf. the phrase, 'Handsomely as a bear pricketh muscles.' See p. 165.
- As *ugly* as an *owl*. i. e. blob-cheeked. Skelton, *Ym. of Hypoc.*, 430 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *ugly* as an *octopus*. Cowan, PS, 37. *Octopus* rec. in NED fr. 1758.
- As *fow* as a *toad*. Der. The toad ougly and venemous. Shak., 1600, NED. See p. 140.
- She would appear *more ugly* than a *beast*. Burton, AM, III, 239.
- Ez *bonny ez a sheep-cade*. In ridicule. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. *Sheep-cade*, sheep-tick or louse, chiefly a northern word.

Dirty, Lousy, Untidy.

- As *dirty* as *Thump-o'-Dolly*, that died of being washed. Lan. Wright, RS, 162. Which reminds one of the North-Swedish woman, who stoutly maintained that she suffered from gout in her left foot, because she had washed it two years ago.
- As *lousy* as a *schoolmaster*. *Puritan* I, ii, 1607 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. *Melancholy*, p. 55.
- As *sluttish* and *slatterny* as an *Irishwoman* bred in France. Wycherly, *Plain Dealer*, II, i, 1677 (Lean).
- As *towzled* as a *mop*. N. & Q., 12, III, 277; not in very common use.
- Ez *dusty ez a flour pooak*. In daily use, Blakeborough, NRY, 240. Cf. *Dustud o'er wi' a fleaur-poke*. Lan. 1864, EDD.
- Tha drunken filth — that's as *mucky* as a weet *soot-bag*. Lan. 1886, EDD. *Mucky*, rec. fr. 1538, not now in polite use. NED.
- As *rusty*, or *mouldy*, as an old *horse-shoe*. Northall, FPh., 9.
- Ez *mucky ez a pig-sty*. In daily use, Blakeborough, NRY, 240.
- Ez *mucky ez a duck pond*. *ibid.*
- As *dirty* as old *Brentford* at Christmas. Farquhar, *Beaux Strat.* 1707 (Lean). Brentford, 7 miles WSW of London.
- As *howerly* as a *dog*. Lin. EDD. *Howerly*, dirty, a Lin. adj. — The French say *Crotté comme un barbet*, muddy or dirty as a poodle. Brewer, Dict. 336.
- As *mucky* as a dog. Lin. EDD.
- As *lousy* as a *pig*. Northall, FPh., 9.
- As *lousy* as a *coot*. Not. Lin. EDD. Northall, FPh. 9. See *Mad*, p. 42; *Stupid*, p. 52; *Bald*, p. 168.
- Scabbed* as a *cuckoo*. Ray. *Gentleman's Mag.*, 189 (Lean, II, ii); *Folk-Lore Rec.* 1878 (EDD). Cuckoo scabb'd gowk, / Mickle said little wrought. Other birds provide for her. Lovell's *Hist. Animals*, 1661, says their feathers come off in winter, and they are scabbed. Northall, FR, 271.
- Brambles . . . were *dingy* as church *cobwebs*. Hardy, TM, 142. *Dingy*, rec. fr. 1736.
- As *mucky* as *muck*. Yks. EDD. Used of dirty roads &c.
- Wery so water in wore*. Kluge, 82. Dirty as water in a swamp.

Ragged.

- Slaves as *ragged* as *Lazarus*, in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores. Shak., KH IVa, IV ii. Probably not proverbial.
- As *ragged* as a *beggar*. Clarke. See *Drunk*, p. 201.
- As *tattered* as the *Scots colours in Westminster Hall*. Howell, *Century of New Sayings*, 1659, IV (Lean).
- As *ragged* as a *mile-iron*. "Explained to me as meaning 'as ragged as an iron milestone', because children pelt them and make them look rough and dented." Lin. EDD. Why, her gown is as ragged as a milestone. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
- Ragged* as a *scarre-crow*. Heywood, 1637, NED. This sense of scarecrow rec. fr. 1592. Cf. No scarecrow in the fields ever had such clothes. Besant, 1887, NED. *Scarecrow* of a person dressed so as to frighten people fr. 1590.
- As *ragged* as a *colt*. *Thersites* (H, *Old Plays*, I, 416). Northall, FPh, 10.
- Ugly, *tatyred* as a *foylle*. *Townel. Myst.* 4.
- As *rugged* as a foal. Chesh. Gl.
- Ragud's* u *raam*, ragged as a ram. At certain seasons of the year, the fleece of the ram becomes in a state which makes this sim. as apt as it is universal. Elworthy, WSG.

White.

- There she was, *white* as *death* itself. Hardy, RN, 32. Cf. dead(ly) white, and 'pale as death' p. 234. Many of the following sim. have their exact parallels under *Pale*, p. 234 ff.
- As *white* as a *ghost*. Lean, II, ii.
- As *white* as my *nail*. Bale, *Kynge John*, c. 1550 (Lean, II, ii).
- Whyt* was his face as *payndemayn*, his lippes red as rose. Chaucer, TST, 14. *Payndemayn*, white bread of the finest quality, obs. already 1530.
- As *white* as a *custard*. Swift, *Verses for Fruit Women* (Lean, II, ii). Cf. White like the white of a custard. 1665, NED.
- He was brigt so glas, he was *whit* so the *flur*, rosered was his colour. *King Horn*, c. 1200 (Kluge, 69). NED insts of 1375, 1440 referring to persons. In daily use, Blakeborough, NRY, 240.
- As smooth as glass, as *white* as *curds*, her pretty hand invites. Gay, NS; The lady turned white as curds an' went in her chamber. Phillpotts, AP, 245.
- An Anlas and a gipser al of silk/ Heeng at his girdel, *whit* as *morne milk*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 357. A barm-cloth eek as

whit as morne milk. *Ibid.* MiT, 50. Shee's white as morrows milk or flakes new blowne. Sall, 1593, NED.

A myule al so whit as *milk*. 13 . . . , NED. *Sir Degravant*, 1490 (Lean, II, ii). Then said the Ladie, quhyte as milk. Lyndesay, (Kissel), 1550. Two Beares as white as anie milk. Spenser, *Ruins of T.*, 562; *ibid.*, FQ, V, v, 2 (of 'sattin'). Cowards . . . Who inward search'd, have livers white as milk. Shak., MV, III, ii, 86. *Ibid.* Per., IV, i, 21 (of fingers). *New Custom*, II, ii, Dodsley, I, 61 (surplices). Dekker, OF, 69 (head and beard). Swift, GT, 250 (skin). Down she comes as white as milk, / With a rose in her bosom as soft as silk. *Sally Water* (Song), Northall, FR, 378. Benecke, PA, 169 (a reindeer). "Q", MV, 232 (a seal). Hardy, Lao. 167 (horses).

A most inspiritingly young old lady, as soft and *white* as a *powder-puff*. Harland, MFP, 315. *Powder-puff*, rec. fr. 1704.

As *white* as his *shirt*. Lean, II, ii. They shook, they stared as white's their shirt. Housman, 1896, NED.

A diaper napkin as *lilly white* as a Ladies marrying *smocke*. Nashe, III, 206, 1599. Cf. Hire chemise [is] smal and whit, . . . and hire smok whit. c. 1200, and Chaucer says, 'Whit was hir smok.' MiT. 52. *Smock* now arch. or dial.

'Twas five pound in gold, as *white* as my *kercher*. Dekker, SM, 47.

A very old riddle, which is commonly asked in a mocking way of very stupid people, is, 'So black's my 'at, so *whit* 's my *cap*, maggoty pie, and what's that?' Elworthy, WSG, 453. [The veal] is as brown as a berry, but I should have it as *white* as a *napkin*. *Vinegar & Mu.*, 23.

Cyterea, How bravely thou becomest thy bed! fresh lily! And *whiter* than the *sheets*. Shak., Cy, II, ii, 14. When the slae tree is white as a sheet, / Sow your barley, whether it be dry or weet. Ray. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. Looking as white as a sheet. Scott, RR, xxxviii. Tom turned as white as a sheet. Twain, TS, 247; *ibid.*, HF, 347. Stevenson, TI, 62. Hardy, WB, 218; LLI, 119 &c. Lyall, DV, &c.

A face as *white* as a *pudding clearwt*. Lan. EDD.

The laundress will make you both look as *white* as a *clout*, if she list. *Band, Cuff and Ruff*, 6. At this Littlefaith lookt as white as a Clout. Bunyan, 1678, NED. De Foe, 1722. Macneill, 1795, NED. In EDD there are some Sc. and n. Cy insts: Wi' face as fyte as ony clout. Kcb. Lth. (1856). Pat ran intill t'hoose, white as a clout. Cum. &c.

In an instant we were all four as *white* as *paper*. Stevenson, NAN, 271 . . . stammered Winfield, and turned as white as paper. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 158.

As *white* as *wool*. Fuller.

This hand, As soft as *doves-down*, and as *white* as it, Or Ethiopians tooth, or the fan'd snow, that's bolted / By th'Northerne blasts, twice ore. Shak., WT, IV, iv, 391. Now innocence must die /

- As white as untrod snow, or *culver down*. Machin, *Dumb Knight*, III, i (Dodsley, IV, 411).
- As *white* as a *tallow candle*. Lean, II, ii. His face as white, under its tan, as a tallow candle. Stevenson, TI, 92. *Tallow-candle* rec. fr. 1452.
- His face as *white* as *wax*. Hocking, MF, 122.
- With his hair as *white* as *silver*. Richardson, P, 46. Cf. the cp sim. silverwhite, rec. in NED fr. 1588. Common in Sw. of a man's hair.
- Whose head doth shine with bright hairs *white* as *perster*. 1602, NED.
- A head as *white* as *alabaster*. *Demaundes Foyous*, 1511, H. Lyly, *Euph*. One good dish of thornback, white as Alabaster or the snow upon the Scithian mountains. Taylor, GE, 14. Her dear flesh was allis as white as halablaster. Wor. 1875, EDD. The *bl* is doubtless due to associations with bleach, blanch, and other bl-forms denoting whiteness. EDD. Cf. The alabaster whiteness of the neck and throat. Doyle, R, 64, and Baring-Gould, BS, 126, &c. The numerous effigies and monuments of alabaster found in churches may have given rise to the sim.
- Her face and hands as *white* as the purest statuary *marble*. Scott, W, LXVIII. Miss T. grew white as marble. Mason, PK, 110. Norris, *Jim*, 164; Hardy, MC, 143. On Scott and sim. see p. 130. Also in G. (Westphalia). Wander.
- A tree fordrye, as *whyte* as *chalk*. SqT, 401. Her chekes . . . as the chalke white. c. 1400, NED. Lady F. was white as chalk beneath the paint. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 236. She was whiter than chalk. *ibid*. Also in Lean, II, ii. Cf. also, Gathering eyther Violets blew, or Lillies white as *lime*. Golding's transl. of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, V. (Shak., WT, ed. Hudson, p. 184). G. *Weiss wie Kreide*. Also in Sw., especially in cp form *kritvit*.
- Hyr vysage *whyt* as playn *yvore*. 13 . . ., NED. Those hands more white than ever Ivorie was. Barley, 1599, *Lied.*, 119. A face as white as the ivory of her broken fan. Mason, PK, 135.
- As *white* as a *hound's tooth*. *Devon. Ass.*, X, 153 (Lean, II, ii). Hewett, Dev. II. White as *dog's tooth* with passion she was. Phillpotts, P, 111. Cf. As white as *bear's teeth*. T. Heywood, *Queen Elizabeth's Troubles*, 1606, H.
- As *white* as a *lamb*. Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685 (Lean, II, ii).
- Desyre not thy neybore's wyff,/ Thow she be fayre and *whyte* as *swan*/, And thi wyff brown. *Cov. Myst.* (Lean, II, ii). As fair as a lily, as white as a swan. Northall, FR, 409. Cf. the cp sim. swan-whit in Langland.
- To telle of her Tethe that tryelly were set, Als *quyte* & quem as any *qualle bon*. c. 1430, *Slang*. A little mouth with decent chin, A coral lip of hue, With teeth as white as whale his bone, Ech one in order due. Turberville, 1567, *Slang*. Her

hands so white as whales bone, Her finger tipt with Cassidone. Puttenham, *Partheniades*, vii, 1579, CD. Herrings which were as white as whales bones when he hung them vp, nowe lookt as red as a lobster. Nashe, III, 204, 1599. See also Shak., LLL, V, ii, 332 (of teeth); Spenser, FQ, III, i, 15 (of a person white "thorough fear"). For further insts see Cowan, PS, 38, Lean, II, ii, 892, and Shak., LLL, l. c., *Variorum ed.* No inst. after 1600 seems to be found. — *Whale's bone*, ivory. So called perhaps, because supposed to come from the bones of the whale, at a time when the real source of the material was little known, or when most of the ivory used in western Europe consisted of the teeth of the walrus, confounded with the whale. The term was in common use for several centuries. *Enc. Brit.* It is rather remarkable that the sim. should have become obsolete a good deal earlier than the term 'whale's bone', and that a phrase very common in the sixteenth c. is altogether unknown to the seventeenth.

I have a pleasant noted nightingale,/ Kept in a cage of bone as white as *whale*. Barnfield, *Affectionate Sheph.*, 1594 (Lean, II, ii). See also *Nugae Poeticae*, Select Pieces of Old E. Pop. Poetry, ed. Halliwell. Probably elliptically for *whale's bone*. *Totum pro parte*. *Bone* in the following sim. is probably elliptical for 'whale's bone'. Pray we that byrde so bright as bon. *Songs*, 85.

Danny, with a face as *white* as a *haddock*. Caine, D, vi. He climbed in at the window, and white as a haddock, and all amuck with sweat. *ibid.*, xviii. See *Deaf*, p. 175, *Melancholy*, 58, *Laughing*, 80, *Stupid*, 52.

As *white* as *mawk*. See *Ill*, p. 164. A Lnk quot. speaks of 'creamy mawks'.

And over that his cote-armoure,/ As *whyt* as is a *lily flour*. Chaucer. She was as white as the lily flower. *ibid.*, TST, 155. Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, V, iii.

An egle tame, as eny lilye whyt. Chaucer, KT, 1320. This staff is my sister, for, look you, she is as white as a lily and as small as a wand. Shak., GV, II, iii. Her hands, white as the lily. Richardson, P, (Introd. XLVI) Northall, FR, 409, see 'fair as the rose' p. 221 . . . Hardy, DR, 458. References to the whiteness of the lily are found long before Chaucer: Seo whitnes þære lilian scineþ on þe. *Blickl. Hom.*, 971, NED.

Whit was his heed as is a *dayesye*. Chaucer. See *Red*, p. 248.

It soon goes very nice, it washes as *white* as *nip*; some people, when they see a flower or anything that is beautifully clean and white, will exclaim, 'Eh, why, it is as white as nip.' Chs. A long stone passage, with a floor as white as nip. Nfk. Also Lan. *Nip*, the herb cat-mint, which being covered with a fine white down, has given rise to a common simile 'as white as nip'. *E. Angl. Gloss.* Lean has another version.

He was *white-headed* as a *mountain*. Hardy, RN, 8. There are numerous phrases in which 'mountain' is replaced by the name of some more or less well known mountain: More white than Atlas browe or Pelops blaze. Arber, 29, 42. [his locks] they are white as the peaks of Plinlimmon to-day, Or Ben Nevis, his pate is so *bien poudré*. Barham, IL, 443; &c.

Her skin as soft as Lemster wool, As white as *snow on peakish hull*, Or swan that swims on Trent. Drayton, *Shepherd's Garland*, 1593 (Lean, II, ii). White his shroud as the *mountain snow*. Shak., *Hamlet*, IV, v. Lawn as white as *driven snow*: Cypress black as e'er was crow; Gloves as sweet as damask roses. Shak., WT, IV, iv, 215. Ray; Scott, RR, iv. Hair white as the driven snow. DNL, 12/IV, '13.

As *hoary* as *snow*. Melbancke, *Phil.*, 1583.

An old man, with beard as *white* as snow. Spenser, FO, I, viii, 30. *Ibid.*, I, i, 4 (of an ass), III, v, 5 (horse). Lyly, *Euph.* (Lean, II, ii; of a flower). Shak., *Hamlet*, IV, v, 190 (beard). Burton, AM, II, 90 (turbans), III, 180 (Juno's breasts). *Tatler*, 97 (garment). Smollet, RR, 156 (teeth). Sewell, 1766 (Stoett, NS, II, 270). Twain, HF, 77 (meat of a fish). Also in Conrad, Hardy, Hornung, Stevenson, &c. For another application of the sim. see p. 6. Common in *many other languages as well*.

Horses as *white* as *drip*. Cum. 1867. *ibid.* 1881 of a 'cleath'. Wm of birds, 1877, clothes, 1868. Also in Yks. EDD. *Drip*, snow, used only in the above sim. in Cum. Wm. Yks. Lan. There is also a cp sim. drip-white. 'Snow is not now spoken of as "drip" in a general way.' Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As wilde bores gan they smyte, That frothen *whyte* as *foam* for ire wood. Chaucer, KT, 800. Cf. O'er the foam-white waves. 1841, NED.

Pale.

Stand as mute and *pale* as *death* itself. Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, V, i. Butler, H, II, 151. Smollet, RR, 103, 343. Gissing, FC, 174. The officer was as pale as death. Doyle, *Strand*, 32, '17. Also in Conrad, Hardy, Hocking, Hope, &c.

He was nat *pale* as a forpynd *goost*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 205; She directed and sealed it, all pale as a ghost. Barham, IL, 201. She . . . came downstairs . . . pale as a ghost. Hardy, TT, 287; HE, 252. Hope, RH, 114, &c.

Bathsheba, *pallid* as a *corpse* on end. Hardy, MC, 350. *Pallid* not rec. before the *Faerie Queene*, and much affected by Spenser. Sick and *pale* as a *corpse*. Hardy, PBE, 193.

As *pale* as a *parson*. Northall, FPh. 10. Ruddy sunburnt farmers may perhaps look upon the study-loving stay-at-home clergyman

as something of a poor pale-face. Or is it a pun or play on *parsnip*? See below.

As *pale* as a new *cheese*. Dekker, *Shoemaker's Hol.* (Lean, II, ii). With hands as *pale* as *milk*. Shak., MND, V, i, 329.

Pale as a *deusan*. *Deusan*, a hard sort of apple which keeps a long time, but turns pale and shrivels. Fr. *deux ans*. The Voc. of E. Anglia, i, 92, 1830. *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII. The word rec. in NED 1570—1741.

As *pale* as a *parsnip*. Lean, II, ii. "I have heard this applied to a person in ill-health, but cannot say where or when. It is very little used." U. Cf. The pale or parsnip tint that belongs to nephritis. 1897, NED.

Lord Hamlet . . . *pale* as his *shirt*. Shak., *Hamlet*, II, i, 81.

O ill-starred wench! *Pale* as thy *smock*. Shak., *Oth.*, V, ii, 275.

She was as *pale* as a *sheet*. Hardy, GND, 24; *ibid.*, TM, 347, TT, 185.

No life I fele in fote nor hand, As *pale* as any *clout*. 1557, NED.

She looks as pale as any clout in the versal world. Shak., RJ, II, iv, 194. His wee bluidless lips were as pale as a clout. Lnk. EDD.

Her lips were, like *raw leather*, *pale*. Spenser, FQ, V, 12, 29.

As pale as a piece of *white leather*. Nashe, III, 190, 1599.

Dyan derlyng *pale* as any *leade*. Hawes, 1509, NED. *Lady Bessy* (Percy Soc. p. 9); Gascoigne, *Dulce Bellum*, ante 1577 (Lean, II, ii). But old folks, many feign as they were dead; Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead. Shak., RJ, II, v, 16. The following sim. probably also belongs here: As pale as a *pelet* in þe palsye he semed. Langland, PPl, V, 78. *Pelet* (pellet), probably a leaden ball of the fourteenth c. mortars. "I don't know this [pale as lead] as a saying, but I fancy I have heard it." U. Probably only lit. reminiscence.

On the step of the broad marble flight, stood the Queen, *pale* as the *marble* itself. Hope, RH, 250.

Jude was at that moment . . . *pale* as a monumental *figure in alabaster*. Hardy, JO, 488.

A countenance *pale* as a *pearl*, fair as a flower. Castle, IB, 206.

Ye were whyte as whale's bone, Now are ye *pale* as any *stone*.

Squire of Low Degree (H., *E. Pop. Poetry*, ii, 50; Lean, II, ii).

Shee lookt a *pale* as *chalke* with wrathful ire. 1587, NED.

Pale as *asshen* colde, Chaucer, KT, 506. She trembled off for dread/ And looked like ashes pale. Gascoigne, *Complaint of Phil.*, ante 1577 (Lean, II, ii). As pale, as wan as ashes was his look. Spenser, FQ, II, xi, 22. *ibid.* VI, vii, 17. A bloody piteous corse; Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood. Shak., RJ, III, ii, 51. *Long Meg*, 19. Butler, H, II, 91, Steele, 1709, NED. Ghosts as pale as ashes. Addison, 1711, NED. (Does this mean that 'as pale as ashes' is an intensive of 'pale as a ghost?'). *Poor Robin's Alm.*, 1770 (Lean, II, ii). Scott, RR,

- xxxii. Besant, RMM, 110. Ashes used poet. for 'deathlike paleness', NED.
- As *pale* of hew as a *drowned rat*. *C. Blobol's Test*. (H., *E. Pop. Poetry*, i, 93, Lean, II, ii). See *Drunk*, p. 207 f.
- As *pale* as a *gilly flower*. Gascoigne, *Glass of Gov.*, IV, ii, ante 1577, (Lean, II, ii). Gilly-flower, originally *Dianthus caryophyllus*, according to Britten & Holland, EPN, 204, Not known to U.
- As *pale* as a *carnation*. Lean, II, ii. "I don't know this." U.
- Picotee . . . grew *pale* as a *lily*. Hardy, HE, 113. *ibid.* Lao., 108.
- I would be blind with weeping, sick with groans, / Look *pale* as *primrose* with blood-drinking sighs. Shak., KH VIb, III, ii, 63. Cf. The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose. *ibid.* Cy., IV, ii, 222; WT, IV, iv, 142. The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose. Milton, 1630, NED.
- So *pale* as a *wild rose*. Phillpotts, SW, 150.
- Hor* as an *hawethorn*, Langland, PPl., XIX, 184.
- And *pale* as *box* sche was. Chaucer, 1383, NED. He lyk was to biholde / The boxtree or the Asshen dede and colde. Chaucer. Also *ibid.* *Leg.* II, 161. As soon as Philotimus had read these leters, he waxed pale as any box, a shuddering through him strake. Melbancke, *Phil.*, 1583 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. The wood of box is yelowe and pale. Turner, 1551, NED.
- And there she stood apart . . . *pale* as a *privet blossom* in June. Morris, 1870, NED. Then pale as privet, took she heart to drink. *Ibid.* 1870, NED. Cf. A skin as clean and white as privet when it flowers. Tennyson, 1842, NED. Not known to U. Cf. *Candidior folio nivei . . . ligustri*.
- Her eye-lashes were *pale* as *straw*. Phillpotts, M, 41.
- You be wisht and *pale* as the *moon*. Phillpotts, WF, 297. Her face was pale and cool as moonbeams. *Nash's*, April, 103, '17.
- He became *pale* as a *summer-cloud*. Hardy, WT, 158.

Grey.

- Her eyen *grey* as *glass*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 152. *ibid.* RT. 53. Shak., TGV, IV, iv, 197. Her eyes are grey as glass. Our hairs, which yellow were as gold, Now grey as glass. Gascoigne, *Grief of Foy* (Lean, II, ii).
- Grey* as *grannun's cat*. Swift, *Apollo to the Dean* (Lean, II, ii). Cf. the proverb, When all candles be out, all cats be grey. Heywood, PE; or as Bohn renders it, 'All cats are alike grey in the night,' which has a distinctly artificial smack. 'All cats are grey in the dusk', says Barret, 1809, NED.
- There's an old Yellow Admiral living at Bath / As *grey* as a *badger*, as thin as a lath. Barham, IL, 113. Zo gray's a badger. Hewett, Dev. II. Northall, FPh., 8. 'Gray' is a Dev. name for the badger.

His rode was reed, his eyghen *gray* as *goos*. Chaucer, MiT, 131.
 Hir yen grey, as is a *faucon*. Chaucer, Rom. R., 546.
 His [eyes] were bleak, and cold, and *grey* as the *sea* itself. Phill-
 potts, SW.

Dark.

Note. For exact parallels to many of the following sim. see *Black*, p. 239 ff.

Each man [among the French] is worth two or three of us, and they wear beards like Jews. There are some as *dark* as the the *devil*. Benecke, PA, 15. English?

This cave was also as *derke* As *helle pitte*. Chaucer, Duch. 170.
 A deepe descent, as dark as *hell*. Spenser, FQ, I, viii, 39.
 Sayest thou that house is dark? — As hell. Shak., TN, V, ii, 34. *ibid.*, IV, ii, 44, we read, I say this house is as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell. — We that live here in the vale of misery are as dark as hell. Dekker, HWh, Ia, vi. Davies of Hereford, *Wit's Pilgr.*, 1610 (Lean, II, ii).

As *dark* as *Hummer*. Yks. *Hummer*, hell, devil. A. Smythe Palmer, *19th Cent.* II, 553, 1910. According to the writer, the word *Hummer* is ON *Hymir* < *humr*, murky. Although we are not entitled to question his correctness as to the sense of the word, it is extremely doubtful whether the word originally had the meaning assigned to it. Is it not rather identical with the word *hoomer* (homer, oomer, omer, owmer, umber &c) rec. fr. Nhb, Cum. Wm. Yks. Lan. Chs., and meaning 1. shade, a shadow, 2. a grassy slope by the side of a river, a swamp. The first sense fits the context perfectly, 'as dark as (the) shade.' If *Hunmer* has any connection with the infernal regions it means, consequently, the shades below, to use Byron's phrase. If this is correct — and everything speaks in favour of the interpretation — Smythe Palmer's derivation cannot be correct. *Hoomer* < Fr. *ombre* < L. *umbra*. In most cases the word appears without *h*. That it sometimes has it, is not more remarkable than the Sc. and Nhb. *hus* for *us*. See *Black*, p. 246.

The night was as *dark* as *Erebus*. Marryat, 1839, NED. Cf. The motions of his spirit are as dull as night/ And his affections dark as Erebus. Shak., MV, V, i, 87.

When it was just about the bluest and blackest — fst! it was as bright as glory and . . . *dark* as *sin* again in a second. Twain, HF, 71.

All was *dark* as the *grave*. Hardy, UGT. Cf. But use such secrecy as stolen Loves should have,/ Be dark as the hush'd silence of the grave. Otway, 1675, NED. Cf. *Secretive*, p. 129.

[Villas] rose in the dusk of this gusty evening *dark* as *tombs*. Hardy, HE, 403. Cf. The great room . . . was still and *gloomy* as a tomb. London, FM, 67.

“As *dark* as a *sweep's sut bag*’, was often heard. This was the ‘bag’ which the little ‘chimbley-sweeps’ put over their heads before they began their dismal climb.” Worksop. N. & Q., 10, XII, 318.

As *dark* as my *hat*. Lean, II, ii.

As *dark* as a *boot*. Yks.

As *dark* as my *pocket*. Lean, II, ii.

Daark's u baig. Elworthy, WSG.

Dirk was the night as *pitch* or as the *cole*. Chaucer, MiT, 545.

‘Dark as coal’ not found after Chaucer. As dark as pitch.

Porter, *Two Angry Wom.*, 1599 (Lean, II, ii). Bunyan, PP, 72.

Barham, IL, 51. Twain, HF, 97. Hardy, JO, 474. Doyle,

R, 250. Sc. Oxf. Som., EDD.

As *dark* as *bit*. *Northants Gloss.*; (*Bit*, bitumen? Lean, II, ii).

So we crept along on tiptoe till we got within fifteen feet of them

— *dark* as a *cellar* that *sumach* path was. Twain, TS, 223.

Thrown/ In a down-bed as *dark* as any *dungeon*. Jonson, *Alch.*,

III, ii, 254. We descended by divers ladders to a space as

dark as a *dungeon*. Smollet, RR, 188. Chs. Gl., Ant. EDD.

A road *dark* as a *tunnel*. Hardy, MC, 32. The modern sense of

this word does not go further back than to 1782.

As *dark* as a *pit*. Roget.

The night grew as *dark* as a *cave*. Hardy, T, 511.

The park and wood, *dark* now as a *cavern*. *Ibid.*, GND, 66.

On a very *dark* night the driver remarked, ‘Ah! it is a *dark* night,

dark as *Newgate knocker*. Sur. See *False*, p. 23, and *Black*,

p. 244.

“Years ago I used to hear folk say of a *dark* night, when the

lantern they carried made the darkness beyond all the worse,

that it was as ‘*dark* as a *black sheep*’.” Th. Ratcliffe, Worksop.

N. & Q., 10, XII, 318. *Shep*, the shepherd’s dog.

As *dark* as a *dog's mouth*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116.

All was *dark* as a *stack of black cats*. *Catfish Story*, 1846, Thornton.

You will go down, down, down, into the bottomless pit, that

is darker than a stack of black cats. Dow, 1853, Thornton.

Used by the boatmen of western America, meaning very dark.

Pittsburg, Pa., N. & Q., 11, IV, 286.

As *dark* as *black hogs*. Said of a *dark* night. Suf. Edw. Fitz

Gerald, Wks, ii, 446.

‘As *dark* as a *black pig a mile off*’, is to be heard in Lincolnshire.

N. & Q., 10, XII, 318.

Dark as *black pigs*. Used of a *dark* room or the street at

night. “It is a common remark through the county of Devon

that things at night are as ‘*dark* as *black pigs*’. Is it an

exclusively Devonshire saying? I remember once to have

heard something very similar in the north of England." Harland-Oxley. N. & Q., 10, XII, 268. Cf. the above Lin. saying. As *dark* as a *black cow's skin*. Said of a very dark night. Yks., NED. The room was as *dark* as a *wolf's mouth*. Mason, PK, 98. Stowe, UTC. Brewer, Dict.; *Slang*.

[A long thin face] was of the same colour all over, as *dark* as the darkest *walnut*. Doyle, R, 224.

The grand staircase is as *mirk* as a *Yule midnight*. Scott, A, 363. See *Bare*, p. 255.

As *dark* as a *Yule night*. *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXXV, 90.

The depths of the barn dark as *night*. Baring-Gould, RS, 189. Also in Lean.

Black.

As *black* as *Lucifer*. *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, 1608, (Lean, II, ii).

As black as the *devil in a comedy*. Killigrew, *Thomaso*, II, i, 2 (Lean, II, ii). Probably fig. use.

For shaft and ende, soth to telle,/ Were also blak as *fende in helle*. Chaucer, Rom. of R. 973. The original has, *Li fust estoit et li fer Plus noirs que deable d'enfer*. Haeckel, 58.

Also in modern Fr. Talleyrand is said to have required coffee to be *noir comme le diable, chaud comme l'enfer, pur comme un ange, doux comme l'amour*. (Lean).

Black as the *devil*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). Sir T. Herbert, 1638, NED. Ray. Such of my servants as have done their duty, . . . are painted out by you as black as devils. Richardson, P, 262. (Cf. the proverb, 'Devils are not so black as they be painted,' found already in Lodge, 1596, and used by Thackeray, BL, vii, Phillpotts etc.). His face, all bloody and powder-burnt, was black like a devil's. Masfield, CM, 103. Zo black's the tha dowl. Hewett, Dev. N. & Q., 12, III, 274. Lin.

As *black* as *Old Sam's nutting-bag*. Used in London by an elderly lady born and bred in Northamptonshire. N. & Q., 9, V, 95. Cf. Her smock's leyke auld Nick's nuttin bag. Cum. 1866, EDD.

As black as the *devil's nutting-bag*. North Lincoln. N. & Q., 9, IV, 478. Cum. (of something black with soot). Wm. 1790, EDD. Berks., N. & Q., 5, XI, 327. Suss. (Folkard, PL, 83).

In common use about Marlesford, Suffolk. N. & Q., 9, V, 197. Somers. N. & Q., 9, V, 38. Cf. The colour of the devil's nutting-bag, said of anything dingy or bad-coloured. Northall, FPh. 24. "Applied to things much soiled or dirty, which required washing." N. & Q., 9, V, 95. "Russet cloaks, The colour of the devil's nutting-bag." Longfellow, *New England Tragedies, Endicott*, I, ii. (N. & Q.). No further facts as to the age of this sim. have been found. It is probably a good deal older

than 1790, as we find the devil connected with nutting a hundred years before that date, as is seen from the following verse, which must be founded on old traditions: —

The devil, as some people say,
A-nutting goes Holy Rood Day;
Let women then their children keep
At home that day; better asleep
They were, or cattle for to tend,
Than nutting go and meet the fiend. (1693, Lean).

The idea seems to have lived on far down into the nineteenth c., at least in some parts of England, Lincoln, Suffolk, Kent. "When a boy, and living in E. Sussex, I remember then on a particular day in autumn no one would go out nutting, or, indeed, if possible, pass along the lanes of the village, fearing to meet the devil. I have frequently, in different parts of Sussex in late years, mentioned this; but the devil's nutting day now seems to be entirely forgotten." N. & Q., 4, IX, 57. But the whole matter does not seem to have been taken very seriously, to judge from what we read in Haughton's *Grim the Collier of Croydon*, 1662, II, i, 'To morrow is Holyrood day,/ When all nutting take their way.' And elsewhere in the same play, 'This day, they say, is called Holyrood day, And all the youth are now a-nutting gone.' But whether it was seriously believed in or no, the idea was wide-spread enough to occasion the sim. But how has the idea grown that mothers should warn their children against nutting on a Sunday, and especially on Holyrood Day, assuring that if they do so, "the devil will hold down the branches for them." (Folkard, PL, 83). Is it because the devil, a very 'nuthook' or catchpole, finds his work of soul-gathering particularly easy on that day, as many people go out nutting instead of being at church? In one direction the devil is supposed to be very busy on this day, according to the Devon rhyme, 'Many nits, many pits'. Plenty of nuts means unusual mortality. And further, and more directly bearing on our subject, 'If store of nuts this month, the proverb's clear/ That it will be a mighty bastard year. *Poor Robin's Alm.*, 1687, and 27 years afterwards this is more fully explained, This month some maids makes nine months after sick,/ When they with men in woods go nuts to pick;/ For, being round about with wood enclosed,/ They oftentimes are wantonly disposed. *ibid.* 1714. The same idea in France and Germany (Lean and Wander). It is very likely that such things happen, but it is remarkable to find the hazel and its nuts connected with love, marriage, and (women's) fruitfulness in other respects. In Westphalia and other parts of Germany, a few nuts are mixed with the seed-corn to make it prolific. In old Rome, nuts were scattered at marriages, as they are now(?) in Italy and Alt-Mark, and hazelnuts have been a

favourite medium in divinations relating to love and marriage. Old Germanic peoples seem to have regarded the hazel as a promoter of fruitfulness, as, being sacred to Thor, it was the embodiment of lightning. Mannhardt, *Die Götterwelt der Deutschen*, p. 193; Folkard, PL, 461, p. 23. L. c., 83, he refers to the superstition that certain trees are haunted by the devil. Now, is the devil's haunting the hazelwoods a reminiscence of this ancient Germanic tree-worship?

As *black as hell*. In most cases probably fig. use. See p. 7 f.

Black as Hades. Brewer's Dict. See p. 8.

Drooping fog, as *black as Acheron*. Shak., MND, III, ii 357. Cf. the Miltonian Under the sooty flag of Acheron. 1637, NED. To shrowde her safe from Acheronticke mistes. Tournour, 1600, NED.

Then all was silent, and as *black as a cave in Hinnom*. Hardy, MC, 295.

Every low-chimneyed house . . . as *smoky as Tophet*. Hardy, WT, 122. "The Tophet" is taken to be the 'fireplace', or pyre, the deep pit, dug in the valley of Ben Hinnom, near Jerusalem, where the idolatrous Jews in the time of Ahab and Manasseh burnt children as offerings to Molech and other heathen gods. Josiah 'defiled' it as a part of his reforming activity, and it became a place for the bestowal and destruction of refuse, and a synonym for Gehenna. See Isa, 30, 33; Jer., 7, 32. Enc. Brit.; Enc. of the Bible. Cf. The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence/ And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell. Milton, PL, i, 404, 5.

It was gloomy there [a path through a young plantation of firs] at cloudless noontide, twilight in the evening, dark as midnight at dusk, and *black as the ninth plague of Egypt* at midnight. Hardy, FMC, 185. See Ex., 10, 21 ff.

The miller swore himself as *black as sin*. Scott, RR, vii. (Refers to the wellknown idea that perjury will make a person ugly or black &c.). Da new tippence-hap'ny paper 'at I hed hame frae Lerrick wis as black as sin wi' sötwater. Sh. I., 1901. In daily use, Blakeborough, NRY.

The night was *black as the grave*. Stevenson, NAN, 317.

As *black as Toby*. N. I., EDD. *Toby*?

So *black's a sweep*. Hewett, Dev. 10. Is this the man or the flower, the chimney-sweep, *Centaurea nigra*? When the children first see it in the street, they repeat the following rhyme: — Chimney-sweeper all in black, Go to the brook and wash your back; Wash it clean or wash it none, Chimney-sweeper, have you done? Holland, Chesh. Gl.; Northall, FR, 330.

Blac as a *bloaman*. c. 1225. Mucbele del blaccere pen euer eni blamon. c. 1225. NED. *Bloman*, blackamoor, obsolete already in the sixteenth c.

Swart like a *tawny Indian*. Lodge, *Wit's Mis.*, 1596, (Lean, II,

- ii). Cf. Foaming about the chaps like some wilde boore,/ As swart and tawny as an *India Moore*. *Letting of Humours Blood &c.*, c. 1600, Halliwell.
- He was 'so angry for it, that he became as *black* as a *moure*. Caxton. 1489. The black or tawny colour of the Moor is frequently alluded to, often in contrast to his white teeth. In G. (Wander).
- As *swart* as a *negro*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii).
As *black* as a *nigger*. Lean, II, ii. An intensive of this is the American, Blacker than a *funeral of negroes* in a thunderstorm. Dow, (Thornton).
- As *black* as *Toal's cloak*. N. I., EDD. *Toal?*
- So *black* as a *bag*. Dev., 1887. Cf. Sw. *så mörkt, svart som i en säck*. Also in G. Swych wer foul & *blacke* of syht Lych to a *colyers sak*. Lydgate, 1426, NED.
- As *black* as my *hat*. *School of Slovenrie*, 1604 (Lean, II, ii). Three Stumps in her Head . . . as Black as my hat. 1710, NED. With his face as black as your hat. 1825, NED. Barham, IL, 358. Dark? Why, 'twas as black as my hat. Hardy, MC, 305. Whiteing, No 5, 182 (of outlandish arrivals in town). "When tall black hats were in general use, this expression was much in the mouths of certain people describing old port, which had kept its colour. Tawny port had lost it." H. A negro 'as black as one's hat' calling another 'a damned black nigger'. *Slang*. See also 'white as my cap' p. 232.
- Ivy berith berries as *blak* as any *sho*. *Songs*, 117. What complexion is she of? *Swart*, like my shoe. Shak., CE, III, ii, 100.
As black as my *boot*. H.
- A Peire of Bedes *blak* as *Sable*. Sche tok and heng my neck aboute. Gower, 1390. The subst. *sable* rec. fr. the middle of the fourteenth c.
- Deformed monsters, fowle, and *blacke* as *inke*. Spenser, FQ, I, i, 22. The Aethiopians seed of generation was black as inke. Nashe, III, 62. The blackest news that ever thou heardest, — Why, man, how black? — Why, as black as ink. Shak., TGV, III, i, 281. Hood, 1829, NED (of water). His hair was still as black as ink. Horning, TN, 19. Hocking, MF, 54 (mud in the streets). Wells, LL, 52 (trees). Brewer, 139. *Ink*, rec. fr. c. 1250.
- My head as parched and *black* as any *pan*. Barclay, *Ecl.* i, ante 1530, (Lean, II, ii).
- As *black* as the *aister*. Shr. My hay was over-heated, and as black as the ester. Lei. EDD. — *Aister*, chimney-balk. Jackson & Burne, 594. 'As black as the aister' is a phrase employed to express any sooty, grimy appearance. Shr. EDD.
- She wad put hersel into sike flusters, that her feace wad be as black ast' *reckon creak*. — *Reckon creak*, a crook suspended from a beam within the chimney, to hang pots and pans on. *York. Dial.*, 4.

[Apples] rot as *black* as a *chimney crook*. Hardy, DR, 151. As black as the *crook*. Sc.; N. I, EDD. NED.

As black as the *hake up the chimney*. — Said of anything very black or dirty. E. Suf. EDD. As black as the hake. Cosens-Hardy, *Broad Norf.*, 1893. Cf. in G. *Et is sau schwarz as en Haul up'n Herde*. *Haul*, iron instrument on which the boiling pots are hung, i. e. a crook or hake.

Stock is the back of the fire place, the hob of a grate, frequent in phr. 'as *black* as the *stock*'. e. An. EDD.

As *black* as an *oven*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.

Real downright negroes, half-naked, *black* as *ebony*. Smith, 1878, NED. On a pitch-dark starless night, the high-hedged . . . lanes of Little Sark are as black as the inside of an ebony ruler. Oxenham, MS, 9. Oxenham frequently employs the word ebony as a symbol of extreme blackness. Cf. also, A black expanse, against the lightest tone of which a piece of ebony would have appeared pale. Shaw., CBP, 38. Probably much older than our insts. Cf. It [the house] hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clear-stores towards the south-north are lustrous as ebony. Shak., TN, IV, iii, 36. — "Not very common, used by educated people only." U.

þys Ananyas fyl downe dede As *blak* as any *lede*. 1303, NED. See Pale, p. 235.

Take oxon younge . . . Their lippes and their eyen *blaak* as *gete*. 1420, NED. Thy ear white as pearl, thy teeth black as jet. Heywood, PE, 244. Sloues black as ieat. Greene, 1589, EDD. What colour is my gown of? — Black, for sooth: coal-black as jet. Shak., KH VIb, II, i, 111. Elsewhere also of a palfrey. Armed in a crimson robe as black as jet. Taylor, GN, 1. Their small pink eyes as black as Jet. 1688, NED. Smollet, RR, 303 (stump of a pipe). *ibid.* 286 of hair. Cf. 'hair of jet' in Dickens, NN, I, vi. Cowper, 1784, NED (bramble). Thackeray, BL, vii (moustaches). Hardy, MC, 293 (two human shapes). Also *ibid.*, T, 253.

þan lai he þar so *blac* so *pych*. c. 1380, NED. Her whole body became as blacke as pitche. Stubbes, *Two Wonderful & Rare Ex.*, 1581. Greene, *Menaphon*, 1587 (Lean, II, ii); Her twyfold Teme, of which two were blacke as pitch, And two were browne. Spenser, FQ, I, v, 28. Night-ravenes more black than pitch. *ibid.*, *Shep. Cal.*, June 23. Taylor (WP), *Sir Gregory Nonsense*. Blackmore, LD, 64 (the night). As black as *pick*. *Cleuel. Gloss.*, 8.

Al *blak* so *colebrond*. c. 1300, NED.

As *blak* as *brond ybrent*. *Libeaus Desconus*, c. 1350, W. See *Bright*, p. 228.

As *blak* he lay as any *cole* or *crowe*. Chaucer, KT, 2692. A littil kyton as *blakke* as eny *cool*. 1450 NED. Barry, RA, II, i (thy head). Snail, snail, come out of your hole, Or else I'll make you as black as a coal. *Gammer Gurton's Garland*, c.

- 1783 (In a reprint dated Glasgow 1866 there is a note to this place: — It was probably the custom on repeating these lines to hold the snail to a candle, in order to make it quit the shell). Northall, FR, 328. Barham, IL, 486 (a person tumbling down the chimney). Southey, 1848, S. Wm., EDD. Caine, D., 105 (empty net). Aynho on the hill, / Soulden in the hole, And Fritwell wenches as black as a coal. Birmingham Notes & Queries, May 24, 1884. A., S., and F., villages in the neighbourhood of Banbury. Northall, FR, 58. Conrad, *Romance*, 381 (foliage). Hewett, Dev. 11. Cf. As black and burning as a coal. Byron, DJ, IV, 94, W. — Sw. and G. as well.
- We were as *black* as *clinkers*. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 191. Used of a ship that shows no light.
- Hard as any horn & *blakker* fer then *soot*. Lydgate, 1420, NED. A berry as black as soot and as bitter. Burton, AM, II, 285. R. Brome, Wks, III, 335 (Lean, II, ii). The collier . . . as black as soot. *The Coaches' Overthrow, Roxburgh Ballads*, III, 335. N. & Q., 12, III, 274. Cf. soot-black, soot-dark, NED.
- "As *black* as a *Newgate knocker*. — I heard this expressive phrase used the other day by a servant. Is it common? Does it come out of some comedy?" E. Walford, M. A., N. & Q., 6, III, 248. It is as black as Newgate knocker. Used by a Croydon driver of a dark night. *ibid.* 298. It is said to refer to the fringe or lock of hair which costermongers and thieves twist back towards the ear, called a Newgate knocker. Brewer, Dict., 139. Very doubtful. Sim. not known to U.
- As *black* as *Byard's dog*, or *bitch*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.
- As *black* as a *coot*. Clarke (Lean, II, ii). As black as the coot. R. Holme, *Armory*, II, 272, 1688, referred to as a proverb.
- His skin was as *black* as a *hub-craw*. Lin. EDD.
- As *blak* he lay as eny col or *crowe*. Chaucer, KnT, 1834. Wyclif, 1382, NED. Lawn as white as driven snow, Cyprous black as e'er was crow. Shak., WT, IV, ii. Him, Who giant in limb, As black as the crow they denominate Jim. [the devil]. Barham, IL, 387. 'Is locks be all curdly an' black as a crow. Pulman, Dev., 1860, EDD. Nhb., 1870, EDD (of hair). As pale as a ghost and as black as a crow. Hope, PZ, 40. Hewett, Dev., 10. The sim. sometimes refers to the rook. See p. 245.
- As *blake* as *marygowds* and as *black* as *corbies*. Cum. EDD.
- Black as the *raven's plume*. Cooper, *Ralph*, 3. H. Cf. As eny ravenes fether it schon for *blak*. Chaucer, KnT, 1286.
- Black as a *raven's wing*. Brewer, Dict. 139.
- Al pat opur del with-Inne swiþe *blak* as a *rauon* it is. c. 1290. EDD. His locks are bushy and as black as a raven. Song of Sol., 5, 11.
- Her hair was blacker than a *raven*. Swift, Introd. 22 (quot.). What, the old red-head that comes singing, as the saying is, "Aw, no, woman, but as black as a raven . . ." Caine, D, vii.

“My days and nights be black with sorrow.” “As the raven is black,” said J. F. London, FM, 128. The rose is red, The violet blue. The grass is green, And so are you. Black is the raven, Black the rook, But blackest he who steels this book. “Some thirty years ago.” N. & Q., 10, VI, 353. Black is the raven, Black is the rook, Black is the thief That steels this book. “Some fifty years ago.” *ibid.* U. gives this form, Black as the raven, Black as the rook, But blacker the rascal Who steels this book. 'as (the raven') in this case probably a wrong spelling for [æz], [ɪz] (is) as in the other insts of this children's rhyme. — Cf. raven-dark, raven-black, and the adj. use of *raven* for glossy black, intensely dark, rec. fr. 1634.

It was believed that the raven was originally white, but that it was changed to black for its disobedience, or discourteous behaviour. See Swainson, BB, 92, Hulme, NH, 241 f., Sloet, *Dieren*, 228.

As *black* as a *rook*, As speckled as a pie, I cannot sing no longer, My throat is so dry. In a ditty sung by children of Sunningwell, Berks, on Shrove-Tuesday, while going round the village, throwing stones at the doors, until cakes &c. are given them. Northall, FR, 192.

As *black* as an *ouzel*. Chapman, *May Day*, I, 1611. Cf. þe wesel be blak among vs; þere [Arcadia] þey beþ white. Trevisa, 1387. The woosel cocke, so blacke of hew, With orange-tawny bill. Shak., MND, III, i, 128. The water-woosel next all over black as jet. Drayton, 1622, NED.

His bodie being dead lookt as *black* as a *toad*. Nashe, II, 326. It was a universal belief that the body of a person in league with the devil became black. For the toad and its associations with demonology see p. 140.

Ful sam y-pulled weren hir browes two, And tho were bent, as *black* as any *slo*. Chaucer. Davies, *Sc. of Folly*, 1614, R. Brome, 1632 (Lean, II, ii). Swift, GT, 278, (of hair). A bonnie flae as black as a slae. Forbes, 1812, EDD. *Suffolk Wds & Phrases*, 1823, *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII. His eyes . . were black as slooes. Hardy, Lao., 59. Cf. sloe-black, rec. fr. 1773.

As *black* as a *bollas*, *bullas*. Yks. 1876, *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 429. Cf. Like a bully cooked in soot. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276, very swarthy, very dark.

Blak as *bery*, or any *slo*. Chaucer, RoR, 928. The original has, *plus noirs que mores*. (Häckel, 58). So toothless Aegle seems a pretty one, Set out with newbought teeth of Indy bone: So foul Lycoris blacker than berry Herself admires, now finer than cherry. Burton, AM, III, 100. Transl. fr. *Sic dentata sibi videtur Aegle,| Emptis ossibus Indicoque cornu;| Si quae nigrior est cadente moro,| Cerussata sibi placet Lycoris*. Martialis, i, lxxii, 3—6.

- That hair More *black* than *ash-buds* in front of March. Tennyson, 1842, NED.
- His locks, as *black* as *pitchy night*. Spenser, FQ, VI, vii, 43.
Her hair was *black* as *midnight*. Hardy, TT, 7, DR, 389.
A mane as black as *night*. Hardy, RN, 331. For other insts of the same sim. see p. 58, 104. It has also other fig. uses. Cursed Imposter, . . . As blacke in cursed purposes as night. VW, 50. To scowl black as night. Hope, PZ, 150.
- As *black* as *thunder*. See p. 48, and cf. also p. 104. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.
- Black* as *humber*. *Humber*, shade. Cf. Corn does not ripen well if it is in the umber. *Chs. Gloss.* See p. 237.

Red, Blushing.

- As *red* as *Roger's nose*, who was christened with pump-water. Northall, FPh. 10. *Roger* occurs in some other proverbial phrases, Roger Cary's dinner, a scanty dinner, Roger's blast, and it has an extensive appellative use. See Östberg, and NED.
- The mark of my fist is on your forehead still. There it is as *red* as a *cardinal*, while the rest of your face is as white as a Pope. Caine, EC, 245. Cf. These in scarlet and caps Like cardinals. Southey, 1795, NED. This refers to the red hat and the scarlet robe still worn by cardinals on days of ceremony. A cardinal is also a short cloak worn by ladies, originally of scarlet cloth.
- Blushing* as deep as a *maiden*. Blackmore, LD, 71.
- þe oder is milcwhite, þe oðer raed also blod. Layamon, 1205, NED. *Cursor Mundi*, c. 1300, NED. *Songs*, 16. Barclay, Ecl., iv, ante 1530; Wager, *The Longer thou livest* &c., 1566, (Lean, II, ii); Aromatic cedars — as red as blood. Masfield, CM, 107. What use were sidelights, when a fog might make a headlight as red as blood? *ibid.*, *Multitude*, 82. Hewett, Dev. 11. *Blood-red* fr. 1297.
- The carmine of her lips, *red* as a *bloodspot* on the snov. White, BT, 260.
- I hope to make my hands as *red* as *blood-pudding*. Richardson, P., 79. *Blood-pudding* fr. 1583.
- Ez *red* ez *rauw beef*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use.
As red as *beef*. Fielding, *Tom Thumb*, ii, 4 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *red* as a *petticoat*. Ray. Sydney, 1531, speaks of a 'scarlet petticoat'.
- She has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and *red* as a *pulpit cushion*. Goldsmith, SSC, 243. *Pulpit cushion* fr. 1631.
- To look as *red* as *scarlet*. *Sir Giles Goosecap*, 1606 (Lean, II, ii).

His nose as red as Scarlet. Dekker, OF, 69. Sins (so red as Scarlet). Taylor, UF, 20. A face as red as scarlet. Smollet, RR, 148. Hardy, DR, 469. See Isa. I, 18.

Blushing like scarlet with shame and concern. Barham, IL, 187.

Ez red ez a brick. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use.

Flames, like to a *furnace red*. Spenser, FQ, III, ix, 22. See below 'red as fire'.

His long locks *coloured* like *copper-wyre*. Spenser, FQ, II, iv, 15. Cf. copper-topt, red-haired.

To *blush* like *copper*. Gosson, *School of Abuse*, 1579; *Christmas Prince*, 1607; Beaumont & Fletcher, *Woman's Price*, (Lean, II, ii). Cf. copper-nose, *Slang*.

Thou shalt have Grapes ryght as the *Ruby red*. Ripley, 1471, NED.

His Coomb was *redder* than the *fyn coral*, And battailed as it were a castel wal. Chaucer, NPT, 39. Their colour was fresh read as the Corall, their beautie like the Saphyre. Coverdale, 1535. This refers to the red or precious coral (*Corallum rubrum*) of the Mediterranean.

As *sandy* as a *Tamworth pig*. — Spoken of a red-haired woman, and hinting that she was likely to prove concupiscent and prolific. Northall, FPh, 10. Tamworth, a market town and municipal borough in the Lichfield parliamentary division of Warwickshire. Cf. [from his nose] stood a tuft of heres, / Reede as the berstles of a souwes eeres. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 555. See below!

As *red* as a *Martlesham lion*. e. An. EDD. See p. 91, Lion of Cotsolde, p. 115, Essex Lion.

His berd as any sowe or *fox* was *reed*, And therto brood as though it were a spade. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 552. Nashe, III, 191, 1599. The king, they say, is as red as a fox. Hope, PZ, 22.

As *red* as *rats*. Cor., N. & Q., 12, III, 233.

As *red* as a *ferret*. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. — Said of people with a rufous complexion; also of those who blush suddenly. Lin.

As *red* as a *turkey-cock's jowls*. Northall, FPh. *Fowls*, wattles. A comforter of red wool, that puffed out under his long throat, like the wattles of a turkey. Phillipotts, P, 114. His ears showed red as a turkey's wattles. "Q", MV, 191.

This is not true, said Minghelli, as red as the *gills of a turkey*. Caine, EC, 247.

He looks *red* in the gills like a *turkey-cock*. Lodge, *Wit's Misery*, 1596; Congreve, *Double Dealer*, 1694 (Lean, II, ii). His gills are as *rosy* as a turkey-cock. Dryden, SF, VI, 442.

The idea . . . mantled the blood in my cheeks till I was as red as a turkey-cock. Marryat, 1833, NED. Hewett, Dev. *Roed als een kalkoensche haan*. Fr. *Rouge comme un coq*. G. *Rot wie ein Zinshahn*. Stoett, NS, I, 262. *Er ist so roth wie ein Truthahnskopf*. Wander.

As *red* as a *roost cock*. S. Dev. H.

Looke upon any trumpeter, & see if hee looke not as red as a *cocke* after his trumpeting. Nashe, III, 202, 1599.

She came out *red* as a *biled lobster*. Baring-Gould, BS, 121.

As *red* as a *lobster*. Nashe, *Lenten Stuff*. His face as red as a lobster. Mason, PK, 177. — In Dutch, G., and Sw. the crayfish is used in the same sort of sim. *Rood als een kreeft; Rot wie ein gesottener Krebs; röd som en kokt kräfta*. See above.

As *pink* as a *prawn*. H.

As *red* as an *apple*, as round as a ball, Higher than the steeple, weathercock and all. Old Shropshire riddle, referring to the sun. Jackson & Burne, III, 574. Children with cheeks as red as the apples in the orchards. Thackeray, BS, xxiv. Yoxall, RS, 17.

As *rosy* as an apple. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. Her look'd as *cherry* as a crap of fresh *apple-blooth*. Dev. *Cherry*, ruddy, Yks. Lan. Dev.

Dropes *red* as ripe *cherrees* . . fro his flesch gan laue. 1425, NED. Wyne redd as *Cherye*. 1440, NED. Lean has two insts fr. H., *E. Pop. Poetry*. Ray; Blakeborough, NRY, 239, common. Mentioned by NED as a frequent sim., but no inst. given. Her lusty lypes *ruddy* as the cherry. Skelton, *Magnyf.*, (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Showing a colour like a cherry in each cheek. Castle, IB, 47. The 'great politician' *blushed* like a cherry. Benecke, PA, 90. (Polish?). The Germans say 'brown as a cherry'.

Master Marsh thrust out a tongue long, clear and *red* as a *beetroot*. Barham, IL, 86.

Red as *beet* his face was. Phillpotts, TK, 18. Cf. All colours, all hues, now advance, now retreat, Now pale as a turnip, now *crimson* as beet. Barham, IL, 473.

Ez *red* ez *rud*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in common use. *Rud*, ruddle, reddle, or red ochre.

And here's a flower, and there's a flower, As *red* as any *daisy*. Northall, FR, 375. Cf. Of all the floures in the mede Thanne loue I most these floures white and rede, Such as men callen daysyes. Chaucer. Daisies, red as rose, And white also. 1450, NED.

There is a double flowret, white and red
That our lasses call Herb Margaret,
In honour of Crotona's penitent,
Whose contrite soul with red remorse was rent;
While on her penitence kind heaven did throw
The white of purity surpassing snow.
So white and red in this fair flower entwine,
Which maids are wont to scatter at her shrine.
Folkard, PL, 431.

A bouncing, fresh-looking lass, whose face was *red* as the *holly-hocks* over the pales of the garden. Thackeray, HE, 79.

Wi' a faice az *red* az a *pynat-flaar*. 1859, Yks. EDD. So red

as a *piney*. Som. 1898, EDD. Your face is as red as a peony. Hardy, Lao., 207. He was red as a peony; his voice choked. Gissing, HC, 235.

Aw *blushed* like a pyannet. 1876, Yks. EDD. Blooshen rhed as the pinnies oop the walk. 1895, Som. EDD.

Her cheeks, As *red* as is the *party-coloured rose*. *Tancred and Gismunda*, IV, iv, Dodsley. She is mended of her mysse, Her rudde redder it is Than the rose is in rayne. *The Smyth and his Dame*. H., *Engl. Pop. Poetry*, iii, 220 (Lean, II, ii).

The sonne that roos as rede as rose. Chaucer, Leg. Prol., 112. His lippes red as rose. *Ibid.*, TST, 15. As rose her rode was red. *Libeaus Desconnus*, W. She began to wexe in her visage more rede than a rose. *Mel.*, 213. Then that lady, so fair and free, With rudde as red as rose in May. *Lady Bessy* [Percy Soc., 12] Lean, II, ii. Wyde was the wound, and a large, lukewarme flood, Red as the Rose, thence gushed grievously. Spenser, FQ, II, viii, 39. Your colour, I warrant you, is as red as any rose. Shak., KH IVb, II, iv, 23. [She is] red as a rose. Coleridge, 1798, NED. Kingsley, *Wat. Bab.*, W. Hardy, RN, 131, TT, 22. &c. Already in OE: seo readness þære rosan lixeþ a þe. Mentioned by NED as a frequent sim. but no inst. given. It is also in G. and Sw. She changed coloure and blussyd as *ruddy* as a rose. Ld Berners, 1532, NED. The arms of Aurora as ruddy as the Rose. Burton, AM, III, 180. — How the rose was given its red colour, is told in many stories, and some few of them are collected by Folkard, PL, 549.

As *red* as the *rong*. Montgomery, *Poems*, 220, 1819 (Lean, II, ii). *Rong*, rowan; refers to the berries.

Rubyes as *red* as any *glede*. Langland, PPl, b, II, 12. This cruel ire, as reed as any gleder. Chaucer, KT, 1139. Twoo fryr dartes as the gledes rede. *Ibid.* 1385, NED. *The Smyth and his Dame*, 117; Occlleve, *La Male Regle*, ante 1450, (Lean, II, ii). Her cheeks war red as the gleid. Burns, *Ladie Onlie*, 1791. See p. 94.

Yformed as a dragon, as *red* as þe *fuyr*. R. Glouc., 1297, NED. Barclay, 1506 (Lean, II, ii). To blush as red as fire. Udall, *Er. Apo.* (alluding to the andiron on the hearth; Lean, II, ii). Cheeks as red as fire. Baret, 1580 (Lean, II, ii). His eyes as red as fire with weeping. Shak., JC, III, ii, 113. Eyes as red as new-enkindled fire. *Ibid.*, KJ, IV, ii, 163, and KH VIc, III, ii, 51. Blushed, as red as fire. Dekker, PW, 207. With a face as red as fire. Mabbe, 1622, NED. A face as red as fire. Susan Coolidge, Boston, 1887, W.

Clym *reddened* like fire. Hardy, RN, 237.

Blushing like a little fire. Hardy, TM, 57. — 'Red as fire' mentioned in NED as a frequent sim. but no inst. given. *Fire-red* already in Chaucer and Wyclif. Also G., Sw. and Dutch.

As *red* as the *rising sun at Bromford*. — “As this phrase is well known in War., I judge that it alludes to Bromford, a mile SE from Erdington, par. Aston juxta Birmingham, where there was a mill on the Tame prior to the Conquest. A forge mill still exists on the old site. It might be thought to refer to some old public-house sign, but of this there is no present proof, I am informed”. Northall, FPh., 10.

The face became *red* as *sunset*. Hardy, TM, 301.

To the Nuptial Bowre I led her *blushing* like the *Morn*. Milton, 1667, NED.

Miss Townley . . blushed like the *dawn*. Mason, PK, 110.

Green.

A nettle *gren* (as *Themeraude*), spread In a bed of roses like the ruby red. Heywood, PE, 129. A lichenous wash as green as emerald. Hardy, W, 248.

Also *grene* as ony *leek*. Chaucer, RR, 212 (The original has, *Aussi vert comme une cive*. Haeckel, 58). His eyes were green as leeks. Shak., MND, V, i, 326. Ray. Grass, which, though as dry as hay, was as green as a leek. 1727, NED. Smollet, RR, 191 (nose). The hedges and trees they are so green, As green as any leek. May song quoted by Northall, FR, 240. Zo green's lick. Hewett, Dev. II. — White and green were the old Cymric colours, and these colours are found combined in the leek, which is the national emblem of the Welsh. The following lines are from a MS in the Harl. Col. Brit. Mus.: —

I like the Leeke above all herbes and floures;
When first we wore the same the field was ours.
The leek is white and green, whereby is meant
That Britaines are both stout and eminente.
Next to the lion and the unicorne,
The leeke's the fairest emblym that is worne.

Folkard, PL, 409 f.

Leekshire is a nickname for Wales.

All this brass will be as *green* as *tulips*. Masefield, CM, 17.

The duke waxed pale and *grene* as a *lefe*. Ld Berners, 1525, NED.

As *green* as *grass* that grew in May Sesoun. Dunbar (Lean, II, ii).

As greene as any grasse. Fehr, *Die formelhaften Elemente der alten engl. Balladen*, 88. Shak., MND, V, i, 326; Clarke, *Phras. Puer.*, 1638 (Lean, II, ii). As white as milk, and 'tisin't milk; as green as grass, and 'tisin't grass; As red as blood, and 'tisin't blood; As black as ink, and 'tisin't ink. A Dorset form of the old well-known riddle concerning a berry or a fruit, in this case the black-berry . . See N. & Q., 7, XI, 195. (A G. form is, Erst grün wie Klee, dann weiss wie Schnee,

dann rot wie Blut, und isst man es, so schmeckt es gut.) Ez green ez grass. Blakeborough, NRY, in daily use.

As *green* as *summer*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Valin.*, ii, 5 (Lean, II, ii).

Blue.

He reported prodigious depth of ice, *blew* as a *sapphire*, and as transparent. Evelyn, 1676, NED. The sky . . . was as blue and clear as the heart of a sapphire. Black, 1876, NED.

As *blue* as a *razor*. Pegge, Anon. 1776, (Lean, II, ii). See *Drunk*, p. 210.

To look as *blue* as a *whetstone*, to look blue with cold. N. Cy. It is also applied to one holding extreme Tory views, as blue is the conservative colour, in Glo. e. Yks. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. See *Dull*, p. 53.

As *blo* as *lead*. Langland, PPl. b. III, 97. *Townel. Myst.*, 224. See *Pale*, p. 235.

Pinch the maids as *blue* as *bilberries*. Shak., MW, V, v, 43. As *bleea* as a *blea-berry*. *Whitby Gloss.* (Lean, II, ii).

As blue as a *wimberry*. Chs. Gloss. *Wimberry*, bilberry.

Eyes . . . *Blue* as the blue *forget-me-not*. Tennyson, 1833, NED. Her eyes were blue as the forget-me-not. Baring-Gould, RS, 189. Also in Sw.

Een as *blue's* a *blawort*. Fergusson, 1774, NED. His poor wizened houghs as blue as a blawort. 1824, NED. Wi' his dow'd nose as blue's a blawart. Sc. Bnff. Abd. Nhb. EDD. *Blawort*, cornflower.

As *blue* as *salt water*. Massinger, *Guardian*, ii, 1. (Lean, II, ii).

Zo *blue's* the *sky*. Hewett, Dev. 11. Cf. The eyes were blue, blue as autumn distance. Hardy, PBE, 2. Bluer than bluest summer air. Sharp, 1884, NED.

Yellow.

Blake as May *butter*. Cum. *Whitby Gloss.* See below 'blake as a paigle'.

Each day the gold in the pan shows up as *yellow* as butter in the churning. London, GF, 161.

Let his nose be as *yellow* as *saffron*. Smollet, RR, 191. Er's a pretty washer, her clothes be as yellow as saffern. Oxf. EDD. This sim. probably goes back to ME as we read in Chaucer, His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun. TST., 19.

A visage as *yellow* as an *orange*. Smollet, RR, 18.

As *yellow* as a *guinea*. Ray; Elworthy, WSG. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. His face was as yellow as a guinea. Galsworthy, IP, 117.

As *yellow* as the *golden noble*. Ray.

What colours his hose? Yellow, maister, *yellow as gold*. Voigt, 1594. Morley, 1597 (*Lied*. 126). Three pots of boon beer, as yellow as gold. Taylor, TH, 3. Richardson, 1846, EDD. This pardoner had heer as *yelwe as wex*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 675. Her hair was as *golden as a field of ripe barley*. *London Mag.*, 662, '09.

As *blake* as a *paigle*. Northern. Ray. Yks. EDD.

Yellow as a Peigle. — 'The peigle is the cowslip, *verbasculum*. See Bradley's *Country Housewife*, I, 70. I never heard this simile or Proverb but in Kent. See Gerard's *Herbal*, who writes paigle.' — Pegge, *Kenticisms*. Current also in Ess. Cam. "As yulla as a peagle" is said of a fallow atrabilious person. Ed. Moor, *Suffolk Wds & Phrases*, 1823, 268 (*Folk-Love*, XXXVII). *Paigle*, seldom used except in the comp. 'as yellow as a p.' Nhp. Of this sim. H. writes, "This is substantially identical with 'as black (or pale) as a paigle'". p. 552. No doubt one of his many misprints, as p. 65 he has copied Ray correctly. *Blake*, of a dusky dark colour, livid or yellow, of golden appearance, generally applied to butter and cheese. On the applications and spellings of paigle, see Britten & Holland, 365.

I purchased a hen boiled with bacon, as *yellow* as the *cowslip*, or gold noble. Taylor, SL, 12.

As *blake* as *marigowds*. Cum. EDD.

The belly of it [the trout] looked, some part of it *yellow* as a *marigold*, and part of it as white as a lilly. Walton, CA, 24.

As *yaller* as a *meadow bowt*. Chs. Gloss. *Meadow bowt*, *Caltha palustris*.

His ugly brown face went as *yellow* as a *straw*. Yoxall, RS, 91.

As *yellow* as a *duck's foot*. — Used of the complexion. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As *yellow* as a *kite's claw*. New Forest. H.

Zo yellow's a kit's fute. Hewett, Dev., 11.

Brown.

Bendicite, fair son! (the baron was as *brown* as a *cigar*). Barham, IL, 56. Probably also an allusion to the popular belief that certain crimes cause their perpetrators to become brown, mentioned elsewhere in IL.

Brown as a *coffee-berry*. Alcott, *Jo's Boys* &c. 21, W.

His palfrey was as broun as enye *berye*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 207. Gaillard he was as Goldsynch in the shawe, Brown as a *berye*, a propre short fellawe. *ibid.*, CoT, 4. [The veal is] as brown as a berry, but I should have it as white as a napkin. *Vinegar & Mu.*, 23. Gay, NS. Here's to the maid with a bosom of

snow. Now to her that's as brown as a berry. Sheridan, SS, III, iii. Dickens, W. Hardy, UGT, 242. Cf. Berry-brown, rec. fr. 1611.

As *brown* as a *chesten*. Heywood, 1546. Baret, 1580, NED. A sirloin . . . smells like a beanfield, and brown as a chestnut. Baring-Gould, RS, 60.

Kate, like the hazel-twig, Is straight and slender; and as *brown* in hue/ As *hazel nuts*, and sweeter than the kernels. Shak., TS, II, i, 247.

Knight was brown as a *nut*. Hardy, PBE, 333. Cf. nutbrown rec. fr. 1300.

In the midst of all this, the lamp still cast a smoky glow, obscure and *brown* as *umber*. Stevenson, TI, 93.

A poorly dressed old man, as *tawny* as *copper*, and as wrinkled as moss. Benecke, PA, 165. English as well? Cf. *Red*, p. 247.

John Smith — *brown* as *autumn* as to skin. Hardy, PBE, 101. Another of his heroes, Giles Winterbourne in W., Hardy describes as 'white as winter as to clothes.'

Bare, Naked.

Ez *nak't* ez a *graav-steean*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. Yoy can see this island is as *bare* as a *skull*. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 14. Ez bare ez a *bald head*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

Rio Medio, the dead, forsaken, desecrated city, was lying as *bare* as a *skeleton* on the sands. Conrad, *Romance*, 182.

As *bare* as my *arse*. Palsgrave, *Ac.*, 1540 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. It is ill begging a breech of a bare-arse man. Heywood. It is ill to take a breek off a bare arse. Ferguson, 1641.

As *bare* as my *nail*. Fulwell, *Like Will to Like*, 1568 (H. *Old Plays*, iii, 346, Lean, II, ii). But bare wages (yea, as bare as my nayle, I faith). Nashe, III, 6, 1596.

I would I had her, as *naked* as my nayl. Day, BBB, 2508.

Cupid is a god, as naked as my nail. Dekker, HWh, Ia, vi.

We . . . were led in prysoners naked as my nayle. *Mirr. Mag.*, 1599, NED. And tho' he were as naked as my nail, Yet

would he whinny them and wag the tail. Drayton, 1605. Did so towse them & . . . plucke and pull them till he left them

as naked as my naile. Heywood, 1633, *Slang*. Nares. Lean has two insts of 1622, 1630. Obsolete according to NED.

As *bare* as the *back of my hand*. Ray. Unusual, U.

So bare as the *palm ov m' 'and*. Hewett, Dev. 11. Generally used. A cupboard empty of food, a bald head, a destitute person are so described. U.

Robbers who stripped him as bare as *my hand*. 1853, NED.

As *bare* as my *arm*. Lean, II, ii.

He stole me away a fair shirt of my Mothers own spinning . . . in the morning when mine Hostis came up to call me, I was as *naked* as your *Norfolk-Dumpling*. Day, BBB, 735. Cf. *Canbee*, let me nere take purse again, and I think not, but thou & this *Tom Tawny coat* here gulls me, makes me your cheat, your gull, your strowd, your Norfolk dumpling, whom when you cheated him of his sattin-suit, left naked bed to the mercy of his hostess. *ibid.*, 410. Alluding no doubt to the tight-fitting skin, like a sausage. H. "I am not certain, but I think I have heard this applied to a tree with the bark off. It is a very rare expression, and I believe very rarely used nowadays." U. — Probably obs. long ago.

As *naked* as an *egg*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As *naked* as a *Strand Maypole*. Rowley, *Match at Midn.*, 1633, NED. — This refers to the Maypoles that formerly used to be put up in the Strand, when deprived of their ornaments of flowers. Was the sim. ever a proverbial one?

Take two strong men, and in themese cast hem, and both *naked* as a *nedle*. PPl, 1377, NED. See *ibid.*, c. text, XX, 56. There syr launcelot toke the fayrest lady by the hand . . and she was naked as a nedel. Malory, 1470—85, NED. Obsolete according to the dict.

Now he hath right nought, *naked* as an *asse*. Skelton, *Magnyf.*, 1919 (Lean, II, ii). *Naked*, poor?

As *bare* as an *ape* is behind. Ingelend, *The Disob. Child*. (H., *Old Plays*, ii, 308, Lean, II, ii).

As *bare* as a *coot*. See *Bald*. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.

As *naked* as a *robin*. Northall, War. Jackson & Burne, 595. — Usually said of an undressed child. — How can a robin be said to be naked?

Haäfe on 'im was *bare* as a *bublin*. Lin. 1889. EDD.

As bare as a *bab*. N. Lin. Known to C. all his life. "In Lincolnshire we boys called young birds when first hatched 'bare bublins'." Also 'bare bolchin'. N. & Q., 5, X, 97 f, and *ibid.*, 12, III, 274.

As *naked* as a *gorpin bird* new hatched. *Teesdale Gloss.* (Lean, II, ii).

As naked as a *gorpin*. Yks. EDD.

As *bare* as a *bird's arse*. Ray.

And the arrant knave when I come he will him hide, / Making him as *bare* as a *bird's tail*. *Fests of Wid. Edyth*, 1525 (Lean, III). See also *Poor*, Ch. IV.

As *naked* as a *frog*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Fair Maid &c.*, IV, ii (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Whose coat was as bare of nap as a frog's is of feather. NED, 1823; and the Dutch term *paddebloot*.

That bone's as *bare* as a *bumbee's knee*. Lin. EDD.

Nakid as a *worm* was she. Chaucer, RR, 454. The Lord Schalys

. . . was slayne at Synt Mary Overeyes, . . . and lay there dyspoly nakyd as a worme. Gregory's Chron., 1467, NED.
 As *bare* as the *birch at Yule Even*. Ferguson, 1641 (Lean, II, ii).
 The place'll be as bare as a birk at Yule e'en. Rxb. Hamilton, 1897, NED. He answered that he was no more a varlet than he had the saving grace of god, and that he was as free of, as the birk is of leaves at Yool-even. Jamieson. According to Lean, the sim. refers to poverty.
 Of all blis let it be als *bair* as the *birk*. Montgomery, 1629 (Lean, II, ii).
 As *bare* as *January*. Armin, *The Two Maids* &c., 1609 (Lean, II, ii).
 As *naked* as *night*. Lean, II, ii.

Sharp.

Note. For other sim. with *Sharp* see *Clever, Crafty*, p. 27 ff. In some of the following sim. the adj. has a variety of transferred senses beside the original matter-of-fact one.
 As *sharp* as an *apparitor's nails*. S. S., *Hon. Lawyer*, 1616, (Lean, II, ii). Probably only a nonce-phrase.
 gifer hatte se wyrm, þe þa eaglas beoð *needle scearpran*. c. 1000. NED. Heywood, *Fair Maid* &c. 1607, (Lean, II, ii). From his fearfull eyes Two fierce beames, More sharpe than points of needles. Spenser, FQ, IV, viii, 39. To look upon him till the diminution Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle. Shak., C, I, iii. Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685 (Lean, II, ii). Sharp as a needle are her words. Gay, NS. We pride ourselves covering an infinite amount of petty miseries, tiny bullyings, naggings and prickings with tongues as sharp as needles. Besant, RMM, 292. Cf. Portatyf and persant as þe poynt of a nedle. Langland, PPI, I, 155.
 His *nose* was as *sharp* as a *pen*. Shak., KH, V, II, iii, 15.
 Her naylys *sharp* as *tenter hokys*. Skelton, 1518, NED.
 And out he kaughte a knyfe as *rasour kene*. Chaucer, Leg., IX, 93. Her glance is as the razor keen. Gay, NS. Hys swerd that was pesaunt, and cutting *sharp* as a raser. *Melusine*, 283. The brigge was heigh as a tour And as sharp as a rasour. *The Legend of St. Owain*. His little weezen face as sharp as a razor. Foote, 1765, NED. The knife gleem'd on high, bright and sharp as a razor. Barham, IL, 235. Epigrams that were as sharp as razors. Thackeray, VF. Keen and cutting air, sharp as a razor. Hawthorne, 1858, NED. It [a toy sword] must have been the finest steel and as sharp as a razor. Doyle, AG, 328. Cf. also the fig. use of *razor* in the following quot.: These words are razors to my wounded heart. Shak., TA, I, i, 314. The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen As

is the razor's edge invisible, Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen. *ibid.*, LLL, V, ii, 256. The man's jokes cut like a razor. Phillpotts, TK, 18.

- As *sharp* as a *knife*. Barclay, *Ship of F.*, 1509, see p. 32.
- As *sharp* as a *dart*. Barclay, *Ship of F.*, 1509 (Lean, II, ii). That . . . soul-ravishing, and captivating beauty, which, as one saith, is sharper than any dart or needle. Burton, AM, III, 73.
- My word from hens forthe, is *scharp* and bytyng as a *Swerd*. Maundeville, c. 1400, NED. Slander, Whose sting is sharper than the sword's. Shak., WT, II, iii, 85. Pens are most dangerous tools, more sharp by odds than swords. Taylor, ST, 34. God hath delivered a law as sharp as a twoedged sword. Enc. London, 1811 (N. & Q., 7, V, 252). See Heb., 4, 12.
- A gay daggere,/ Harneised wel, and *sharp* as *point of spere*. Chaucer, ProL. CT, 114. See p. 32. — The following passages are of interest as illustrating the fig. use of *sharp*, *keen* in connection with edge-tools: Thou makest thy knife keen, but no metal can, No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness of thy sharp envy. Shak., MV, IV, i, 124. My desire, More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth. *ibid.*, TN, III, iii, 4.
- As *sharp* as a *handsaw*. Heywod; Peacham, 1640, (Lean, II, ii). *Sharp* as a *sickle* is the edge of shade and shine. Meredith, 1851. NED.
- Each black nail was *sharp* as an *eagle's claw*. Phillpotts, AP, 459. With thicke bristlis on his berd unsofte, Lyk to the skyn of hound-fisch *scharp* as *brerc*. Chaucer, MaT. 580. Cf. Summer, When Briars shall haue leaues as well as thornes And be as sweet as sharpe. Shak., AW, IV, iv, 32. See *Clever* &c. p. 35, and *Rough*, p. 258.
- As *sharp* as a *thorn*. Heywood. (Lean, II, ii). The children yet unborn Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn. Shak., KR, II, IV, i, 323. Ray. Cf. The best of them is as a briar: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge. Mic., 7, 4; and, Is love a tender thing? It is too rough, too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn. Shak., RJ, I, iv, 26.
- I have oone [a wife], to my fere, As *sharp* as a *thystylle*, as rough as a brere, And she is browyd lyke a brystylle. *Townel. Myst.*, 100.
- As *sharp* as a *winter's morning*. Bp Corbet, *It. Bor.*, 1672, (Lean, II, ii).
- Dropping apostrophes *sharp* as *hail* upon fools who could not help themselves. Castle, IB, 271.
- A fear *sharp* as *frost*. Hardy, TT, 279.
- As *sharp* as the *wind*. Tom Tyler &c., 1598, (Lean, II, ii).

Rough.

Note. For sim. referring to *rough behaviour*, see p. 106, 107.

Beneath a tuft of bristles As *rough* as a *frieze-jerkin*. Butler, H, III, 142. No cp. *frieze-jerkin* in NED. But the roughness of *frieze* is not unfrequently referred to. And cf. Iohn nagle sent me ffrize for a Ierkin. Sir R. Boyle, 1616, NED.

Let her not live to be the mistress of A farmer's heir, and be confined ever To a serge, far *coarser* than my *horse-cloth*. Beaumont & Fletcher, NG, I, ii.

As *rough* as a *tinker's budget*. Ray. Just as the tinker himself has entered largely into English proverbial phraseology, all that belongs to him has followed suit. See p. 200. Tinker's budget may mean stale news, but 'Tinkers may have leave to live And bear the sow-skin budget.' (Shak., WT, IV, iii; cf. A dogskin hairy budget. Stf. EDD). Even if 'a tinker's budget's full of necessary tools' (H), he is not always likely to enjoy them, according to the old saying 'Yer mun wait while yer get it, like the tinker an' 'is budget', which was often in pawn for board and lodging (S. Not., EDD). It was mentioned already by Nashe: Where had this brable his first beginning but in . . . the tynkers budget, the Taylors sheares, and the shepheardes Tarboxe? (Nashe, I, 77). See also *Slang*, s. v. budget, Harman, 1567.

Rough as a *nutmeg grater*. Brewer, Dict., 1135.

People . . . muche like vnto dogges, with mouthes *roughe* like a *grater*. Watreman, 1555, NED. Zo rough's a grater. Hewett, Dev. 12. My throat's as rough as a grater. Hardy, TT, 21.

Es *pricky* ez a *pricky-backed* otch'n. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. *Pricky*, prickly in dial. use fr. Sc. to Ken. *Pricky-back-urchin*, hedge-hog. As *rough* as the *back of a hedgehog*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). *Hedgehog*, rec. in NED fr. 1450. — "The little Hiricion, with his sharpe pykes, is almost the least of all other Beastes. And of vs Englishmen he is termed an Irchin or Urcheon, a beast so called for the roughness and sharpnesse of his pykes, which nature hath giuen him in steade of haire". Bossewell, *Wks of Armorie*, c. 1580 (Hulme, NH, 169). G. *Rauher als ein Igel*. Wander.

As *rough* as a *badger's back*. N. & Q., 4, VI, 321. Rough as a *badger*. *ibid.* 12, III, 275.

As *rough* as *Babby 'ood gorst*. — Babbin's Wood is in the parish of Whittington. Shr. Jackson & Burne, 595. See p. 107, 'as coarse, rough as Hickling gorse.' Some of the other sim. with 'coarse' are perhaps also used of the rough surface of things.

As *hask* as *sawcum*. *Hask*, arsk, northern form of harsh, in gen. dial. use in Sc. Eng. Irel., rec. fr. 1440, the sense rough to touch and taste chiefly Sc. and N. Cy. *Sawcum*, sawdust. Yks.

As *hask* as *chopped hay*. Used of 'hask' bread. Coarse or rough or harsh to the senses of taste and touch; the coarseness or harshness of too great dryness as well as austerity or roughness of taste being included. *Whitby Gloss.* (Clevel. Gloss.).

[A wife] As sharp as a thystylle, as *rough* as a *brere*,/ She is browyd like a brystylle, with a soure, loten chere. *Townel. Myst.*, p. 100.

Hys eares a *rugged* as *burres*. Heywood, 1547, NED.
Passages as *craggy* as the *Alps*. VW, 58.

Hard.

Note. For some other sim. with *Hard* see *Hard-hearted*, *Cruel*, p. 87 ff. and *Healthy*, *Hardy*, p. 151 ff. The application of many of the following sim. does not appear from the sources.

As *hard* as the *devil's forehead*. N. & Q., 9, IV, 478. Lin.

As *hard* as the *devil's nagnails*. Northall, FPh. 9. (*N*)*agnail*, 'a little corne vpon a toe'. Cotgrave, NED.

... Those that made me were uncivil,
For they made me *harder* than the *devil*;
Knives won't cut me, fire won't sweat me,
Dogs bark at me, but can't eat me!" These proverbial lines are supposed to be spoken by a Suffolk cheese, which is so hard that a myth tells us gate pegs in that country are made of it. The proverb has been long true, and Pepys, writing in 1691, says, "I found my wife vexed at her people for grumbling to eat Suffolk cheese, which I also am vexed at." H. Ray has the proverb, 'Hunger will break through stone walls, or any thing, except Suffolk cheese,' and by way of explanation he adds, 'Suffolk cheese, from its poverty, is frequently the subject of much humour.' Suffolk cheese mentioned already by Fuller, who speaks very highly of it. (Fuller, W, III, 151).

Her hand/ In whose comparison all whites are ink,/ Writing their own reproach, to whose soft seizure/ The cygnet's down is harsh and spirit of sense/ *Hard* as the palm of *ploughman*. Shak., TC, I, i.

As *hard* as *brawn*. Brewer, Dict. 580. *Brawn*, probably hardened skin, although of this sense NED has no inst. later than 1639. The adj. *brawny*, 'having a hardened skin', seems to be still in use.

As *hard* as an *egg at Easter*. Denham. Cf. As bashful as an egg at Easter. *ibid.* The Easter eggs were to be hard-boiled, and at Chester at least so hard that they could be played with by the boys as balls. (Chambers, BD, I, 425, 9.) But

how could they be looked upon as 'bashful'? Perhaps it is ironical, as these eggs, being coloured with red, blue, or violet dyes, with inscriptions and landscapes traced upon them, must have been regarded as very gay or proud, in the sense of fine or splendid. Cf. As proud as a gardener's dog &c. p. 220, and see *Modest, Bashful*, p. 66.

As *hard* as *Severn salmon* dried in Wales. N. W., *Nupt. Dial.*, I, xiii, 1710. Authorities consulted know nothing of salmon caught in the Severn.

[Make my hands] as *hard* as a *beechn trencher*. Richardson, P, 79. As the article itself is now found chiefly at museums, the sim., if it ever was a current one, must have dropped out of use.

As *hard* as a *tabber*. Northall, FPh. 9. *Tabber*, tabour. This form rec. fr. 1587 and still current in some Midl. Counties. The pipe and tabour, for a long time very popular throughout Europe, are now obsolete in England. NED.

A hand as *hard* as a *table*. Kingsley, *Wat. Bab.*, W.

As *hard* as a *deal board*. Lean, II, ii.

Table cloths folded square and hard as *boards*. Hardy, UGT, 133. The muscles are as hard as a board. Doyle, SF, 101.

I thought that Jack had bin as *hard* as *brazzil*. 1854, Yks. EDD. It forehead is as hard as *brazzil*. Yks. The ground is as hard as *brazil*. Lin. N. & Q. 12, III, 275. That fellow's head is as hard as *brazil*. Mtg. Chs. Stf. Lan. Wilts. 'As hard as *brazzin*' is often heard in the neighbourhood of Middlewich. Chs. Also in Shr. 'As hard as *brazil*' is a common saying over a great part, perhaps the whole, of England. NED.

There has been some discussion as to the meaning of the word *brazil*, *brazzin*. Miss Jackson, in her Shropshire Word Book, explains *brazzin* as iron pyrites. This sense of the word is rec. fr. 1747. It means also coals containing much pyrites; specially applied to the 'middle seam of the Great Thick Coal of South Staffordshire, which is characterized by the unfailing presence of iron pyrites, and has been locally known as *Brazzles* from time immemorial; hence transferred to other hard coal of a similar character.' Prof. Lapworth (NED). The existence of the sim in Stf. may seem to speak in favour of this interpretation of the subst. Leigh, in his Cheshire Gloss. explains it as referring to a *brazil* nut. It has a very hard shell, and, as a cor. of N. & Q., II, V, 434, thinks, "would be better known in Wiltshire than Brazilian wood", which is the sense preferred by NED and EDD. *Brazil*, meaning *brazil-wood*, has long been used as a type of hardness. Cf. Are my bones *brazil*, or my flesh of oak. Quarles, 1635. Turn thou my *Brazil* thoughts anew. *ibid.*; which is a possible reference to the *brazil* wood turned into bowls for bowling. Thus, it is possible that the sim. took its rise from this sense of the word. It is nevertheless probable that a great many of those who

use it associate it with the more common sense, iron pyrites, or the hard coal so called.

As *hard* as *oak*. Huloet, 1552, Lean, II, ii. See p. 116, 'stout as an oak.'

"It was a big 'un, an' *hard* as *wood*." Copping, GG, 24. Used of a baking pear.

As *hard* as *old nails*. Northall, FPh. See p. 153, 'as tough as rusty wrought-iron nails.'

Hard as nails. Used of muscles, beds. Overheard in Oxford. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. Cf. *Zoo hard als een spijker*, Stoet, NS, I, 289, of a miser. As hard, or *jed* as a *door-nail*. Chs. Der. EDD. See pp. 153, 142, 87.

As *hard* as a *stiddy*. Brocket, *A Gloss. of N. Country Wds*, 1825; Carr, *Craven Gloss.*, 1828; *A Song against the Mass*, *Huth Ballads*, p. 251, Lean, II, ii.

As *hard* as a *bullet*. Northall, FPh. 8.

As *hard* as *wire*. J. Heywood, 1533 (Lean, II, ii).

As *hard* as *iron*. Lodge, *Wit's Mis.*, 1596 (Lean, II, ii).

In a book, published in 1786, . . . the unicorn is described . . . as having . . . horn "as hard as iron and as rough as any file." Hulme, NH, 132. Your head must be as hard as iron. Stevenson, TI, 109. A fist hard as iron. White, BT, 175. Brewer, Dict. 580. Northall, FPh. 8.

My hart is *hard* as *stele* to trow in sicke mastry. *Townel. Myst.*, 288. *Hard*, difficult, unwilling to be convinced. See p. 88.

As *hard* as *adamant*. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, ii, 127, 1509; Cawdray, 1600 (Lean, II, ii). Here we impinge upon a dilemma as hard as adamant. Gladstone, 1852, NED. Features set as hard as adamant. Doyle, *Firm*, 242. Brewer, Dict. 580. Chiefly used in transferred senses, it would seem. See p. 89.

As *hard* as *brick*. Shelley, *Sum. and Wint.* (Lean, II, ii). Straight, fat, strong, flesh as hard as a brick. Stowe, UTC, 151.

Youth presents a surface as *hard* as *marble* to the finality of death. Conrad, *Romance*, 297. His face, white and hard as marble. Vachell, OS, 142. See *Firm*, p. 261, and *White*, p. 232.

The devel dragouns hide was *hard* so ani *flint*. c. 1320, NED. As hard as a flint stone. Wright, *Displ. of Duty*, p. 6, 1614 (Lean, II, ii). Northall, FPh. 3. Brewer, Dict. 580. See p. 89.

As *hard* as a *coble*. A common proverb. Dur. EDD. Cf. *Zoo hard als een kei*. Stoet, NS, I, 289. *Hart sein wie ein Kieselstein*. Wander.

Ebenif . . . that is a tree that after that it is kit waxith *hard* as a *stoon*. Wyclif, 1382, NED. *Cov. Myst.* 286; Barclay, *Ecl.*, ante 1530 (Lean, II, ii). Marlowe, *Lust's Dom.*, V, iii (Lean, II, ii). It was dry as a stick, hard as a stone, and cold as a cucumber. Gray, 1760, NED. Ez hard ez a steean. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. Brewer, Dict. 580. Cf. This hard house — More harder than the stones whereof 'tis

raised. Shak., KL, III, ii, 63. And see p. 89. Also in Dutch, G., and Sw.

Here is a chinne, As *soft* as the *hoof of an horse*. DP, Dodsley, I, 278. The soles of their feet being as *hard* as *horse-hoofs*. Burton, AM, I, 405.

As *hard* as *horn*. Cai. EDD. Hard as any horn, and blakker fer than soot. Lydgate, 1420, NED. Cf. The hearty shake of Mr. Girder's horn-hard palm. Scott, 1819, NED.

I could soon wish my hand to be as *callous* as *horn*. Scott, A, 120. See p. 213.

Dubs were *hard* as *ony bane*. Nicoll, 1837, EDD.

Hard as *ice*. Brewer, Dict. 580.

Firm, Stable.

Note. For some related sim. see *Honest, Faithful, Trustworthy*, p. 9 ff. *Calm, Steady, Unflinching*, p. 60.

Firm as *Hodge-wife*. — Hodge's wife is said to have been confirmed (by the bishop) several times, and the phrase is now applied to anything very firm and secure. Lan. EDD. Who is this Hodge? It cannot be Gammer Gurton's 'goodman'. She [a ship] was a lovely creature, and as *stiff* as a *church*. Martineau, 1837, NED.

Ez *fast ez a rivet*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

Ev'ry limb, nerve, and muscle grew *firm* as a *post*. Barham, IL, 254.

Her red ankles and feet were planted *firm* as *iron* on the sacred doorstep of Home, that she protected. Baring-Gould, RS, 87.

Her full, round, naked arms, wet, mottled with the chill of the water, and as *firm* as *marble*. Hardy, JO, 45. See *Hard*, p. 258, and *Stiff*, p. 263. Cf. I had else been perfect, Whole as the marble, founded as the rock. Shak., Mb, III, iv.

The thick lips, which are yet as *firm* as *granite*. Kingsley, WH, 465.

His heart is as *firm* as a *stone*; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone. Job, 41, 24. See p. 88.

As *firm* as the *rock of Cashel*. Cashel, on the Suir, co. Tipperary.

The Rock of C. well-known in Irish. hist. See Enc. Brit.

The mass was immovable. He shook it, it was as *firm* as a *rock*. Stevenson, NAN, 321. Geoffrey stood his ground, unmoved and firm as a rock. Hardy, UGT, 199.

"Is my hand trembling", she asked, lifting it and laying it again on the tiller, where it rested firm as a rock. "Q", MV, 53. Cf. I know thy faith to be as firm as rock. Jonson, EM, 71.

The glass *steady* as a rock. "Q", MV, 14, 194.

Our peace shall stand as *firm* as *rocky mountains*. Shak., KH, IVb, IV, i.

Roc's egg . . . that looked like an enormous white dome over a hundred cubits high and as firm as a mountain. Hulme, NH, 214.

Rigid, Stiff.

- As *stiff* as *Tommy Harrison* when his mother could not bend him. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. See p. 59, where a shorter form is given. What is the application of the sim.?
- Bulging leggings as *stiff* as the *Philistine's greaves of brass*. Hardy, RN, 22. See I, Sam. 17, 6, And he had greaves of brass upon his legs.
- As *stiff* as the *staff of Government*. — Applied to a person whose carriage is stiff and erect. Its origin was a white staff, which the Governour of the Island received on his instalment, swearing that he will "truly and uprightly deal between the Queen and her subjects, and as indifferently betwixt party and party as this staff now standeth." Wood, *Manx P.*, 255. Cf. *Straight*, p. 276.
- As *stiff* as a *stappit saster*. Lth. Rxb. Jamieson, EDD. *Saster*, a pudding composed of meal and mincemeat, put into a bag or tripe.
- It's as sticky an' *stiff* as *treacle foot*. Lin. EDD. *Stiff*, slow-flowing. *Treacle-foot*, the bottom sediment of a treacle-pot.
- Stuf's u strad*. — Strads are very hard leather leggings and arm-pieces worn in hedging or cutting faggot wood. A frozen cloth would be described as u'freez su stuf's u strad. Elworthy, WSG.
- As *stiff* as *buckram*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. Application?
- As *stiff* as a *drab's distaff*. — Welsh. Howell, 1659, (Lean, II, ii). Meaning?
- Make your hair stand on end as *stiff* as a *rubbing brush*. T. Heywood, *Fair Maid &c.*, (Lean, II, ii).
- A small sword as long and as *stiff* as a *poker*. Barham, IL, 283. "If you sit there, you'll freeze stiff." — "Stiff as a poker," was Shorty's verdict. London, SB, 139. Hewett, Dev., 12. Brewer, Dict. 1143. See p. 59.
- As *stiff* as a *cart*. — Which is stiff when the wheels need greasing. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. See *Fond*, p. 44.
- There were the two watchmen, sure enough: Redcap on his back, as *stiff* as a *handspike*. Stevenson, TI, 92.
- As *stiff* as a *post*. *Slang*. My legs . . . as stiff as two *postés*. Hrt. EDD. This sim. may perhaps be applied to an unyielding character, a stiff or grave nature or behaviour as well as to human bodies or things that are stiff in a matter-of-fact sense. Cf. "I can't dance any more than a lamp-post." Anstey, VV, 58. See p. 165.

My neck was as *stiff* as a *board*. *Strand Mag.*, Oct. '12.
 She was freezing cold, and *rigid* like a *stick*. Stevenson, NAN, 298.
 Here armes when hi vpward reizte bicome as *stif* as *tree*. c. 1305,
 NED.

Fermor felt David's arm as *rigid* as *iron* against his own. Vachell,
 OS, 141. See *Hard*, p. 260, *Firm*, p. 261.

His hart gan wexe *starke* as *marble stone*. Spenser, FQ, II, i, 42.
 See *Firm*, p. 261.

As *stiff* as *stone*. *Chester Pl.*, 1328 (Lean, II, ii). Byron, *Don F.*,
 13, 110.

He suspended his muscles *rigid* as *stone*. Hardy, UGT, 40.
 She remained rigid as a *stone*. *Ibid.* Lao., 15.

I never fa' but I'm as *stiff* as a *wuddie* for twa or three days
 after it. Frf. 1886.

The ither hauf is as *dour's* a *wuddy*. Rnf. *Wuddy*, widdy,
 withy.

As *stiff* as a *ram's horn* stooping so long. Hardy, RN, 224. See
Crooked, p. 279.

Note. Stijf als een boom, een boonenstaak, en boonenstok, een
 deur, een paal, een plank. Stoett, NS, I, 104. Er ist so steif wie ein
 Bock, Stock, Stamm, Klotz, Hopfenstange, Besenstiel, Pfahl, Dragoner-
 pferd, Karrengaul, Wallach, Ziegenbock, Stockfisch &c. (Wander) are
 some D. and G. sim. referring to different kinds of stiffness.

Tight.

Note. For other sim. with *tight* see pp. 127, 195. See also
Full, *Crowded*, p. 294, and *Close*, Ch. IV.

As *tight* as *Dick's Hatband*. N. & Q., II, ii, 189. See p. 98 ff.
 The folkes that I did see, Chucked up es *tite* as *wax*. Cor. EDD.

Tite, tight, very closely wedged together. Another meaning
 in the following inst., I pulled and strained, but it was as
 tight as wax. Barnes-Grundy, 1902, NED. See 'close as wax',
 p. 130, 'neat as wax', p. 219. Does *tight* in our sim. origi-
 nally mean 'close or compact in texture and consistency'?
 This sense rec. in NED 1513—1797.

As *tight* as a *clicket-nail*. — "Clicket" is, or was, a door-knocker,
 the iron knob on which it struck being the clicket-nail. Lin.
 N. & Q., 12, III, 275. Clicket-nail in no dict.

As *tight* as *twopence in a rag*. In. 1901, EDD. Does this origi-
 nally refer to something securely tied up?

We've got them as *tight* as a *nail*. Oxenham, GD, 167. Used of
 people who would be trapped without any means of escape

As *tight* as a *bottle*. Lean, II, ii. Water-tight?

'That dam's sprung aleak.' 'Is t'other alright?' 'Yes, that's *tight*
 as a *cup*. Emerson, 1892, EDD.

With belly *stif* and *toght* as any *tabour*. Chaucer, ST, 560.

Their rounded bodies were as *taut* as a *drum-head*. Stanley, 1878, NED.

The skin-roof, stretched *tightly* as a drum head. Phillpotts, SW, 256.

As fine as fivepence is her mien, No *drum* was ever *tighter*. Gay, NS.

Fitted her like a skin, *tight* as a *drum*. Galsworthy, MP, 148. Cf. He's high braced, like a drum; pray God he break not! Beaumont & Fletcher, NG, III, ii.

As *trig* as a drum. Lin. Sc. EDD. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. *Trig*, close-fitting, tight-strained, distended, in Sc. and n. Cy dial., rec. in NED fr. 1811. For another sense of *trig*, see 219, 217, and a cognate sim. p. 184.

The hauser was as *taut* as a *bowstring*. Stevenson, TI, 86.

Ez *tight* ez a damp *cleas-line*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

As *tight* as the *bark of a tree*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).

Tough.

Ar *tough* as the *devil's shoe-sole*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As *tough* as *bull-beef*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

As *tough* as *shoe-leather*. Lean, II, ii. The poor man's loaf was . . . as tough as shoe-leather. Jessop, 1889, NED. *Shoe-leather*, rec. fr. 1576.

As *tough* as right horsecollar *whiteleather*. Armin, *Nest of Ninn.*, p. 42, 1608 (Lean, II, ii); As tough as whitleather. Ray; *Slang*. 'As tou' as whitleather' is a common sim., especially for meat. Lei. EDD. It is also used of a man's constitution: I am hard as a nut, and as tough as whitleather. Der. Lan. EDD. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. *Whiteleather* known at least from Beaumont & Fletcher.

Ez *tough* ez *leather*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. Hewett, Dev. 12; Brewer, Dict. 1135.

As *tough* as the *tongs*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

Ez *tough* ez a *swipple*. — The swipple is the short bar of the flail, used to thrash corn with — by hand — and was always made of the toughest wood. Blakeborough, NRY, 244.

As *teuf* as *pinwire*. Dickinson, 1866, Cum. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use.

As *tough*, or as tiff, as *Billy Whitlam's dog*, that barked nine times after it was dead. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

As *tough* as an *old horse*. Lean, II, ii. Refers probably to the meat of a horse some twenty and odd years old.

As *teeaf* as *raglad*. *Raglad*, gristle. The peculiar cartilage to which this is applied will split into filaments or tags, hence it is termed 'teeaf tags'. Nicholson, Flk-Sp., Yks., EDD.

As *tough* as *hickory*. See p. 156.

As *tough* as a *widdey*. Brocket, *Gloss. of N. Cy Wds*, 1825 (Lean, II, ii). That goose is as teuch as a wuddie. Abd. Also Ant. 1878; *Ayr.* 1879; *Bwk.*, 1856; *Yks.* 1865. It is sometimes applied to a person's constitution: He'd ance be as swank, an' as teugh as a widdie. Abd. 1880. *Wuddie, wid(d)y*, withy.

Note. So zäh wie Händsche (Handschuh) leder, Juchtenleder, Hundeleder, (dial.), Hundefleisch (cf. dur comme du chien), Eschenholz, Wite (widdy), so taj as Gold, so taj as 'n Katt (the cat has nine lives!). Wander.

Frail, Brittle, Broken.

As *cracked* as a *brokken pot*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

As *brittle* as *Venice glass*. Withals (Lean, II, ii).

Lett the world pas, It is ever in drede and *brekyll* as *glas*. *Townel. Myst.* 101. He understood well that an army being brickle like glass. Munro, 1637, EDD. 'Tis so brickle's glass. Som. EDD. *Brekyll*, brickle, frail, not rec. before the *Townel. Myst.*

As *brittle* as the glass. *Mirror for Mag.*, 179, 1559 (Lean, II, ii). *Rare Triumph of Love &c.*, 1589 (Lean, II, ii). To have a Mistris as brittle as glasse, And that were as bad as the horn-plague. Dekker, OF, 99. These women/ Are as brittle mettle as your glasses. Ford, LS, 104.

As *frail* as *glass*. Davies, *Select Sec. Husb. &c.*, 1616. But we bee frail as glass, And also brettylle. Wright, *Pol. Poems and Songs*, i, 180 (temp. Edw. III to Henry VIII), Lean, II, ii.

Short as *cat-fat*. Lin. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 410. *Short*, brittle, in some n. Cy dial. The phrase signifies something that breaks very readily and in an unexpected manner. 'This warp is as short as cat-fat. It weänt hing together a bit.' Lin. EDD. Some are fragile or *brittle* as *bones*. Crooke, 1615, NED.

As *snapple* as a *carrot*. Lin. EDD. *Snapple*, brittle.

As *smopple* as a *carrot*. — That is, as easily snapped in two.

I never heard it applied to anything rigid like glass or china.

N. & Q., 12, III, 275. Used of wood, or pie-crust. EDD.

As *smopple* as *touch*. — *Touch*, touchwood. *Yks.* EDD.

Soft, Pliant.

Then came a breath of wind. At first it was as *soft* as an *angel's whisper*. Caine, D, xxiv.

Her skin is as *sumple* as a *duchess's*. Hardy, T, 30. *Sumple*, supple, pliant.

With a skin *soft* as a '*lydy's*'. Phillpotts, SW.

- Paula's hand was cool and *soft* as an *infant's*. Hardy, Lao., 102.
 She looked from brown hand to white — the one, work-worn and hardened by whiphandle and paddle, the other as guiltless of toil and soft as a *newborn babe's*. London, FM, 184.
- Softer than sleep*. Tennyson, W.
- As *soft* as *butter*. Lean, II, ii. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. See *Polite, Civil*, p. 68.
- Limber* like the *skin* of a *white pudding* when the meat is out. Middleton, 1602, NED.
- As *soft* as *pap* her kisses are. Gay, NS. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. Cf. A child's head is naturally as soft as the pap of an apple. Sterne, 1761, NED.
- "Pretty soft subsoil." — "*Soft as dough*," he admitted. *Illustr. Lond. News, Xmas N.*, 1915, p. 32.
- Soft as soap*. Brewer, Dict. 1157. "I never heard this." U.
- As *soft* as *putty*. "Used it all my life." C.; Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. Probably the glazier's putty. This sense rec. fr. 1706.
- As *soft* as a *biled turmit*. *Chs. Gloss. Turmit*, turnip. Cf. As full of dreaminess as a tummit is full of watter. Yks., EDD.
- Her lips are as *soft* as a *medlar*. *Musarum Delic.*, ii, 265, 1656 (Lean, II, ii). The fruit is eaten when decayed to a soft pulpy state. See *Rotten!*
- As *soft* and *semmit* as a *lady's glove*. *Whitby Gloss. Semmit*, a n. Cy word meaning soft pliable, rec. fr. 1790, EDD.
- As *kind* as a *glove*. Kraven Dial. *Kind*, smooth, soft, sleek.
- As *linnow* as a *glove*. Shr. *Linnow* a Shr. form of *lennow*, limp, a word rec. fr. 1589.
- As fine and *soft* as *Dutch cloth*. Yarranton, *England's Improvem.*, i, 108, 1677 (Lean, II, ii).
- These starched things bin as *linnow* as the *dishclout*. Shr. EDD. For sim. with dish-clout, see p. 162, and *Weak*, Ch. IV.
- A skin, a *sattin* is not *more soft*, nor lawn whiter. Dekker, HWh, Ia, vi. See *Smooth*, p. 269.
- The gras, as thikke y-set And *soft* as any *veluet*. Chaucer, RR, 1420. Soft as velvet the young gras. Lydgate, CBK, st. 12. Conscious borrowing? A thick moss which was as soft as velvet beneath their feet, Hardy, DR, 433.
- Body and brest wel mad al, . . . Eyther side *soft* ase *sylke*. c. 1310, NED. Straw her cage faire and soft as silk. Chaucer, 1386, NED. Soft and soupill as the silk. Dunbar, 1508, NED. A skin as soft as silk, and as smooth as jet. Lyly, AC, II, ii. Spenser, RuTi, 564 (of hair). When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk. Shak., Co., I, xi, 45. Clarke, 1638. Her breath is as sweet as the rose in June, Her skin is as soft as slik. Aubrey, 1669, *Slang*. Gay, NS. Hardy, Lao. 183 (of hair). Ray; Brewer &c.

A sort of Paper . . . as fine and *limber* as Silk. Cheselden, 1713, NED.

As *soft* as *silkworms*. Taylor, *Pastoral* (Lean, II, ii). Lean quotes this sim. fr. several other late ME and early MnE sources, but as far as they have been verified they give insts of 'as soft as silk'. The mistake is probably due to the imperfect state in which the manuscript was left. See Introduction about Lean's *Collectanea*.

Ez *soft ez* a *geease-down pillow*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.

As *soft* as is the *pillow down*. Grange, *Gold. Aphrod.*, 1577 (Lean, II, ii). No cp pillow-down known to any dictionary.

Whiter Galatea than the white withy-wind,
Fresher than a field, higher than a tree,
Brighter than glass, more wanton than a kid,
Softer than *swan's down*, or ought that may be.

Burton, AM, III, 181. A translation of: —

Candidior folio nivei, Galatea, ligustri.

Floridior prato, longa procerior alno,

Splendidior vitro, tenero lascivior haedro &c.

Mollior et cygni plumis, et lacte coacto.

Ovid. Met. 13, 789—96.

More sleek thy skin . . . And *softer* to the touch, than *down of swans*. Dryden, 1700, NED. Cf. Her hand . . . to whose soft seizure/ The cygnet's down is harsh. Shak., TC, I, i, 51.

As fat and plum euerie part of her as a plover, a skin as slike and soft as the back of a swan. Nashe, II, 26.

I take the hand, this hand/ As soft as *dove's down*, and as white as it. Shak., WT, IV, iv.

As *soft* as *down*. Jonson, *Charis*, ix (Lean, II, ii). Sharpham, *Cupid's Whirligig*, 1630 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. the cp-sim. down-soft, Tailor, 1614, NED.

As *fine* as *Kerton*. i. e. Crediton spinning. Devon. Ray. "Which to express the better to your belief, it was very true 140 threads of woollen yarn spun in that town were drawn together through the eye of a taylor's needle, which needle and thread were for many years together to be seen in Watling Street in London . . ." Westcot's *View of Dev.*, 1630, Lean. "In 1231 the bishop obtained a fair, still held, on the vigil, feast and morrow St. Lawrence. This was important as the wool-trade was established by 1249, and certainly continued until 1630, when the market for kersies is mentioned in connection with the saying 'as fine as Kerton spinning'." Enc. Brit. The woollen trade and industry was established in Devonshire in very early times, and flourished . . . until the closing years of the eighteenth c. when it was greatly checked by the introduction of cotton fabrics. The chief woollen market was at Crediton, but it was removed in the sixteenth c. to Exeter. Cambr. Co. Geogr. Co. Devon. Kerton seems to have given rise to another at least local sim. 'The soil (of the Lord's Meadow,

a broad open field, extending from the Crediton valley to the Creedy river) is very fertile . . . insomuch that it is grown to a general proverb throughout the whole kingdom, "as good hay as any in Devonshire", and here in the county "as good hay as any in Kirton, and there "as good as any in my lord's meadow". Westcott, *View of Dev.* (Lean).

Her skin as *soft* as *Lemster wool*, As white as snow on peakish hull, Or swanne that swims in Trent. Drayton, *Shepherd's Garland*, 1593. (Lean, III). A bank of moss/ Spongy and swelling and far more/ Soft than the finest Lemster ore. Herrick, *Oberon's Pal.*, 1648. My flocks/ Yielding forth fleeces stapled with wool,/ As Lempster cannot yield more finer stuff. Greene, FBB, 220. "Where lives a man so dull on Britain's furthest shore/ To whom did never sound the name of Lemster ore? That with the silkworm's web for smallness doth compare . . . Of each in high'st account and reckon'd here as fine/ As th'Apulian fleece or dainty Tarentine. Drayton, *Pol.*, vii, 1612 (Lean, III). Camden also speaks of Lemster ore: *cui [excepta Apulia et Tarentina] palman deferunt Europæi omnes.* (Lean).

She was more blisful on to see/ Than is the newe pere-jonette tree; And *softer* than the *wolle* is of a *wether*. Chaucer, *MiT*, 61.

This tye is as *plum* as 'ool. Cor. *Plum*, smooth, soft.

His lips . . . *softer* than *bevers Skins*. Cowley, 1667, NED.

A thatched roof, brown and *soft* as the *fur* of a *mole*. Baring-Gould, *RS*, 25.

A skin as soft as a *nowdy-warpe*. Cum. Wm. EDD.

Zo zaft's a *want*. Hewett, *Dev.*, 13.

I got en as *plum* as a *want pile*. Cor. EDD. *Plum*, see above. *Want-pile*, molehill.

As *soft* as the *hair of a coney*. Withals, 1586 (Lean, II, ii).

As *soft* as *weshleather*. Blakeborough, *NRV*, 240, in daily use.

I . . found . . in one instance several of the bones as *limber* as *leather*. Cheselden, 1713, NED.

[The bones of an arm] be as *loose* as a *bag of ninepins*. Hardy, *TM*, 32.

So *limber's* a *fishing-rod*. Said of a framework or other construction not sufficiently rigid. Som. EDD.

My arms as *limp* as a *herring*. Blackmore, *LD*, 60.

My shirts I have of taffeta-sarsnet, *soft* and light/ As *cobwebs*. Jonson, *Alch.*, II, i, 192. A limp band softer than silk or cobweb. Emerson, 1860, NED.

As tall and *semmant* as a *willow wand*. *Whitby Gloss*. *Semmant*, a n. Cy form of *semmit*. See above, p. 266.

You felt as *limp* as *withy-wind*, and yearned for something to cling to. Hardy, *LLI*, 185.

The sun-gleams *soft* as *primrose*. Baring-Gould, *VM*, 32.

As *soft* as the falling *thistledown*. Hall, *Sat.*, iv, 4, 1599 (Lean, II, ii).
The air, *soft* as the *dead leaves of spring*, fanned his cheek. White,
BT, 192.

As *soft* as a *bank of moss*. Cawdray, 778 (Lean, II, ii).

A deep red carpet of Aleppo, as soft and yielding as the
moss of a forest. Doyle, R, 103.

Thy voice is the cooing wood dove's/ And soft as moss thy
hand. SV. 64.

As *plum* as a *juggle-mear*. Dev. Ray. *Plum*, see above. *Juggle-
mear*, juggy-mear, a quagmire.

Note. H. has, 'as *plain* as a juggem ear.' The word
juggem puzzled the compiler very long, until it was discovered
that the phrase must be "quoted" from Bohn's *Handbook of
Proverbs*, p. 320 (ed. 1855), where we read: "As *plum* as a
juggem ear." When transcribing this for his book H. must
have had his eye on the preceding line: "As *plain* as the
nose on a man's face." Hence the *misquotation*. But the
matter does not end there. On p. 57 of Bohn's *Handbook*
(58 must be a misprint) there is: "As plum as a *jugglem ear*."
This is also found in Ray, 1768, and probably also *ibid.* 1678,
and no doubt is a misprint for "juggle-mear" or "juggle mear",
which is the form given by Lean, who nevertheless also copies
Bohn.

Ez *soft ez muck*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

How different was her palm! . . Like a rose petal, he thought;
cool and *soft* as a *snowflake*. London, ME, 36.

She was *soft* to the touch as a *cloud*. Hardy, RN, 77.

The touch upon your hand was as *soft* as *wind*. Hardy, W, 31.

As sweet as balm, as *soft* as *air*. Shak., AC, V, ii, 308.

Smooth.

As *smooth* as my *hand*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. the adj. and adv. hand-
smooth, rec. in NED 1530—1632. In dial. use much later.
In e. An. Suf., EDD.

As *smooth* as the *smoothest beaver hat*. Davies, *Scourge of Folly*,
1611, (Lean, II, ii). Beaver hat known fr. Chaucer's times.

The rock is cut up till it is as *smooth* and as *sleek* as *sattin*. Gray,
1754, NED. With a cooat as zlick as *sattin*. Som. 1872,
EDD. See *Soft*, p. 266 and *Easy*, Ch. IV.

As *smooth* as a *carpet*. Ray. Spoken of a good way. Cf. *carpet-
smooth*. Mrs. Browning, 1844, NED.

As *sleek* as a *hornbook*. Jonson, *Poetaster*, IV, v, 1602 (Lean, II, ii).
The covering of transparent horn that protected the sheet of
letters of the "book" must have been worn very smooth. The
hornbook is mentioned in NED fr. 1588. It seems to have
dropped out of use in the beginning of the nineteenth century

- Make this borde as *smothe* as a *dyce, comme ung dez*. Palsgrave, 1530, NED. Heywood, PE. Goodly fields as plaine and smooth as any die. Hakluyt, 1600, NED. Herrick, 1648 (Lean, II, ii). Fiennes, 1710, NED (of the sands of a shore). See pp. 271, 273.
- Cheek . . *smooth* as the *billiard ball*. B. Jonson, 1637, NED.
- As *smooth* as polished *crystal*. Sharpham, *Cupid's Whirligig*, 1607 (Lean, II, ii).
- The Alleys in the Gaol yard were as *glib* as glass, Miller, 1776, NED. The snow lies *glib* as glass and as hard as steel. Browning, 1879, NED.
- It were as *glibby* as glass. Not. EDD. *Glib, glibby*, smooth and slippery in surface and consistency. Of movements, easy, unimpeded. Rec. fr. 1599, now rare except dial.
- Like *glass* the Ocean's face was *smooth* and calm. Taylor, MV, 15. Gay, NS; As smooth as glass the glibbed pool is froze. Nhp. EDD. The sea was as smooth as glass. Hardy, LLI, 243. Hewett, Dev. 12. Lean has an inst. of 1614.
- As *smooth* as *jet*. Webster, *Northw. Ho!*, I, i; As smooth and black as jet. Herrick, 1648, (Lean, II, ii).
- I'll not shed her blood, Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow And *smooth* as monumental *alabaster*. Shak., Oth., V, ii, 3. An high brow like unto the bright heavens white and smooth like the polished Alabaster. Burton, AM, III, 90. See *White*, p. 232.
- The Mediterranean stretched away *smooth* as a slab of *marble*. Mason, PK, 71.
- Women of elegant beauties, for the most part . . . cleare, and *smooth* as the polished *ivory*. Sandys, 1615, NED. Her skin's as smooth as ivory. Hocking, MF, 56.
- As *slape* as a *plough-slipe*. — A plough-slipe is the sheet of iron on the "land" side of the plough, which turns over the earth as the plough cuts into the soil. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
- As *smooth* as a *bowling green*. Lean, II, ii.
- It was quite calm, and the Sea as *smooth* as a *Mill-pond*. Dampier, 1697, NED. In the month of November, when the Mediterranean is always smooth as a mill-pond. Smollet, 1766, NED. Cf. As calm as a mill-pond. Lean, II, ii. The sea's like a mill-pond? Tracy, *Pillar*, 13. Cf. also, If the sea be as *calm* as a *milk pan*. Taylor, NL, 21. As calm as a *milk-bowl*. Poor Robin, *Prog.*, 1766 (Lean, II, ii).
- Ez *smooth* ez a *cat's back*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use.
- As *sleek* as a *mouse*. Gay, NS, *Sleek*, rec. fr. 1589.
- As *slick* as a *mole*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). War. EDD. Your fëace looks as slick as mouldort. Shr.
- As slick as a (*h*)oont. Hrf. A common expression signifying very smooth. EDD. Cf. No quadrupede is fatter, none has a more sleek or glossy skin [than the mole]. Goldsmith, 1774, NED. See *Blind*, p. 170, *Fat*, p. 184.

[The horse] has a buttock as *slick* as an *eel*. Marlowe, 1604 (Thornton). See *False*, p. 24, and *Slippery*, 242.

As *smooth* as a *rush*. Jonson, *Underwoods*, 1640, Killigrew, *Thomaso*, 1664 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. The Lawyer being captious made a scruple in a smooth rush, asking what is meant by Neighbour. Taylor, 1649; and the prov. 'to seek a knot in a rush'. Cf. *Cibum et potum aversantur multi, nodum in scirpo quaeritantes*. . . Ter., *And.*, V, iv, 38. Burton, AM, III, 464.

Flat, Even.

Note. In some of the following sim. *flat* means *dull*.

His talk as *woman backward flat*. Rob. Heath, *Epigr.*, 1650. See p. 106.

'Tis a narrow strip, as you see, hemmed by the river, but as *flat* as the *back* of your *hand*. Phillpotts, P, 249. See *Bare*, p. 253.

As *flat* as a *flawn*. Ray. Bailey, ante 1800. w. Yks. 1887. *Flawn*, custard or kind of pancake.

The jokes of an auctioneer are generally as *level* as a cold *slap-jack*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). *Level* is by Lean rendered 'good'; does it not rather allude to monotonous sameness?

A sportsman describing the floor of a cockpit, the contour of a race-course, the state of a bowling-green, or the surface of the water on a calm day, his simile would invariably be — 'it was *level* as a *die*, sir'. This gentleman was born in 1777, and is said to have had it from his father. Thus, its pedigree would run back to the early part of the eighteenth c. N. & Q., 4, IX, 345. Cf. 'straight as a die', p. 273, of which it is said to be a modern form. N. & Q., 4, IX, passim.

I'll beat thy nostrils as *flat* as a *pancake*, or a *barley froyes*. Day, BBB, 1644. A continual Simon and Jude's rain Beat all your feathers down as flat as pancakes. Middleton & Dekker, 1611, NED. *London Chanticleer's*, 1659, H. A country as flat as a pancake. Ld Bloomfield, 1860, NED. Ez flat ez a pancake. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. Brewer; *Slang*. *Pancake* often taken as a type of flatness. NED. — *Barley froyes*, *froise*, *fraise*, a kind of pancake or omelette, often containing slices of bacon, mentioned in NED fr. 1338, still in use in some midl. and southern counties.

As flat as a *cake*. Udall, *Erasm. Apo.*, Baret, *Alv.*, 1529 (Lean, II, ii).

Poorgrass being *flattened* like a *jumping-jack*. Hardy, MC, 399. *Jumping-jack*, a children's toy made of the merrythought of a bird. NED.

I am struck as *flat* as a *frying pan*. Farquhar, *The Inconstant*, (Ware).

- Ez *flat* ez an *iron*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. The tailor's iron.
- The road from H. to this place is as *even* as a *floor*. Highmoor, RS, 7.
- Flagstones as *level* as a *pavement*. Hardy, PBE, 324.
- The whole country *flat* and *even* as a *bowling green*. Evelyn, 1646, NED. An immense plain . . . as level as a bowling-green. Waterton, 1825. A common sim. NED. See *Smooth*, p. 268.
- As *flat* as a *conger*. *Thersites*, (H, *Old Plays*, i, 410; Lean, II, ii). *Conger*, sea-eel.
- Flat* as a *dab*. Ed. Fitz Gerald, 1887, *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII. Knocked t'poor barn darn as flat as a dab. Yks. EDD. *Dab*, a small flat-fish, *Pleuronectes limanda*, resembling the flounder.
- As *flat* as *flounder*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Women Pleas'd*, II, iv (Lean, II, ii). Ray; Gay, NS; Zounds! We have nort but loosing tacks;/ We now be humbled 'pon our backs/ — Lord! Lord! as vlat as vlounder. Wolcott, 1802 (Cowan, PS, 34). I knocked him down flat as a flounder. Brewer, Dict. 468. *Slang*. "Used of anything that can be squashed flat, such as a tin can after a motor car has run over it. Also used of persons when depressed. Less common than 'flat as a pancake'." U.
- The loaves be as *flat* as *toads*. Hardy, MC, 35. Known to U.
- The water *level* as a *pond*. Phillpotts, SW, 239.
- Look at his neck craned out in front of him, and his face as *flat* as a *full moon* towards his man, as if he was inviting him to shut up both his eyes with one blow. Shaw, CBP, 148.

Slippery.

- Now [the frozen river] was level, hard, and *slippery* as a *dance floor*. London, GF, 192. *Slippery* rec. fr. 1535. The other adj. of the section except *slape* are much older.
- Ez *slape* as a *greasy powl*. — It is common at village feasts to erect a pole daubed thickly with grease, on the top of which a ham, a leg of mutton &c. is fixed. Blakeborough, NRY, 243.
- The road so *zipper's* glass. Elworthy, WSG.
- As *slape* as glass. *Whitby Gloss*.
- As *slippery* as glass. Gascoigne, *Grief of Foy*, 1576, (Lean, II, ii). Hardy, DR, 304. See *Smooth*, p. 270.
- Their wordes . . . are more *slipper* than *oyle*, but in the ende they are steeled arrows to destroy. Lodge, 1591, NED. See p. 25.
- As *slippery* as an *eel's tail*. Heywood (Lean, II, ii). Slyper as an eeles taylor is the holde of it. Heywood, 1562, NED. Cf. A slipper holde the taile is on an ele. Skelton, 1523. NED.
- As *slipir* as any *ele*. Ocleve, *Reg. Prin.*, ante 1450 (Lean, II, ii).

Ez *slape* ez an eel. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. As *slippery* as an eel. Ray. 'The chiefest that is marked in the Ele is that it is slippery.' Maplet, 1567, NED. See p. 24.

Slimy and *slidery* as *sea-weed*. Wilson, 1827, NED.

As *slipir* as *ice*. Tusser, *Husbandry*, 1580 (Lean, II, ii).

The floor was as *slidery* as ice. Hislop, 1874, NED. — Ice is at once the smoothest and slipperest of ways. Boyle, 1665, NED.

Straight.

Note. In some of the following sim. *straight* means 'upright, fair-dealing, correct.'

As *straight* as *truth*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Pilgrim*, II, ii (Lean, II, ii). Ez *straight* ez *trewt*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

A path which ascended skyward *straight* as *Jacob's ladder*. Hardy, *Lao.*, 386. Some picture illustrating Gen. 28, 12 may have occasioned this sim.

She was tall . . . and stood as *straight* as a *soldier* on parade. Hocking, MF, 29.

Enormous, busy, pleased, and *upright* as a *soldier*. Galsworthy, IP, 17.

Say, I put away seven guineas in the year, why, it would take me thirteen to fourteen years to earn a hundred pounds — going *straight* as a *nail*, not as a screw, nor as a ferret. Baring-Gould, RS, 153. See *Dead*, p. 142.

My hair . . . hung down upon my shoulders, as lank and *straight* as a *pound of candles*. Smollet, RR, 80. His hair is as straight as a pound of candles. Northall, FPh. 15.

Arums climbing fifty feet up large trees as *straight* as a *die*. Spry, 1877, NED. *Slang.* The sim. has been discussed in N. & Q., 4, IX, X, *passim*. "This old phrase is usually applied to a very distinct, clear, and inevitable course of action, and is derived from the straight, true, and regular descent of the die by the old method of stamping metal, before the screwpress came into such general use." *ibid.* IX, 186. An exhaustive description is given showing how the 'die' descended straight upon the metal to be impressed and cut out. Most corr. seem to be of the same opinion, and 'as true, level, clear, clean as a die' are explained as having reference to the nicety and exactness observed in fixing the die in the stamping machine, and the "original words" are supposed to be 'as true as a die', i. e. as exact as the impression is to the matrix. But, as one of the corr. says, "the proper way to find the precise words and meaning must be by ascertaining how the saying was and is used." The earliest inst. of a sim. with *die* is 'as

smooth as a die', see p. 270. Palsgrave's Fr. rendering makes the sense unquestionably clear. The usual sense of *dez* (*dé*) is the cube with which games are played. Just as the die has to be smooth to throw well, it must be *level*, and hence 'as level as a die'. Another very early inst. of a sim. with *die* is in Davies, *Sc. of Folly*, 1614 (Lean, II, ii). Let all tongues walk through all mine actions, I/ Will stand the while as *upright* as a *dye*; [Whose even squares shall pass among the best]. — A die, no matter how it is thrown, will always be upright. Cf. 'as right as a trivet'. A development from upright to *straight*, *true* is perfectly rational. We have also in NED the descriptive comparison "Square as dises pou shalt hit make." c. 1420, and in specifications for carpentry in buildings the expression 'diesquare' to indicate exact squareness in the timber is very common. N. & Q., 4, IX, 520. And among the transf. senses of *square* there are upright, precise, straight. Consequently, in 'as straight as a die' we must have the same word as in the earliest cases. It must further be borne in mind that, although it gives good sense to explain our sim. as a reference to the die used in stamping, this is not the most natural explanation, as the die used in gaming has always been far more common, and, being much more frequently spoken of, is more likely to have played a part in phrase-making. *Die*, engraved stamp, rec. in NED fr. 1699.

She sat with grim determination, *upright* as a *darning-needle* stuck in a board. Stowe, UTC, 191.

The colonel walks as *straight* as a *pin*. Swift, PC, 255.

Sat *upright* as a *waxwork*, in his shallopy chariot. Galsworthy, MP, 154.

As *straight* as a *whip*. Used by an Irish cab-driver to designate the absolute straightness of a certain road. N. & Q., 4, IX, 520.

As *straight* as a *dig*. *Lincoln Gloss*. A common proverbial expression. EDD. *Dig*, a mattock, or spade; already in Grose.

As *stright* as a *gunstick*. Lin. EDD. *Gunstick* rec. fr. 1589.

The squire walks as *straight* as a *pike*. Common expr. Wil. 1860.

EDD. *Pike*, a lance-like weapon with a long wooden shaft, *Straight* as a *lance*, steady strong. Holme Lee, W.

Long as a mast, and *upright* as a *bolt*. Chaucer, MiT, 3264.

Straight as an *arrow*. Ray. Were your cause as straight as an arrow, he wad find a way to put you wrang. Scott, RR, xxv.

I have only to cut a gap through the hedge of your paddock, and in three minutes, straight as an arrow, you can go from one house to the other. Baring-Gould, RS, 270. She lay supine, and straight as an arrow on the sloping sod of this hill-top. Hardy, JO, 60; *ibid.* 514. A full-length figure as straight as an arrow. Conrad, *Romance*, 238. — This is no doubt originally elliptical for 'as straight as an arrow flies'.

- The highway soon became as *straight* as a *bowstring*. Hardy, TM, 237.
- He stood up immediately, as *straight* as a *fiddlestring*. Benecke, PA, 17, 40. Cf. Maybe this chance ain't worth no more than that, if he'll sell it so cheap. Maybe there's something ain't straight about it. — But it *is*, though — straight as a *string*. . . Twain, HF, 272.
- As *straight* as a *thread*. *Jacob and Esau*, 1568 (H, *Old Plays*, ii, 222; Lean, II, ii).
- A streak, *straight* as a *meridian*. Hardy, TT, 151.
- Straight* as a *surveyor's line*. Hardy, MC, 245.
- The Cedres high, *upright* as a *lyne*. Lydgate, CBK, 10. Also in Chaucer according to Lean.
- Thou folowest their steppes as *right* as a *lyne*. Heywood, 1546, NED. See *Right*, Ch. IV.
- But to his neces house, as *streght* as *lyne*, He com. Chaucer, Troyl., II, 1461. To purgatorie y shal as streight as *lyne*. Hoccleve, 1422, NED. To prove my saying as straight as a line. *Schole of Wom.*, 736, 1541 (Lean, II, ii). She was running straight as a line. Baring-Gould, RS, 229. He went as straight as a line. Boldrewood, 1889, NED. I am going to send as straight as a line. Hardy, DR, 283, UGT, 97. I am so straight as a line. Phillpotts, SW, *ibid.* M, 30. The absence of insts fr. 1541 to modern times is noteworthy.
- Cows, with backs as horizontal and *straight* as the *ridge of a house*. Hardy, DR, 20.
- A lyttle thing . . . Small, long, sharp at the point, and *straight* as any *piller*. GGN, II, i.
- Upright* as a *column*. Hardy, FMC, 130.
- As *straight* as a *shingle*. Bartlett, (Lean, II, ii).
- As *straight* as a *wand*. Lyly, *M. Bombie*, I, iii (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Her stature to an inch; as wand-like straight. Shak., Per., V, i, 108. *Wand*, at least fr. Orm.
- As *straight* as a *yard of pump wayter*. *Chs. Gloss*. Often said of a tall, lanky girl. Also in Yks. Berk. Cf. 'I'm right up and down like a yard o' pump water, that's what I am.' Caine, D, viii. 'Straight up and down like &c.' is a Lan. form. 'Yard-of-pumpwater', common term for a tall thin man.
- Straight* was the passage, like a *ploughed ridge*. Spenser, FQ, V, vi, 36.
- As *straight* as the *crow flies*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. 'as the crow flies, in a crow line', to denote the shortest possible way. In Sw. 'fägelvägen' (the bird-way).
- He usually moves to his quarry as *straight* as a *falcon*. Whiteing, No. 5, 71.
- As *straight* as a *loon's leg*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). They were puzzled with the accounts; but I saw through it in a minit, and made it all as straight as a loon's leg. Downing, 1865,

Slang. Whether there is any zoological fact to justify the sim., is not known to the compiler.

As *straight* as the *backbone of a herring*. Ray. A big strapping chap . . . as straight as the backbone of a herring. Caine, D, xxiii. Cf. If so be that the man was hanging them they'd do him justice man to man as fair as the backbone lies down the middle of a herring. Deemster's justice couldn't be cleaner; Caine, D., xxxiii, and the Manx Deemster's oath: By this book . . . I, A. B., do swear that I will, without respect of favour or friendship . . . execute the laws of this Isle . . . betwixt party and party, as indifferently as the Herring's backbone doth lie between the two sides. *Denham Tracts, Folklore*, XXIX, 186, f, and a slightly differing form, As indifferently as the herring backbone doth lie in the midst of the fish. Wood, *Manx P.*, 264.

Ah wor as *streyt* as a *loitich*. Yks., 1875. He pearkt up as streyt as a loitch. *ibid.*, 1877. Tall, 'straight as a loach', and 'thin as a lath'. EDD. This expression has been in common use in this part of Yorkshire from time immemorial. It is used to express the perfect straightness of anything. Batley. N. & Q., 6, V, 28. It is also in Robinson's *Dialect of Leeds*. "I have heard the expression used for many a year." Market Deeping, Linc. N. & Q., 6, V, 177. The loach, or loitch, is as small fresh-water fish allied to the minnow and found in some of the Yorkshire streams.

As *upright* as a young *apple tree*. Blackmore, LD, 55.

As *upright* as the *cedar*. Shak., LLL, IV, iii, 84.

He had a beautiful gentle way with him for all his fighting face. An' so *straight* as a *fir tree* a was. Phillpotts, AP, 291.

I can see them myself with their ranks open, and each as stiff and straight as a *pine stump*. Doyle, R, 324.

Kate like the *hazel twig* Is *straight* and slender and as brown in hue As hazel-nuts, and sweeter than the kernels. Shak., TS, II, i, 246.

As *brant* and lissom as a *poplar tree*. Blumby, 1815, Yks. EDD. *Brant*, upright; See *Proud*, 82, f.

Ez *straight* ez a *bulrush*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. As straight as a *rush*. Mactaggart, 1824, EDD. The larch . . . shoots up, as straight as a rush, to a great height. Stephens. 1844, NED. Also in Ayr. Cum. Nhb. Lin. Maclaren, YB, 17. I'm straight as a rush, and plump as a pea. Nicholson, 1895, EDD. She was always as straight as a rush. Boldrewood, 1889, NED.

Crooked.

As *crooked* as *Yarmouth steeple*. — Pulled down in 1803. Cf. You cannot spell Yarmouth steeple right. A play on the word right, i. e. straight. — The crooked spire of Great Yarmouth is said to have got out of the perpendicular through a virgin having once been married in the church. *Norfolk Ant. Misc.*, i, 301 (Lean, II, ii).

Wybunbury Church has also a steeple above its ancient tower, but it is not a hundred years old; the old spire was so crooked that there was a Cheshire proverb, “as *crooked* as *Wembury steeple*”, and it ultimately had to be rebuilt. Cambridge County Geographies, Co. Cheshire, p. 136.

As *crooked* as *Robin Hood's bow*. H.

Lady Answ. But, Mr. Neverout, I wonder why such a handsome, straight young gentleman as you, do not get some rich widow.

Ld Sparkish. Straight! *Straight* as my *leg*, and that's crooked at knee. Swift, PC, 259. See *Right*, Ch. IV.

As *crooked* as *Dick's hatband*. Shr., 1883, EDD. See p. 97 ff.

Crooked as *Mullins's roadside fence*.

His name was William Mullins,
And he had a sneering way
Of turnin' his proboscis up
At everything you'd say.

He cut his grass whenever it rained,
He shocked his wheat up green,
He cut his corn behind the frost,
His hogs was allus lean.
He built his stacks the big end up,
His corn-cribs big end down;
“Crooked as Mullins's roadside fence”

Was the proverb in our town. c. 1880, source uncertain, Thornton.

Probably only local.

Crooked as a *Virginia fence*. Uneven; zigzag; said of matters and persons difficult to keep ‘straight’. ‘To make a Virginia fence’ is to walk unsteadily, as a drunkard. The Virginia fences zigzag with the soil. Amer. *Slang*.

As *crooked* as an *Izzart*. Robinson, *Whitby Gloss*. (Lean, II, ii). Rhumatiz creeps into foaks' elbows an' knees an macks em az *crooth* as *huzzats*. Yks., 1856, EDD. When I're the age of you lass, I're as straight as a pickin-peg. But now . . . I am croot as a huzzet. Lan. 1868. EDD. s. Chs. still occasionally used. Said to mean deformed in person; perverse in disposition. As *crooked* as the *A's* and *B's* quite down to Izzard. Nares. (Lean, II, ii).

As *crooked* as the *letter Z*. Grose (Lean, II, ii).

Ez bent ez a sickle. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use.

- As *bent* as a *bucker*. *Bucker*, a bent piece of wood, especially that on which a slaughtered animal is suspended. Halliwell.
- As *crooked* as a *camock*. Lyly, *M. Bombie*, i, 3, (Lean, II, ii).
As *right* as a *camock*. Skelton, *Why Come Ye nat to Court?* (Lean, II, ii).
- As *crooked* as a *gaumeril*. Yks. H. — *Camock*, *gaumeril*, *camerill*, *cambril*, *gambrel* are different forms of the same word meaning the same thing as *bucker*, also the crooked beam or knee of timber, used in shipbuilding. Cf. the proverb 'Soon crooks the tree/ That good gambrel would be.' Northall, FR, 489. Camden has a slightly different form. Heywood says, 'Timely crooketh the tree/ That will good cammock be.' Cf. also, 'Early crooks the tree/ That ever will be/ A good ship's-knee.' Cowan, PS, 142.
- Hail saint dominik with þi long staffe it is as þe our end *crokid* as a *gaffe*. c. 1300, NED. *Gaff*, an iron hook or hoe.
- Crooked* as *Crawley brook*. — This is a nameless brook arising about Woburn, running by Crawley, and falling immediately into the Ouse. But this proverb may be better verified of Ouse itself in this shire [Bedford], more meandrous than Meander, which runneth about 80 miles in 18 by land. Fuller, W, I, 167.
- As *crooked* as *Tecton brook*. Cf. In and out like Tecton brook. A Northamptonshire brook famous for its devious course. N. & Q., 12, III, 233.
- There is a winding stream at Hail Weston [Bedfordshire] near St. Neots, which is made useful in skin diseases, and in the comparison is "as *crooked* as *Weston Brook*." The friend who tells me this has not been able to find anyone in the neighbourhood of St. Neots who knows anything about the crookedness of Crawley. N. & Q., 5, XI, 54.
- As *crooked* as a *dog's elbow*. *Chs. Gloss*.
So *crooked's* a *dog's hind-leg*. Elworthy, WSG. Northall, FPh. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. As *crooked* as a *dog's hind-leg*. Lincoln, 1877, *Folk-Lore*, XLIII, 404. Cf. In and out like a *dog's hindleg*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116.
- As *crooked* as a *dog-leg*. A common saying. E. Peacock thinks that it probably refers to the carpenter's tool so called. It is a kind of claw used for holding a piece of wood firmly on a bench. Lincoln. *Folk-Lore*, *ibid.* 408. The above forms of the sim. make this very improbable.
- As *twisted* as a *ram's horn*. Nhp. EDD.
Zo crooked's a *ram's horn*. Hewett, Dev. 10. — This is the modern form of the old sim. 'right as a ram's horn' rec. fr. c. 1307 (*Slang*) to Ray. Its ironical character appears from one of Lydgate's poems, which, in H. M. McGibbon's *Early English Poetry* (London, 1887, p. 38) is called 'As straight as a Ram's Horn.' All verses end with this line, Conveyed

by line right as a ram's horn. St. iv, l. 5 we read, "And charity is now a chief mistress, Slander from his tongue hath plucked out the thorn, Detraction his language doth repress, Conveyed by line &c."

As *crooked* as a *horn*. EDD.

An' used to go as *boghedy* as a *night bee*. *Fenian Nights*, 1893; *boghedy*, an Irish word meaning crooked, misformed. EDD.

She shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as *crooked* as a *Crescent*. Sheridan, R, II, i.

Round.

As *round* as a *dumpling*. Lean, II, ii. See p. 183.

Rounder than one of your own *sausages*. Carlyle, 1843, NED.

As an *Appel* þe eorþe is *round*. 1290, NED. As *rounde* as an *appille* was his face. Chaucer, Rom. R. 819. (The original has, *La face avoit com une pomme*. Haeckel, 57). Cheeks that are fresh and round as lady apples. Hardy, HE, 25. See p. 183.

As *round* as an *orange*. Brewer, Dict. 1079.

As *round* as a *berry*. Grange, *Golden Aphrod.*, 1577 (Lean, II, ii). *zis*, *zis*, seyð the wymbylle, I ame als *rounde* as a *thynbyll*. 14 . . , NED. This sense of the word rec. fr. 1412.

The boar was *round* as any *clue*. Lintoun Green, 1685, EDD. My masters, said I, it is no laughing matter; for if my master take you here, you goe as *round* as a *top* to the pound. *George a Green*, Dodsley, I, 198. — This is a very interesting inst. of the development of a sim. A top is usually round, and it turns round, hence as round as a top. But in this case *round* means the same thing as roundly, without much circumlocution, straight, and thus the comparison with a top becomes very little appropriate.

Pope Anicetus also commanded that priests' crown should be shaven, not four-cornered, saith he, like unto Simon Magus, but as *round* as a *bottle* like ants. Becon, Wks, iii, 304, 1564 (Lean, II, ii).

As *round* as a *kettle*. Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685 (Lean, II, ii).

As *round* as a *Pontypool waiter*. — "Pontypool, in the northern parliamentary division of Monmouthshire, was the original site of the manufacture of japanned tin ware, which, within my memory, was popularly called Pontypool ware. Round waiter-trays of this ware must have been common enough in former days to give rise to the proverb". G. E. F., N. & Q., I, XI, 272. The manufacture of japanned goods was invented by one Thomas Allwood, a native of Northampton, who settled at P. in the reign of Charles II. The factory came to an

- end in 1822, though a branch survived at Usk till 1860. Enc. Brit. Cambr. Co. Geogr. Co. of Monmouth, p. 59.
- Lactantius . . held the earth *round* as a *trencher* . . . but not as a ball. Burton, AM, II, 49. More descriptive than intensifying. See *Hard*, p. 258.
- [The devil] smiled on me wellfavouredly,/ Bending his brows as brode as a barn door,/ Shaking his eares as rugged as burres;/ Rolling his eyes as *round* as two *bushels*. Heywood, *Four P's*, Dodsley, I, 113.
- Round* as a *hoop* the bumpers flow. Gay, NS. What is said of 'round as a top' largely applies here. In this case *round* must mean something like 'going round briskly.' See also 'round as a ball.' The sim. is also in Hewett, Dev. 12.
- Grosse as a hogge to be, *round* as a *tun*. Middleton, 1608 (Lean, II, ii). See p. 183.
- A neck which was smooth and *round* as a *cylinder*. Hardy, RN, 49.
- A fierce dilating eye, almost as *round* as a *pistol-rim* in its wide-opened lids. Castle, IB, 129.
- As *round* as a *bullet*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. *Bullet*, cannonball, fr. 1557.
- As *round* as a *tennis ball*. Lean, II, ii.
- þe eorþe a-midde þe grete se ase a luyte *bal* is *rcund*. 1290, s. v. *round*, NED. Cf. Urthe is amidde the see a lute bal and round. 1300, NED. His heued ys rounded as a balle. 1340, NED. *Roxburgh Ball.*, ii, 130 (Lean, II, ii). Brewer, Dict. 1079. It is also used in a fig. sense: To lawe go they, as round as a ball, till both, or at least the one, become a beggar all daies of his life. Stubbes, 1583, NED. A little after, if the gentleman hath not wherewithall to pay as well the interest as the principall agreed vpon, whensoever this reprobate cut-throate demandeth it, then presently as round as a ball, he commenceth . . . Sir W. Vaughan, *The Golden Grove*, c. 1600.
- As *roond* as a *grun-stoän*. Lin. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 410.
- As *round* as a *windmill*. Roxb. Ball. ii, 303 (Lean, II, ii).
- Round* as the *globe* her breast. Gay, NS. *Globe* rec. fr. 1551. The earliest inst. runs, But in a *Globe* (whiche is a bodie *rounde* as a *bowle*) there is but one platte forme &c. *Recorde*, NED.
- Bot abowte you a serkylle, as *rownde* as a *moyne*. *Townel. Myst. Moyne*, moon, the usual spelling of the *Townel. Myst.*
- As round as the *full moon*. Lean, II, ii.

High, Tall, Long.

- A Hieland blackguard, whom he'll hang up as *high* as *Haman*. Scott, RR, xxiii. Hang him as high as Haman, Anselm! Barham, IL, 59. In Esther, 7, 9 we read, And Harbonah . . .

said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai . . . Then the King said, Hang him thereon.

The very stones of the road cast tapering dashes of darkness westward, as *long* as *Jael's tent-nail*. Hardy, PBE, 116. This is a reference to Judges, 4, 21, Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him [Sisera], and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground. Cf. Nayle to be knockt into Seseraes head. Nashe, I, 84, 1589. Three nails driven into the head commemorated as many crises in Maggie's nine years of earthly struggle — that luxury of vengeance having been suggested to her by the picture of Jael destroying Sisera in the old Bible. Eliot, MF, 27.

As *long* as *Meg of Westminster*, Fuller; Ray. "This is applied to persons very tall, especially if they have hop-pole height, wanting breadth proportionable thereunto." Fuller, W, II, 413. 'Long Meg (of Westminster)' is mentioned as a term for a very tall woman in the *New Cant. Dict.*, 1825, and in Grose, 1785, and in the *Edinb. Antiqu. Mag.*, Sept. 1769, we read of "Peter Branam, aged 104, who was six feet six inches high, and was commonly called Long Meg of Westminster." But the expression is also used of other things: Near the Cumberland village of Little Salkeld there is a circle of stones called Long Meg and her daughters. — Long Meg of Westminster is the famous heroine of numerous 16th and 17th c. legends. "There is a penny story-book of this tremendous virago, who performed many wonderful exploits about the time when Jack the giant-killer flourished. She was buried, as all the world knows, in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, where a huge stone [called Long Meg] is still pointed out . . . as her grave." Gifford's *Ben Jonson*, VIII, 78. In *The Fortunate Isles*, 1624, Ben Jonson describes her in this way: —

Westminster Meg/ With her boney leg,
As long as a crane,/ And feet like a plane,
And a pair of heels/ As broad as two wheels.

And in Gayton's *Festivous Notes on the History of . . . Don Quixote*, 1654, p. 289, we read: —

I, Long Meg, once the wonders of the spinsters,
Was laid, as was my right, i'th' best of minsters,
Nor have the wardens ventured all the whiles
To lay, except myself, one in those iles.
Indeed, until this time, ne'er any one.
Was worthy to be Meg's companion.
But since Toboso hath so fruitful been
To bring forth one might be my sister Twinne
Alike in breadth of face; no Margeries
Had ever wider cheeks or larger eyes;
Alike in shoulders, belly and in flanks,

Alike in legs too, for we had no shanks,
 And for our feet, alike from heel to toe.
 The shoemakers the length did never know.

She was frequently referred to by the Elizabethans. Nashe and Harvey speak of her, and she is mentioned in Lyly's *Pap with an Hatchet*, Middleton's *The Roaring Girl*, V, i, Beaumont & Fletcher's *The Scornful Lady*, V, ii, Dekker's *Westward Hoe*, V, ii, and SM. In 1594 there was performed a play called Long Meg of Westminster. The earliest edition of the above mentioned penny story-book dates fr. 1582, and the Life of Long Meg of Westminster continued to be printed down to the beginning of last century, which bears witness to the great popularity of the stories concerning her many pranks. Dekker calls her "a goodly woman", but in Holland's *Leager*, 1632, mention is made of a house in Southwark, which is said to be "renowned for nothing so much as for the memory of that famous amazon Longa Margarita, who had there for many yeeres kept a famous *infamous* house of open hospitality." And according to Vaughan's *Golden Grove*, "Long Meg of Westminster kept alwaies twenty courtizans in her house, whom, by their pictures, she sold to all commers". A woman of this character could hardly be buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, and in *Historical Description of Westminster Abbey*, London, 1826, p. 189, it is expressly stated that the stone in question is called Long Meg from its extraordinary length. Henry Keefe, in his *Momumenta Westmonasteriensia* 1682, says, "That large and stately plain black marble (which is vulgarly known by the name of Long Meg of Westminster) . . . was placed here for Gervasius de Blois &c.". Another tradition assigns Long Meg as the grave of some monks who died in the plague in 1349 and were buried together. It is altogether improbable that this stone has given rise to the sim. Fuller thinks that it is rather a gun, called Long Megg, which in troublesome times was brought from the tower to Westminster (W, II, 413). It is true that we do not unfrequently meet the names Mons Meg, Roaring Meg &c. designating well-known guns, but none of them can have been more often spoken of and referred to than "the monstrous tall virago." The numerous allusions to her and the above-quoted descriptions quite justify what Grose says of the sim., "Whether there ever was such a woman, is immaterial; the story is sufficiently ancient [and may it be added, well-known and widely spread] to have occasioned the saying. *Provincial Gloss.*, ed. 1811, p. 207. See *Long Meg*, Old Book Collector's Miscellany, Vol. 4, ed. Charles Hendley, and N. & Q., 1850, *passim*.

The old lady is as ugly as any woman in the parish, and as *tall* and whiskery as a *grenadier*. Thackeray, BS, xxxiv.

I'll first see thy neck as *long* as my *arm*. Ray. Near as long as my arm. Richardson, P., 186. A grace as lang's my arm. Burns, 1786, NED. You're no witch if you don't see a cobweb as long as my arm. Edgeworth, 1836, *Slang*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. Colloquial, NED.

A sermon as *long* as my *leg*. Maclaren, YB, 120. Hewett, Dev. 11. As *long* as a *thanksgiving sermon*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). Not in Thornton.

Man, woman, and child wore then hair *longer* than a *lawsuit*. Dekker, GH, 31. And how long wast ere thou camest thither? Me thought 'twas long, as long as a suit hangs here in the law ere it be ended. Sharpham, F, V, 93. NED has no inst. of Lawsuit before 1624. Bleak House furnishes the classical example of an endless lawsuit. Of interest is the different senses of *long* when used of *lawsuit* and *hair*.

As *long* as a *Welsh pedigree*. Ray. Given as a "British or Welsh proverb." "So that any Welsh gentleman (if this be not a Tautology) can presently climb up the stairs of his pedigree into princely extraction." Fuller (Lean, II, ii).

As for the barge, I'm clean tired out wi't, for it pulls the days out till they're as *long* as *pigs' chitterlings*. Eliot, MF, 269.

As *long* as a *breakfast*. Baker, N'hants Gloss. (Lean, II, ii).

Ez *long* ez a *parson's coat*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241.

A pedigree as *long* as my *walking-stick*. Hardy, PBE, 142.

'E's as *lung* as a *lather*, an' as thin as a rail. Shr. EDD. *Long* of a tall person is now rare, except in jocular use (NED) and in several dial.

As *long* as a *halter*. Massinger, *Old Law*, II, ii (Lean, II, ii).

A whip as *long* as a *fishing-line*. Hardy, TM, 145.

As *long* as a *boat*. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

Winsinge she was, as is a joly colt. *Long* as a *mast*, and upright as a bolt. Chaucer, MiT, 77. Cf. Mast-high.

Ez *tall* az a *mill chim'ley*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

As *lung* as the *chimdey*. Jackson & Burne, 595. Chimdey, another form of chimney.

As *high* as a *house*. Habberton, *Helen's Babies*, W. High houses, an allit. expr. fr. ME times.

A fire of fir-wood as *high* as an indifferent *May-pole*. Taylor, PP, 53.

As *tall* as a *May-pole*. Torriano (Lean, II, ii) 1666; Ray; of an overgrown slut.

Heres one [a fiddle] aumost as *long* as a *May-pole*. *King's & Queen's Entertainment*, 1636, Materialien &c., II, 1903. *May-pole* rec. fr. 1554. Cf. maypole of a man &c. fr. 1590. The following passage perhaps explains the absence of later insts. "May-poles seem to have existed in most of our villages until the time of our great civil war. By an ordinance of the Long Parliament all May-poles were ordered to be removed, as heath-

enish vanities, 'generally abused to superstition and wickedness.' E. Peacock, N. & Q., 6, VIII, 55. Now the old May-poles and May-pole dances have been revived.

As *tall* as the *Monument*. Lean, II, ii.

A shadow as *long* as a *steeple*. Hardy, UGT.

A lilac shadow as *tall* as a *steeple*. *ibid.*, TM, 102.

As *high* as the *steeple*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116.

As *high* as an *abbey*. *Merry Devil of Edm.*, 1608 (Lean, II, ii).

As *high* as *Marlin tower*. A favourite sim. The tower of the church of St. Mary Magdalen at Taunton, one of the finest of our Somerset towers, is known as "Marlin tower" by all the country round. Elworthy, WSG, 463.

As *high* as *St. Paul's*. Tomkins, *Albumazar*, iii, 1615 (Lean, II, ii). I'll take no wrong if he had a head as big as brass or looked as high as *Pauls' steeple*. Porter, *Two Angry Wom.* (H., Old Engl. Plays, V, ii, 357) Lean, II, ii. See p. 149.

(In Love's Court) where many a proper youth, thinking to rise aloft, is magnified till he look as *high* as *Lincolne*, climbing up by a ladder and a hempen cord higher than he would by half-a-yarde from the ground. Melbancke, *Philot.*, 1583, (Lean, II, ii). — "Lincoln is situated on the summit and south slope of the lime-stone ridge of the Cliffhills which rises from the north bank of the river Witham . . . to an altitude of 200 feet above the river. The cathedral rises majestically from the crown of the hill, and is a landmark for many miles. Formerly the cathedral had 3 spires . . . The spire on the central tower, which would appear to have been the highest in the world, was blown down in 1543." Enc. Brit.

As *high* as *Highgate Hill*. Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685, (Lean, II, ii).

As *long* as *Deans Gate*. H. Deans Gate, Manchester. — Market Street would have been more appropriate and better known.

As *long* as *Wimpole street*. Lean, II, ii. Wimpole, nine m. SW. of Cambridge. Does the sim. refer to the double avenue of elms leading up to Wimpole Hall 2 ³/₄ m. long?

As *long* as a *Devonshire lane* (no turning). Lean, II, ii.

Note. My full points seeme as tedious to thy puritan perusers as the Northern mans mile, and a waybitte. Nashe, III, 345, 1590. Cf. Essex stiles, Kentish miles, Norfolk wiles, many a man beguiles. Clarke (H). "A Kentish mile is, I believe, like the Yorkshire waybit and the Scottish 'mile and a bittock', a mile and a fraction, the fraction not being very clearly defined." H.

He is *tall* and high like a *cedar*. Chapman, *Mayday*, i, 1611 (Lean, III). Already the fourteenth c. quotations in NED speak of the cedar as a very high tree.

Fair Galatea . . . *tall* as a *poplar*, taper as the Bole. Dryden, 1697, NED.

Shadows, *tall* as *poplar trees*. Hardy, RN, 254.

They [genies] are as *tall* as a *tree* and as big around as a church. Twain, HF, 27.

Ez tall ez a *bullrush*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.

A tale as long as *to-day and to-morn*. Carr, *Craven Gloss*. (Lean, II, ii).

As long as a *wet week in harvest*. — Only farmers and their men can know how long that is. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

It is as *high as heaven*. Job, 11, 8. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Psalms, 103, 11. As high as heaven. Tennyson, 1864, W. Let his hopes rise, as high as heaven, before I bury them in dust and ashes. Phillpotts, P. 207. Heofon-heah in OE.

As *high* above me as the *moon* in heaven. Alcott, *Joe's Boys*, 352, W.

There was an old woman toss'd in a blanket/ Seventeen times as high as the moon. Ritson, *Gam. Gurton's Garl.*, 1783. Cf. I will delve one yard below their mines And blow them at the moon. Hamlet, III, iv.

Note. Some G. sim. *Lang*: Der is su long, wêi der Tòg on Johanni; so lang als der Sonnwendtag; so lang als Jakobstag (July 21); wie pölitzer Hopfenstange (Pölitz, town in Pomerania), eine Bohnenstange, ein Baum, eine Latte &c. *Hoch*: Höher als der Chimborasso; so hoch als der stargarder Marienturm. Fr. Long comme un jour sans pain. Wander. Sw. Lång som en humlestång.

Wide, Broad.

Note. It is impossible to draw a line between the metaphorical sim. and a matter-of-fact comparison.

Greedy mouth *wide* gaping like *hell-gate*. Spenser, FQ, VI, x, 34. His deepe devouring jawes Wyde gaped like griesly mouth of hell. *ibid.* I, xi, 12.

He made some obvious comments on the wide view warming towards its autumnal blaze that spread itself in hill and valley, wood and village below. "It's as *broad* as *life*," said Mr. R. Wells, AV, 77. See *Large*, 287.

As *broad* as your *back*. Kingsley, *W. Babies*, W. *Broad* and *back* have been coupled alliteratively at least since Milton. See W.

As *broad* as the *chancery seal*. Greene, *Quip* &c. (Lean, II, ii). Cf. How broad was the way to hell? As broad as the space between two lines in a Chaucery bill. Sharpham, F., V, 96. [The lawyers'] lines which gape wider than an Oysterwife's mouth, and straddle wider than a French-man's leg. CC, 5. See p. 21.

As *broad* as a *groat*. Tusser, *Husb.*, 1577.

His chin was propped on a spreading cravat, which was as *broad* and as long as a *bank-note*. Twain, TS, 34.

- There is a serpent in it. 'T'has eyes as *broad* as *platters*. Beaumont & Fletcher, BB, V, i. See *Large*, large as saucers, p. 288.
- Nostrilles *wider* than *barbers' basins*. Randolph, *Muses Looking Glass*, 1668 (Lean, II, ii). Barber's b. rec. fr. 1755.
- Their feet . . . are as *broad* as a *bushel*. Topsel, 1607, NED.
- An equine amazon with a back as *broad* as a *sofa*. Hardy, WT, 94.
- A brooch she baar up-on his lowe coler, As *brood* as is the *bos* of a *bocler*. Chaucer, MiT, 79. *Boss*, the earliest inst. of this sense of the word.
- On hir heed an hat As brood as a *bokeler* or a *targe*. *Ibid.* Prol. CT, 470. Sea muscals are engendered of such quantitie, that many of them are as brode as buckelers. Eden, 1559, NED.
- Having faces as *broad* as the *back of a chimney* and as big as a town bag-pudding. Nashe, III, 98, 1596.
- [The hurt] is not deep as a well, nor so *wide* as a *church-door*. Shak., RJ, III, i, 93.
- Bendinge his browes as *brode* as *barn-durres*. Heywood, 1547, NED. Cf. A mouth that opened as wide every time he spake as one of those old knit trap doors. Nashe, II, 247.
- With a pair of heels As *broad* as two *wheelles*. Skelton, *El. Rummyng*, (Lean, II, ii). Ben Jonson has exactly the same expression in *The Fortunate Isles*. See p. 281.
- Wide* as a *windmill* all his figure spread. Pope, *Dunciad*, II, 6. See p. 183.
- Wide* as *Rimside Moor*. — Cf. I wadna be on Rimside Moor wi' a black pig by the tail. — These proverbial sayings the Northumberland yeomen are wont to recount on a dark and stormy night. It is a bleak heathy waste, stretching over the uplands behind Rothbury. To a Northumbrian the first expression conveys an idea of indefinite extent. *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXIX, 321.
- As *wide* as a *week*. N. & Q., 12, III, 276.
- If I had a choice as *wide* as the *ocean sea*. Hardy, MC, 102.
- As wide as the *river*, or the *sea*. Cowan, PS, 39.
- As *wide* as the *poles* asunder. Lean, II, ii. Cf. Far as the poles asunder. Farquhar, *The Beaux' Strat.*, V, v, (N. & Q., 5, III, 200). People . . . whose interests and hopes had been as wide asunder as the poles. Hardy, WB, 19. These Forsytes, wide asunder as the poles in many respects. Galsworthy, MP, 183.
- Open the gates as *wide* as the *sky*, And let King George and his lady go by. Northall, FR, 397. See *High*, p. 285. Cf. The ceiling was swelling and swelling just above him. It seemed as *vast* as *heaven*. Masfield, *Multitude*, 232.

Large, Big.

Note. Many of the following comparisons are probably not intensifying sim. See *Note* to the previous section. For other sim. with *big* (great) see *Proud*, p. 81 f., *Intimacy, Familiarity*, Ch. IV.

As *big* as a *Testament*, a *Psalter*, a *lady's prayer-book*.

As *big* as a *poetry-book*. — These four comparisons were noted down by the late Edw. Peacock, *N. & Q.*, 12, III, 276. See *Note* above.

As *bigge* as a *beggar*, as fat as a fool. *AV*, (Dodsley, xii, 348). See p. 112.

A glorious crucifix . . . *greater* than *the life*. Evelyn, 1641.

The picture is . . . *bigger* than the life. Johnson, 1758, *NED*. A flimsy kind of fan-painting as *large* as the life. Walpole, 1771, *NED*.

Statues bigger than *life*. Hogarth, 1753, *NED*.

As *large* as life, and not made as a shipman's hose to serve for every leg. Wilson, *Art of Rhet.*, 102, 1580 (Lean, II, ii). Dickens, *L. Dor.*, *Edw. Drood*, &c. Hungerford, *Lonely Girl.*, W. Rog.

An imposing-looking Don, as large as life, and quite as natural. C. Bede, 1853, *NED*. 'Ere we are as large as life and twice as natural. White, *SE*, 56. Northall, *FPh*. Cf. Hallo! here's the governour, the size of life. Dickens, *PP*, I, 314. There was Mr. Woods behind the bar just as real as life. Bennet, *BA*, 31. — Of this sim. *NED* says: 'Life-size; hence humorously, implying that a person's figure or aspect is not lacking in any point.'

As *big* as a *Paignton pudding*. — In the *Railway Magazine* for Jan. 1913 there is an article on S. Devon describing the Paignton puddings: "P. [a seaside resort in the Torquay parliamentary division of Dev.] is celebrated for its puddings. There was one in 1809 consisting of 400 lbs. of flour, 240 eggs, 140 lbs. of raisins, and 170 lbs. of suet. It required . . . a team of oxen to draw it. The opening of the South Devon Railway in 1859 was also observed by a pudding. . . . It was drawn by eight horses to the green at P., where a public banquet took place." *N. & Q.*, 11, VII, 87.

But and I smell not you and a bawdy-house out within these ten days, let my nose be as *big* as an English *bag-pudding*. Decker, *HWh*, Ia, i. Faces . . . as big as a town bag-pudding. Nashe, III, 98, 1596. Bag-pudding not rec. in *NED* before 1598.

As *big* as *Ketherick's pie*. — He was the first mayor of Plymouth in 1493, and the pie he had made for his inauguration ban-

quet was 14 ft. long, and an oven was built for the baking of it. *Athenaeum*, 11, IV, '77 (Lean, II, ii).

As *big* as *Russel's wagon*. Cor. This was a huge wagon drawn by a team of six to ten horses, which plied from Cornwall to London. EDD.

As *big* as *bull-beef*. Hewett, Dev. 11. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. See p. 152, and 82.

A face as *big* as a *ham*. Stevenson, TI, 32.

The rain on her window-pane In drops as *big* as a *shilling*. Barham, IL, 118. Huge drops of rain fell at intervals, stamping his bald pate with spots as big as halfpence. *ibid.* 519.

I'll take no wrong if he had a head as *big* as *brass*. Porter, *Two Angry Wom.* 1599 (Lean, II, ii). See p. 113, and 82.

Upon my conscience, she would see the devil first, With eyes as *big* as *saucers*. Massinger, 1655, *Slang*. The eyes of these Dogs as Jetzer thought . . ., were bigger than Saucers. 1679, NED. There sat the dog with eyes as big as saucers, glaring at him. Andersen's *Fairy Tales* (tr.), 1876, NED. Cf. The woman opened her eyes as *wide* as saucers. Gissing, HC, 129. Had we no walking fire, Nor saucer-eyed devil of these woods that led us. Sucking, 1639, *Slang*. *Les oyls granz com deus saucers*. 13th c., NED. According to NED *saucer* in this case originally means 'a dish or plate in which salt or sauces were put on the table.' The usual modern sense of the word dates fr. the middle of the eighteenth c.

Herr von Potzdorff was returning to life by this time, with a swelling on his skull as *big* as a *saucepan*. Thackeray, BL, ix. Saucepan fr. 1686.

A face as *big* as a *baking-trendle*. Hardy, FMC, 260. — Baking-trendle is a large oval shallow tub in which bakers mix their dough. EDD.

As *big* as a *basket*. Edw. Peacock (N. & Q., 12, III, 276).

As *big* as a *bushel*. Very large. Suf. EDD. Cf. The sense represents the Sun no bigger than a bushel. Hale, 1677, NED. Cf. *Round*, p. 280, *Broad*, p. 286.

As *big* as a *Dorchester butt*. Halliwell and NED. It is said to mean very fat. *Butt*, tub?

As *big* as good *barrels*. Fulwell, *Like will to Like* (H., *Old Plays*, iii, 310; Lean, II, ii). I wish it was as big as a barrel. [a cake]. Twain, TS, 239.

As *big* as a *cow*. Herrick, *Hesperides*, iii, 1648. According to Lean, *cow* is a large wooden tub. This sense is recognised by EDD, which gives it as an Essex word; perhaps another form for *cowl*.

As *big* as a *tun*. *Interlude of Youth* (H., *Old Plays*, ii, 6, Lean, II, ii).

As *big* as the *mouth of an oven*. Wesley, *Maggots*, 115, 1658 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. A fine oule's eye, a mouth like an oven.

DP, Dodsley, I, 278; and the term oven-mouthed used already by Harvey.

His mouth as *greet* was as a *greet forneys*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 559.

A long apartment as *large* as a *chapel* and as low as a malthouse. Hardy, HE, 384.

[The genies] are as *big* around as a *church*. Twain, HF, 27. Cf. A belly as big as the round church in Cambridge. Nashe, 1592. As big as the High Church at Hull. — Used by a tramp. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.

If you'll buy eggs we'll buy flour, We'll have a pudding as *big* as the *tower*. — Part of a Gloucester rhyme on St. Thomas day. Northall, FR, 229.

Big as a *house-side*. Lin. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 407. N. & Q., 12, III, 274.

Packing-cases nailed up — *big* as *houses*. Dickens, PP, I, 11. A golf-bag as big as a house. White, SE, 77. Hewett, Dev. 11.

“As *big* as a *parson's barn*’ is a Dorsetshire measure of magnitude, which happily begins to savour of antiquity, and ought, I think, to be recorded.” N. & Q., 1, XI, 7. ‘Always ready for more’ is sometimes added, it would seem. “In my childhood the nickname of ‘parsonage barn’ was hurled at the head of any one of us who coveted and claimed more than his allotted share.” Herrick, *W. Dorset*, (Lean, II, ii). — This refers to the large mediæval tithe-barns, some of which are still standing, e. g. the great one at Abbotsbury, 11 miles from Portland, which is 276 feet in length. (Cambr. County Geogr., Co. Dorset, p. 127. N. & Q., 9, VI, passim).

Hardy refers to them: A new studio . . as *large* as a mediæval barn. WB, 277, and cf. The fuel-house was as roomy as a barn. *ibid.* RN, 146.

She cot me a side of cheäse iv'ry bit as *big* as a *barn-side*. Lin. EDD. *Barn-side* not in NED.

Faather maade a blotch upo' th' parlour floor as *big* as a *barn-door*. Lin. EDD. Cf. We . . offered a target like a barn-door. Stevenson, TI, 67; and barn-door practice, when the target is not to be missed. *Slang*. See *Broad*, p. 286.

Teris . . as *grete* as eny *mylstone*. Beryn, 1400, NED. Cf. Mens eyes must milstones drop, when fooles shed teares. 1607, NED.

As *big* as a *dog*. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. Edw. Peacock. Of what is this sim. used? *Ans.: A rat.*

As *big* as a *horse's head*. Som. Alfred Stocks hes putten stoäns upo' th' Scalla' laane as big as hoss-heads. Lin. EDD. There is also a sim. ‘as ugly as a horse's head’ of something awkward or shapelessly ugly.

Alaunts, Twenty and mo, as *grete* as any *steer*. Chaucer, KnT, 1291.

A boor as greet as *oxe* in stalle. Chaucer, TC, V, 1469. Cf.

The sheapheards swayne you cannot wel ken, But it be by his pryde, from other men: They looken *big* as *Bulls*. Spenser, 1579, *Slang*. See *Proud*, 82.

As *big* as a *Christmas pig*. *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXXV, 90. She is as *greatt* as a *whalle* [my wife]. *Townel. Myst.*, 100.

The infernal villain! Tell me who he is, and if he was *big* as *all outdoors*, I'd walk into him. Haliburton, 1838. He is looking as big as all outdoors jist now, and is waitin' for us to come to him. *Ibid.*, *Slang*. Does not this refer to a blustering and very stout-looking person?

What! Doth my head swell? — Yea, as *big* as a *codshead*, and bleeds too. DP, Dodsley, I, 266. Does not this mean that the person in question has proved to be something of a cod's-head, i. e. a block-head?

Small.

As *little* as *Tom Thumb*. Ned Ward, *Nupt. Dial.* II, v, 1710, (Lean, II, ii). — The term *Tom Thumb* rec. in NED fr. 1579. Mince me betwixt your teeth as *small* as *Oatmeale*. Nashe, II, 186, 1593. Oatmeal fr. 1440.

Nain, a dwarfe, . . one thats *no higher* than *three horse-loaves*. Cotgrave, 1611, NED. As *high* as three horse-loaves. Ray. Heywood, PE, 24, has '*two h. l.*' 'It was anciently a common phrase to say that a diminutive person was no higher than three horse-loaves. A phrase still current says such a one must stand on three penny-loaves to look over the back of a goat, or sometimes, a duck.' Halliwell. Cf. Hast thou such fear of fortune's frowns or of her whirling wheels, / Who since thou wert three horse loves high hast tumbled at her heels. Fulwell, *Ars Adul.*, 1579 (Lean, II, ii).

Ile mince it as *small* as *pie meate*. Dekker, OF, 113. Cf. Mince Your flesh to mites. Ford, LS, 156; and the phrase 'to make mince-meat of a person', to chop him into very small pieces, destroy him utterly, rec. in NED fr. 1663.

Styr nat bot ye have lefe, For if ye do I clefe You small as *flesh to pott*. *Townel. Myst.*, 142.

As *small* as *herbs to the pot*. Day, *Ile of Guls*, 1606; Morland, *Account of The Evangelical Churches of Piedmont*, 1658 (H.). I'll chop you as small as a ribs for the pot. Lover, *Leg.*, 1848, Ir. Wor. EDD. In very small particles, like herbs prepared for cooking.

A pill as *small* as a *pease*, Jonson, 1632, NED.

A little bleb, *no bigger* than a pease. Bridges, 1894, NED. It is not unfrequently used in other comparisons to denote size: Men fynden summe [Dyamandes] as grete as a pese.

Maundeville, 1400, NED. It grows bigger, to the size of a large white Pease. Denham, 1713, NED.

A little scarlet spider, no *larger* than a *mustard seed*. Baring-Gould, RS, 23. Among the Jews, 'small as a grain of mustard seed' was a common comparison. Folkard, PL, 452.

A 'Shrimp' not as *high* as my *hat*. Barham, IL, 382. Used of 'a youth, still in his prime'.

Not so *high* as a *pint-pot*. Lyly, *M. Bombie*, 1594 (Lean, II, ii). *Pint-pot* fr. 1552.

There is *not* one spark so *big* as a *pin's head*. Still, GGN, I, v. With hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins'-heads. Shak., KH IVa, IV, ii, 20. See also *ibid.* KH IVb, IV, iii, 48. Cf. 'to beat into pin-dust, to batter, scatter to p. d.'. See Jonson, *Alch.* p. 190, and NED.

All looking as *little* as *ninepins*. Hardy, LLI, 273. Cf. You think you are the stronger; and so you are in a physical sense, now. You could push me over like a ninepin. Hardy, JO, 494. They chucked the blooming passengers across the blessed deck like so many dashed ninepins. *The Royal Mag.*, '14, 285. It bowled him over like a ninepin. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 156. See *Dead*, p. 142, where some similar phrases are quoted.

You are as *small* as the *twitter of a twin'd rusky*, a Taunt to a Maid, that would gladly be esteemd neat, and small. Kelly, *Sc. Prov.* 1721, NED. Ramsay, 1858 (Lean, II, ii). *Twitter*, rec. fr. 1721, is the thin part of unevenly-spun thread, and is fig. used for anything that is very slender, small, or feeble. Cf. She is a mere twitter. Jamieson. *Sc. Ir. and n. Cy.* Her waist was like a twitter, had nae curpeen for a creel. Lnk. EDD.

Hewd and slasht he had been as *small* as *chippings*, if he had not . . . Nashe, III, 78, 1596. *Chipping*, small piece of anything chipped off, rec. fr. 1440.

As *high* as a *hog*, all but the bristles. — Spoken of a dwarf in derision. Ray.

I'd make mun look so *small* as *meeze*, Well chow'd by our old cat. Dev. EDD.

As *big* as a *bee's knee*. In a letter of 1797, N. & Q., 8, X, 260. He had a heart as big as a bee's knee. Of a person who was not noted for the generosity of his disposition. Used by an Irish nurse when the cor. was a little boy. N. & Q., 8, X, 199. Suff. Frequently heard in South Notts to indicate a very small piece of anything, N. & Q. *ibid.* Stf. War. Wor. Glo. EDD. Northall, FPh. "Colloquial comparisons which are familiar as household words in one family or district are quite unknown in another. I have just come upon a case in point in reading Mr. Locker-Lampson's 'Confidences'. In a foot-note, p. 98, speaking of an aunt, a nun at Bruges, he

remarks that, offering him, as a boy, some gift of slender dimensions, the nun said, 'Well, only this; it isn't so big as a bee's knee.' On this Mr. L. comments that he had never heard the simile before, nor had he since. . . I have known and used the simile ever since I was a small child." N. & Q., 8, X, 92.

Thou 'ashed me and smashed me as *small* as *flies*/ And sent me to Jamacia (!) to make mince-pies. N. & Q., 9, VII, 363.

Ez *larl* ez *fleabite*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. *Larl*, little. *Fleabite* of anything of very small consequence, fr. 1440.

All his bones as *small* as sandy *grayle* He broke. Spenser, FQ, V, ix, 19. *Grayl*, gravel, rec. fr. Spenser to Browning.

As *little* as a *mote*. *Nobody and Somebody*, 1592 (Lean, II, ii). *Mote*, a minute particle of anything, rec. 1300—1725.

I'll slice him as *small* as *atoms*. Dryden, L, VI, 58. *Atom*, the smallest conceivable fragment of anything fr. 1630. Cf. *Atoms* are not so small, as I will slice the slave. *ibid.* 107.

Thin.

Note. For. sim. with *thin*, referring to a lean person, see p. 185 ff.

Our lands and glebes are clipped and pared to become as *thin* as *Banbury cheese*. *On the Sad Condition of the Clergy in Ossory*, 1664, N. & Q., 1, XI, 427. Cf. I never saw Banbury cheese thick enough, but I have often seen Essex cheese quick enough. Heywood, PE, 5th Hundr. No. 24. See p. 185.

As *thin* as a *wafer*. *Xmas Prince*, i, 1607 (Lean, II, ii). Slices of bread and butter, thin as wafers. Hardy, PBE, 135. Brewer, Dict., 1220.

Were not heavenly grace that did him blesse, He had been pouldred all as *thin* as *flowre*. Spenser, FQ, I, vii, 12.

As *thin* as *halfpenny ale*, 2d a quarter. Northall, FPh. See p. 186. Another thread of light, as *fine* as a *needle* and as faint as a phosphorescence. Stevenson, NAN, 322.

As *fine* as *Kerton spinning*. See *Soft*, p. 267.

The wire is as *thin* as a *thread*. Barham, IL, 350; *ibid.* 354 of gold.

[The autograph of P.] in trembling lines as *fine* as *silk*. Hardy, HE, 431. Her fair hair, *fine* as silk, just wound from a cocoon. Baring-Gould, RS, 183. See *Soft*, p. 266.

Ez *femmur* ez *musweb*. *Femmur*, slight, slender. *Musweb*, mouseweb, cobweb. Blakeborough, NRY, 243. Cf. *So diinn wie Spinneweb*. Wander.

Zo *thick's* a *stick*. Hewett, Dev.

A streak of fire as *narrow* as a *corn-stalk*. Hardy, Lao., 85.

Ez *thin* ez a *bubble skin*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

Thick.

Note. Sim. with *thick* referring to frequency are given under that heading, Ch. IV. See also *Intimacy* &c. *ibid.*

As *thick* as *mould butter*. Nashe, *Terrors of the Night*; used of misty air.

Damn this fog, it is lying as *thick* as *pea-soup* on the water. Conrad, *Romance*, 241. *Pea-soup* rec. fr. 1711. Cf. A pea-soup fog in March is going a little too far &c. *Westm. Gaz.* 1899, NED. The pea-soupy character so distinctive of these [fogs] in cities. Sharp, 1883, NED.

Brought in the red ruddocks and the grummel seed as *thick* as *oat-meal*. Nashe, III, 174.

As *thick* as *loblolly*. *Loblolly*, any thick spoon-meat. Forby, *Voc. of East Anglia*, 1830. The word is rec. fr. 1597.

As *thick* as *stirrow*. *Chs. Gloss.* *Stirrow*, stirabout, a kind of porridge.

As *thick* as *porridge*. — Very thick in substance, muddy, not clear. A sim. often applied to beer. Yks. EDD.

Lizzy, this yer milted butter idden made vittee; tez za *thick's stodge*; nobody can't ayte et. Hewett, Dev. 12. Sometimes also used of a fog. Cor. EDD.

As thick as *todge*. *Suffolk Notes and Queries*, 1877 (*Folk-Lore*, XXXVII). Also in Oxf., used of porridge. *Todge*, *stodge*, any thick mass of semi-liquid nature.

They have in the West a thick sort of ale which they call grout ale (or white ale), and it is in many places a common proverb, "As *thick* as *grout*." Bp Kennet, Lansdown MSS, 1694 (Lean, II, ii). See *Sweet*, p. 307.

A fresh crop of feathers came *thick* as a *mat*. Barham, IL, 156. Cf. A very heavy mat of sandy hair. Stowe, 1852, NED.

In lyknes of a gret serpent, the tayl as grete and *thykk* as a *barel*. *Mel.* 297,

A bank as *thick* as a *wall*. Hardy, HE, 401.

As *thick* as *wood*. This flannel has run up as thick as wood.; 'to run up' being to shrink. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III. 275.

As *thick* as *gutter mud*. Northall, FPh. 11. Zo thick's mud. Hewett, Dev. 12.

The dull billowes *thick* as troubled *mire*. Spenser, FQ, II, vi, 20. Sleet brings down t'chim'la seut-drops thick as mire. Dickinson, 1876, EDD.

The fog . . . hanging like a heavy pall as '*thick* as a *hedge*'. *Daily News*, 1892, NED.

Full, Crowded.

Note. For some sim. with *full*, having eaten and drunk one's fill, see pp. 185, 195, 199, 203, 206, 212. See also *Near, Close; Intimacy, Familiarity*, Ch. IV.

As *thrang* as *three in bed*, they were wedged in that neet. Anderson, *Ballads*, 1808, Chs. EDD. NED has an inst. of 1770. *Thrang*, throng, crowded, full, pressed for space, fr. 1400. Cf. As *thick* as three in bed. Middleton, 1599 (Lean, II, ii). Uls. Lin. Oxf. EDD. See *Intimacy*, Ch. IV.

A goodly man, full fed and corpulent, *Fill'd* like a *bag-pudding* with good content. Taylor, DS, 8.

A right good fellow, free of cap and leg, Of compliment as *full* as any *egg*. Taylor, DS, 8. Full as an egg was I with glee. Gay, NS. Foote, 1764, NED. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

An egg is not so *full of meat*, as she is full of lies. Still, GGN, V, ii. Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarrelling. Shak., RJ, III, i, 21. Ray. Jeffreys, in 1685, in sentencing Baxter, declared that his books were as full of sedition as an egg is of meat. H. Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685 (Lean II, ii). The following passage contains an allusion to this sim., "'Tis all the hatched out egg of the Lord. Full of meat — full of meat are his ways." Phillpotts, AP, 370.

Cf. the following iron. sim. Ye be as full of good matter as an egge is of ote mele. Whitinton, *Vulg.*, 1520 (Lean, II, ii). Some call me dunce; another saith, my head is as full of Latin, as an egg's full of oatmeal. Greene, FBB, 236. As full of reason as an egge full of mustard. Sir Thomas More's Eng. Wks, p. 582. Cf. *Voll wie ein Ei*. Wander. *Plein comme un oeuf*. Meurier, 1558 (Lean, II, ii). Also It. Sw.

As *full* as a *piper's bag*. Ray. Ben Jonson, *Tale of a Tub*, V, iii, *Barth. Fair*, IV, iv. Cf. An enormous canvas bag full and rotund as the moneybag of the giant whom Jack slew. Hardy, LLI, 139.

As *thrunke* as *Cheddle Wakes*; no ream areat. Chs. EDD.

As *thrunke* as *Eccles wakes*. The saying is current in Lancashire, but more especially in the vicinity of Manchester, from which Eccles is only four miles and a half distant. H.

As *throng* as *Knott Mill Fair*. Manch. H.

Ommost as *threng* as a *fair*. Yks. EDD.

The rooms as *full* of company as a *jail*. Dekker, GH, 50. Descriptions of jails in Dickens and e. g. Goldsmith, VW, show us the old time prisons deplorably crowded.

The house seems to be as *full* as a *rabbit-warren*. Doyle, SF,

104. Cf. It is almost as thickly populated as a rabbit-warren. Reeves, 1892, NED.
- He was as full of love and paramour/ As is the *hyve full of honey* swete. Chaucer, CT, 8. Cf. the transf. use of hive for a place swarming with busy occupants, rec. in NED fr. 1634.
- As *full* as a *toad* is of poison. Ray. See p. 140.
- As *full* as a *bee* with *thyme*. Herrick, *Hesp.*, 1648 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *full* as a *tick*. Ray. Pegge's *Derbicisms*, Ed. Skeat., 129. Northall, FPh., 8; Nicholson, *Folk-Speech of E. Yorkshire*; N. & Q., 8, IX, *passim*. 12, III, 133. Northall explains this as being the bed-tick. W. Watson, N. & Q., l. c., p. 294, seems to think that it is the small kind of horse-bean so called, and cites from Cum. a parallel expression, 'as full as a fitch', *fitch* being a local form of vetch. "This undoubtedly refers to the parasite, not to the bed-tick. 'As full as a louse' is a common variant, and can have but one meaning." C. C. B., N. & Q., 8, IX, 65. See also Nicholson. Cf. the G. sim. *He is so dick as ene Teke* (as thick as a tick), Osnabrück; *Voll wie eine Zecke*, which means exactly the same thing as our sim. See p. 185.
- As *full* as a *fitch*. Cum. Yks. Lan. Also 'as fat &c.' EDD.
- As *full* [of conceit] as the *moon*. Clarke (Lean, II, ii).

Empty, Hollow.

- Note.* See *Hungry*, p. 180, 182.
- Es *empty* as a *blawn egg*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241.
- As *toom* as an *egg-shell*. Yks. EDD. See p. 48.
- The whole world is as *empty* as an egg-shell. Stowe, UTC, 358.
- As *hollow* as a *churn*. Der. EDD.
- How should a woman who is as *empty* as a *drum*, talk of any other subject. Johnson, 1778, NED.
- As *hollow* as a drum. Lean, II, ii. — On the other hand we have the Sc. cp. sim. drum-fou, 'chock-full', as full as a drum. "The things he sent him . . . held a' oor hoose drum-fou for better than a fort-nicht." Lth. 1892, EDD. Has this sim. any connection with the sim. given p. 203, 'as drunk as a drum'? A development from 'as full as a drum' to 'as drunk &c.' is quite possible.
- As *hollow* as a *gun*. Ray. See *Sure*, Ch. IV.
- As *hollow* as a *trunk*. Quoted in Lean, II, ii; source not identifiable. *Trunk* has a variety of meanings that may fit the context. It may refer to any kind of pipe, or tube, or shaft.
- I have brought you to the mouth of the world's treasure-house, and it is your own fault now if you don't sweep it as *empty* as a *stockfish*. Kingsley, WH, 8. A very puzzling phrase.

Is the stockfish empty or thin-bellied in the same way as the herring is said to be so. See p. 189.

I do think him as *concave* as a covered goblet or a worm-eaten nut. Shak., AYL, III, iv, 22.

As *hollow* as a *kex*. A *kex* is a dried stalk of hemlock, or of wild cicely. Ray. It's hollow as a *homlick*. Nhb. Nearly all the large *Umbelliferae* are called hemlocks.

The parish was *vacant* as a *desert*, most of its inhabitants having gathered inside the church. Hardy, JO, 194. See *Lonely*, Ch. IV.

As *empty* as *air*. Brewer, Dict. 417.

Heavy.

The Yorkshire puddin' is noan light. It's as *sad* as a *waiver's clog*. Hocking, MF, 26. *Sad*, massive, heavy, obs. since c. 1650. Used of 'heavy, close bread' it is rec. fr. 1688, but now only dial. Cf. They gev us breed as sad as *bull liver*. Dur. EDD. As sad as *liver*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. As sad as a *dumpling*. Yks. EDD. And see below.

Eyes sunken deep, under lids *heavy* as *pot-covers*. Hardy, JO, 152.

The timber, *heavy* as an *iron safe*. White, BT, 16.

Lifting her eye-lids, *heavy* as *window-shutters*. Hardy, HE, 14.

His hand more *sad* than *lump of lead*. Spenser, FQ, II, viii, 30; *ibid.* II, i, 45.

To those that . . . tell you . . . I am but as a feather, I shall be found sadder than lead. Strafford, 1638, NED. This here bread's as sad as *lead*. Cmb. Nhb. NED.

My hede is as *hevy* as *lympe of leede*. *Cov. Myst.* (Lean, II, ii). Our hearts, as heavy as lead lumpes. Udall, RRD, 27. It [supper] lies As heavy in my body as *moult lead*. Barry, RA, V, i.

The weght of wickedness þt makis goure herts heuyere þan *lede*. c. 1340, NED. Me thynke myne eyne hevy as *lede*. c. 1440, NED. If that my hert wax hevy as *leyde*. *Townel. Myst.* p. 37. Insts of c. 1515, 1550, 1568 in Lean, II, ii. [Imagine themselves to be] as heavy as lead. Burton, AM, I, 444. Hardy, FMC, 3 (of ground), *ibid.* TT, 77 (of clothes). Doyle, SF, 72 (heart); Linen tablecloth, that were, collectively, as heavy as lead. Wells, *Kipps*, 41. Hewett, Dev. 11; Northall, FPh. 9, &c.

Each heart as *heavy* as a *log*. Cowper, 1786, NED.

I grete with myn eene as *heavy* as a *sod*. *Townel. Myst.*

Light.

The carriage is light enough . . . *light as vanity*; full of nothing. Hardy, PBE, 438.

As *light as the Queen's groat*. *Adagia*, 1622 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. 'as light as a *clipped angel*'. Dekker, HWh. *Angel*, a gold coin worth about ten shillings, very often clipped, and therefore light; the subject of many a wretched pun with the Elizabethans. But what does the *Queen's groat* refer to? Cf. He . . . swore . . . that I should not leave till his purse was as *light as eleven pence*. Pratt, 1775, NED.

He [a dream] back returning by the Yvorie dore, Remounted up as *light as cheerful Larke*. Spenser, FQ, I, i, 44. See p. 159.

I am as *light as a kite* when anything's going on. Hardy, RN, 170. See p. 182.

Every elf and fairy sprite, Hop as *light as bird* from brier. Shak., MND, V, ii, 382. The oracle would bound . . . and subside on the other side into the trough as lightly as a bird. Stevenson, TI, 89. See p. 160.

Oh the times when my heels have capered over the stage as *light as a Finches feather*. SC, 4.

"Nothing is lighter than a *feather, Kit*." "Yes, Clim." "What light thing is that?" "Thy light wit." Heywood, PE, 242.

As light as a feather. Nashe, III, 190, 1599. Glorious semeth love, though light as a feather. Byrd, 1598, *Lied.*, 25. *Contention betw. Lib. & Prodig.*, 1602 (Lean, II, ii). Clarke.

One thinks himself a Giant, another a Dwarf; one is heavy as lead, another is light as a feather. Burton, AM, I, 463. *ibid.*, 444. There are old Engl. and Lat. epigrams of the 16th or 17th cent. stating that lighter than a feather is the wind, than the wind, fire, than fire, a woman's mind, which is the lightest of all things. N. & Q., 3, X, passim. Hewett, Dev., 11; Northall, FPh, 9.

As *light as flocks*. Gascoigne, Wks, i, 114, *ante* 1577 (Lean, II, ii).

[A canoe] *light as an egg-shell* and as fragile. London, DS, 288.

Her shoulder touched his as *lightly as a butterfly* touches a flower. London, ME, 179.

Ez leet ez a *midge*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. *Midge*, any small gnat-like insect. In some n. Cy dial. anything very small is called a midge. Cf. the fig. use of *midge's wing* in the following passage, There is a foundation for the other part of the story, though no larger than a *midge's wing*. Scott, 1808, NED.

As *light as a fly*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii), Ray. Cf. not to care a fly.

His touch was as *light as gossamer*. Hornung, TN, 134. Gossamer is applied to something light and flimsy fr. c. 1400. NED.

- We shall be winnow'd with so rough a wind/ That even our corn shall seem as *light* as *chaff*/ And good from bad find no partition. Shak., KH IVb, IV, i, 94.
- As *light* as a *ke.x.* Heywood, PE, iv, 47. Still a common expression in Dunmow and North Essex. N. & Q., 5, X, 56.
- As *light* as *thistle-down*. Lean, II, ii. A boy's fancy, light as *thistle-seed*; and a boy's head is as a full of fancies as a thistle is of seed. Baring-Gould, RS, 276.
- Was neuere *lej* upon *lynde lyghter* thereafter. Langland, PPl, c., ii, 150. Be ay of chere as light as leef on linde. Chaucer, CIT, 1211. Syne vp and doun, als lycht as leif of lynd. Stewart, *Chron. Scot.*, 1535, NED. Cf. May hit murgeth when hit dawes, . . ant lefis lyght on lynde. c. 1300, NED. A what I am light as *lynde*. *Townel. Myst.*, 80. Cf. Iason as Ientylle as euer was the lynde. c. 1460, NED. Why is the lind or lime-tree called light or gentle? As lyght I me feylle as *leyfe on a tre*. *Townel. Myst.*, 107. Another 15th c. inst. in W.
- As light as *leaves*. Ch. Brontë, *Shirley*, II, 169, W.
- As *light* as *froth*. Davis, *Sc. of Folly*, 1611 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. the fig. use of froth for something insubstantial or of little worth.
- As *light* as the *wind*. *Interl. of Youth* (H., *Old Plays*, II, 13; Lean, II, ii). Cf. Her nimble wings displaid, And flew away as lightly as the wind. Spenser, FQ, IV, viii, 7. Touching him with her fingers lightly as a *breeze*. Hardy, *Tess*, 307.
- Loud silly talk . . Vain as air, and *light* as *air*. Phillpotts, M, 328.
- Every footstep fell As *lightly* as a *sunbeam* on the water. Longfellow, SSt, I, i.

Deep, Low.

Note. For some sim. with *deep* see p. 27 ff.

- This filth within being cast, he would appear A pond as *deep* as *hell*. Shak., MM, III, i, 90. If the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. *ibid.* MW, III, v., 11. In caves as deep as hell. Massinger, VM, 25. Cf. Helle is . . dyep wþ-oute botme. 1340, NED.
- Let the labouring bark climb hills of seas Olympus high and duck again as *low* As hell from heaven. Shak., Oth., II, i, 184. Fall as low as hell. *ibid.* Hamlet, III, iii. Those proud palaces, that even now vaunted their tops from heaven, were dejected as low as hell. Burton, AM, I, 418.
- As *deep* as a *cup*. Lean, II, ii. In what way can a cup be said to be remarkably deep?
- As *deep* as a *draw-well*. H. The draw-well at Carisbrook Castle, Isle of Wight, is 160 feet deep.

Rom. The hurt cannot be much. *Mer.* No, 'tis not so deep as a *well*, nor so wide as a church-door. Shak., RJ, III, i, 93. Blakeborough, NRY, 342. According to Blakeborough it is chiefly used in a fig. sense. See p. 35.

As *deep* as *Pedwell*. *Denham Tracts, Folk-Lore*, XXIX, 7.

As *deep* as *Currie well*. Howell, 1659. Lean, II, ii). A river south of Edinburgh.

As *deep* as *Chelsea Reach*. See p. 33.

Steep.

[The way down a hill] is as *steep* as a *pent-house*. Walton, CA, 308. A hill so *steep* as the *ridge of a house*. Taylor, PP, 46.

The hills are as steep as *house-roofs*. Baring-Gould, RS, 65.

The chief graveyard slopes up as steeply as a *roof* behind the church. Hardy, JO, 250.

Ez *brant ez a hoos end*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

Ez *brent's a hoos-sahd*. *Clevel. Gloss.*, 64.

Dry.

Note. For other sim. with *dry* see *Thirsty*, p. 189.

As *dry* as *David's heart*. Used by a maid (a native of Oxfordshire) in reference to handkerchiefs which had been washed. Possibly a reference to Ps, 102, 5.

Ez *dry ez a sarmon*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

As *dry* as a remainder *biscuit* After a voyage. Shak., AYL, II, vii. See p. 48. Her eyes are as dry as a campaigner's biscuit. Mason, PK, 165.

A sudden shower fell . . . he remained as *dry* as a *toast*, for an eagle had kindly spread his wings for an umbrella over him. Brewer, DFF (Northall FR, 441). See *Hot, Warm*, p. 310.

I've sucked *Widecomb* as *dry* as an empty *egg-shell*. Phillpotts, WF, 16. See *Empty*, p. 295.

But our spirits they cannot touch, for they nevere understand. Without that, Monsieur, all is *dry* as *parched skin of orange*. Galsworthy, IP, 70.

As *dry* as the *clerk of the limekilne*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). Thirsty?

As *dry* as a *lime-burner's wig*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). See p. 189.

As *dry* as a *lime-basket*. See p. 190.

As *dry* as a *baking-spittle*. Baking-spittle, a thin spade-shaped board with a handle used in baking oat-cakes.

Lene he wexe, and *drye* as eny *schaft*. Chaucer, KT, 1362. The wooden part of an arrow.

Dry as *iron*. e. Suf. EDD.

My clothes were as *dry* as a *bone*. Taylor, WV, 7. Ray. It's as *dry* as a *bone*. Marryat, 1833, NED. "A very good, high-principled man." "He may be all you say; but he's as *dry* as a *bone*." Phillpotts, M, 74. It was as *dry* as a *bone* until just as that wave came along. White, BT, 319. Here's a snugg cubby-hole I've found — *dry* as a *bone*. Phillpotts, AP, 305. This is the almost invariable sim. to express the superlative of dryness. Elworthy, WSG. Hewett, Dev. II. Baumann. Cf. the cp sim. bone-dry.

As *dry* as a *horn*. Sc. n. Yks., NED. See *Hard*, p. 261.

That hand has wonderful powers of itself. It is a thing alive, though dead and *dry* as *leather*. Baring-Gould, BS, 201.

As *yell's* the *bill*. Burns, 1786, NED. As milkless, or *dry* as a bull. See p. 48, f.

As *dry* as a *post-horse*. *Woman turned Bully*, III, ii, 1675 (Lean, II, ii). Thirsty?

As *drie* as a *eel-skin*. Dekker, OF, 110. Eelskin rec. fr. 1562. Cf. the cp sim. skin-dry.

I will drain him as *dry* as *hay*. Shak., Mb, I, iii, 18.

Sapless as a *kix*. *The Women's Petition against Coffee*, 1674, NED.

As *dry* as an *old kecksy*. Lin. 1886, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 408.

An ye bydde mee, chill squease as drie as a kyxe. *Resp.*, 61. Miserly and *dry* as a *kix*. Bernard, 1598, NED. Jackson & Burne. Cooper's *Suss. Voc.* Baker's *North. Gloss.* Probably in many other dialects besides. "The word [kex] seems of universal acceptance; supplying all the kingdoms through a simile for what is withered". Hartshorne, *Salopia Antiqua* (Bridge, CP, 17). The sim. is also in Welsh. See p. 190. The word has some other forms beside those given in EDD. See *Englische Studien*, XXX, 381 f. Cf. also the Norfolk, Suffolk adj. *kisk*, *dry*, *thirsty*. "In the dialect of Lindsey, and I believe throughout a great part of England, *kex* means the hemlock; but as the people who use the folk-speech are no botanists, the word is often applied to any plant somewhat like a hemlock, the stalks of which stand up hard and *dry* in the winter." N. & Q. See *Empty, Hollow*, p. 296.

As *dry* as *hambucks*. Hambuck, the *dry* fibrous stalk of hemp, after having been peeled. Ed. Moor, *Suffolk Wds & Phrases*, 190, *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII.

It was *dry* as a *stick*, hard as a stone, and cold as a cucumber. Gray, 1760, NED. Hewett, Dev. II.

He was accurate, unemotional, and valuable. All his actions were as *dry* as the *sawdust* in the burner. White, BT, 355.

As *dry* as a *chip*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). And that Maiden's lip That was made to sip, Should here grow withered and *dry* as a chip. Barham, IL 314. It also means *thirsty*, "Ah's as *dry* as a chip." e. Yks. EDD. See *Laughing*, p. 79, *Merry*, p. 77.

Gonzales, *dry* as *Touchwood*, with all its inflammability. Malkin, 1809, NED.

Wod *dry* as *toundere*. 1475, NED. Lundsay, *Dream*, (Lean, II, ii). The interior was as dry as tinder. Doyle, R, 356. *ibid.* 332 (of a withered beech tree).

Wit Revived, or a New and Excellent Way of Divertisement . . . by *Asdryasdust* Tossofacan, 1674. N. & Q., 5, XII, 277. Rev. Dr. Dryasdust is well-known since the Waverley novels. Frequently used by Carlyle, who says that "the Prussian Dryasdust . . . excels all other Dryasdusts yet known." (NED), and he seems to have coined the adj. *dryasdustic*. Evolution was a dry-as-dust theory. London, ME, 109. Zo dry's dust. Hewett, Dev. 11.

Those were the last kind words I got for ten long years, and my heart all withered up and felt as *dry* as *ashes* till I met you. Stowe, UTC, 226.

Note. Dürr wie ein Jagdhund, Hering, Zaunstecken, eine Schindel, ein Staket, Stroh &c. draige asse Pulwer, So drüge äs en Stock Holt &c. Zoo droog als een puimsteen; zoo droog als poeder. Wander. Some of these also mean 'thin, lean'.

Inflammable.

As *inflammable* as a *beehive*. Hardy, DR, 205.

The grass was as *inflammable* as *tinder*. Baker, 1867, NED.

Wet.

Ez *damp* ez t' *graav*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. The ordinary current sense of the adj. is rec. only fr. 1706.

As *wet* as a *sop*. WL. Cf. such phrases as 'all of a sop', very wet, and the adj. *sopping*, *soppy*.

Everything is as *wet* as a *dish-clout*. Hardy, HE, 424. Blakeborough, NRY, 240 in daily use. Cf. Zo *limp*'s a dish-clout. Hewett, Dev. 11. Blakeborough NRY, 242, in daily use. See *Weak*, Ch. IV.

Ez *wet* ez *new pent*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. *Pent*, paint.

Ez *damp* ez a *cellar*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. Cf. The damp cellar's stifling air. Bryant, 1877, NED. In a moist seller. Stubbs, 1583.

As *donk* as a *dungeon*. Robinson, *Whitby Gloss.* 1855.

Ez *wet* ez a *mill-wheel*. Blakeborough, NRY, in daily use.

As *wet* as *thatch*. *Chs. Gloss.* As wet as *thack*. Lin. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 411. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. The straw with which buildings or stacks are thatched is wetted before it is

laid on, to make it bed properly. Cf. He's as wet as a *thatcher*. Bridge, CP, 26.

As *wet* as *litter*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116.

"How did you find yourself when you got home, sir?" "How, why *wet* as *muck*." Burney, 1782; Wolcot, 1886, NED. If a Scottish southland shepherd comes soaking wet from the hill, or a farmer from the plough in the same condition each will describe himself as being as wet as muck. N. & G., 5, IX, 73. "As wet as muck" is a vulgarism not unknown to me. *ibid.*, 2, III, 383. Slg, 1818, Cum. Wm. Som. 1894, EDD. When shall we get into our new offices?" "Not till March is past, they are still as wet as muck." War. EDD. Jackson & Burne. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. 'As wet as a muck' is also found. Cf. muck-wet. *Muck* now chiefly dial. and vulgar.

Zo *wet's dung*. Hewett, Dev. 13. Oxf. EDD.

Wet as *sore*. Yks., 1900, EDD. *Sore*, or *saur*, liquid manure, fr. the middle of the fifteenth c.

Wet as a *water-dog*. Lan. EDD.

Peas and beans are as *dank* here as a *dog*. Shak., KH IVa, II, i, 8.

As *wet* as a *drowned kitten*. Lan. EDD.

As *wet* as a *drowned rat*. T. Heywood, *Fair Maid* &c., II, ii. (Lean, II, ii). I got on shoare as wet as a drowned Rat. Wadsworth, 1630, NED. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. "i. e. soaking wet. Drowned rats certainly look deplorably wet, but so also do drowned mice, cats, and dogs." Brewer, Dict., 383. See above, and cf. p. 207.

Wery and *wet* as *bestys* in the rayn. Chaucer, RT, 187.

It reened all the wee, an ah'm as *wet's* a *robin*. Lei. EDD.

I am as *wet* as a *shag* and as cold as charity. Marryat, 1835, NED. Came home in the middle of the day 'as wet as a shag', it having come on to pour. Hawker, 1841, NED. Halliwell, South. "As wet as a shag" is a common expression taken from the idea of a cormorant, diving frequently under the water. Suss. EDD. One can understand a sea-bird being taken as a type of wetness, but how can a robin be regarded as wetter than anything else?

He be so *wet* as a *frog*. Phillpotts, AP, 14.

As *wet* as a *fish*. Cowan, PS, 38. Brewer, Dict. 1243. Cf. 'dry as a fish', p. 190.

Ez *wet ez sump*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. *Sump*, a bog.

As *wet* as *drip*. Peacock, *Lin. Gloss*. I maad my sark as wit as drip. Yks. "'Drip' here may mean snow, as it does in Lancashire. In its other sense it means the fat that exudes from fried bacon." N. & Q., 12, III, 276. According to EDD it means, in this sim., anything that falls in drops. See *White*, p. 238.

Bitter.

Note. For sim. referring to a bitter temper, see p. 95 ff. Most of the following sim. are chiefly used in a transf. sense.

Those fond imaginations . . . most pleasing and amiable at first, but *bitter* as *gall* at last. Burton, AM, II, 120. See also *ibid.* I, 281, 420. Ray; Hewett, Dev. 11; Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. See below, 'bitter as sloes'. Dutch, *Zo bitter als gal*. Stoet, NS, I, 208. Cf. also *Ipso bile amariora*. [*Voluptatum exitus*] as bitter as *gall* and *wormwood*. Burton, AM, I, 333. Cf. All this was gall and wormwood to the heart of Gabriel Grub. Dickens, PP, II, 42. A Bill the very idea of which is gall and wormwood to the Protestant artisans. Times, 1893, NED.

Plaisant at first she is [madness on woman] . . . the rest as *bitter* as *wormwood* in the end . . . and sharps as a two-edged sword. Burton, AM, I, 338. Words far bitterer than wormwood. Butler, H, 67. My life is as bitter as wormwood. Stowe, UTC, 16. Brewer, Dict. 139. See Prov. 5, 4. and p. 96. *So bitter als Wermuth. Plus amer qu'absinthe.* Wander.

The food . . . shall be as *bitter* as *coloquintida*. Shak., Oth., I, iii, 344. Cf. *Coloquintida* is a manere herbe that is most bitter. Trevisa, 1398, NED.

The wooful teres pat þei letyn fall As *bitter* wer . . . as ligne *Aloes* or gall. Chaucer, 1374, NED. As bitter as aloes. Dyer, FLP, 185. Lean, II, ii. From the acid taste of the juice.

Bitter as a *bask apple*. Cum. EDD. *Bask*, Sw. *bäsk*, sharp, bitter to the taste, rec. fr. Orm, but obs. except in some Sc. and n. Cy dial.

As *bitter* as *wer*. S. Chs. Der. EDD. See p. 97.

"Babies!" said another scornfully, "they come as thick as blackberries, and as *bitter* as *sloes*." Baring-Gould, BS, 29. See *Black*, p. 245, and *Sour*, 305.

His good fortune was *bitter* as *ashes* on his palate. *The Royal Mag.*, '14, 262.

Hit falleth the king of fraunce *bittrere* than *sote*. Böddeker's *Altenglische Dichtungen*, 1302 (N. & Q., 7, XII, 304). And now thy mouth, if one knew the truth of it, is as bitter, I dare say, as soot. Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, IV, xiii. ed. 1788. (N. & Q., 8, I, 212). "Did you ever eat lug [worm], uncle?" "Lord, ay, my son, to be sure I have. They are as bitter as soot, if you eats 'em raw, but they are as sweet as sugar, if you cooks 'em." Buckland, *Curiosities in Nat. Hist.*, iii, 29 1857—1872. N. & Q., 7, XII, 392). Current in Bucks. Lei. "'As bitter as soot' (pron. sut) is a very common expression here and in Derbyshire, and has probably been in use since the time when coals began to be burnt instead of

wood and peat. Anyone knowing the mysteries of mashing and brewing tea in earthenware teapots, which are stood on the hob to draw till infusion is complete, know also the consequence of a dash of soot setting in the pot through the spout. The result of this is a mixture 'as bitter as soot.'" Th. Ratcliffe, Worksop, N. & Q., 7, XII, 455. The above insts show that it is a good deal older than Ratcliffe seems to think. Cf. *Le tien* [nom] *est de si dous renon* | *Que nus no lo't no s'i deduie*; | *Le mien est plus amer que suie*. Rutebeuf, *Vie de Sainte Marie l'Egyptienne*, 6, 1260 (N. & Q., 7, XII, 304). *Amer comme suie*. Littré. Al sugre and hony, al ministralsy and melody ben but soot and galle in comparison. Usk, 1387, NED. To whom this tale sucre be or soot. Chaucer, TC, 1194. *Er ist so bitter wie Ofenruss*. Wander.

Sour.

Note. For sim. referring to a bitter or sour temper, see p. 95 ff.

- Thou first art swete, at last more sour than gall. Barclay, *Ship of Fools* 1509 (Lean, II, ii).
- The ääle as is as *ask* as *whig*. Lin. *Ask*, sour, in Yks. Lin. EDD. Oh! Lor.' The milk's as *sour* as whig. Lin. EDD. Baker, *N'hants Gloss.* (Lean, II, ii). N. & Q., 12, III, 116. 'As sour as wig' is no doubt a corruption of 'as sour as a whig', with which I have been familiar all my life. C. C. B., N. & Q., 11, V, 434. 'A thin subacid liquor resembling whey which collects on the surface of butter milk, when long kept', is Grose's explanation of the word. It is also a drink made of whey, referred to already in the early sixteenth c. See EETS, es, 10, 257.
- As *sour* as *lees of wine*. Melbancke, *Phil.*, x, 3, 1583 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *sour* as *eysel*. Lan. EDD. See p. 97.
- As *sour* as *vinegar*. Herrick, 1648 (Lean, II, ii). Each of them far more salt than Brine, or more sower than the strongest Vinegar. Boyle, 1666, NED.
- As *sour* as *verjuice*. Ray. Lan. EDD. *Chs. Gloss.* Brewer, Dict., 1135.
- If a fruit-pie is short of sugar the exclamation is often heard, 'It's as *sour* as *whir*.' When milk has gone sour, someone will say, 'It's as sour as wharre.' s. Lan. Chs. EDD.
- As sour as a *crab*. *Chs. Gloss.*
- As sour as a *crab-apple*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. Cf. If you squeeze a crab-apple, you get only sourness. Baring-Gould, RS, 20. "Sour is the land that grows sour apples

and sour folks." "Heaven made the apples. They are good enough. Man makes the cider — which is evil." *ibid.* 19.

Sour as a *grig*. "I do not know the meaning of *grig* and never heard it applied to any substance of fruit; it is the most usual superlative of sour, and the very name is supposed to set the teeth on edge." Elworthy, WSG. — According to EDD *grig* is the bullace, and the *sim.* is used in Dev. and Cor. — EDD has a Cornish phrase, 'as sour as a *rig*', but we are not told what *rig* is. It may be the Dor. word *rig*, which is said to mean 'part of a cider making machine.' Halliwell gives the sense 'a tub for new cider.' See p. 103.

Sour as *sloes*. Brontë, *Shirley*, II, 115, W. Ez sour ez a sloe. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. Already Dryden speaks of the sourness of the Sloes (1697, NED). It is also used *fig.*, Their visage wither'd lang, an thin, An' sour as ony slaes. Burns, 1786, NED.

As *sour* as *sorrel*. *Mirror for Mag.*, 1559 (Lean, II, ii). The acid qualities of the sorrel are too well known to require any comment.

As *sour* as *herbs*. Gosynhyll, *The Scholehouse of Wom.*, 1561. Dekker, *Shoemaker's Holid.* (Lean, II, ii). Lean explains 'wormwood or rue'. It may be any of the above mentioned plants.

This *yal's* as *hard* as a *whinstun*. Lakel. EDD. An interesting case of sense-development and sense-shifting. A whinstone is a name given in the north of England and in Wales to various rocks, chiefly to basalt, but also to any unusually hard quartzose sandstone. Cf. As for gratitude, you will as soon get milk from a whinstone. Stevenson, *Master of Ball.*, CD. 'Hard as a whinstone', consequently, is a perfectly natural *sim.*, and sour beer being called 'hard' in several Sc. and E. dial. it can also be said to be 'as hard as a whinstone'.

Salt.

Salt as *Lot's wife's backbone*. To suggest extreme saltiness. Ware. She became a pillar of salt.

As *saut* as *brack*. Yks. Cowan, PS, 36. This bacon is sote as brack. Cum. EDD. *Brack*, brine.

Ez *saut* ez *sea watter*. Blakeborough, NRY, in daily use. Cf. Tears as salt as sea. Shak., KH VIb, III, ii, 96.

As *salt* as *fire*. — A cor. of N. & Q., asked whence. He was told that it was probably from the Roman custom of throwing meal and salt into the fire at sacrifices. N. & Q., July, 1852, 112. Probably not. A thing may be so salt that it is as sharp and biting as fire.

Sweet Taste and Smell.

Note. Many of the following sim. have various transf. senses.

Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dressed,/ He was *perfumed* like a *milliner*,/ And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held/ A pouncet box. Shak., KH IVa, I, iii. Cf. The odorous and contagious perfume of that house was able to outvie all the milliners in Christendom or Somersetshire. Taylor, WV, 10. This is the haberdasher.

As *sweet* as *sugar-Candy*. Lean, II, ii. I thought . . . his voice as sweet as sugar-candy. Smollet, 1755, NED. Cf. also, O the sugarcandy of the delicate bag pipe. Harvey, 1593, NED. Sugar-candy fr. c. 1390.

Her breath was as sweet as *sugar-candian*. Taylor, PP. See NED. As sweet as *sugar*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. The myneth is swete to þe soule, no sugre is swettere. Langland, 1377, NED. Cf. also *sugar-sweet* in Breton, 1600, NED. Obs. according to the dict. But see below, 'Sweet as a nut'.

As *sweet* as *molasses*. Marryat, *Perc. Keene* (Lean, II, ii.) *Molasses*, kind of treacle. The word now rare in British use, frequent in American E. NED.

As sweet as *syrup*. *Tauchn. Mag.*, 6, 5, W.

As *sweet* as *Bragett drynke*. *Prompt. Parv.* Hir mouth was swete as bragot or the meeth, Or hord of apples leyd in hay or heeth. Chaucer, MiT, 3261.

As sweet as *bratchet*. N. Cy. Bratchet is another form of *bragot*, a drink composed of honey and ale fermented together, or ale spiced with sugar.

As *sweet* as *metheglyn*. Palsgrave, *Acolast.*, R.4. (Lean, II, ii.) *Metheglin*, beer made from honey, current in Wales and some counties east and south of it, rec. fr. 1533.

As *sweet* as *wort*. — Not in very common use. N. & Q., 12, III, 277.

As *sweet* as *must*. Huloet, 1552; *Roxb. Ball.*, i, 375.

As sweet as *new wine*. Baret, 1580 (Lean, II, ii).

And is not my hostess of the tavern a most *sweet* wench? As the *honey of Hybla*. Shak., KH IVa, I, ii, 39. Every word that dropped from his lips was as sweet as the honey of Hybla to me. Richardson, P, 297. Her tone was sweet as Hybla honey. Phillpotts, SW. Cf. the adj. Hyblean, honied, honey-sweet, rec. fr. 1616, fr. Hybla, the well-known Sicilian mountain.

O swete wordes, more sweter than honey and suger. Fisher, 1508, NED. Custance is sweet as honey. Udall, RRD, 88. Baret, 1580 (Lean, II, ii). As sweet as *mig* and honey. Rowley, *Witch of Edmont.*, 1658 (Lean II, ii). Ray. No later inst. has been found, but cf. the cp sim. honey-sweet rec. fr.

c. 1000 and still current in Som. Dev. Dor., EDD. And the Latin, [Study is] *melle dulcior, omni pane suavior, omni vino hilarior*. Burton, AM, II, 107 (fr. Austin). And the classical *melle dulcior fluebat oratio*, which has its exact parallel above.

Note. “As *mig*” is a puzzling phrase. There is a later inst. of it in EDD, fr. Som. 1829. The word *mig* is not in NED, and EDD has an interrogation mark against it.

As *sweet* as *grout*. — Like the last part of one's tea with the sugar unstirred at the cup-bottom. Yks. EDD. *Grout*, gritty sediment, fr. 1697.

As *sweet* as *milk*. Taylor (W. P.) *Thame and Isis*, (Lean, II, ii). Cf. That there cider do drink so mile's milk. Elworthy, WSG. See p. 63.

Ez *sweet* ez a *kern*. — A churn of all things, must be sweet and clean; hence, anything which may be truly said to be as sweet as a churn, must excel in cleanness. Blakeborough, NRY, 244. *Kern*, kirn, a n. Cy and Sc. form of churn.

As *sweet* as *summer cherries*. Brontë, *Shirley*, II, 212, W.

As *sweet* as a *white plum*.

As *sweet* as a *nut*. Buttes, *Dyets Dry Din.*, 1599 (Lean, II, ii). The white and sappy neepies — they were as sweet as any nit. Abd. 1858, EDD. T'meit's əz swīt əz ə nut. Yks. Thick there vowl's house stink'd aloud, but now I've a'clain un out, he's so sweet's a nut. A freshly washed cask would be described as [zo zweet-z u nut]. In this sense a nut is always the climax of comparison, while in the ordinary sense of sweet to the taste, the word used is generally *sugar*. Elworthy, WSG. Hewett, Dev. 13. Cf. Kate . . . is . . . as brown in hue As hazel nuts, and sweeter than the kernels. Shak., TS, II, i.

Her breath is *more sweet* than perfect *Amber* is. Byrd, 1589, *Lied.*, 34. *Amber*, the resin, which burns with an agreeable odour.

As *sweet* as *balm*. Gascoigne, *Voyage into Holl.*, 1572 (Lean, II, ii). As swete bawme they smell. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, ii, 221 (Lean, II, ii). Brenneith a vesselle . . . fulle of Bawme for to geven gode smelle. Maundeville, 1400. *Balm* of course refers to the aromatic resinous product.

They lefte a very sweete sauour behynde them *sweeter* than *muske*. Eden, 1558, NED. As sweet as musk. Clarke (Lean, II, ii).

A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye . . . Ful fetisly y-dight with herbes swote; And he himself as *sweete* as is the rote Of *licorys*, or any *cetewale*. Chaucer, MiT, 20. Cf. There springen herbes grete and smale, The lycorys and cetewale. *Ibid.* TST, 49. His love is all so swete, y-wis, So ever is mylk or licoris. 13 . . . NED. *Setwal*, (the root of) the E. Indian plant *Curcuma Zedoaria*, used as a drug, rec. 1225—1640.

O breath more *sweet* than is the *growing bean*. Sidney, 1598 (note to *French beans*, Jonson, A, I, i, 403). As sweet as the bean's

first blossom. Suckling, 1646 (Lean, II, ii.) Cf. This way she came, and this way too she went; How each thing smells divinely redolent,/ Like to a field of beans when newly blown,/ Or like a meadow being newly mown. Herrick, *Hesp.* (Lean, II, ii).

As *sweet as lilies* in May. Lean, II, ii, source not identifiable. Cf. As fresh and *fragrant* as the *floure-de luce* She was become. Spenser, FQ, IV, i, 31.

Gloves as *sweet as damask roses*. Shak., WT, IV, iv, 215.

As sweet as the *newblown rose*. Adams, 1629 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Once I was lovely; not a blowing rose More chastely sweet. Beaumont & Fletcher, MT, V, ii. As sweet as a rose. Lean, II, ii.

As *sweet as a violet*. Rowley, *Witch of Edm.*, 1658 (Lean, II, ii).

She smells as *sweet* as any *posy*. Killigrew, *Thomaso*, 1664 (Lean, II, ii). Ez sweet ez a posy. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. The fresh-turned earth was itself *fragrant* as a *bouquet*. Barham, IL, 519. *Posy*, rec. fr. 1565, is now arch. and rustic.

Ez *sweet ez floors* in May. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. Cf. Thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous, But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers. Shak., TS, II, i.

And that wild breath,/ That was so rude and rough to me last night/ Was *sweet as April*. Beaumont & Fletcher, MT, III, i.

Lofty and sour to them that love him not, But to those men that sought him, *sweet as summer*. Shak., KH VIII, IV, ii. Sweetness of summer, see W.

Tasteless, Vapid.

As *walsh* as the *white of an egg*. Yks. EDD. *Walsh*, wallowish, insipid, tasteless.

As *wally* as *raw tates*. Roberts, Note to Udall, *Er. Apo.* (Lean, III). *Wally*, wallow, wallowish.

Ane o' her thick ait jannocks, that was as *wat* and *raw* as a *divot*. Scott, RR, xiv. *Wat*, wet. *Divot*, a piece of sod.

Stinking.

It *stank* like the *devile in helle*. Townel. *Myst.*, 14.

To *stink* like an *apothecary*.

He *stinks* like a *phisicion*. — I have heard it for a proverb many a time and oft. Nashe, III, 377, 1593.

- To *stink* like a *currier's hands*. *Poor Rob.*, 1667 (Lean, II, ii).
- To *stink* like a *fishmonger's sleeves*.
- When a man goes a wenching, 'tis as if he had a strong stinking breath, every one smells him out, yet he feels it not, though it be *ranker* than the *sweat of sixteen bearwarders*. Dekker, HWH, Ib. See 'as cross as a bear' p. 102.
- As *strang* as *rotten cheese*. Cum. EDD. *Strang*, strong, strong-smelling, fetid.
- As *rank* as *garlik*. Lean, II, ii. *Rank*, having an offensively strong smell, fr. 1529.
- Their memory *stinks* as a *snuff of candle*. Burton, AM, III, 32. Cf. vnsauory snuff, fig., 1589, NED.
- An old and crazed man, That *stinks* at both ends, *worse* than an *elder pipe*. Barry, RA, V, i. No word *elder-pipe* in any dict.
- To *stink* as a *rotten dog*. *Hickscorner* (H., Old Plays, i, 190; Lean, II, ii).
Youre rud that was so red, youre the lylly lyke, Then shalle be wan as led and stynke as *dog in dyke*. *Townel. Myst.*, 325. See p. 145 'as dead as dog &c.'
- For al the world, they *stinken* as a *goot*. Chaucer, CYT, 386. Already Orm said, For gat iss . . . Ful deor and stinkeþþ fule. Frequent in Latin poetry.
As *rank* as goats. T. Adams, 1629 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *rank* as *ram*. Lean, II, ii.
- To *stink* like *new ox-dung*. Buttes, *Dyets Dry Dinner*, 1599 (Lean, II, ii).
- To *stink* like a *poisoned rat* behind a hanging. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Mad Lov.* (Lean, II, ii).
- Stinks* like a *badger*. M. & Q., 4, VI, 321.
She seyde your brethe stank lyke a *broke*. Skelton, 1528. He stinks lyke a brock. Lin. 1877, *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 412. Place stinks wo's 'an a brock. Yks. Nhb., e. An. (only used in the sim.) EDD. *Brock*, a name for the badger, in later time associated with the epithet *stinking*. NED.
- 'E *stinkth* like a *fitch*. Hewett, Dev. 18. Elworthy, WSG. Stinking lyke a *fitchet*. Cor. EDD.
It stinks lyke a *fummat*. Nicholson, Mrs Gutch, *Folk-Lore*, LXIX, 223. To stink lyke a *fumard*. Not. Stinks worse than a *foomet*. Wm. EDD.
O this ferret is as *rank* as any *polecat*. Jonson, A, II, i, 295. She 'as a breath *stinks worse* than *fifty polecats*. Dekker, HWH, Ib.
To stink lyke a *polecat*. Ray. The stinking polecat, *Putorius foetidus* is very often referred to. Cf. 'I love a stinking pole-cat.' Taylor, GN, 12.
- He is now at a cold scent. — Sowter will cry upon't for all this, though it be as *rank* as a *fox*. Shak., TN, II, v, 111, Cf. Like the aprons of some Pie-corner Cookes, Whose breath

smells sweeter than an hunted Foxe. VW, 30. Tobacco makes your breath stink, like the piss of a fox. Dekker, HWh, Ia, vi. To *stink* like a *skunk*. Overheard in Oxford. Cf. A smell as insufferable as that of some of the American Wessels or Skunks. Shaw, 1800, NED. *Skunk* rec. fr. 1634. To *stink* like a *herring*. Northall, FPh, 30.

Hot, Warm.

- Note.* For other sim. with *Hot* see p. 19, 96, 121.
- As *hot* as the *devil's kitchen*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).
- My throat and heart as *hot* as the *pit*. Kingsley, WH, 496. Pit for the bottomless pit of hell rec. fr. c. 1300.
- Whole seas of pottage, *hot* as *Phlegethon*. Taylor, ST, 32. φλεγέθων, burning, flaming.
- This puddin's as *wot* as *love nine days owd*. Shr. EDD.
Zo '*ot's love*. Hewett, Dev. 11.
- In *Wine and Walnuts*, ii, 62, there is the following phrase, "and let it be as *hot* as *Mary Palmer*." To this is attached the following foot-note: This saying was common, up to this period, at the Red Lion of Brentford. Its origin was derived from a witty circumstance during the Commonwealth, and it was used by Cavaliers to the annoyance of the Puritans." N. & Q., 5, V, 329. Nothing seems to be known now about this witty circumstance.
- Hot* as a *piper*. See p. 121.
- Thou that wert wont to be as *hot* as a *turnspit*. *Puritan*, I, ii.
Refers to the man or boy whose office it was to turn the spit.
- As *warm* as a *bap*. — A *bap* is a flat breakfast roll. Sc. N. & Q. 4, XII, 215.
- She still slept on, inside his great-coat, looking as *warm* as a *new bun* and as boyish as a Ganymedes. Hardy, JO, 190. Cf. As brown as any bun. Hood, 1845, NED.
- As *warm* as a *penny-pie*. — Generally said of children. Sc. EDD.
- Who comes yonder puffing as *whot* as a *black pudding*. Fulwel, 1568, NED. The earliest inst. of *black pudding* in NED.
- Oyle soppys . . . caste per-to Safroune, Powder pepy, Sugre, and Salt, and serve forth alle *hote* as *tostes*. c. 1430, NED. Lean has insts fr. Baret, 1529, Skelton, 1538, Palsgrave, 1540, Udall, 1553, Harvey, 1573. Loue had apered in him to hir alway Hotte as a Toste. Heywood, 1546, NED. And there's a goose that breeds at Winchester, and of all Geese my mind is least to her; For three or four weekes after she is rost, She keeps her heat more hotter than a tost. Taylor, *Goose* &c. Keep yourselves as hot as Toasts. Motteux, 1694, NED. Ray. *Warm* as any toast. Gay, NS. It keeps this end of

- the valley as warm as a toast. Stevenson, 1883, NED. Here I have been lying as warm as a toast. Phillpotts, SW, 226. This form of the sim. still very common. N. & Q., 9, VIII, 293.
- 'Tis a fine summer night and *warm as milk from the cow*. Phillpotts, M, 215.
- As *hot as pepper*, Roget. See p. 96.
- As *hot as ginger* and as steave as steel. Cunningham, *Gloss. to Burns* (Lean, II, ii). Yes by S. Anne, and ginger shall be hot i' th' mouth too. Shak., TN, II, iii, 125.
- As *warm as wool*. Peele, *Edw. I*; Clarke; Taylor (W. P; Lean, II, ii). 'One said merrily: "It must needs be warm, consisting all of double letters."' Fuller (Lean).
- As *hot as an oven*. Roget. Cf. The clouds hung low and dark and hot as the roof of an oven. Caine, D, xxxvi. The day of the Lord is coming that shall burn as an oven. Sewell, 1722, NED.
- I am as *hot as molten lead*, and as heavy too. Shak., KH IVa, V, iii, 33. Cf. Mine own tears Do scald like molten lead. *ibid.*, KL, IV, vii, 46.
- I have been in places *hot as pitch*. Stevenson, TI, 17. This must refer to the heated pitch used by sailors when caulking their ships.
- She was *warm as a sunned cat*. Hardy, T, 221.
- As *hot as horse piss*. Barclay, *Ecl.* ante 1530 (Lean, II, ii).
As hot as *mare's piss*. Lean, II, ii.
- Warm as a mouse in a churn*. Ray. — A churn in the usual sense of the word is a very unlikely place for a mouse. But it also means, at least in Ant., the last handful of corn to be cut at harvest, the stalks of which are roughly plaited together. This churn was sometimes placed over the chimney hob for good luck and a charm against witchcraft. EDD. If the mouse is in this churn on the field, it will get it pretty hot in the end, and it will be warm enough, if it takes refuge in the churn indoors. That field-mice and suchlike vermin are found in the last patch of corn to be cut on a field, is a thing of common occurrence, but is a mouse likely to find its way to the churn over the hob? One would think not, even if the houses in the good old days were far more vermin-infested than now. Further information required.
- When he was young, his feet were as *warm as a bat*, but now if he warmed them at the fire before he went to bed, they were "as cold as a dog's nose" before he got upstairs. Lan. "Old folks employ it". Many people say they feel "as warm as a bat", just as others say they feel "as warm as a toast." N. & Q., 4, XII, 215. Staff. *ibid.* 377. There are several words *bat* with many different senses. The meaning that fits the context best is one current in Staffordshire, where it means, among

other things, a slaty bit of coal, which will not burn but retains the heat a great while. N. & Q., 4, XII, 377.

As *hot as coals*. Udall, *Erasm. Apo.*, 1542 (Lean, II, ii). [Avowals] inoffensive, but *fiery* as live coals. Harland, MFP, 272. *Coal*, in the sense of live coal is now arch.

Now I shiuer for defeaute of hete, And *hot* as *glede* now suddenly I suete. Lydgate, CBK, 33. Guy of Warwick, ed. EETS, 262. (Lean, II, ii). NED mentions this sim. but without giving any inst. and calls it obs. See *Red*, p. 249, and *Fierce &c.* p. 94, *Bright*, p. 227.

Rum and cider *hot* as *flame*. Hardy, LLI, 271. My Lord Duke was as hot as a flame at this salute, but said never a word. Thackeray, HE, 362.

As *hot as fire*. Barclay, *Ship of Fools*, 1509. *Scholehouse of Wom.*, 1541 (Lean). Kentshire hot as fire. Pegge's *Kentic.*, p. 34. This sim. seems to have been used of Kent fr. late ME times (Lean). You are as hot as fire. Hardy, DR, 99.

I am as *hot* as *dog-days*. Hardy, RN, 26. The dog-days are frequently referred to as the hottest part of the year. Cf. Hotter in January, than Italy in the dog-days. Cooke, 1712, NED. The term is known in E. fr. 1538.

As *hot as hayharvest*. Skelton, *Ymage of Hypocr.*, 1533. Melbancke, *Phil.*, 1583.

Her love was *warm* as *summer* and fresh as spring. Hardy, FMC, 220.

Cold.

Up there it's *colder* than *hell on a stoker's holiday*. White, BT, 189. One of the picturesque Americanisms already referred to p. 123.

The cold vapours, *cold* as *death*. Baring-Gould, BS, 106.

"I feel", an old cottager said, "as *cold* as a *maids knee*." Huntingdon. N. & Q., 4, VI, 495. Not known before to the cor. The cottager himself regarded it as a very old saying. "A maid's knee and a dog's nose are the two coldest things in the creation", was his opinion. Also current in the west of Scotland. A dog's nose and a maid's knees are always cold, says Ray.

As *cold as charity in the heart of a lawyer*. N. & Q., 5, X, 136. As *cold as charity in a lawyer's pocket*. *ibid.*, 358.

Cold is thy heart and as *frozen* as *charity*. Southey, 1795.

As *cold* as charity. Ray. Now have I been peeping through the snow storm these last two hours, watching for the boat, and I am as wet as a shag and as cold as charity. Marryat, *J. Faithful*, xx, Cowan, PS, 38. The wind is as cold as charity. Trollope, 1865, NED. Roget. According to NED this refers to "the perfunctory, unfeeling manner in which acts

of charity are often done, and public charities administered." Cf. Their incomes are very small, as charity and Piety are very cold among their Flock. Hamilton, 1727, NED. This may be the case, but the origin of the sim. is nevertheless biblical. When Burton, AM, I, 365, writes, "So cold is my charity", it is a reference to Matt., 24, 12, where we read, in a translation of 1582, the charitie of many shal vvax cold. (NED). In the Auth. V. we have 'love' for 'charity'. The Greek text has ἀγάπη. One of the earliest allusions to this passage that have been found, is, The morning, like charity, waxing cold. Dekker, GH, 25, which seems to hint that the sim. was current already then. Cf. also, You shall see that hot loue wil waxe soone colde. Lyly, MB, I, iii, 197. The loue of our children waxeth key colde. *ibid.*, IV, i, 42. — NED seems to think (see cold, 7) that the sim. refers to a person void of ardour or intensity of feeling. The above insts do not bear this out.

It was dry as a stick, hard as a stone, and *cold* as a *cucumber*. Gray, 1760, NED.

Tak' a antle of wutmil, an' as much cowsharn as'll mix well together, an' put it on the leg, it'll swage the swellin', an mak' it as *cool* as a cowcumber. (Shr.), Wright, RS, 247.

'There was formerly a superstitious belief in England that cucumbers had the power of killing by their natural coldness. Gerarde says "they yield to the body a cold and moist nourishment and that very little and the same not good.'" Folkard, PL. 300. See p. 61.

As *cold* as a *clock*. Lyly, *Euph.*, ed. Arber, 106, H. Melbancke, *Phil.*, iii, 106, 1538 (Lean II, ii).

With quaikand voce and hart *cald* as a *key*. Douglas, 1501. My Lyfe . . . from my body fled, And left my corps as cold as onie kie. Montgomerie, 1600, NED. Cf. And so it coldeth at min herte/ That wonder is, how I asterte/ In such a point that I ne deye. For certes, there was never keie Ne frosen is upon the walle/ More inly cold, than I am alle. Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, ed. Pauli, iii, 9, (Skeat, N. & Q.). An excellent explanation of the rise of the sim. — Cf. the cp. sim. key-cold, which is rec. in NED fr. 1529. It is stated to be rare now.

As *cold* as *iron*. Roget.

As *cold* as *lead*. Roget.

Within was a small chamber, *chilly* as an *out-house*, and walled by nature with solid limestone. Twain, TS, 215.

The room was as *cold* as an *ice-house*. *Strand Mag.*, 123, '13.

As *warm* as a *sheep-net*. — Used derisively; there is no shelter or warmth in a sheep-net. Blakeborough, NRY, 244.

His feet . . . were "as *cold* as a *dog's nose*." See 'warm as a bat' p. 311, and above 'cold as a maid's knee'. In Scotland, the reason why the dog's nose is always cold, is said to be this:

When Noah was in the ark it sprung a leak, and according to a dogrel song — He took the dog's nose to stop up the whole,
And ever since then it's been wet and cold. N. & Q., 4, VII,
43. Cf. *Kalt wie eine Hundsnase*. Wander.

As *cold* as a *rat*. Very cold. Suf. EDD. See p. 208.

As *cold* as a *frog*. Northall, FPh. Hewett, Dev. 10. Roget. Cf. *So kalt wie ein Frosch*. Wander.

Your hands are as cold as a *paddock*. Ken., EDD. *Paddock*, frog or toad.

This is worse and worse, he's as *cold* as *hemlocke*. Ford, LS, 105.
What does this refer to?

The cheek was *cold* as *marble*. Thackeray, HE, 392. Cf. She took both his hands — hers were marble cold. *ibid.* 138. Mason, PK, 123 (of a hand). Roget. [Her arms] were *cool* as marble. Galsworthy, CH, 122. It is astonishing that no earlier insts have been found. Chaucer renders the Fr. *plus froid que marbre*, as cold as stone (*Duchesse*, 124; see Haeckel, 35).

So *cold* as a *ston*. 1290, NED. [The clothes] were as cold as any stone, and so upward and upward, and all was as cold as any stone. Shak., KH V, II, iii, 23. A lecher's love is, like sir reverence, hot./ And on a sudden cold as any stone. Taylor, (W. P.), *A Whore*, (Lean, II, ii). Roget. P. became cold as a stone. Hardy, WB, 178.

Her hand was *chill* as a stone. Hardy, W, 78,

She is this day as *cold* as *clay*, my Mistris she is dead. Heywood, CGW, 1802. Cf. such terms as (cold, lifeless) clay, used of the human body, rec. fr. ME times.

When I come home and find thee *cold* as *earth*. Heywood, CGW, 286.

A new nine-gallon, tapped before breakfast this morning, now running clear and *cool* as a *mountain burn*. Gissing, FC, 57. The word *burn*, rec. fr. OE times, now chiefly north, except in the form *bourne*. NED.

Cleer was the water, and as cold As any *welle* is. Chaucer, Rom. R., 116.

pat *coldore* was pane ani *ys* &c. c. 1290, NED. Colder than ice. Granger, 1620, NED. As cold as ice (in the middle of July). Middleton, 1604 (Lean, II, ii). Water may be made to boil, and burn as bad as fire, and made cold as ice. Burton, AM, I, 136. I feel as cold as ice and as nervous as a cat. Doyle, *Firm*, 305. Phillpotts, AP, 159 (of a dead person); Courad, *Romancc*, 357 (forehead); Caine, ET, 127 (hand); Mason, PK, 112 (hand). It's aboon a mahle an' a hawf heegh, and as cawd as ice at t'top on't. *Yorkshire Dial.* 3. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

The nobleman would have dealt with her like a nobleman, and she sent him away as *cold* as a *snowball*. Shak., Per., IV, vi, 133.

þat *caldore* was þane ani ys oþur *snovz*. c. 1290, NED. Thoughts as cold as snow. Beaumont & Fletcher, *KK*, IV, iv.

As *coulde* as any *froste* now wexeth shee. Chaucer, *Leg.*, IX. 122.

Cold as *Christmas*. Denham Tracts, *Folk-Lore*, XXXV, 91. Ez caud as Kessamas. Blakeborough, *NRV*, 240, in daily use. Roget.

A very old man, as *cold* as *January*. Burton, *AM*, III, 346.

Note. A rather interesting G. sim. is, *So kalt wie ein Schneider*. (as cold as a tailor.) Is it because it "takes nine tailors to make a man", and consequently one tailor cannot have more than the vitality and warmth of 1/9 of a man?

CHAPTER IV.
OTHER DEFINITE SIMILES.

Good.

- Agreed and as *good* as *wheat*. Twain, TS, 212. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). Spoken of a cheque or a bill of exchange, where we should say 'As good as gold'. Lean.
- An 'twere not as *good* deed as *drink* to break the pate on thee, I am a very villain. Shak., KH IVa, II, i. 27. This'll be as good as drink to my mate Bill. Stevenson, TI, 14. Does not the Shakespearean *drink* mean 'the action of drinking'? NED has this sense only since 1865. Differently in Stevenson.
- As *good* as a *feast*. Lean, II, ii. Is not this only a part of the old proverb, 'enough is as good as a feast'?
- As *good* as a *comedy*. Taylor, (W. P.), *Wit and Mirth*, 129 (Lean, II, ii).
You know your manners too well to wash your dirty linen in public like this." "As *good* as a *pantomime*", said a thin labourer. Phillpotts, M, 259. *Pantomime* rec. fr. 1735.
- As *good* as a *puppet show*. Said of anything amusing. Northall, FPh. 8. *Puppet-show*. fr. 1650.
The tale that Master Jarvis told was as *good* as a *play*. Wood, 1871. NED (s. v. play). Are they not as good as a play, trying their hand at legislation? Jowett, 1875, NED (s. v. good). The thing was going to be as good as a play. Gissing, TT, 39. Hardy, PBE, 142, MC. 311. Castle, IB, 224. It was as good as a play to see his father with the children. Galsworthy, MP, 189. This sim. is supposed to have originated with Charles II, who is said to have exclaimed, when watching the discussion in Parliament of Lord Ross's Divorce Bill, that it was as good as a play (Lean). But compare, He so strangely looked as his countenance was better than the play. Armin, *Nest of Nin.*, 1605 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *good* as *guinea gold*. Gold of which guineas were coined. Lan. EDD.
His name was soon as good as gold. Blackmore, LD, 68. See p. 5.

- Of Sancho's Proceeding in his Government, with other Successes as *good* as *Touch!* Shelton 1620, NED. See p. 11.
- His money always was as *good* as the *bank*. Dickens, PP, II, 4. The note of hand of so well known a person as yourself is as good as the Bank. Castle, IB, 154. See *Sure*, p. 354.
- As *good* as *goose-skins* that never man had enough of. Chs. Ray. Application? "This is one of the few sayings which it is impossible to explain. The meaning has died out." Bridge, CP, 43.

Useful, Handy.

- As *useful* as a *shin of beef*, which has a big bone for the big dog, a little bone for the little dog, and a sinew for the cat. N. & Q., 5, VII, 9. An old English proverb says . . . 'Of all joints commend me to the shin of beef, which containe marrow for the master, meat for the mistress, gristle for the servants, and bone for the dog.' *Daily News*, 1872, NED.
- I suppose you must let Swaddledown go; it's a pity too, lying *handy* as the *button at the flap* of your *pocket*. Baring-Gould, RS, 21.
- Handy* as a *pocket in a shirt*. — Very convenient. *Amer. Slang*.
- I 'sure 'ee, he's a rare fuller to work, and he's s'*andy* as a *gimblet*. — A very common description of a useful servant. Elworthy, WSG.

Harmless.

- This panacea is as *innocent* as *bread*. *Spectator*, 547.
- As *harmless* as a piece of bread. Jarvis, *Don Quix*. (transl. 1870; Lean, II, ii).
- 'E looked abart as '*awmless* as a *Sunday schule teacher*. Pain, DO, 75.
- As *harmless* as a *sheep*. Herrick, iii, 38, 1648, (Lean, II, ii). A good man can no more harm than a sheep. Clarke. H.
- As *harmless* as a *dove*. Lean, II, ii. We ought to be harmless as doves. Hardy, HE. 52. See Math. 10, 16.
- [A small python] as *harmless* as a *doormouse*. Vachell, WJ, 131, Cf. "But the most exquisite animal was reserved for the last chapter, and that was the Dormouse, a harmless creature whose innocence might at least have defended it both from cooks and physicians." King's *Art of Cookery*, Letter 9 (c. 1700; Ben Jonson, *Alch.* p. 170, s. v. dormouse).
- As *harmless* as a *whitred* without teeth. Colvil, 1796, EDD. Otherwise a weasel is not considered harmless. See 'as soft-hearted as a rezzil', p. 88 and 'as cross as a weasel', p. 102.

Harmless creatures, none evel ment, The upper hand if they once get, Can no *more harme* then a *Mermeset*. *Scholehouse of Wom.* (H., Engl. Pop. Poetry, i, 254, 1541). *Marmoset* was in early MnE a name for any small monkey. The true m. is a tropical American monkey of the family *Hapalidae*, genus *Hapale*. They are gentle and playful and make amusing pets. NED. Cf. I have seen her . . . as changeful as a mormozet. Scott, 1822, NED.

Unavoidable, Necessary.

Fixed as fate. Pope, EM, 202. Horace Smith, *Brambletye House*, 1826, W.

You are as *necessary* in a city as *tumblers in Norfolk, sunners in Lancashire*, or *Rakehells* in an army. Dekker, *Westw. Ho!* III, ii (Lean, II, ii). Norfolk tumblers are mentioned elsewhere in the same play, see p. 158, 'as active as a N. t'. That rakehells are unavoidable in an army, has been the experience hitherto, but why sunners should be more necessary in Lancashire than elsewhere, is as yet an open question.

When I wanted whisky, I *needed it worse* than a *scalded pup* does a *snow bank*. But: "The scalded dog feares euen colde water". Cotgrave, 1611, NED. Which is more in accordance with canine nature?

As *necessary* as a *sow* among young children. Ray. Bohn, in his Complete Alphabet reprints, 'as an old sow'. Also in Lean. A thing altogether out of place, it would seem to a modern mind.

[Friendship] as *necessary* for man's life, as *water, ayre, and fier*. DP.

Appropriate, Fit, Welcome.

As *welcome* as *Hopkins*, that came to jail over night, and was hanged the next morning.

As *welcome* as *two fiddlers*. s. Lan. EDD.

As *welcome* as *eighteen trumpeters*. H (N. & Q.)

As *fit* as *fritter* for a *friar's mouth*. H.

Thou com'st as fit for the purpose as a *Pudding* for a Fryer's mouth. Day, BBB, 2007. Fulwell, *Like Will to Like* (Lean, II, ii) . . . for a dog's mouth, says Lyly, MB, II, i, 106.

"The saying 'As *pat* as *thievin'* to a *tinker*,' is probably quoted among us as frequently as any other." Ir., 1875, EDD.

She is, to turn love to hate, or joy to grief, A pattern as *meet* as a *rope* for a *thief*. Heywood, PE, 24. We have 'as fit

&c.' in *Mar. of Wit and Wisd.* (Shak. Soc.) p. 15, and in Denham.

As *well worth* it as a thief is worth a rope. Ray.

It is as *meet* as a thief for the *widdy*. H.

As *welcome* as the *heart* in one's body. *Interl. of Youth* (H., *Old Plays*, ii, 21, (Lean, II, ii).

Say pardon, gracious king; 'tis but a word . . . but *welcome* as the *breath of life*. May, H, IV, i.

Braue Prince, as *welcome* to Venusius, As *sleep* to wearied nature. VW, 62.

As *welcome* as *slumbers*. Herrick, *Hesp.*, 1648. (Lean, II, ii).

As *fit* as a *pudding*. Dekker, *Shoem. Hol.* (Lean, II, ii). This must refer to the old-fashioned pudding, a kind of sausage, and its tight-fitting skin.

I chanst to light on one, Hyt me as *pat* as a pudding Pope Ione. Whetstone, 1578, NED.

As *noist* as *pie*. — Said of anything convenient, comfortable, appropriate, or toothsome. It fits 'im noist as a pie, I heard of a coat. Lei. EDD. Cf. 'as good as a pie.' p. 5. *Noist*, niced, nicet, nice.

As *pat* as a *dinner of broth*. w. Yks., EDD.

As *welcome* as *sour ale in summer*. Dunton, *Life and Er.*, 1705, H. Cf. to mend like sour ale, or milk, in summer. *Slang*.

The boots . . . *fitted* me like a *glove*. Smollet, 1771, NED. Boccaccio must be read in his Italian, as Cervantes in his Spanish: the language fitting either 'like a glove', as we say. Fitz Gerald, 1876, NED. The badger-skin waistcoat no longer fitted him as a glove, it fell into wrinkles. Baring-Gould, RS, 51. Cf. *Easy*, p. 346

Filling wp as *trimme* as a *trencher* the space that stood voide. Udall, 1542. — As trim or exact as maybe, as clean as a trencher, when licked. *Slang*.

As trim as a trencher, as trick, as sweet, as clean. *Fac. & Es.* H., *O. P.*, ii 2, 233.

As *meet* as a *treen ladle* for a porridge pot. Scott, *Kenilw.*, iii, 18. *Treen*, wooden. Cf. a Sw. proverb, *var ska slevan vara, om inte i grytan?* (where is the ladle to be if not in the pot?) of two inseparable friends.

As *fit* as a *die*. Melbancke, *Phil.*, 41 (Lean, II, ii). See p. 274.

To *fit* like a *ball of wax*. — To fit close to the skin. *Slang*. See *Secret, Reticent*, p. 130, and *Close*, p. 325.

As *natural* to him as *milk* to a *calf*. Ray. This sense of *natural* fr. 1589.

As *natural* as *grinning* is to *hyaena*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). It's a way I've got, and it comes as natural to me as grinning to a hyaena. 1845, Thornton. The hyaena's laughing is referred to already by Shak.

- It do come as *nat'ral* as *hooping* to *owls*. Robertson, *Gloss. co. Glouc.* (Northall, FPh. 9).
- As *welcome* as the *dandelion* in the *bosom of winter*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).
- As *welcome* as *flowers in May*. Clarke, Howell, Ray. Art welcome, girl, as flowers in May. Scott, RR, viii. Welcome to all as knowed you, as the flowers in May. Dickens, *Dombey & Son*, xlix. Ez welcome ez t'floors in May. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. "This form of greeting was in constant use years ago amongst ordinary folk, and many a stranger has been greeted as a friend by 'A'wm glad ter see yo: you'r as welcome as flowers i' May'". Th. Ratcliffe, Worksop. N. & Q.
- As *welcome* as our *Lady-day*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Woman's Pr.* I. (Lean, II, ii).
- Welcome* hither, as is the *spring* to the *earth*. Shak., WT, V, i, 151.

Cf. the following passage in Shak.: As fit as ten groats is for the hands of an attorney, as your French crown for your taffeta punk, as Tib's rush for Tom's forefinger, as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday, a Morris for a Mayday, as a nail to his hole, the cuckold to his horn, as a scolding quean to a wrangling knave, as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth, nay as the pudding to his skin. AW, II, ii, 20.

Thoroughly, To Perfection, Clean, Slick.

- "Trees clean and free of limbs?" asked Jackson. "They're as good as the stuff over on seventeen; you remember that?" "*Clean* as a *baby's leg*," agreed Jackson. White, BT, 180. — I. e. the trees on seventeen were thus "clean". White has a bewildering assortment of fanciful sim., and some of them have already been commented upon. See *Busy*, p. 123, and *Fierce, Angry*, p. 90, *Cold*, 312.
- Note.* For some other sim. with *clean*, see *Beautiful, Fine*, p. 218 &c.
- As *clean* as *wheat* — Said when a point in discussion is cleared up. n. Yks., EDD. See *Good*, 316.
- He'll break yer up as *clean* as *carrot*. A. Mayhew, *Kitty Lamerevell*, 176, W. In this sentence *clean* is the intensifying adverb = quite, altogether, utterly, which is further intensified by being compared with something that is looked upon as clean, fine, smart. See p. 217.
- For now, as *clean's* a *leek*, Ye've cherish'd me since ye began to speak. Ramsay, 1725, NED. The dict. renders 'perfectly, entirely, completely'. 'Thoroughly, greatly, highly', would be more to the point in this inst. You did your work as clean as a leek. — Ye'd split a hair. Abd., 1867, EDD. He drew

ilk nail With a swirl round baith bolt and cleek, As clean's a leek. Frf. 1833, EDD. Cf. 'as spruce as an onion', p. 217, and the Sc., He took it off as clean as I would the head of a *sybie* (a young onion). N. & Q., 3, XI, 360. Shaving every labouring man As clean's a sybo. Abd., 1871, EDD.

I've lost my knife as *clean* as a *penny*. w. Yks. EDD. See p. 218, and above 'as clean as a carrot'.

That eightpence shaves off my profit as *clean* as a *razor*. Eliot, MF, 361. i. e. as clean as a razor does.

As *dead* as a *hammer*. — "Dead" in this case sometimes is equivalent to thoroughly. Lfn. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. See p. 141. *Dead*, i. e., completely, entirely, thoroughly, in general colloquial use. Cf. 'as stunt as a hammer'.

As *clean* as a *pick*. Middleton, *World tost at Tennis*, (Lean, II, ii). According to Lean, *pick* is a pitchfork. There are several other senses of the word that may fit the context just as well.

I done it *slick* as a *whistle*. 1844, *Slang*. The wind carried away the roof as slick as a whistle, but without hurting anybody. 1909, Thornton.

To cut as *clean* as a whistle. N. & Q., 3, XI, 360. He chopped off his thumb-end as clean as a whistle. *ibid.* 12, III, 275. That thing as thay uses in France (the gully-tine don't um call it?) to put folks to dyuth ooth, insted a 'angin' um; cuts their yuds off 'as clane as a whistle'. Wor. EDD. "She's gone, clean gone". murmured the bewildered captain. — "As clean as a whistle", said the mate. Jacobs, MC, 26. He took the tooth out with the first stroke, too, clean as a whistle. London, SS, 127. Hewett, Dev. 10, Yks. EDD. "Clean as a whistle", he said, "she is all right [of a mare]. Galsworthy, CH 138. — As appears from the insts, the first form of the sim. refers to something that is done to perfection, smartly and easily; the second is chiefly used to intensify such verbs as to 'cut off, go, and take away &c'. — There has been a good deal of discussion as to the origin of this sim. It has been suggested that it refers to the clean white wood that is produced at the manufacture of a rustic whistle. But the white wood is not the whistle itself. 'To cut as clean as to produce a whistle' is the explanation proffered by a cor. of N. & Q., 3 XI, 360. But these speculations do not start from facts. We have in Burns 'Paint Scotland greetin owre her thressle; Her mutchkin stowp as *toom's* a *whistle*. *The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer*, vii. Breakfast's ready, and you must be as tume as a whistle after your night's work. Sc. 1896; also Gall. 1894 in the same sense of hungry. EDD. 'Clean as a whistle' is simply a translation of 'toom as a whistle', as *clean* has the sense of 'toom, empty' in many combinations. A whale-ship returning without oil is said to be clean, and so are also the empty boilers in a soap factory. The sense-

development offers no more difficulties than in 'clean as a carrot, a leek', where *clean* originally means 'fine, smart'.

She is as *clene* as *cristalle clyfe*, For me. *Townel. Myst.*, 79. Undeified.

Dune as *clean* as a *mackerel*. Lnk. A nokt im ouær æz tliæn æz æ makril. Yks. Completely, entirely. EDD. Why the mackerel should be selected as the cleanest, or one of the cleanest, of fishes, is more than one unskilled in ichthyology can tell. Cf. 'dead, mute as a mackerel'.

A highly respectable individual . . . *clean* as a *pink* and as dull as a pikestaff. Hunt, 1847, NED. Northall, FPh. It is supposed to be in Middleton, *Inner Temple Mask* (Lean, II, ii). The insts are too few to admit of any statement as to meaning and application of this sim. It has been discussed in N. & Q., 6, VII, *passim*, and beside the flower, there have been suggested as renderings the foxhunters' pink, a sharp-cut hole, and the fencing term pink, which refers to a clean thrust, and, last but not least, the fish called pink or penk, the minnow, *Leuciscus phoxinus*. "As clean as this very common and very elegant fish would not form a bad simile, and is much more likely than any of the explanations suggested". N. & Q., 6, VII, 495. — NED does not see any difficulty in the sim. It simply puts the above inst. under *pink* sb. 4, which is the flower. There is another very interesting sim. in Baker, *Northants Gloss.*, as *clean* as a *smelt*. Various small fishes in English waters are called *smelt*. *Osmerus eperlanus* is one. Smelts, when fresh, have a fine bright appearance, says Sara Adams, 1825, NED. The beautiful and delicately flavoured little fish known as smelts. Lydecker, 1896, NED. It also means, esp. in north. dial., a smolt: He took Smelts of the Salmon with their silvery sides. 1842, NED. Smolt is the term for the young salmon at the period when it becomes covered with silvery scales and migrates to the sea for the first time. Now, pink is another of the many words for the fry of the salmon, and whether we render it smelt, as is done in the dict., or smolt, as these two terms to a certain extent are interchangeable, we get good sense either way. It is immaterial whether *pink* is explained as a minnow, or, as the Northants sim. makes perhaps more likely, a young salmon, both words form just as good a sim. as 'clean as a mackerel'. — There is no evidence as to the frequency of this sim. outside dial. It is quite possible that most non-dial. users associate it with the flower, the most common sense of *pink* in standard lit. E.

But you will meet with the Holy Society of the Wipers everywhere, and they will be ready to wipe you as *clean* as a *clock* before you come to the castle. Henry More, *An Antidote against Idolatry*, 1669, N. & Q., 5, I, 327. "This is a common phrase in Yorkshire, referring to the shining and clean-

looking blackbeetles (always called clocks in the North) which are to be found under every piece of cowdung which has been dropped a few hours." N. & Q., 5, I, 454. Has *clean* in this sim. also the adv. sense it has in 'clean as a mackerel'? The same question applies to 'clean as a pink' as well. If for 'wiped' we substitute 'robbed' the word may mean something like 'thoroughly'.

Approximately.

Note. For some related sim, see *Similarity*, p. 329 ff.

As *just as fourpence to a groat.* *Jack Fugeler*, (H., *Old Plays*, ii, 149, Lean, II, ii).

As *near as fourpence to a groat.* Torriano (Lean, II, ii). Northall, FPh., 9. "This is the climax of exactness, but it has nothing to do with distance. It would be said of any two things which exactly matched in appearance, or of two valuations, which approached closely in amount; or it would be used to express a good fit. or a close joint in masonry or carpentry". Elworthy, WSG. Fourpence rec. in NED fr. 1722.

As *near as two ha'pennies for a penny.* Northall, FPh. 9.

So D. and T. were nearly being rusticated this morning. "As *near as a toucher.*" Hewlett, 1840, NED. And there we are in four minutes' time as near as a toucher. Dickens, 1865. *Slang.* The berries were as big as Welsh nuts — or so near as *touch.* Som. 1895, EDD. 'Twas jist a come they hadn a bin aturned over right into the river — 'twas so nigh's a ticher. Elworthy, WSG. Yks. EDD. Baker, *N'hants Gloss.* Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 275. I was as near as a toucher turning too short, through mistaking the post. Astley, 1894, NED. Cf. It hits to a toucher, i. e. so exactly that the joints touch each other. *Graven Gloss.* 1828, NED.

A hit dhat mark, əz niər əz ə pɒp. Ai it just did mis, ən dhat wər ol it wəz əz niər əz pɒp. w. Yks. *Pop*, dot, spot, mark, Cf. You are a pop nearer being a countess than you was last week. Bradshaw, 1718, NED.

As *near as nobbut.* — As near as possible. *Nobbut*, not but. Cf. They're nobbut just cum'd. Yks. EDD. and, 'E'd gort as near drunk as no matter. Pain, DO, 33.

Close, Near.

Note. For some closely related sim. see *Full*, p. 294, and *Common* &c.

Though I were *near* him as his own *skin*. Nashe, I, 330, 1592.

Cf. Our inward garment that should be nearer and dearer to us than our skins. Gauden, 1660, NED, and the following sim.

The kyng began to muse on this request, and not without a cause, for in dede it touched him as *neer* as his *shirt*. Hall, 1548, NED.

Living so close to it as what I do — *closer* than my shirt to my *body*, you might say. Phillpotts, WF, 112. Cf. Near is my shirt, but closer sitteth my skinne. Godwin, 1625, NED. We must discern the skin from the shirt. Lennard, 1730, NED. See also NED, *shirt*, sb. 2e, 1579, 1586, 1596, and *coat*, sb. 13, 1539. Though to Fortvne neer be her petticoate, Yet, neerer is her smock. Jonson, A, IV, v; and such phrases as *Skiortan är nämbre än Tröyan. Das hemd is neher den der rock*. Grubb. (the shirt is nearer than the coat). *Tunica pallio prior*. Erasmus (Grubb).

Wedged together as *close* as *wheatears* in a Tunbridge pie. Ned Ward, *Step to Stirbitch Fair*, 1700 Wks II, 250 (Lean, II, ii). Does this refer to the inland watering place in Kent, fashionable especially in the 18th cent. and still popular? Tunbridge Ware, small articles in wood-mosaic, is not unknown, but who has ever heard of wheatear pies made at Tunbridge Wells? Pies made of small birds were long regarded as a delicacy.

As *close-packed* as *herrings* in a barrel. Lean, II, ii. Cf. People jammed inside like herrings in a barrel. Gould, 1891. *Slang*. Cf. *Gedrängt sitzen, stehen wie die Heringe in einer Tonne. Être serré, rangé comme des harengs en caque*. Wander. Sw. *Packade som sillar*.

As *close* as *sardines* in a box. Jespersen-Rodhe. Cf. Packed like sardines. *Slang*. The guests were not packed together sardewise, as they are at most concerts. Du Maurier, 1894, NED.

As genteel boy, whose plated buttons were as *close* together upon the front of his short jacket as *peas in a pod*. Hardy, GND. 240.

As *thick* as *peas in a shell*. NED, no inst. given.

To see the keels upon the Tyne/ As *thick* as *hops* a-swimming. Nhb., 1891, EDD. Said of things very close together. See *Common*. Of this sim. NED says, ? Referring to the plants when grown in rows, or to the crowded catkins of flowers.

In ridding of pastures with turfes that lie by/ Fill every hole up as *close* as a *die*. Tusser, *Husbandrie*, 1577 (Lean, II, ii). *Close*, closely, without leaving any 'interstices or vacuities' (NED). In this case the best rendering of *die* would undoubtedly be a stamping machine, but *close* may also mean 'close-fitting, nice, exact' and be applied to the other sense of the subst.

Mark staid more at home, kept to his three-legged stool as *close* as any *wax*. Harris, 1901, Cor. EDD. Several insts of this sim. have already been given. See pp. 130, 127. See also *Tight*, p. 264, *Neat*, 219.

As *close* as a *close stool*. Melbancke, *Phil.*, 1583 (Lean, II ii).

As *close* as a *jail*. Tusser, *Husb.*, 1577 (Lean II, ii).

As *close* as the *Black hole in Calcutta*. Lean, II, ii.

To lie close to you? *Close* as a *cockle*, keep the cold nights from you? Beaumont & Fletcher, WGC, I, iii. Cf. I keepe close for all this/ Close as a Cockle; *Two noble Kinsman*, IV, i. Act IV, except iii, is generally ascribed to Fletcher, and the occurrence of the sim. in both plays may be a further proof of the authorship. For some related sim. see p. 130.

Wotte you where I had him? Ith ale-house at whipperginnye as *close* as a *burr*. *Misogonus*, ed. Brandl, in *Quellen &c.*, II, iv, 93. i. e. the person in question was not to be got away from the place, he stuck to it like a burr.

To seel her father's eyes up *close* as *oak*. Shak., *Oth.*, III, iii, 214. Is it the hard, compact and close texture of oak-wood that has given rise to the sim.?

As *near* as [the] *bark* to the *tree*. Clarke (Lean, II, ii). Cf. *Dhen som kryper millan Barken och Träät han blijr klämder*. Grubb, 142. *Er steckt zwischen Baum und Borke*, used of one in a fix, or one that does not know what to do. Wander. Altogether different is the E., 'Twixt the oak and the rind. To make fine distinctions. Som. Dev. EDD.

Kindred.

As *sib* as *Simmie* and *his brother*. Scott, *Fortunes of Nigel*, XV. *Sib* is a very old word, rec. fr. Beowulf, now chiefly Sc., n. Cy or arch.

We weir als *sib* as *seue* and *riddill* *In una silva quae creverunt*. Wm Dunbar, 1508 (Lean, II, ii). Inst. of 1631 in H. As much sib'd as sieve and riddle that grew in the same wood together. Ray. 'No more sib &c.' is a form given by H.—A riddle, being a coarse-meshed sieve, must necessarily be related to it, especially if "they grew up together". NED has insts of these two words being coupled for at least 500 years, quite apart from the sim.

As much *akin* as *Robin Hood* and the *Rood of Chester*. Gascoigne, *Glass of Gov.*, 1575 (Lean, II, ii).

As *near akin* as the *cates of Banbury* to the *bells of Lincolne*. *A Knack to Know a Knave*, 1594, H. Lean quotes the sim fr. the same play (H., *Old Plays* VI, i, 533) in a slightly different form, 'As near akin together &c.'. — The cates of B. probably refer to the Banbury cakes mentioned p. 47. The bells

of Lincoln will be further dealt with in the section *Silence, Sounds*.

As much *akin* as *Lenson-hill* to *Pilson-pen*. — "That is no kin at all. It is spoken of such who have vicinity of habitation or neighbourhood, without the least degree of consanguinity or affinity betwixt them: for these are two high hills, the first wholly, the other partly, in the parish of Broad Windsor, whereof once I was minister." Fuller, W., I, 453. *Lenson* is probably a misprint for *Lewson*. According to Lean the "correct names" are *Lewesdon* and *Pillesden*. The map-names of to-day are *Pilsdon Pen* and *Lewesdon Pen*. (Cambridge Co. Geogr., co. Dorset). Fuller goes on to say of these hills, "Seamen make the nearest relation of them calling the one the cow, the other the calf; in which forms, it seems, they appear first to their fancies." The present incumbent of this parish writes that he does not know the sim. to be current in the neighbourhood.

Intimacy, Familiarity.

Note. For some closely related sim. see *Knowledge*, p. 130, *Love, Sympathy*, p. 135.

As *great* as the *devil* and *Dr. Faustus*. De Foe, 1726, NED. Probably only a nonce-phrase. Nevertheless it bears witness to the great popularity of the legend of Dr. Faustus and the devil, well-known from Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* and Goethe's *Faust*. — *Great*, intimate, rec. fr. 1483, is now only dial.

As *great* as *old Nick* and the *Earl of Kent*. Ned Wards, *Revels of the Gods*, 1704, (Lean, II, ii).

We became as *great friends* as the devil and the Earl of Kent. T. Brown, 1704, NED. As *great* as &c., Swift, PC, 296. — "The villanous character given by history to the celebrated Goodwin, Earl of Kent, in the time of Edward the Confessor, occasioned the proverb." Pegge's *Kenticisms*, 10, 60, Engl. Dial. Soc., vol. 4.)

As *thick* as *Darby* and *Joan*. Lan. EDD. *Darby* and *Joan*, a proverbial jocosé appellation for an old-fashioned loving couple, used for the first time in a ballad printed in *Gentlem. Mag.*, V, 153, 1735. According to Brewer it was written by Henry Woodfall, and the characters are those of John Darby of Bartholomew Close, who died in 1730, and his wife. But NED thinks that all the conjectures as to the identity of the characters have had no valid results.

As *thick* as *Dick* and *Leddy*. w. Yks. EDD.

As *thick* as *Harry* and *Mary*. Cor. EDD.

We were as *loving* as *inkle-weavers*. Scott, Nigel, 1822, EDD.

As *kind* as *inkle-weavers*. *Clev. Gloss.*, 280.

You mud ga wi' er an' stick as *cloas* as *inkle-weavers*. Wm. EDD.

As *great* as (two) *inkle-makers*. *Dict. Cant, Crew*, 1700, NED. Applebee's Weekly Journ., 28 Nov., 1719 (N. & Q., 10, X, 235). As *great* as two *inkle-weavers*. I've seen her hug you, as the devil hugged the witch. Swift, PC, 267. She and you were as *great* as two *inkle-weavers*. Grose, 1725. Lady Suffolk's Letters, 1712—1767 (Lean, II, ii). *Slang*, 1700. N. I., EDD. When people are intimate, we say they are as *great* as two *inkle-weavers* . . . *inkle-weavers* contract intimacies with each other sooner than other people on account of their juxtaposition in weaving of *inkle* [the *inkle-loom*s being so narrow and close together]. Cowper, 1788, NED.

As *thick* as *inkle-makers*. Launceston, Cor., c. 1825. N. & Q., 10, X, 186. Dev. Yks. Lin. EDD. We're as *thick*, as a pair o' owd reawsty *inkle-weavers*. Lan., Vaugh, 1868, EDD. We soon grew as *thick* as *inkle-weavers*. Routledge, 1869, NED. This form of the sim. is rec. fr. Grose, and seems to be current in some Sc. and Ir. and many E. dial., fr. Nhb. to Cor. "As a simple word, *inkle* is dying out now, but the compound *inkle-weaver* is very common in the phrase, As *thick* &c." Wright, RS, 56. The subst. *inkle-weaver* is rec. fr. 1691. — The above explanation given by Cowper as to the origin of the sim. is repeated by many writers in N. & Q., see e. g. 10, X, 186, and elsewhere. But cf. the following passage "The introduction of this inferior kind of tape was from the Low Countries, during the persecutions of the 16th c. The traffic was carried on by a few foreign weavers, who kept the secret among themselves, and being of one trade, language, and religion, they naturally became staunch familiar friends. Hence it is now said of persons very friendly, "They are &c." H. takes the same view. But *inkle-weavers* were not always clanny foreigners who "kept themselves apart to prevent the discovery of their mystery", as appears fr. the following entry in the Records of the Corporation of Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, Dec. 12, 1623, . . . yt was and is agreed. . . that there shall bee twenty fframes provided for the makinge of Ynckle, and that Mr. David Gyer, Receiver of the Town's Revenue, shall have the charge and care of the deliverie of the threede for the making of the same ynckle unto the Overseer of the poore children which shallbee sett work therewith . . . N. & Q., 5, X, 156.

As *great* as *inkle-tape*. Lean, II, ii. Genuine?

So *thick's forty thieves*. Hewett, Dev. 12. — Is this an allusion to the Tale of Ali Baba, or the Forty Thieves of the *Arabian Nights*, or simply an intensification of the following?

As *thick* as (two) *thieves*. Sc. Ir. Dur. Lan. Not. War. An. Dev. EDD.

She and my wife are as *thick* as *thieves*, as the proverb goes. T. Hook, 1833, NED. In about half an hour they was as

- thick as thieves again. Twain, HF, 269. Miss Petronelle and young Doctor Grenville so thick as thieves. Phillpotts, WF, 267. *ibid.* 42. Kipling, *Tauchn. Mag.* 18, 11.
- As *near* to [one an]other as *man* and *wife*. Clarke (Lean, II, ii). They are as *kaand* as *brothers*. Yks. *Kaand*, kind, intimate. Cf. His lordship impressed this upon me as strong and *familiar* as a brother. Hardy, HE, 391. He is blessed that is so *near* you as a brother is. Beaumont & Fletcher, KK, III, i.
- He talks as familiarly of John a Gaunt as if he had been sworn brother to him. Shak., KH IVb, III, ii, 299. See p. 136.
- As *thick* as *two in bed*. Der. EDD. That's right, Captain . . . you twa will be as thick as *three in a bed* an ance ye forgather. Scott, 1820, NED. Uls. Lin. Oxf., EDD. See p. 294.
- These are all familiar things to me; *Familiar* as my *sleep*, or *want of money*. Beaumont & Fletcher, KK, IV, iii.
- The slaue's/ Already as *familiar* as an *Ague*/ And shakes me at his pleasure. Tourneur, RT, I, iii. — Did Tourneur live somewhere in the neighbourhood of "ague-fens"?
- As *familiar* as *D. T. Slang*. D. T., *Delirium tremens*. A modernism, as the subst. is not more than about a hundred years old in E.
- As *familiar* as *slap-dragons* with the humming. Brathwaite, *The Laws of Drink.*, 1617 (Lean II, ii). *Slap-dragon*, see p. 201.
- As *big* as *bull-beef*. Very intimate. Stf. EDD. See *Proud*, pp. 82, 152, 288.
- [Poison] is become as *familier* to thee as *meate* and *drinke*. Nashe, II, 36.
- These tokens were *familiar* to Mr. Kelly as his *daily bread*. Mason, PK, 73.
- You and Lady Coupler are as *great* as *cup* and *can*. Swift, PC, 296. *Dict. Cant. Crew*, 1700 (NED). Cf. You and he are Cup and Can. Swift, 1729 (NED). *Cup and Can*, familiar associates (the can being the large vessel from which the cup is filled). NED.
- As *thick* as *glue*. — Close in confidence and association. NED. No inst. given. Cf. No glue like that of good fellowship. Burton, AM, I, 262.
- A pair of boots which were as *familiar* to his legs as the *pillory* to a baker's or collier's neck. Peele's *Fests*, 3. Is not this a libel upon the Worshipful Company of Bakers?
- As *familiar* with me as my *dog*. Shak., KH IVb, II, ii, 102.
- As *close together* kept those two/ As dogs in coupling use to do. T. Ward, *Engl. Reform.*, p. 150, 1719, (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Love-making and dishonesty are as inseparable as coupled hounds. Hardy, HE, 51.
- As *thick* as dogs' *heads*. Very intimate, friendly. It is often understood as conveying an insinuation that the intimacy will

- not last, and that it may be succeeded by a violent quarrel, like that of dogs when they fall by the ears. Jamieson (EDD). As thick as two dogs' heads. Nhb. EDD.
- As *thick as thatch, thack*. Yks. I. Ma., EDD. Lin., *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 411.
- To *cling* like a *couple of eels*, not to be dissolved but by thunder. S. S., *Honest Lawyer*, II, 1616.
- Close as adders* be me and Martha to the outer world. Phillpotts, WF, 135.
- You an' she were as *thick as bees*. Brks. EDD. They hold together like bees; offend one, and all will revenge his quarrel. Kingsley, WH, 235.
- Sir Christopher Pack did *cleave* like a *clegg*, and he was very angry he could not be heard *ad infinitum*. Burton, 1656, NED. *Sticks* like a cleg of [on] a windy day. Yks. EDD. Robinson, *Witby Gloss.*, 1855. Lan.
- To *cling* like a cleg. Lin. — *Cleg*, a gad-fly, *Tabanus bovinus*, the female of which is very bloodthirsty. It inflicts great pain, and is difficult to get rid of. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. — The sim. only partly belongs to this section, being applied to a rather unpleasant sort of intimacy, i. e. with people one would rather shake off. Otherwise it is used of such as obstinately stick to something.
- I thought you an' he were as *thick as blackberries* before you went away. Ir., 1894, EDD. See *Common &c.*
- Togider thai *cleued* . . So with other doth the *burre*. 1330, NED. Together they cleve more fast then do burres. Barclay, 1514, NED. Heywood, PE, 72.
- To *cling* like a bur. NED. Inst. not given.
- Wantons *hang* like burs upon you. MM, 17. Friends who will hang like burs upon his coat. Crabbe, 1810, NED.
- To *hold* together like burs. Clarke (Lean, II, ii).
- The Jews *stick* together like so many burrs. Burton, AM, III, 400. *ibid.* 24. Miede, 1677, NED. When a fellow stuck like a bur, that there was no shaking him off. Aburthnot, 1712, NED. Gay, NS. Cf. They are burs I can tell you; they'll stick where they are thrown. Shak., TC, III, ii, 103; and the fig. use of bur for a hanger on, a dependant, one who sponges. *Slang*. Cf. A scriueners shop hangs to a Sergeants mase like a burre to a freese coate. Lyly, MB, IV, ii, 237.
- Pivart was as "*thick as mud*" with Wakem. Eliot, MF, 178. See *Thick* p. 293.

Similarity.

- As *like* as rain to water, or the *devil* to his *dam*. Shak., KJ, I, ii, 128. For the *devil* and his *dam*, see p. 81. The following comparison deserves to be chronicled here. He would trans-

form himself in colour,/ As like the devil as a collier; As like as hypocrites, in show,/ Are to true saints, or crow to crow. Butler, H, 52. Cf. To kiss like the devil and the collier. Killigrew, *Thomaso*, I, v, 12, 1664. 'In a deposition made before the magistrates of this borough, in the year 1603, in a case of riot respecting the cutting down of a Maypole, the witness deposed that one Agnes Watkin had railed again the witness, saying, "Thou are like unto like, as the devil said to the collier.'" Leicester, N. & Q., 3, V, 282. As the sayinge is, lyke wyl to lyke, as the deuyl fyndeth out the colyer. Bale, 1552, NED.

As *like* one another as a *Scot* and a *Redshank*. Howell, *Cent. of New Sayings*, IV, c. 1660. *Redshank*, as a term for a Scotchman, rec. fr. 1542, NED. See p. 157.

As *like* his own father as ever he can *look*. Ray.

As *like* him as he can *stare*. Middleton, *Fam. of Love*, III, i 1608; *ibid.* *Chaste Maid in Cheaps.*, III, ii. His loving mother left him to my care/ Fine child as like his dad as he can stare. Gay, *What d'ye call it*, I, i, 1715 (Lean, II, ii). Jane Austen, 1796, NED.

Twoo girles . . . the one as like an owle, the other as like an urchin, as if they had beene *spitte* out of the mouthes of them. Breton, 1602, *Slang*. I dare be sworn 'twas thou did'st get him, He's e'en as like thee as th'had't spit him. Cotton, 1670, *Slang*. *Ibid.* insts of 1675, 1698. Ray. Swift, PC, 294. Smollet, 1751, *Slang*. Grose, 1788, NED. The baby is as like it fadther, as if he hed spit it. Wm. 1825, EDD. Yks. 1828, EDD. Here in the North, the common phrase of a good portrait is, "it's the vary spit and image of him." Newcastle, N. & Q., 8, VIII, 53. Cf. The figure of Saint Mary Virgin . . . was cut the very spit and image o' Dahlia. Yoxall, RS, 26. He looked the spitten picture of my ould father. Caine, D., xxvi.

In Fr. similarly, *C'est son père tout craché. C'est son portrait tout craché, Slang*.

They are as *like* to your own, as an egge to an egge, or *milke* to *milke*. Chillingworth, 1638, NED. Cf. It looks so like intemperance as milk to milk. Taylor, 1660, NED. Cf. *So ähnlich wie eine Milch der anderen*. Wander. A Latinism. NED.

As *different* as one *egg* from *another*. Lean, II, ii.

They say we are almost as *like* as *eggs*. Shak., WT, I, ii, 120.

As like as one egg is to another. *Timon*, the old play, c. 1600, Shak. Soc., II, iv (Lean, II, ii). Swift, PC. 294. Cf. *Sie gleichen sich, sind so gleich, ähnlich wie ein Ei dem anderen*. Wander. *Non tam ovum ovo simile*. See below *Fig*.

As *like* as two *halves* of an *apple*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. An apple cleft in twain is not more twin Than these two creatures. Shak. TN, V, i 215. An apple cut in half is not so like. Daven-

port, *City Nighthc.*, III, 1661 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. As like as a broom to a besom, barm to yeast, or codlings to boiled apples. Taylor, *World on Wheels*, 1635 (Lean, II, ii). In this case codling refers to the hot codlings or roasted apples that were formerly sold in the London streets.

'Tis as *like* to you as *cherry* is to cherry. Shak., KH VIII, V, i, 168.

So *like* to one another that we can less discern an egg from an egg or a *fig* from a fig. Bacon, I, 34, 1563, 4 (Lean II, ii). — Although properly speaking this comparison has not the form of an intensifying sim. in the sense accepted in this collection, the context makes it probable that such a sim. existed. In German there is, *Ähnlicher als eine Feige der anderen*, (Wander), and *ibid.* is quoted fr. Erasmus *Similior ficu*. There are numerous proverbial phrases in which *fig* occurs, in E. as well as in G., Du., Sw., and Fr.

As *like* as one *pease* is to another. Lyly, 1580, NED. Rebellion and Witchcraft are as like as two Pease. Flatman, 1681, NED. Swift, Dennis's Inv. to Steele, (Lean, II, ii). As like . . . as two peas are to one another. Burney, 1778, NED. A brother/As like him in form as one pea's like another. Barham, IL, 479. A . . . twin-sister . . . of the same age . . . the same father, same mother. And as like to Therese as one pea to another. Barham, IL, 255. We both should be like as pea and pea. Browning, 1868, NED. The two women be alike as peas. Hardy, PBE, 299. We're . . . as like as two peas. Anstey, VV, 19. The King of R. and your humble servant are as like as two peas. Hope, PZ, 276. The boxes were as like to one another as two peas. Mason, PK, 15. Yoxall, RS. 104. Pain, DO, 89. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use. — Yes, yes, Madam, I am as like the Duke de R. as two peas; but then they are two old withered grey peas. Walpole, 1765. *Slang*. The little wench 'ull be as like her as two peas. Eliot, MF, 296. The creature's so like his father as two peas. Phillpotts, M, 288. This last, strictly speaking incorrect, form of the sim. is probably older than Walpole. Cf. There is no end of little valleys, each like the other, much as peas in a pod. London, FM, 11.

As *like* as *fourpence* to a *groat*. Ray. Cf. 'Tis so near as fourpence is to a groat. West country saying. N. & Q., 9, XI, 58. They are all *like* one another as *halfpence* are. Shak., AYL, III, ii, 329.

We're all as *alike* as *pins in a row*. Robins, OQ, 345.

As *like* as two *pins*. Lean II, ii.

"I have a son of my own," said he, "as like you as two blocks. Stevenson, TI, 15. See above, 'as like one as two peas.'

"They're as *like* as two *lumps of coal*," said Sam slowly. Jacobs, MC, 40.

- At twelve or thirteen years of age [those lads] look as much *alike* as *goslings*. Eliot, MF, 32.
- As *like* as two *snowdrops*. Hardy, HE, 359. Said of two persons who had become very pale.
- As *like* As *rain* to *water*, or devil to his dam. Shak., KJ, II, i, 127. Cf. Two drops of water cannot be more like. Dryden, VII, 100. Cf. *So ähnlich wie kaum ein Tropfen Wasser dem anderen. Sie gleichen sich wie zwei Tropfen Wasser.* Wander.

Dissimilarity, Difference.

- Note.* For some closely related sim. see *Disagreement*, p. 134 f.
- We and he *differ* as much as *heaven* and *hell*. Fulwell, *Like will to Like* (H., *Old Plays*, iii, 338), 1568. Men at most differ as heaven and earth. But women, worst and best, as Heaven and Hell. Tennyson, 1874, NED.
- They *differ* as *darknes* dothe from *light*. NC, I, i (Dodsley, I, 49). The two things . . . might be as *different* as light and darkness. Gissing, GS, 119 P.
- Your way and his are as different as light from darkness. Phillpotts, P, 299. Cf. Making such difference 'twixt wake and sleep, As is the difference betwixt day and night. Shak., KH IVa, 111, i, 219. Darknes from light we part on two. *Townel. Myst.*, 1. Bytwene the shynyng lyght and black derkness. Fisher, 1508, NED. Cf. *olika som dag och natt. Differ*, and *different* fr. c. 1400.
- As much *difference* between them as betwixt *white* and *black*. Rowley, *Witch of Edm.*, V, i, 1658 (Lean, II, ii).
- We are as *like* in condition as *Jack Fletcher* and his *bolt*, Brought up in learning, but he is a very dolt. DP, IV, 19. No more like than Jack Fletcher and his bolt. Twyne, *Pattern of Painful Adv.*, 1576, H. Cf. Then wolde ye mend, as the fletcher mends his bolt. Heywood, 1562, NED, Is it Jack Fletcher (the fletcher?) that is a very dolt, although he is brought up in learning? And do persons, who are 'no more like than J. F. and his bolt' differ in everything except dulness?
- Lesse like than *Poules steple* to a *dagger shethe*. Thos More, Engl. Wks, 595, 672. See p. 149.
- As *like* as *York* is to foul *Sutton*. H. Cf. It will be found to exceed them as much as York exceeds foul Sutton, to use a Northerne phrase. H. Stephanus, *World of Wonders*, 1607, transl. by R. C., Translator's Epistle to the Reader. H.
- She's *like* this as a *crab's* like an *apple*. Shak., KL, I, v, 14. Of things apparently alike, but intrinsically very different. See *Sure* p. 354.
- As *like* as an *apple* is to a *nut*. *Musarum Del.*, i, 1656 (Lean, II, ii).

As *like* as an *apple* is to a *lobster*. Fuller; *Poor Robin's Alm.*, 1687 (Lean, II, ii). Ray.

Hys similitude of grammer, likened vnto fayth is no more *lyke* than an *apple* to an *oyster*. More, 1532, NED. Your argument is as like, as an apple is like an oyster. Fulke, 1579, NED. He is my father, sir, and sooth to say, In countenance somewhat doth resemble you — As much as apple doth an oyster. Shak., TS, IV, ii, 99. At night zo zoon's chwar into bed/ I did all my pray'rs without book read, My creed and paternoster./ Methink zet all their prayers to thicke,/ And they do go no more aleek/ Than an apple's like an oyster. Alex. Brome, *The Clown*, 1664 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Why do you bring him in speaking of apples, when you speake of oysters. Jenkyn, 1648, NED.

As *analogous* as *chalk* and *cheese*, or a Cat and a Cartwheel. Motteux, 1708, NED.

As *like* as chalk is to cheese. Wor. Oxf. EDD.

No more like than chalk and cheese. Rowland, *Let. of Humour's Blood*, 1600, H. They are no more like than chalk to cheese, than black to white. *Marriage of Wit and Sc.*, H. Old Plays, ii, 389 (Lean, II, ii). Ray.

Do not these thynges *differ* as muche as chalke and chese. Shacklock, *Hatchet of Heres.*, 1565 (Lean, II, ii).

As *different* as chalk from cheese. Liddel & Scot, Gr. Dict., as a rendering of ὅσα διαφέρει σῦχα καρδάμων. They are as different as chalk and cheese. Vachell, SB, 21.

— There are numerous phrases in which chalk and cheese are made to illustrate things that are as different and discrepant as they possibly can be. Some may be quoted: — Lo, how they feignen chalk for cheese. Gower, 1393, NED. Chalke may no bear the price of Cheese. Nashe, I, 126. They shall not meet with chalk for cheese. G. Harvey, Wks, II, 318. He discerneth not cheese from chalk. Wager, *The Longer thou livest*, 1568 (Lean, II, ii). I must keep company with none but a sort of Momes and Hoydons that know not chalk from cheese. Day, BBB, 865. That's a gall that knows chalk from cheese. Baring-Gould, BS, 50. No horse in the world could tell chalk from cheese. Barham, IL, 348, &c.

As like as *chalk* and *charcoal*. Clarke (Lean, II, ii).

As like as *chalk* and *coles*. Sir T. More, p. 674 (Lean, II, ii).

We *differ* like *flint* and *steel*, yet strike some spark between us. Phillpotts, AP, 74.

Different from . . . modern Popery as a *hawk* from a *handspike*.

Faber, 1846, NED. This reminds one of the old Shak. bone of contention, "When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw". Hamlet, II, ii.

An historian and a Libeller are as *different* as *Hawk* and *Buzzard*.

North, 1734, NED. Cf. the saying 'between hawk and buzzard', or 'buzzard and hawk', rec. in NED fr. 1636 and still current, in the latter form, in Der., EDD. It means 'between a good thing and a bad of the same kind, the hawk being the true sporting bird, the buzzard a heavy lazy fowl of the same species'. NED. See also p. 172.

As *like* as a *dock* and a *daisy*. Ray. Is this *dock* the plant, *Rumex*?

Unfit, Inappropriate, Unexpected.

As *fit* as a *thump* with a *stone* in an *apothecary's eye*. Fuller (Lean, II, ii). *Thump*, subst. rec. fr. 1552.

As *welcome* as a *thief*. Taylor, *Fearful Summer*, 1625, (Lean, II, ii). Cf. *Er ist so willkommen wie ein Dieb im Laden. Hij is zoo welkom als een dief aan den kramer*. Wander.

As *welcome* as *water* into *one's shoes*. Ray. "In one's shoon" is the form in which the sim. is used in s. Lan., EDD. Cf. They caressed his lordship very much as a new comer, whom they were glad of the honour to meet, and talked about a time to dine with him; all which (as they say) was water in his shoes. North, 1744, *Slang*.

As *welcome* as *water* in a *ripen ship*. Sc. — "into a ship" is the form given by Ray. H. has 'into a leaking ship'.

As *welcome* as *water* into a *ship*. Udall, RRD, III, ii; Lyly, *Euphues*, 381, 1581; Melbancke, *Phil.*, 1583; Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. *Wälkommen som Salt i surt öga/ och Watn i nytt Skipp*. Grubb. Similar in Danish. *Er ist so willkommen wie das Wasser im Schiff*. Also in D. Wander.

Welcome like *dogs* unto a *church*. Taylor, *Fearful Sum.*, 1625 (Lean, II, ii).

As *fit* as a *shoulder* of *mutton* for a *sick horse*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). Ray.

Thou art to be plain, and not to flatter thee, / As *Wholesome* a morsel for my comely corse / As a shoulder of mutton for a sick horse. Heywood, PE, 85. Cf. Evil things which were as unmeaning to her as joints of flesh to a herbivorous creature. Hardy, GND, 219.

As *welcome* as *stones* in *oats* to a *horse*. *News fr. Chelmsf.* (Bagf. Ball., II, 739; Lean, II, ii).

As *becometh* a *cow* to *hoppe* in a *cage*. 1399, Langland, NED. She is, in this marriage, As comely as a cow in a cage. Heywood, PE, 52.

For how should they have learning that were born but even now? As *fit* a sight it were to see a *goose* shodd, or a *saddled* *cowe*. NC, I, i (Dodsley, I, 45).

As *seimly* a sight . . . as to putt a *sadill upoun* the back of an unrewly *kov*. Knox, 1566, NED. *Seemly*, appropriate, suitable, rec. in NED 1330—1634.

That becometh him as *handsomely* (according to our Proverb) as A saddle doth a Cowes back. Hughes, 1677, NED.

Fifty year ago I knew her a trim maid. Whatever she were then, . . . she is now/ To become a bride, as *smeet* as a *sow to bear a saddle*. Heywodd, PE, 52.

He used to go very fine, when he was here in town. — Ay, and it became him, as a saddle *becomes* a sow. Swift, PC, 279.

It becomes him as well as a sow doth a *cart-saddle*. Ray.

Lean quotes this, but he substitutes *cow* for *sow*. Misprint?

He has also the form, 'as fit as a saddle for a sow', and gives Ray as the authority for it. But no such sim. is found there. Cf. the G. "Der kann der Saw den Sattel recht auflegen. Er kann keine Sew satteln." Cf. To look like a hog in armour. It looks as well as a diamond necklace about a sow's neck. H. *Er hängt einer Saw ein golden Halsband an*. Wander.

You [a barber] look as *unnatural* away from your wigs as a *canary* in a *thornhedge*. Hardy, W, 9.

He is as much *out of his element* as an *eel in a sandbag*. Bohn. Cf. p. 160.

Thart əz *welcome əz mawk i' cheese*. 1881, Yks., EDD.

O, do not slander him, for he is *kind*. — Right, As *snow in harvest*. Shak., KR III, I, iv, 237. *Kind*, appropriate, fitting, obs. c. 1700.

Tam apta nuptiis quam bruma messibus. As *welcome* to a young woman as snow in harvest. Burton, AM, III, 306.

He is *Weelcome* as *snaw* in har'st. Sc. Ray. Of 'untimous persons' as Ray put it. ". . . as snow in hay-harvest" is Hazlitt's rendering.

As *seasonable* as snow in summer. Ray.

As *welcome* as *rain* at harvest. Draxe, 1633 (Lean, II, ii).

Ez *larl wanted əz rain i' hay-tahm*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242.

As *welcome* as a *storm* of wind to the month of March. Melbancke, *Phil.*, 1583 (Lean, II, ii). As *welcome* as a storm. H. Cf. *He*. As *welcome* to my eyes/ As *foul weather* to the skies. *She*. And you to mine as *mists* to the day/ Or *frost* unto the month of May. Flecknoe, *Diarium*, A rural Dial., p. 69, 1656 (Lean, II, ii).

As *welcome* as *thunder* to our beer. Herrick, *Hesp.*, 377, 1643.

Unexpected like the *thunderbolt*. Kingsley, WH, 400. Terrible events fell as *unexpectedly* as *thunderbolts*. Hardy, TM, 275.

Useless, Worthless.

"I lately heard a Norfolk man, in speaking of one of the most noted clergymen in East Anglia, say that he was *of no more use* than a *headache*. I have never heard the expression before, but I am told on inquiry that it is not uncommon." N. & Q., 8, VI, 126.

As *much need* of it as I have of the *cough*. Lean, II, ii.

As *much need* of it as he has of the *pip*. H.

As *coarse* as *neck-beef*. — Very coarse, of the poorest quality. *Slang*. *Neck-beef*, rec. in NED fr. 1662, *transf.* of anything inferior or very cheap. See *Cheap*, p. 346.

As *useless* as *open arses* gathered green. Killigrew, *Parson's Wed.*, II, ii, 1664 (Lean, II, ii). O. a. are medlars. They are eaten when decayed to a soft pulpy state. See below *Rotten*. p. 338.

Ez *larl value* ez an *au'd hat*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242.

Ez *worthless* ez an *au'd shoe*. *ibid.*

And for winter fly-fishing, it is as *useful* as an *almanac out of date*. Walton, CA, 43. In the first Zion House tract the presbyterian ministers accused Cromwell's party of esteeming the Covenant no more than an "almanack out of date". Milton, *Tenure &c.*, Introd. p. XX. Out-of-date almanacs are frequently mentioned as typical of things of no value. See Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*, (ed. Grosart, XII, 132), Dekker, Wks, ed. Pearson, II, 154, and Nashe, I, 167. Cf. Were harlots therefore wise, they'd be sold dear: For men account them good but for one year; And then like Almanacks (whose dates are gone) They are thrown by, and no more lookt upon. Dekker, HWh Ib. Cf. "Conyers, you are about as interestin' as a week-old copy of the Times." Cassels' Mag. of Fic., '14, 231.

Chastite withoute charite . . . is as *lewed* as a *laumpe* pat no *ligte* is inne. Langland, PP, I, 187. *Lewed*, good-for-nothing, worthless, obs. in the 18th c.

As *useless* as the *fifth wheel* to a wagon. Lean, II, ii. Although the phrase "the fifth wheel of a coach, wagon" is not rec. in NED (s. v. fifth) before 1891, it is probably a good deal older, as it is found in Sw. (Grubb, 302), Fr., G., and D. at very early dates. *Quinta rota plaustris*, already in the 11th c. Probably already in classical Latin. Wander; Stoett, NS, II, 186.

As *simple* as a *ha'p'orth* of *soap* in a washing mug. Chs. Gloss. That is, as ineffectual as so small a quantity of soap would be in a large quantity of water. *ibid.*

As *useless* as *whistling psalms* to a dead horse. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).

As *useless* as to *stop up a rathole* with an apple dumpling. *ibid.*

As *much need* of a wife as a *dog* of a *side-pocket*. Said of a weak old debilitated man. Grose, 1796, NED.

You have *no more use* for that than a dog for a side-pocket. East Riding. N. & Q., 6, III, 77. Dev. *ibid.* 6, II, 377.

Wanted as much as a dog wants a side-pocket. *ibid.*, *Slang*. He's no more use for a hunter now than a *cow* for a *side-pocket*. Melville, 1862, NED; As much use as a cow has for side pockets. Bridge, CP, 18.

You have *no more use* for it than a *cow* has for a *ruffled shirt*. Lan., N. & Q., 6, III, 77.

My master hath made me sewer of these great lords, and (God knows) I am as *serviceable* at a table, as a *sow* is under an apple-tree. Green, FBB, 217.

You have no more use for that article than a *monkey* has for *side-pockets*. A proverb perhaps confined to the north of England. N. & Q., 6, II, 347.

As *useless* as a *monkey's grease*. Lean, II, ii.

As much *need* of it as a *toad* of a *side-pocket*. *Slang*.

About *as much use* to him as a side-pocket to a toad. SE Cor., S. Dev., N. & Q., 6, III, 77. As much use of it &c. Northall, FPh., 9. Anything unnecessary.

Nor more use for it than a toad has for a side-pocket. S. Dev., SE Cor., Nhp. Yks. Lin., N. & Q., 4, XII, 435, 12, III, 276.

An old man speaking of a young man who occupied a farm and did not understand his business, said, "A varm wur no mare use to heem than a side-pocket to a twoid." Glo., N. & Q., 4, XII, 385. Common in Dor. and Cor., N. & Q., 5, I, 18. Lei., Bridge, CP, 18.

A Berkshire farmer was speaking to an excentric old man who was mending the road, when the old fellow said: — "I no more *wants* that than a toad wants side pockets." "What do you mean?" was the reply. "Why, a toad don't want side-pockets, do he? Nor do I want what you says." N. & Q., 4, IV, 147. Why, sir, he didn't want a wife any more'n a toad wants a side-pocket. Staf., N. & Q., 6, III, 77.

The little things such as I had striven for — place, position . . . were all as *worthless* as *thistledown*. Hocking, MF, 87.

I've heard your boasts; they are idle — *idle* as *thistledown*. Baring-Gould, RS, 21. Cf. the use of *thistledown* as a type of lightness, flimsiness.

I respected riches as the sand I trample on; rejected honour as a bubble, a puff of wind, *vocem populi*, a meere sound, and *weighed* women as *lightly* as *feathers*. MM, 5. See *Light*, p. 297.

No more use for a book than a *duck* has for an *umbrella*. Lan., *Folk-Lore Rec.*, III, 75 (N. & Q.). Wright, RS, 161.

As *good* as *nifles in a bag*. Withals, 1616 (Lean, II, ii). *Nifle*, a thing of no value, rec. fr. 1386, and common 1550—1650. 'Nifles in a bag' seems to have been a phrase current in early MnE.

Cease thy counsel, Which falls into my ears as *profitless* as *water* in a *sieve*. Shak., MA., V, i, 3. Proverbial phrases such as 'to carry, fetch, take water in a sieve' of a sleeveless errand, are rec. already in ME. Cf. also, 'That which is said in the proverb, where one doth milke a goate, another holds under a sieve.' Hieron, 1616, NED. To milk one's cow in a sieve. Rnf., 1813, EDD.

Trifles *light* as *air* Are to the jealous confirmations strong As proofs of holy writ. Shak., Oth., III, iii, 326. All delights . . . are light as air/ To a true lover when his lady frowns. Beaumont & Fletcher, MT, 41. Have faith in me, and don't magnify trifles light as air. Hardy, Lao., 294. Whether A. the merchant lived or died was a thing as light as air to me. Doyle, SF, 247. An one tell'd another 'at his opinions wor o' *noa moor use* nor a *duck quackin* agean thunner. W. Yks. EDD.

Bad, Rotten.

As *foul* as a *priest's ear*. (Irish), Cheales, 1875 (Lean, II, ii). A priest has to listen to a good many foul things.

The rails are as *rotten* as your *great grandfather*. Dekker, GH, 40. See *Dead*, p. 142.

As *bad* as *Suffolk cheese*. Swift (Lean, II, ii). See *Hard*, p. 258.

As *rotten* as an *open arse*. Lodge, *Wit's Mis.*, 1596 (Lean, II, ii).

See *Useless*, p. 336. Cf. But yet I fare as doth an open ers; what ilke fruyt is ever lenger the wers. Chaucer, RT, 16.

His body was as *Rotten* as a *Pear*. Brown, 1700, NED. Gay, NS.

Ez *rotten* ez (a bad) *to'nip*. Blakeborough, NRY, 242, in daily use.

As *foul* as *Zebedee's hen* that laid three rotten egges to a good one. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).

As *rotten* as an *asker*; newt, and it is *rotten* because it can drop its tail off. Bridge, CP, 19. This plom's as rotten as an owd asker. Chs. EDD.

The 'arf of them [gates] 's as *rotten* as *matchwood*. Galsworthy, CH, 269. As the wood of which match-sticks are made scarcely can be said to be more rotten than any other wood, we are forced to adopt the other sense of the word, touchwood. NED has no inst. of this meaning since 1597. But cf. the phrase 'to tumble into matchwood.'

Conjuror Fall was a good man when I was a boy, but he is rotten as *touchwood* by now. Hardy, *Tess*, 171. In common use, Blakeborough, NRY, 239. *Touchwood*, rec. fr. 1579.

As *rotten* as *tunder*. Yks. EDD. See *Dry*, p. 308.

As *rotten* as a *turd*. Ray; *Slang*, no inst.

As *rotten* as *dirt*. Wilson, *Project.*, 1665 (Lean, II, ii.)

Note. In G. *Er ist so faul wie Mist, ein Misthaufen.* *Faul*, originally *foul*, has developed to mean *lazy*.

Terrible, Dangerous.

Blacker than night, more *terrible* than *hell*. Arber, 29, 71.

The way as *dangerous*, as inaccessible as hell. Burton, AM, III, 190. — ‘As black as hell’ has sometimes very much the same meaning.

Her fatal breath is *fell* as *death!* The simoom’s blast is not more dire. Barham, IL, 326. See p. 90.

He’s the first begotten of Beelzebub, with a face as *terrible* as *Demogorgon*. Dryden, SF, VI, 517. In ‘The Flower and the Leaf’ Dryden mentions this deity, whose very name was capable of producing the most horrible effects: — When the moon arises . . . cruel Demogorgon walks his round, and if he finds a fairy lag in light, He drives the wretch before and lashes into night. — This also gives us a hint as to what D. was, the king of elves and fairies. Milton (PL, II) speaks of “the dreaded name of Demogorgon”. Downe in the bottome of the deepe Abyesse, Where Demogorgon . . . The hideous Chaos keeps. Spenser, FQ, IV, ii, 47. See also *ibid.* I, v, 22. According to Ariosto, D. has a splendid temple palace in the Himalaya mountains, whither every fifth year the fates are summoned to appear before him, and give an account of their actions. Keightley, 1850, NED. For some further notes on the ultimate origin of this mythological character see NED.

The angles of the atoms as sharp as needles and as *poisonous* as *diamond dust*. H. Walpole, Letters to the Countess of Ossory, clxxxviii (N. & Q., 5, III, 308). Powdered diamond was believed to be a most deadly poison. Buckle, 1630 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. “It was well known amongst the [medical] profession that Cook was not poisoned with strychnine, but with diamond dust. That experiments had been made with it, and that the symptoms were analogous, or nearly so, to strychnine, and that the chemical analysis proved the fact, and that the dust was mistaken for the other substance . . .” N. & Q., 3, I, 487.

Queer, Wonderful.

As *queer* as *Tim’s wife* when she hanged herself in a dishclout. Lean, II, ii. What is the sense of *queer* in this sim.? Accord-

ing to Lean it means pale. Doubtful. For other sim. with *queer* see p. 98, 162. See also *Busy*, p. 123.

As *queer* as a *quaker*. Overheard at Oxford. Nonce phrase? There's nowt so *queer* as *foak*. Lan. (Lean, II, ii). Already the Greek poet was of this opinion, Πολλὰ τὰ δεινά, κούδὲν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 332.

As *queer* as *Dick's hatband*. See p. 97 ff.

As *wonderful* as *calves with five legs*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Wit Without Money*, II, iv (Dyce, IV, 127). Cf. What should my knave advance/ To draw his company? he hung out no banners/ Of a strange calf, with five legs, to be seen? Jonson, *Alch.*, V, i, 6, and *ibid.* *Bart. Fair*, III, i, bull with five legs. Monsters were in great demand in the cock and bull fighting days.

Free.

Note. For some ironical sim. with *free*, liberal, openhanded, see *Miserly*, p. 126 f.

As *free* as a *bird* in ayre. Powell, 1631, NED. You are now left as free as a bird to follow your own hobbies. Hardy, TT, 96. Left her free as a bird to follow her own course. *ibid.*, RN, 180. Phillpotts. SW. In G., Sw.

From torments and troubles of Body and Mind, Your Bonny Brisk Planters are *free* as the *wind*. Jordan, 1681, NED. Away, away, Goes the fleet duple-grey, Fresh as the breeze and free as the wind. Barham, IL, 345. More fleet than the roebuck, and free as the wind, She had left the good company rather behind. *ibid.*, 465. Hardy, HE, 267.

As *free* as *air*. Marston, *The Insatiate Count.*, 1613 (Lean, II, ii). In Lean insts of 1612, 1621, and 1664. A fortnight hence I shall be as free as air. Peel, 1818, NED. You are as free as air till you are found guilty. Smyth, 1824, NED. In this enlightened land justice is free as the air we breathe, strong as the licker we drink . . . London, GF, 128. Our young women nowadays are running about as free as air practically. Wells, AV, 30. Roget.

She's no man's slave . . . Her eye Moves not on wheels screw'd up with jealousy. She . . . does merry journeies make, *Free* as the *sun* in his gilt zodiac. Dekker, HWh, Ib.

Rich.

As *rich* as *Croesus*. Wright, *Displ. of Duty*, 1611 (Lean, II, ii); Burton, AM, I, 319, Stevens, 1707, NED, Gay NS; The old

ruffian is rich as Croesus. Hornung, TN, 9. Roget; Brewer. Ware has the phrase 'as rich as crases (Irish).' According to him *crases* is 'of course' a corruption of Croesus. But why 'of course'? There may be some Irish word behind it.

As *rich* as *Damer*. — "John Damer, of Antrim, migrated in the time of George I to Tipperary, established himself in some business, and acquired wealth." H.

As *rich* as *Cock's canny hinnies*. — "They were the daughters and co-heiresses of Alderman Ralph Cock, of Newcastle. The above proverb was no doubt highly popular, not only in the days of the worthy alderman, but also during a long subsequent period." *Denham Tracts*, Folk-Lore, XXIX, 297.

Yf any of them [the marvels I schall to you shew] be untrue — Then wax I as *pore* as the *Byschop* of Chester. Another version is, I wolde I were as *bare* as the Bischope of Chester. MSS c. 1440. A sarcastic allusion to the wealth of the Bishopric, which at that time was of immense extent. Bridge, CP, 9.

You'd be as *rich* as *kings* if you could find it. Stevenson, TI, 24. Then we shall all be rich, rich as kings. London, GF, 161.

I spoke of my own estates and property, as if I was as *rich* as a *duke*. Thackeray, BL, iii.

I wish I was as *rich* as a *lord* when he is as poor as a crow. Hardy, UGT.

Great as an Emp'ror should I be/ And *richer* than a *Jew*. Gay, NS. She's gettin' as *rich* as a Jew. Eliot, MF, 361. Hewett, Dev. 12. Roget. "This expression arose in the M. Ages, when Jews were almost the only merchants, and were certainly the most wealthy of the people." Brewer. The sim. must be much earlier than our insts.

A bowerly girl she be, and pretty, and sweet as sugar, and as *rich* as a *gold-mine*. Phillpotts, WF, 439.

As *ronk* as the *Roodie*. — *Ronk*, very rich and fertile. Rood-eye, the celebrated racing-course at Chester. Bridge, CP, 19.

As bigge as a begger, as fat as a fool,/ As true as a tinker, as *rich* as an *owle*. AV, (Dodsley, xii, 348). See p. 112, where the whole passage is quoted. Is the wise bird of night supposed to guard treasure-hoards, like the dragon of old?

Note. So *reich wie Salomo, Krösus, der Markgraf zu Meissen, wie Rotschild, ein Amsterdamer Handelsherr, ein Jude, ein Commissar* (originally Fr.), *ein Sautreiber an Martini &c. Wander.*

Poor.

Note. For some sim. with *poor* = thin, see *Thin, Lean*, p. 185 ff.

As *bare* as *Job*. Udall, 1542; *Nice Wanton*, 1560 (H., *Old Plays*,

II, 172); Draxe, 1633 (Lean, II, ii). "Too rare to be general". U. Probably obsolete.

To ben for evere til I deie As *povere* as *Job*. Gower, 1390, NED. Tushe, thou art as poor as Job. Wilson, 1553, NED. Shak., MW, V, v, 149. He's poor as Job, and not so patient. Byron, 1822, NED. Hardy, HE, 479 (of a man who had an income of £ 150). H. and Lean have insts of 1506, 1609, 1614, 1638, and 1830. Ray, Roget &c. "This similitude runs through most languages." Ray. Lean has an inst. of it in Fr. of 1549. In D. and G. It refers of course to Job, I, 13—19, 21, where we are told how he was deprived of all he possessed and when recognizing his destitute state he said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. I should rather be as *poor* as *Job's cat* all my life. Smith, 1866, Thornton.

Captain Jack looks as poor as *Job's turkey*. Haliburton, 1838, *Slang*. He's as poor as Job's turkey, if it wan't for that powerful sallury the trustees give him. Carlton, 1843, Thornton. Other Amer. insts *ibid.* of 1852, 1856, 1872. For some additions to this sim. see p. 188.

All the honest people he ever knew were as *poor* as *King David's goslings*. Bird, 1839, Thornton. Where are these extraordinary domestic fowl spoken of?

As *poor* as *Lazarus*. Brewer, Dict. 996.

(*Poorer* than *Irus*. A Greek proverb adopted by the Romans, and existing in Fr., *Plus pauvre qu'Irus*, alluding to the beggar in Odyssey, XVIII. Brewer, Dict. 996. *Iro pauperior*, a phrase that seems to have been a good deal used in mediaeval L., as it has found its way into several collections of Proverbs. See e. g. Wander).

Marrying Mr Cecil Devereux, who is as *poor*, they say, as a *Connaught man*. Miss Edgeworth, *Ennui*, xi. Ware. Cf. "Go to hell or Connaught", a proverbial phrase rec. fr. the middle of the 17th c., to express the barrenness and bleakness of the poorest of Irish counties.

As *poor* as a *clapperdudgeon*. *World Bewitched*, 1699 (Lean, II, ii). *Clapperdudgeon*, a beggar born, rec. fr. 1567.

We are as *poor* as *paupers*. Malvery, SM, 61. Cf. Tablecloths . . . as poor and ragged as any union beggar's. Hardy, UGT, 132. As poor as *pauper soup*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. *Pauper* rec. fr. c. 1500.

As *poor* as *truth*. *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, II, ii (Lean, II, ii).

As *poor* as *virtue* and as friendless. *Ibid.* (H., *Old Plays*, x).

As *poor* as a *groat*. — An intimation of comparative poverty. Yks. EDD. See p. 185.

Captain de S., who is as *poor* as a *gallicrow*. Hardy, Lao., 273. *Gallycrow*, a scarecrow, rec. in Wil. and Dor. *Gally*, frighten, is found already in the early seventeenth c., but is now only

dial. Cf. "Look!" cried N., "a walking scarecrow!" Grace recognized the being, and laughed. "A scarecrow, you say. That's the richest woman on Dartmoor." Phillpotts, AP, 60. See *Ragged*, p. 230.

As *rich* as a *new-shorn sheep*. Ray. Lean quotes this fr. *Cock Lorel's Bote*, c. 1510; Baret, *Alvearie*, 1580; *Marriage of Wit and Wisdom* (H., *Old Plays*, ii, 335).

Poor as a sheep new shorn. Peele, *Old Wife's Tale*, 1595 (Lean, II, ii).

My old man's *poor* as a *rabbit* also. Phillpotts, WF, 126.

The owner, 'tis said, was once *poor* as a *churchmouse*. 1731, NED.

The young couple are as poor as churchmice. Thackeray, 1848, NED. Brewer, Dict., 996; Bohn; Roget; Hewett, Dev., 12; Wood, *Manx P.*, 251, &c. Cf. As for the "ready" I'm like a churchmouse, — I really don't think there's five pounds in the house. Barham, IL, 271. So you are as poor as an Irish churchmouse again. Mason, PK, 68. — This sim. is in Sw., G., Dutch (Flanders), Fr.: *fattig som en kyrkråtta, arm wie eine Kirchenmaus, zoo arm als de ratten, muizen in kerk, il est pauvre (gueux) comme un rat d'église*. See Stoett, NS, I, 43; Wander. — It has not been possible to find out whether the sim. has risen independently in these languages, or, which is more probable, has been borrowed from one of them, possibly Fr., into the others.

You know I am as poor as a *mouse*. Hardy, Lao., 180.

As poor as a *rat*. Burney, 1782, NED. Marryat, 1833, NED.

Roget. As poor as rats. Swift's *Stella* (N. & Q., 10, VII 469).

All as poor as rats, and no one better than the other. Weyman, 1900, NED. And though poor as a nest of rats, we was never in debt. Phillpotts, WF, 263. See *Drunk*, p. 208.

As *poor* as a *craw*. Peacock, *Lin. Gloss.* (Lean, II, ii). Hewett, Dev., 12.

Being so *poor* as a *coot*, I was counted just a baggering, old worthless poacher. Phillpotts, WF, 20; *ibid.* SW. Cor. EDD. See *Bare*, p. 254.

We be *poor* as *birds*, and very near as cheerful. Phillpotts, WF, 134.

Such drifts drave he, from ill to worse,/ Till he was as *bare* as a *bird's arse*. Money and money's worth so did miss him/ That he had not now one penny to bliss him. Heywood, PE, 89. As bare as a *bird's tail*. n. Lin. Said of a person who has lost everything he possessed. *Folk-Lore*, LXIII, 407. See *Bare*, p. 254.

As *full of money* as a *toad* is of *feathers*. Grose (*Slang*).

I've to keep at it, an's as *poor* as a *nit*. v. Yks., 1881. EDD. See *Dead* p. 147.

You might haue seen me as *poore* as an *open-arse*. VW, 35. See *Rotten*, p. 338.

The Scotch proverb, which says of a very poor man that he is

“as bare as a birk at Yule e'en”, probably refers to an old custom of stripping the bark of the tree prior to converting it into the yule log. Folkard, PL, 254. But cf., “This does not concern the Christmas log. Birches are denuded of their foliage long before Christmas . . . A birchwood in winter, with its multiplicity of dark twigs, is extremely bare.” *Denham Tracts*, Folk-Lore, XXXV, 91. See p. 255, where it is made clear that it is the leaf-less state of the birch in winter-time that has caused the sim.

“In an article in the *Quarterly* On the Exhaustion of the Soil in Great Britain is quoted the proverb ‘as poor as Crawborough’. Having lived in the locality for years without hearing it, I am anxious to know if any of your Sussex readers are familiar with it.” N. & Q., 4, XI, 238. “My grandfather, born in 1786, was an E. Sussex yeoman, and in speaking of land, would often use the proverb. The soil is of iron sand formation, hence its sterility.” *ibid.* 350. See geological works on Sussex, e. g. Mantell, *Geology of Sussex*, i, 125.

In speaking of land, the climax of poverty is ‘so poor’s a hill. — Hill, common. Elworthy, WSG, 339.

Oliver be poor as *rushy land*. Baring-Gould, RS, 230.

Ez poor as *moorland*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

But riches fineless is as poor as *winter* To him that ever fears he shall be poor. Shak., III, iii, 177.

Note. Some sim. in G.: Arm wie Hiob, Arm und ruhmstüchtig wie ein Maler. Armer als Kodrus, Irus, Telenikus. Pauson (Iro, Codro, Telenico pauperior. Erasmus), arm wie Lazarus, eine Hure in der Marterwoche (see p. 66, lenten lover), eine Schnecke, eine Ameise. Wander. — In D.: zoo arm als Job, een Laplander (Flanders), een Ierlander (Fland.), een schooier (Fland.), een Kozak (Fland.), en luis, de mieren, een worm aan de haak. Stoett, NS, I, 43.

Dear.

As dear as two eggs a penny. Ray.

As good a bargain as an egg for a penny. Letter of 1598, in Calendar of the Cecil Papers, Vol. 8. (N. & Q., 9, X, 154). — We have only to substitute *shilling* for *penny* to suit present day conditions. ‘Two eggs a penny’ would be enormously cheap now, but it was a different thing in the sixteenth c. The writer of the ST (p. 98) complains of circumstances that “cause the egges to be sold fower a penny.” And in 1599 Nashe writes, “It were to be wished that other coasters were so industrious as the Yarmouth . . . Then we should haue twentie egges a pennie, and it would be as plentifull a world as when the Abbies stood. (III, 171). The state of things “when the Abbies stood” appears from the following verse: —

Ch'll tell thee what, good vellowman,
 Bevore the vriers went hence,
 A bushell of the best wheat
 Was sold vor vourteen pence,
 And vorty eggs a penny,
 That were both good and new . . .
Reliquies of Ancient English Poetry.

The scene was Glastonbury Abbey, which was demolished in 1539. The conversation recorded in the verse is supposed to have taken place some 40 years later. (N. & Q., 9, IX, 412). Taylor, the Water Poet, who lived and travelled half a century later, could buy twelve eggs for a penny (SL, 15). We have Johnson's authority, in his *Journey to the Western Islands*, that 200 years before a hundred hen's eggs new laid were sold for a penny (N. & Q., 9, X, 154), and in 1596 15 to 20 doz. were sold at Cambridge for 4d. But that must have been very cheap, as in 1536 we find that the price of eggs at Canterbury was fixed by the corporation to 6 eggs a penny. (N. & Q., 9, IX, 278). But that again appears to have been rather dear, for Wither, writing in 1613, says in his *Abuses, Stript and Whipt*, II, ii, Things were cheap and 'twas a goodly meny/
 When we had four and twenty eggs a penny. (Lean, II). But that of course refers to the good old time when everything was supposed to be good and cheap. As late as in 1679 one could buy 3 eggs for a penny, which shows that about that time prices had risen so as to make the sim. meaningless. For further notes on the price of eggs see N. & Q., 8, IX, *passim* and Rogers' *The History of Agriculture and Prices in England*, Vol. IV—VI.

Cf. *Miss*. What! and you must come in with your two eggs a penny, and three of them rotten. Swift, PC, 242; a proverbial phrase often used by Swift. There are other forms of the same proverb: He comes in with his five eggs a penny, and four be addled and rotten. Draxe, 1633 (Lean, III). He comes in with his five eggs and four be rotten, is Clarke's wording. Taylor, in his *Praise of Hempseed*, says, Another spends his five eggs like Tom Ladle,/
 Brings in his five eggs, four of which are addle. (Lean, III). Five eggs a penny, and four of them addle, is according to NED the standard form. Different in the following passages: What, come you in with your seuen egges? *Misogonus* (ed. Brandl in Quellen, II, v, 93). Ten eggs for a penny, and nine of them rotten. Nashe, III, 129. For some further insts see McKerrow, *Notes*, 366 f., where it is traced back to the tale *Quinque Ova* in *Facetiae* by Poggio.

'Tis a purty litle place, he'd let so *dear's saffurn.* w. Som. As dear as saffron. Lin. Cor., EDD; Hewett, Dev. 11. "Why

saffron should be used in this sense, I do not know." E. Peacock, Lin., *Folk-Lore*, LIII, 408. The explanation is very simple. Anyone wanting to buy a pound of saffron will find it out.

Cheap.

(*Cheap* as a *Sardinian*. A Roman phrase referring to the great crowds of Sardinian prisoners brought to Rome by Tiberius Gracchus, and offered for sale at almost any price. Brewer, Dict., 242. Cf. the old border phrase, We will not lose a Scot. Ray.).

A few drops of women's rheum, which are As *cheap* as *lies*. Shak., Co., V, vi, 46.

Ez *cheap* ez *promises*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.

She's very pretty, and as *cheap* as *neck-beef*. Sedley, 1687, NED. Also in Swift (Lean, II, ii). See *Useless*, *Worthless*, p. 336.

As *cheap* as *bullbeef*. w. Som. Superlative absolute of cheap. Cf. Which look as cheap as bullbeef at one cent a pound. Haliburton, 1860, *Slang*. See *Intimacy*, p. 328.

You may buy land now as *cheap* as *stinking mackerel*. Shak., KH IVa, II, vi, 340.

As *cheap* as *old clothes*. H., Walpole, Letter of 1786 (Lean, II, ii).

So *cheap's* a *dog in a halfpenny*. w. Som. EDD. Superlative absolute of cheap. Cf. the common phrase dog-cheap.

Cheap's dirt. w. Som. EDD. Roget.

A pedlar or other dealer will commend his wares to his customers as being as *cheap* as *muck*. N. & Q., 5, XI, 73. Cabbidges is as cheap as muck nah-a-days. Nhb., EDD.

Easy, Simple.

Note. See also the following section, *Comfortable*, *Smug*.

'Tis *simple* as *Scripture story*. Hardy, MC, 10. *Simple*, rec. fr. 1555.

As *easy* as my *eye*. Popular. *Slang*.

The ladies was *easy* as *mittens*. Milliken, 'Arry Ballads (*Slang*).

Does it mean that the ladies in question are of "easy virtue", or simply that they are easy to get on with, or a bit free in their manners? See the following form.

As easy as a *glove*. Hardy, UGT. In this case *easy* means (originally) comfortably and loosely fitting, not tight. Cf. The woman's an easy glove, my lord, she goes off and on a pleasure. Shak., AW, V, iii, 271. A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit; how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward. Shak., TN, III, i, 10. See *Soft*, 266.

As *easy* as my (an) *old shoe*. Yks. War. EDD. Spoken of the fit of anything. Northall, FPh. 8. As easy as a shoe. Baker, N'hants Gloss. (Lean, II, ii). Cf. A glove or boot so many times pull'd on may well sit easy on the hand or foot. Fielding, *Tom Thumb.*, II, vii (Lean, II, ii).

He could name kittle words as *smooth* as *satın*. Nicholson, 1814, Gall. EDD. *Smooth*, glibly, without difficulty. See p. 269.

He'd feight the whole lot on 'em . . . as *easy* as *ninepence*. Lan. Gloss., 1881. NED.

If I didn't see him whip a picture out of its frame, as *neat* as *ninepence*. 1857, *Blackw. Mag.*, NED. We have nobbled him, as neat as *ninepence*. Henley & Stevenson, 1884, *Slang*. *Neat* must mean 'with ease, dispatch and cleverness'. For another application of the same sim. see p. 218.

Simple as *ABC*.

As *easy* as *ABC*. DNL, 1 March, '16. *Slang*. Popular; extremely facile; the acme of ease. This colloquialism is by no means of modern growth. Shak. speaks of an answer 'coming like *ABC-book*.' *Slang*.

As *easy* to understand as *big print*. Phillpotts, SW. Cf. 'neat, clean as print', p. 219.

The dunce at school knows that if you take 80 from one side and add it on to the other, the difference is not 80 but 160. It is as *simple* as *how many blue beans make five*. DNL, 1889, *Slang*. 'He do know how many beans make five,' a very common description of a clever cute fellow. w. Som. EDD. Few men who better knew how many blue beans it takes to make five. Galt., 1830, NED. See p. 77.

Its as *simple* as *tit-tat-toe*, three in a row, and as *easy* as *playing hooky*. I should *hope* we could find a way that is more complicated than that. Twain, HF, 301. *Tit-tat-toe*, a children's game, rec. in NED fr. 1855. Tick-tack-to, tip-tap-to, tit-bo-tat, kit-cat-cannis are names of the same or similiar games.

Women be a noble branche of learning, and they'm like reading . . . to some they come as *easy* as *pat*. Phillpotts, M, 28. *Pat* stands for anything that comes easily and to the purpose. See p. 318, 9.

As *easy* as to say *Jack Robinson*. Lean, II, ii. 'Before one can say Jack Robinson', rec. in NED fr. 1778, is a phrase more known, See e. g. Hardy, UGT, 175, 6. It is supposed to have originated from a volatile gentleman of that appellation, who would call on his neighbours, and be gone before his name could be pronounced. Grose, 1785 (*Slang*).

'This all so *easy* as *cursing*, she said. Phillpotts, AP, 407.

Easy as damn it. Popular. *Slang*.

Hamlet. . . Will you play upon this pipe? *Gui*. My Lord, I cannot.

Ham. 'Tis as *easy* as *lying*. Shak., *Hamlet*, III, ii.

As *easy* as to *lick a dish*. Ray.

- As *easy* as to *kiss one's hand*. Torriano, 1666, (Lean, II, ii).
 They would shew you a crock o' money as aisy as kiss hand.
 Ir., 1844, EDD. It's as easy as kiss your hand. White, SE, 13.
 She cud 'ave gort in as easy as kissin' the beck o' yer and.
 Pain, DO, 19.
- As *simple* as *kissing hands*. *Strand Mag.*, Nov. 1912.
 I lay it's as easy as *kiss-my-thumb* For to have my way
 wi' her. Munby, 1891, NED.
- 'Tis all as easy as kissing. Castle, IB, 63.
- I should have cleared two hundred as *easy* as *looking*. Hardy,
 FMC, 305.
- As *aisy* as *fawin off a chair* when yo're drunk. Chs. Gl.
 To such a man, deceiving a simple soul like her was as *easy* as
falling off a log or *picking his teeth*. Phillpotts, TK, 102.
- As *easy* as *felling a log*. Bartlett? (Lean, II, ii).
- As *easy* as *pissing a bed*. Ray. In Bohn we read, As easy
 p—ssing a bed as to lick a dish, 187. This is also found in
Slang, probably from Bohn. This must be the result of mis-
 quotation. In Ray, ed. Bohn, p. 187, Bohn prints, As easy
 as p—ssing a bed, as to lick a dish, which of course means,
 'as easy as to lick a dish.'
- As *easy* as *get out*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. There are some other
 sim. in which *get out* occurs: As mean as get out. NI,
 EDD. He glooart at me as impident as get out. Cum., 1881,
 EDD. They meadd t'blankets far warse nor git oot. *ibid.*
 EDD. This must refer to the colloquial use of the imper. get
 out to express 'disbelief, dissent, or a desire to hear no more',
 rec. in NED fr. 1711.
- I done it as *slick* as a *whistle*. 1844, *Slang*. *Slick*, easily, Amer.
 See p. 321.
- Regular as clockwork it happened, quiet and *easy* as a *door* on
 a *greased hinge*. "Q", MV, 233.
- You might all manage to get on as *slick* as *goose-grease* without
 as much doctor-stuff as would physic an adolescent spider.
 Dow, 1853, Thornton. Up thar all glides as "slick" as goose
 grease. Dow, 1854, Thornton.
- Thus happy I hope I shall pass sleek as *grease* down the cur-
 rent of time. 1804, Thornton.. As slick as grease. Halibur-
 ton, 1843, NED.
- We should think that the roads in Greece would be as *slick* as
ile. 1840, Thornton. As smoothly and easily "as lightning
 on a greased railroad." The simile is David Crochet's own.
Yale Lit. Mag., XVII, 61, Thornton.
- Comes apart *light* as a *feather*. Stowe, UTC, 26. *Light*, easily.
 pen wurch forth in the other figurys till thou come to the end,
 for it is *lyght* as *dyche water*. 1425, NED. For other sim.
 with ditchwater, see p. 85, 54.

Comfortable.

Us'll be so *snug* as *seven-sleepers*. Phillpotts, SW. — The seven sleepers mentioned in NED fr. c. 1000. *Snug*, rec. fr. 1630. "Thought I'd better report, sir; cargo's not shifted; she's as *snug* as a *nigger in treacle* below there," bellowed a voice that laughed derision to the howling anger of the gale. *Cassell's Mag. of Fict.*, 1914, 169. *Snug* of a ship means trim.

A glass of this wine is as *comfortable* as *matrimony* to an old woman. Swift, PC, 276. *Comfortable*, refreshing, sustaining. The adj. is rec. in E. fr. 1377. This sense, now obs., rec. fr. 1440, the ordinary current senses fr. c. 1760.

She cried a bit when there was no more to be had, but a warm bath with some boric acid in it made her sleepy. An' there she is *snug* as a *cat*. Tracy, *Pillar*, 27.

Thou art as wairm and *comfortable* as a *hog sheep* in winter neights. Yks., 1870, EDD. Hog sheep is a one year old sheep.

Let us sleep as *snug* as *pigs in pea-straw*. Heywood, WKK, 69. Snug as a pig &c. Davenport, *New Trick &c.*, 1639, H. Cf. *Happy*, p. 78.

As *comfortable* as *chick* in wool. Northall, FPh.

It makes all the house/ Lie as *snug* as a *mouse*, And a petticoat sleep without porters. Wilson, *Andron.*, II, iv, 1664 (Lean).

Put your things in there, and when you are in yourself you'll be as *comfortable* as an *oyster* in its shell. Jacobs, MC, 29.

So they hoisted her down just as safe and as well/ And as *snug* as a *hodmandod* rides in his shell. Anstey, 1766, NED. Hodmandod, a snail-shell, sometimes the snail itself.

He sits as *snug* as a *Bee* in a box, making his honey, 1709, NED.

You'll be *snug* there as a *bug in a blanket*. Malkin, 1809, NED.

If she [a rich widow] has the mopus's, I'll have her, as snug as a *bug in a rug*. 1769, NED. Does not *snug* here mean something like securely caught (see NED), sure? — You might sit as snug as a bug in a rug. Hook, 1833, NED. Mac-taggart, *Gallo. Enc.*, 1824 (Lean, II, ii). Hewett, Dev., 12, Elworthy, WSG, 691 (a common superl. absol.). Cf. A cowardly crew, all wanting to keep each other warm, like bugs in a rug. Phillpotts, WF, 327. Some people not content with the usual everyday sense of the word rug, a thick woollen wrap or blanket, have suggested that it stands for rogue, a tramp, or means some kind of dog. The first form of the sim. renders all such conjectures superfluous. Cf. also 'as close as a flea in a flocke bed.' Breton, 1604, Lean, II, ii, and 'intricate as a flea in a bottom of flax.' See *Safe*.

Difficult.

Note. Some of the sim. under *Hard* p. 258 ff. are perhaps also used in this sense.

It is as *hard* to enter my belief/ As *Dives into heaven*. Heywood, WKK, 50. *Dives* taken as the proper name of the rich man in the parable Luke 17 and hence generically for a rich man is rec. in E. fr. Chaucer.

It was as *hard* to be earliest in a woman's heart as it was to *be first in the pool of Bethesda*. Hardy, PBE, 363.

It is as *hard* a thing as to *sail over the sea in an eggshell*. H. As *difficult* as *driving a black pig* in the dark. N. & Q., 10, XII, 318. See p. 101, as obstinate as a pig.

As *troublesome* as a *wasp in one's ear*. Fuller, *Gnom.*, 1731.

As *intricate* as a *flea in a bottom of flax*. *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, ed. 1672, p. 452. The saying seems to be introduced proverbially. H. *Bottom*, a skein or ball of thread; this sense obs. since the middle of the eighteenth c.

The following phrases deserve to be quoted under this head: The ladies prove averse, / And more untoward to be won/ Than by Caligula the moon. Butler, H., II, 50. Thou art as like to obtain thy wish as the wolf is to eat the moon. H. Raw beef was almost as obtainable as raw moon. Oxenham, MS, 53. He cries for the moon, i. e. for something altogether beyond his reach. H. Cf. *Il veut prendre la lune avec les dents. Zij willen den maan mit den tanden pakken. Den mond mit den Zähnen fassen. Nach dem Monde greifen.* Wander. See p. 133. Sw. *Att ta ner månen*, to take down the moon. See p. 133.

Safe, Secure.

Note. See the following section, *Sure*.

Safe as *death*. Nhb. EDD.

As *safe* as my *life*. Davenport, *New Trick &c.*, II, ii, 1639 (Lean, II, ii).

We may do it as *secure* as *sleep*. Shak., KH IVa, I, ii.

The plain ones [women] are *safe* as *churches*. Hardy, T, 114. Cf. There are your damned goblets, as safe as in a church. Stevenson, NAN, 315. Cf. the sim. 'as fast as a church tied to a holly-bush, or a stake.' Jackson & Burne, 595. What is the application?

No man will quarrel with you. You shall be as *secure* as *chrisom children*. Shirley, *Doubtful Heir*, II, ii, 1636 (Lean, II, ii). Cf.

Mr Badman died like a lamb; or as they call it, like a chrisom child, quietly and without fear. Bunyan, 1680, NED.

Safe as a *thief in a mill*. Day, *Ile of Guls*, 1609, H. There she may lodge, and trade too, if she will, As sure and safe as thieves are in a mill. Tayler, 1630, *Slang*. You can give this wench a dish of trotters for restority, and that wench a dish of guts, to scour her maw; whilst I, poor soul, sit at home with a dish of pouts; and they, to requite your kindness, one brings a plumcake, another brings a goose, and thus when you feast together, you are as safe as so many thieves in a mill. *Vinegar & Mu.*, 20. Ray. You gaol birds — are as safe as thieves in a mill within this sanctuary. Motteux, 1694, *Slang*. Why, Miss, let Tom Neverout wait on you and then, I warrant, you'll be as safe as a thief in a mill. Swift, PC, 247. As *fast* as a thief in a mill. — “Quite safe, with no means of escape. The mill referred to would be one of the old wooden windmills, built on posts, with only one way of ingress or egress, and which could easily be surrounded, thus giving no chance of escape to the thief therein.” Nicholson, e. Yks, 1889, EDD. — Whatever may be the application of the Yks. form of the sim., the earlier insts do not refer to a person who is sure to be caught, quite the contrary, to one that is secure and certain to escape. But whether a thief was more likely to be safe, in this sense of the word, in a mill, than elsewhere, is a matter of doubt, but we know for certain that one is safe, i. e. sure, to find a thief in the mill., viz. the miller himself. Folk-rhymes of to-day, proverbs, and quips of wags and jokers in Elizabethan plays and jest-books bear witness to the miller's bad repute. “Miller, miller, blow your horn. You shall be hanged for stealing corn,” is a Shropshire rhyme (Northall, FR, 327). “Many a miller, many a thief,” says the miller's wife in *Vinegar & Mu.*, 19. “Meg going one day with her neighbours to make merry, a miller near Epping looking out, the boy they had with them . . . said, ‘Put out, Miller; put out.’ ‘What must be put out?’ said he. ‘A thief's head and ears,’ said the other.” *Long Meg*, xx. “This meller stal both mele and corn,” said already Chaucer, and see p. 113. Consequently, the sim. would originally mean ‘as safe (=sure) as (there is) a thief in a mill.’ But there is a difficulty about this interpretation. This sense of the adj. safe is not rec. before some 150 years after the earliest inst. of our sim. It may perhaps mean that the miller, although proverbially a thief, generally manages to keep within the law, and so he is safe in his mill. It is also well known that in many parts in early times the mills were the meeting-places of all sorts of disreputable people, and so perhaps notorious felons resorted there as to some sort of sanctuary where the representatives of the law did not care to go. If this was the

case they might say that in the mill they were "as safe as in a sanctuary". (Spenser, *FQ*, IV, ix, 19). But in order to be perfectly sure of the origin of this sim. one must learn more about the old mills and life in and around them. See further down 'as safe as a mouse in a mill.'

Safe as brandy. Nhb., NED.

We've got the Derby and Leger this next year as *safe as eggs*. Collins, 1871, NED. — This must be elliptically for 'as safe (= sure) as eggs (is eggs)'. See *Sure* p. 356.

If they are in yonder shed, they are packed as *safe as herrings* in a barrel. Caine, D, xxxiv. See *Close*, p. 324.

They're *safe* however. — As a *guinea in a miser's purse*. Goldsmith, SSC, 256.

As *safe as treasure* in a kist/ Is the day in an old moon's mist. Denham, *Proverbs*, 15. Cf. the following sayings: An old moon in a mist/ Is worth gold in a kist; But a new moon's mist/ Will never lack thirst. Inwards, *Weather Lore*, 42. The new moon's mist/ Is better than gold in a kist, is the Yorkshire opinion. Northall, FR, 461. *Kist*, a chest or a place in which money is kept, rec. fr. 1619.

Ha'th got tha Kolra *saf's* a *nit*. Hogg, Dev., 1866, EDD. This *nit* may possibly be the word we have in 'dead, poor as a nit', but it is far more likely to be the other word nit, nut. The sim. would be a development or ellipsis of 'as safe (and sound) as a nut'.

As *safe as the Bank* [of England]. Lean, II, ii. *Slang*. A lot of securities which I thought as safe as the Bank of England. Hocking, MF, 70. Cf. His word is as good as the bank. Holcroft, 1834 (Lean, II, ii). There's nobody will touch your lordship's money. I am as safe as the bank. Stevenson, NAN, 75. Cf. *So sicher wie die Londoner Bank* Wander. But also *Zoo vast, seker, sekuur als de bank*. Stoett, NS, I, 61. *So sicher wie die Bank von Amsterdam*. Wander.

If you was caught up and brought afore the Lord Mayor, he'd give you fourteen days on it, as *safe as the bellows*. Mayhew, 1851, *Slang*. Origin?

Safe as a trivet. DNJL, 3/3, '13. See *Right*, p. 369.

'Tis as pure, and as sure, and *secure* as a *gun*, The young lover's business is happily done. Fielding, 1733, NED. They'll sure to gee un a month vor't, *saaf* as a gun. Elworthy, WSG, 729. See *Sure*, p. 370.

The owner of the weapon assured him he was as *safe as houses*. Cornwallis, 1859, NED. I have the means of doing that, as safe as houses. Yates, 1864, *Slang*. We're safe to nab him; safe as houses. 1867, *Slang*. The whole story will have to go through Parliament House, and I shall be high-treasured — as safe as houses. Hardy, DR, 376, *ibid.*, FMC, 472. Why, of course, then, that's the explanation of it — safe as houses,

you may depend upon it. Grant Allen, 1886, *Slang*. You may make your forgery itself as safe as houses. 1890, *ibid*. I overlaid my book against Wheatear; I'd heard that she was as safe as 'ouses. More, 1894, *Slang*. Yes 'ir, I'm saved as safe as houses. Stooke, Dev. (n. d.), EDD. He's shut off his engine — volplaning, you know, safe as houses. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, July, 236, '14. Northall, FPh. 10 (usually spoken of investment). As safe as *a house*. Baumann. Cf. As safe as *in houses*. North, *Examen*, 1740, (Lean, II, ii).

As *safe as the king's highway*. Torriano, 1666, (Lean, II, ii). — From a present-day point of view this must express rather a pious desire than the actual state of things in the seventeenth c., but the different degrees of safety in the time of the Commonwealth must not be measured by our standards. Cf. "The two phrases ['the King's peace', and the 'King's highway'] are indeed intimately connected; they come from the time when the king's protection was by no means universal but particular, when the king's peace was not for all men or all places, and the king's highway was in a special manner protected by it." Pollock, 1895, NED.

You know you are as *safe as a cow tied to a wall* behind that table. White, BT, 179.

He's *safe as a pig in a pen*. Oxenham, MS.

Ez *seeaf* as a *pig ring*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239. Is it because the ring is a safe means of preventing the pig from rooting?

As *safe as a mouse in a cheese*. Ray. Cf. To speak like a mouse in a cheese. Rec. fr. 1811 in *Slang*.

Safe as a mouse in a malt heap. Clarke, H. Ray.

As *safe as a mouse in a mill*. Davenport, *New Trick &c.*, 1639, H. I've got him. *Safe as a rat in a trap*. Kingsley, WH, 237.

He is ours now safely, sir . . ." "*Safe as a fox in a trap*. Satan himself cannot take him from us." Kingsley, WH, 496.

Here, *safe as a fox in carth*, she remained close hidden. Phillpotts, AP, 317.

We are all ruined as *safe as coons*. 1864, *Slang*. The explanation may be, "We are all ruined as surely as coons are 'gone coons'," which expression is rec. in *Slang* fr. 1845.

As *safe as a crow in a gutter*. Ray. — As there is no context to tell us the meaning of the word 'safe', we must suppose that it stands for 'secure'. But a gutter is not nowadays a very safe, or secure, place for a crow. But 400 years ago the streets were different. The crows, especially the carrion-crow, must have found the gutters of e. g. late mediaeval London something of a paradise, and perhaps they made themselves as much at home there as pigeons and sparrows in our modern towns. And as long as London's chief traffic was on the river, they were perhaps not too much disturbed.

I pumped her dry, and, no doubt, thought the secret was so *safe* with her as a *bird in a bush*. Phillpotts, WF, 438.
 The doctor visited me . . . and . . . said, 'you are as *safe* as a *bug* in a *rug*.' Hutton, 1798, NED. See *Comfortable*, p. 349.

Sure.

As *sure* as *God made Moses*. Sam Slick, *Wise Saws*, 1855 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. I'm going to shape the courses of this shebang, and you observe; and if you do anything more, I'll bore you as sure as *Moses*. London, GF, 113.

As *sure* as *God's in Gloucester(shire)*. Ray; Bailey, 1721, NED. He hitcht 'pon spire of magick steeple, And truly had not some ran quick/ And succoured him in just the nick/ He had broke his neck and life lost there,/ Assure (poor wretch) as *God's in Gloucester*." H. Lean has insts of 1606 and 1632. — There has been a good deal of discussion as to the origin of this sim. Fuller says, "This proverb is no more fit to be used than a toad can be wholesome to be eaten . . . Some, I know, seek to qualify this proverb, making God eminently in this, but not exclusively out of other counties; where such the former fruitfulness thereof, that it is said to return the seed with increase of an hundred fold. Others find a superstitious sense therein, supposing God . . . more peculiarly fixed in this county, wherein there were more and richer mitred abbeys than in any two shires of England besides." (W, I, 551). But Fuller himself writes later on of Norfolk, "This county has the most churches of any in England (six hundred and sixty)". W, II, 444. Oliver Cromwell's experience of richly mitred Gloucester was that the city had "more churches than godlines," which may be a circumstantial evidence that he knew the proverb, and associated it with the large number of churches and chapels of the city. (Enc. Brit.)

According to others, it refers to the relic of Christ's blood preserved at Hailes Abbey 2 miles north of Winchcomb. This is alluded to in Bullein, *Bullwarke of Def.*, 1562, "The blood of ducks keepeth a goodly coulour longtime, the idolaters did practice therewith, deceiving the people of Hailes with a blood which they called holy." (Lean, II, ii).

As *sure* as *God's i'th orchut*. Lan. EDD.

As *sure* as *God made little apples on big trees*. Dev. or west Cy., N. & Q., 11, IV, 377. Straight on, as sure as God made *little apples*. Hardy, FMC, 247. And as sure as God made little apples, I don't know my elbow from my knee about a paddle. London, DS, 285. Northall, FPh., 11, Manchester, N. & Q., 11, IV, 289. Norwich, "some forty years ago", Bristol, N. & Q., 11, IV, 377. "This is a widely known saying — in North

Midland counties at any rate — and years ago, I often heard it in Derbyshire in this form, 'As sure as God made *crab apples*.' N. & Q., 11, IV, 377. Cf. If it ain't the real thing, may God knock off my head with sour apples. London, MF, 90.

As *sure* as *God made rain*. Lin. EDD.

As *sure* as *God sees me*. Stevenson, TI, 55.

A blackguard creditor will discover me and nab me as *sure* as *Satan*, if I open my mouth. Hardy, FMC, 404.

If the sun sets as clear as a bell, It's an easterly wind as *sure* as *hell*. Hall, *Fragm. of Voy.*, 1833 (Lean, II, ii).

You'll bate mun, *sure* as *Judgement*, you'll bate mun. Kingsley, WH, 470.

He can spaik seven langijis, *fac* as *death*. Gordon, 1891, EDD, 'As much fact as death.' Insts given only fr. Scotland and not earlier than 1889.

Dead was it *sure*, as *sure* as *death*. Spenser, FQ, I, xi, 12. And *sure* as *death* I swore I would not part a bachelor from the priest. Shak., TA, I, 487. Jonson, EM, 45. *Andromana*, IV, viii, 1660 (Lean, II, ii). Goldsmith, VW, 383, GNM, 186. No testimony in his judgement was worthy unless it were clinched with an emphatic . . . 'Ay, ay, *sure* as *death*.' Sc. EDD. 'As *sure* as *death*' was with us the final and awful test of truth. Mac Laren, YB, 50. As shair's daith. Bell, WM, 19, 58. Dmf, 1898, Ir., Cum., 1875, EDD. And so *sure* as *death* he won't let Jack marry me now. Phillpotts, WF, 24, AP, 363. Ray; Northall, FPh., 11. Mentioned in NED, but no inst. given.

That's as *certain* as that *I shall die*. Galsworthy, F, 73.

You'll be pixy-led, *sure* as *life*, and locked into a bog. Kingsley, WH, 140.

Hark! — *Sure* as *fate*! The clock's striking eight. Barham, IL, 392, 494. *Strand Mag.*, 245, '12. Back he's come *sure* as *fate*. Wells, MP, 225. Northall, FPh., 11.

My mind will be as *sure* as the *bible*. Hardy, DR, 456.

Siker as the *Crede*. Gower, 1393, *Slang*. *Sicker*, *sure*, now obs. except in Sc. and n. Cy dial.

The knave will be there as *sure* as is your *crede*. GGN, IV, ii (Dodsley, I, 164). Bynde them to believe as surely as your *crede*. *Songs*, 80. He dies thereof as *sure* as *creed* (Frank Davidson's song, which he made 40 years ago). Walton, CA, 158.

As *sure* as *simony*. Blackmore, LD. Cf. Promotion which was wont to be y^e free propounded palme of paines, is by many men's lamentable practise, become a purchase. Nashe, I, 37. *Simonie* is now so common growne, That 'tis account no sinne. 1616, NED. *Simony* is very often spoken of as something lamentably common. See e. g. *Resp.*, 29; *Songs*, 82, 1546; Milton, *Tenure*, 51, and Burton, AM, I, 372.

- As *sure as honour*, I esteem it so much . . . Jonson, EM, 58. Does this mean 'word of honour', which sense is rec. 1658—1825, NED.
- Ez *sartin ez t'horn-bush*. — "It was the custom for the parson to collect the tithe by placing a branch of thorn in every tenth stook, he choosing the stooks, and sending his cart for them." Blakeborough, NRY, 244.
- Sure as Demoiivre*. — The French-born mathematician Abraham D., who died in 1754 after some 60 years in England, the author of the Doctrine of Chances or the Method of Calculating the Probabilities of Events at Play. It was Pope who said, 'Sure as Demoiivre, without rule or line.' Brewer, Dict., 1192. Probably never proverbial.
- As *sure as Job Orton in his shop*. — J. O. renowned for his close attention to business, was a grocer at Shrewsbury, died 1717. Jackson & Burne, 595. Better known is his son, a dissenting minister of the same name, by some considered "one of the most striking preachers ever heard." *Dict. of Nat. Biogr.*
- Ez *sartin ez t'cess getherer*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use.
- A dead lift, as *sure as sexton*. Flecknoe, *Diar.*, xii, 1656 (Lean II, ii). In what way is the sexton surer than other things or people? A Swede remembering the Sw. sim. 'så säkert som sex' (as certain as six), is tempted to ask: does it stand for sexton < sexten < sixteen, although it would not make so good alliteration as in Sw., if any at all, as *sure* may have developed its *f*-sound about this time.
- As *certain as D. T.* is the end of drinking. Pain, *Glowworm Tales*, I, 209, *Slang*.
- As *sure as eggs in April*. Baring-Gould, *Exmoor* (Lean, II, ii), 'As sure as there are eggs in April.' But *sure as eggs*, whilst folks are sleeping, We both again should catch thee peeping. Bridges, 1772, *Slang*. Probably an ellipse of the preceding or the following form.
- As *sure as eggs be eggs*. B. E., *New Dict. of Cant. Crew*, 1699 (Lean, II, ii). As *sure as eggs is eggs* the bridegroom and she had a miff before morning. Goldsmith, GNM, 184. If you should jump from off the pier, you'd surely break your legs, / Perhaps your neck — then Bogey'd have you, *sure as eggs are eggs!* Barham, II, 839. And the Bishop says, "Sure as eggs is eggs, this here's the bold Turpin." Dickens, PP, II, 269. Hughes, 1857, NED. *Yorkshire Dial.*, 6. "That's convulsions," said Sally. "They will go off in one of they, *sure as eggs is eggs* and ain't inions." Baring-Gould, BS, 31. — "Professor de Morgan suggests that this is a corruption of the logician's formula *x is x*." Brewer, Dict., 408. It has also been said that the 'bad grammar' of the sim. '*eggs is eggs*' points to this origin. But surely this is preposterous. Our sim. is distinctly colloquial, originally also a bit slangy, and is chiefly used by

vulgar and dial. speakers who never could have heard, and still less seen, "the logician's formula." As to the 'bad grammar', it is just the sort of English that is to be expected from those who use the phrase. Any other form would be "Dutch" (see p. 85). To be observed are the form of the verb in the earliest inst. and Barham's attempt at an improvement. See also the last inst. of the sim.

As *sure* as *beans* she'll steal from you. Oxenham, MS, 112. See *Mad*, p. 94, and *Like beans*, Ch. V.

As *sure* as the *clothes on your back*. Fuller (Lean, II, ii). 'The coat on one's back,' says Ray. Cf. As true as thy coat to thy back. Gascoigne. See p. 10.

As *sure* as *Burton's bank*. Ir., H. See *Safe*, p. 352.

As *sure* as an *alderman's bond*. Rowley, *Witch of Edmont.*, I, ii, 1658 (Lean, II, ii).

As *sure* as *Exchequer pay*. This was a proverb in Queen Elizabeth's time; the credit of the Exchequer beginning in, and determining with, her reign, saith Dr. Fuller. Ray. In Queen Elizabeth's days, when nothing on earth was surer than Chequer pay. Mead, 1628, NED.

As *sure* as *check*. Green, 1591, H. Let the proverb As sure as check bayl me from the least suspicion of hyperboly. Osborn, 1659, NED. It was a merry world when Fidelity was master of this ship, Constancy his mate, and Plaindealing the boatswain, but those worthy mariners are dead, and an old proverb as sure as check with them. Taylor, NL. Ray.

Sure as death and *taxes* are. *P. Robin's Prognost.*, 1708 (Lean, II, ii).

And that was as *sure* as *touch*. Hacket, 1670, NED.

As *certain* as *gold*. Draxe, 1633 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. 'good as gold', p. 5.

As *sure* as *twopence*. Lean, II, ii.

He 'ad won the field, as *certain* as a *gun*. Butler, H. 80.

But when he thought her as *sure* as a *gun*/ She set up her tail and away she run. Smith, 1655, NED. Ray. As sure as a *gun*, now, father Dominic has been spawning this young slender antichrist. Dryden, 1681, NED. She's distracted, as sure as a *gun*. Steele, 1703, *Slang*. Gay, NS; As sure as a *gun* I have hit o' the very right ot. Fielding, 1749, Sterne, 1759, *Slang*; As sure as a *gun* then he is going to make a night of it. 1809. *Slang*. I *must* have some fun./ And I will, too, that's flat — ay, as sure as a *gun*. Barham, II, 434. Hello! Where is that boy? Gone, as sure as a *gun*. 1881, NED. We shall have him here next month as sure as a *gun*. Hardy, TM, 123. Some more insts in *Slang* and NED. Pegge, *Derb.*, 135. Hewett, *Dev.*; Elworthy, WSG, 729. Westmorel. and Cumberl. Dial. 256 (Lean). Cor. EDD. — This is said to have arisen from the circumstance that guns were considered very sure or reliable in comparison with bows and arrows. Cf. You'll

centre and jam there as sure as shooting. White, BT, 303. A cor. of N. & Q., I, X, 264, thinks that it refers to the regular firing of guns at sunset and sunrise from castles and other fortified places. But like 'as sure as eggs' it may be some ellipse. As a matter of fact we have an expanded phrase, 'Sure as a gun was iron he'd speak the word.' Ir. EDD. But as long as no more insts of the same kind are found, the question must be left unsettled. But see *Right*, p. 370.

The prophecy fell out as *sure* as a *club*. Scot, *Discovery of Witcher.*, 1584 (Lean, II, ii). Falling into his hands, as sure as a club. Nashe, III, 73, 1596. He is his owne as sure as a club. Day, 1640, NED. Wesley, *Maggots*, 1685 (Lean, II, ii). — It is to be noticed that in the first two insts we have the verb *fall*. Does the sim. refer to the inevitable falling of a club that is raised?

As *sure* as *nails*. Lan. EDD. See 'hard as nails' p. 260.

As *sure* as *I am a sinner* to God. Day, *Ile of Gols*, V (Lean, II, ii).

I'll skimmer your pate as *sure* as you *cry Amen*. Cf. *Så säkert som amen i kyrkan*. Also in G.

You will be clapped into the Inquisition and burnt alive, as *sure* as *your name is Jack*. Kingsley, WH, 258. Sure's my name's Cod. Phillpotts, M, 278. You shall knock fireworks out of him, my boy, as sure as my name's Ned Skene. Shaw, CBP, 56, &c.

As *sure* as your honor's *standing* there, I saw him. Barham, IL, 30. It happened just so, as sure as I am *sitting* in these very tracks. Twain, TS, 147. I'm as sure as I sit here that . . . Gissing, TT, 88. Cf. Just as dead earnest as I'm sitting here. Twain, TS, 269.

He'd kill us some time or other, Just as dead sure as we're *lying* here. Twain, TS, 83.

As sure as *I am here*, Eugenia lives. May, H, III, i.

As sure as *you are there*. Swift, PC. Northall, FPh., 11.

As sure as you are *alive*. Swift, PC. As sure as I am alive. Northall, FPh., 11. Till he's brot hoam limp and drowned, as a will be, sure as I'm alive. Dev. EDD. Do you know that within one day she will be sacrificed, as sure as you stand there alive. Dickens, NN, li.

As surely as you are a *living man*, so surely did that spectral anatomy visit my room. Barham, IL, 31. As shuir as I am *leevin*, that's a bit nice bairn. Slk., 1901, EDD.

I am as *positive* as that I *breathe*. Hardy, DR, 416.

Now don't make joke of The feeling I spoke of; For, as *sure* as *you're born*, that same feeling . . . saves the life of the young Mousquetaire! Barham, IL, 246, *ibid.* 468. Northall, FPh., 11. They'll heng yon Dick, as sewer as he's born. Not. EDD. — There are no doubt numerous other phrases of the same type as the different forms of the last three sim., and the sim. given above are probably much older than appears fr. the insts.

As *sure* as there's a *dog at Dover*. P. 35, Lean. This P sometimes stands for Palsgrave, *Acolastus*. If that is so in this case, the sim. would date from the first half of the sixteenth c. As *sure* as there is a dog in Dover. Pegge's *Kentic.*, 69. Cf. Leg over leg, as the dog went to Dover, When he came to the style jump he went over. Northall, FR, 414. — There are dogs 'all over the place', but very few towns have *do* in common with dogs, and only disyllabic place-names would give so good alliteration and rhythm as Dover (Dorking, Dorset, Dorstone). It is worth noticing that in the form given by Lean we have perfect iambic rhythm. Perhaps it was the first line of a couplet with the rhymes Dover: over (see the folk-rhyme quoted by Northall), which couplet now has lost the second line.

As *sure* as *dogs isn't horses*. Yks. EDD.

As *sure* as there is a *hip on a goat*. N. & Q., 8, IX, 234.

She's running her natural course as *sure* as a *fox runs before the wind*. Baring-Gould, RS, 22.

As *sure* as there's *snakes in Virginny*. *Slang*.

As *sure* as a *louse* in Pomfret. Ray. Then to Pomfret, as long since is/ Fatal to our English Princes; For the choicest liquor-ice crowned,/ And for sundry acts renowned; A louse in Pomfret is not surer/ Than the poor thro' sloth securer. *Drunken Barnaby's Journey*, 1715 (Bridge, CP, 22).¹ How this Yorkshire place has come in for the ill-fame of being particularly lousy, is beyond the ken of the compiler. Numerous towns and villages have been called 'lousy'. "Long, lazy, lousy Lewisham" has already been mentioned. And the following verses are typical of a whole set of folk rhymes, Acton Beauchamp, the poorest place in the nation, A lousy parson, a nitty clerk, and a shabby congregation. Havergal, *Herefordshire Words and Phrases*, 1887 (Lean).

In H. our sim. appears in the following form, As *sure* as a *house* in P. Now, this *house* must either be a misprint or an intended correction. That *louse* is the correct reading, appears from the circumstance that in Ray our sim. is placed immediately after 'as *sure* as a louse in bosom, and the genuine character of the sim. is made clear by the quotation of 1715. But where did Hazlitt get his *house* from? It is another of his quotations from Bohn's *Complete Alphabet*. After 'as *sure* as a louse in one's bosom' he prints, 'as *sure* as a house in Pomfret, 191'. At p. 192 (191 must be a misprint) of his Handbook it is given in the above form. Hazlitt says of Ray that he copied all the childish errors of his predecessors, as has already been said, p. 150, but Hazlitt himself has done the

¹) Cf. The Sw. *Så sant som det finns loppor i Trosa* (as true as there are fleas at Trosa). In a humorous song much in vogue in the north of Sweden about 1890. *Trosa*, one of the smallest country towns in Sweden, called "the end of the world," and as such the butt of a good deal of joke.

same thing over and over again. Hazlitt tells us that he had spared no pains to make his work satisfactory and complete. Who is responsible for the numerous misprints that disfigure the Greek quotations? Once or twice he has ventured to quote Swedish, and the result is 'splitterstwy'! (read: *splitterny*). These are unimportant details, but a literary veteran who thinks fit to poke fun at his predecessors and to sneer at contemporary critics and helpers, must expect no mercy.

As *sure* as a *louse in bosom*. Chs. Ray. Let us hope that this does not characterize modern Cheshire.

If once we get our heads under water we'll all get drowned . . . as *sure* as *crabs ain't garden apples*. Baring-Gould, BS, 197. Cf. She's as like this, as a crab's like an apple. Shak., KL, I, i, 15. See *Dissimilarity*, p. 332.

Dumain is mine, as *sure* as *bark on tree*. Shak., LLL, V, ii, 285. Cf. the proverbial expression 'to go between the bark and the tree'. See p. 325.

As *sure* as a *rock*. Davies, 1611 (Lean, II, ii). Cf. steady, firm as a rock, p. 62.

I shall die, *sure* as *mud*. Phillpotts, 1899, NED. School slang. See *Clear*, p. 362.

As *sure* as *March in Lent*. Codrington, *Proverbs*, 1672 (Lean, II, ii).

Our destiny is *sure* as the *daylight*. Phillpotts, AP, 221. Cf. And more would be made; that was as certain as that darkness follows light. Doyle, R, 129.

You swear like a comfit-maker's wife! . . . As God shall mend me; and As *sure* as *day*. Shak., KH, IV, III, i.

As *sure* as the *sun*. Hardy, UGT. I know it as surely as there is a sun in the heavens. Wells, LL, 243. Cf. *Clear*, p. 363.

The following sim. are ironically meant:

As *sure* as if it had been *sealed with butter*. Heywood (Lean, II, ii). As sure as an obligation sealed in butter. Baret, 1580 (Lean, II, ii).

As *sure* as a *juggler's box*. Ray. Cf. With logical conclusions these would play As jugglers play with boxes or a ring. Davies, *Civil Wars &c.*, 1609, Lean. Or does it mean that jugglers play with their boxes, rings, and balls so adroitly that they never fumble, and can be taken as types of what is particularly sure?

And so such things . . . To thee be as *sure* as *water in a sieue*. Berkley, 1515, NED. See p. 22, and cf., That's no better, than taking up water in a sieve, which runs out as fast as it is put in. Horneck, 1686, NED. See p. 338.

As *sure* as a *mouse tied to a thread*. Heywood, H.

As *sure* to hold as an *eel by the tail*. Lean, II, ii. See p. 22.

Clear, Pure.

Note. For some related sim. see *Bright* &c., p. 222 ff.

It's a capital fresh drink, Missis, as *clier* as *sack*, and sharp enough to cut one's throat. Shr. EDD.

I never dreamed of such a thing, and yet it does seem *clear* as *print*. London, IH, 115. See *Easy*, p. 347.

As *clear* as *copperplate*. — Spoken of a very legible hand, and a figure borrowed from the old copybooks, where the different characters in use are engraved on copperplate. H. Cf. The Th was there as legible as copperplate. Mitford, 1826, NED. It is all here in neat copperplate. Vachell, SB, 25. *Copperplate*, meaning engraving on c., rec. fr. 1817. Otherwise the word is known fr. 1663.

Whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here Ginglen in a whistling wind as *clere* And eek as loude as dooth the *chapelbelle*. Chaucer, Prol. CT, 170. Real fresh genuine portwine. . clear as a *bell*, and no sediment. Dickens, 1838, NED. His voice is as clear as a bell or a musical glass — very like a musical glass indeed. Dickens, NN, xxxvii. He complained that the beer was thick and flat, whereas it sparkled like champagne, and was as clear as a bell. Besant, AS, 115. Ray. Chs Gl.

As *clear* as a *whistle*. Byrom, *Epist. to Lloyd*, 1773 (Lean, II, ii).

As *clear* as a *pikestaff*. H. See *Plain*, p. 365 f.

It's a strange nist bairn; its skin's that *clear* it's like *alabaster*. Wright, RS, 84. This may hint to the existence of a sim. 'as clear as alabaster'. See *White*, p. 232.

Clere as *berel* or *cristal*. Chaucer, W. Water *clere* as *berel* or *cristal*. Lydgate, CBK, 6. NED has exactly the same phrase fr. another source of c. 1450. Any *fresche reueir* as *clair* as *berial*. 1549, NED. *Beryl* in this case probably meant crystal or fine glass.

Step in, Nicholas; looke, is the coaste *cleare*? — Oh, as *cleare* as a *cattes eye*. *Puritan*, IV, ii. — Cat's eye, a precious stone, when cut *en cabochon* displays, on being held to the light, a peculiar fleating lustre, resembling the contracted pupil of a cat's eye. The word rec. in NED fr. the end of the sixteenth c.

As *clear* as a *carbunkle*. Skelton, *Magnyf*. (Lean, II, ii).

Fresh springing wells, as *christall neat*. Spencer, NED.

The water in the fountain *pellucid* as crystal. Stowe, UTC, 193.

Water *clere* as *cristale*. c. 1300, NED. Clerire pan cristal.

1450, NED. Now cryst our comely creature, clerer than crystal

clene. WCh, 330. Fulwell, *Like* &c., 1568 (Lean, II, ii). Wher

shud I find, that I seeke, A person clere as a Christal. G.

Harvey, 4 Letter, I, 211, 1592. Voyces as cleare as Christall.

Nashe, III, 239, 1593. The streame, as clere as christall

glas. Spenser, FQ, I, vii, 6. Used of water *ibid*. *Visions*

of *Bellay*, xii. His face more cleare than Christall glasse. Spencer, *Shep. Cal.*, July, 1, 158. The sim. is very frequent in Spenser. The ancies of Hebe clearer than Crystal. Burton, AM, III, 180. Taylor, PP, 35 (of water). Clear as fair Crystal to the view. Cowley, 1647, NED. Insts from Dickens, Ainsworth, Twain, Warren in W. DNL, 5/11, '12. That wire, the wording of which couched almost in cipher, was, nevertheless, as clear as crystal to the man's eye. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, 126, '14. See *Bright*, p. 224.

That soul, "as clear as diamond, and as hard," as he said to himself. Kingsley, WH, 434.

Its varnish, smooth and transparent as the finest glass. "Q", MV, 198.

As clear as glass. Davies of Heref., *Select Sec. Husb.*, 1616 (Lean, II, ii).

The harbour-bay was clear as glass. Coleridge, 1798, NED. There was nothing to be concealed between these two souls as clear as glass. Kingsley, WH 48.

As clear as any pearl. *Jacob and Esau*, 1568, (H., *Old Plays*, ii, 232; Lean, II, ii). Taverner, *Proverbs*, 1534 (Lean, II, ii).

As pure as a pearl. Tennyson, Henry James, W.

Phrases that sounded clear as silver, that were luminous as starry spaces. London, ME, 280. Cf. As clear and clean as silver. Russel, 1880, W.

The line of duty lay clear before her as a white road in summer heat. Baring-Gould, RS, 176. See *Plain*, p. 366 f.

Proofs as clear as fonts in July when We see each grain of gravel. Shak., KH VIII, I, i, 154.

As clear as spring-watter, Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. He's as clear as water yet. Hardy, UGT.

You see/ This bond of yours gives you here no jot of blood! —

The words are "A pound of flesh", — that's clear as mud.

Barham, II., 277. Well, I get her to set down and go over it ever so slow, and explain it all as clear as mud, and then she says, — Now, do you see, Sam, ain't it horrid pretty?

Haliburton, 1840, *Slang*. 'It was clear as mud', to use Mulvaney's expression. N. & Q., 9, VIII, 207. (Mulvaney, Charles P., minor poet and journalist, dead in 1885). I'll explain the whole thing to you as clear as mud in half a second. Allen, 1890, Milliken, 1892, *Slang*.

"Said in mock commendation of something that is by no means clear (also used as a burlesque intensive of 'clear')." NED. There are numerous sim. of the same kind in German: *Das ist klar wie Wurstbrühe* (also in Sw. *klart som korvspad*, of something that is self-evident), *Butter-milch, Drank*,

(distiller's wash,) *kaffeegrund* (coffee-grounds; also in D. & Sw.) *Schuhewiche* (boot-blackening), *Tinte* (ink) &c. (Wander), some of which may be double-barrelled like 'clear as mud'.

'Tis clear as air That your ambitious hopes . . . gave connivances

to it. Massinger, 1627, NED. In some [lakes] the water's bad, . . . in others again it's as *pure* as air. Benecke, PA, 150.

The thing is as *clear* as the *noonday*. Stevenson, TI, 27. It is as clear as noonday. *N. Age*, X, 3.

• As *clear as day*. Wager, *Rep. of Mary Magd.*, 1566 (Lean, II, ii). Now he denies a deed as clear as day. Day, BBB, Armin, *Nest &c.*, 1608 (Lean, II, ii). Don't you worry about the Waddy — that's as clear as day. Wells, *Kipps*, 110. Their light made the enclosure and the manor-house as clear as day. Doyle, R, 356. Common in all languages.

Thes are thyngys as *clere* to al men as the *lyght of the day*. Starkey, 130.

His lectures on botany were as clear as *daylight*. Darwin, 1862, NED. I've got witnesses — 'tis as clear as daylight. Phillpotts, WF, 24. Doyle, SF, 21. Th' Testament says as clear as daayleet. Wright, RS, 114. As clear as broad daylight. Overheard in Oxford. Used of a picture. In Sw., G., and Dutch.

Thys ys as *evident* as the *schynyng of the sone*. Starkey. He'll read it all as clear as *sunshine*. Phillpotts, WF, 337. Thys ys as clere as the *lyght of the sone*. Starkey.

That he was not a thief was as clear as the *sun at noonday*. Trollope, 1867, NED. Ray. As clear as the sun at noontide. H. As clear as the *summer's sun*. Shak., KH V, I, ii, 86.

A court as cleer as *pe sonne*. Langland, 1398, NED. Fair as the moon, clear as the sun. Song Sol., 6, 10. Cleerer than is the sun that shines so brightly. Morley, 1595, *Lied.*, 11. This is as clear as the sun, and needs no further illustration. Burton, AM, I, 399. Barham, IL, 241, 502, &c. Common in all languages.

Ne she was derk ne broun, but bright, And *cleer* as [is] the *monelight*. Chaucer, 1366, NED. The spectacle of life in death eternal came close and clear as moon-light. Phillpotts, SW.

My thoughts are *clearer* than unclouded *stars*. Dryden, *Oedipus*, VI, 169. Cf. You, the murderer, look as bright, as clear As yonder *Venus*. Shak., MND, III, ii, 61.

Her face . . . *Cleare* as the *skye*, withouten blame or blot, Spenser, FQ, II, iii, 22. His brow grew as clear as the blue sky above him. Lytton, 1853, NED.

His eye is as clear as the *heavens*. Emerson, 1844, NED.

I saw more clear than the blue heaven that they thought it best that I should die, Galsworthy, P, 68.

As *clear as light*. Middleton, *Triumphs &c.*, 1619 (Lean, II, ii).

Wolverstan made it as clear as light. Phillpotts, P, 26, WF, 426.

I saw it all in my fever — *clear* as that *flame* . . . Galsworthy, P, 68.

Plain.

What misterie lyes in this? — Nay, no misterie, tis as *plaine* as *Cupids forehead*. Dekker, OF, 100.

Those things that one would think were as *plain* (as we say) as the *nose on a man's face*. Borrough on Hosea, p. 25, 1652. More, 1655, NED. As plain as noses upon faces. Butler, H, II, 183. 'As witness my hand' — in great letters. Why, 'tis as plain as the nose on one's face. Congreve, 1695, NED. The gentleman has made it as plain as the nose in one's face, if one did but understand him. Graves, 1773, NED. It is as plain as the nose on your face for to see it. Clare, 1821, NED. Hardy, PBE, 17. London, DS, 215, SST, 198; Wells, WA, 170. "Can't you understand? Why, it's as plain as the nose on your face." "Is it?" retorted Polly . . . : "If I got a plain nose, why didn't you tell me so before?" Gissing, TT, 119. The sim. must have existed a good deal earlier, as appears fr. the following passage, O jest, unseen, inscrutable, invisible, As a nose on a man's face, or a weathercock on a steeple. Shak., TGV, II, i, 142.

As by a world of hints appears All *plain*, and extant, as your *ears*. Butler, H, II, 142.

The thing was as *plain* as the *loof of my hand*. Edb., 1828, EDD. *Loof*, palm, chiefly Sc. Ir., and n. Cy. Though the case were as plain my loof. Galt, 1830, NED.

I'll make your conduct plain to you as the *palm of your hand*. Mason, PK, 28. 'Plain pawm of hand' already in 1475, NED.

It's as *plain* as the *fingers of me hand*. Doyle, *Firm*, 66.

You griffs make the discoveries and haven't got the gumption to see them. My good Lord! It is as *plain* as *measles*. Masfield, *Multitude*, 280.

It's as *plain* as *parridge* that he was both a Roman and a Socinian. Sc., 1836, EDD. Very plain or explicit. *Plain*, simple, of food, rec. fr. 1655. The sense-development is the same as in 'clean as a penny, a carrot'.

The cow ran yeild, and it was as *plain* as *pease* that she was with calf. Moir, 1928, EDD. Sc.

It seems to me as *plain's* the *letter S*. Lnk, Murdoch, 1873. Cf. As crooked as S. Bridge, CP, 12. See p. 82.

As *plain* as *ABC*. — The only natural explanation is that 'plain' here stands for 'simple'. It has been suggested that it owes its origin to the hornbook, N. & Q., 9, X, 56. In this case 'plain' would mean 'level, smooth'. See p. 269. But cf. So for weak learners other works there be/ As plain and easy as are A. B. C. Taylor, *Praise of Needle*, 1640 (Lean, II, ii). Her "eye's speechless messages", *plainer* than *print*. Barham, IL, 270. Dickens, *Master Humphrey's Cl.*, *Bleak H.* (W). I seen

- old Flint in the corner there, behind you; as plain as print. Stevenson, TI, 17. The poodle dog . . . lifts a forefoot . . . and looking after the old man . . . says plain as print . . . Mason, PK, 74. A look which said as as plain as print, 'Have you not had enough?' Crocket, 1895, NED. Kipling (W). DNL, 1/3, '13. Cf. Heaven guide thy hand to print thy sorrows plain. Shak., TA, IV, v, 75. See 'as neat as print' p. 219.
- The glance said *plain as writing* . . . Mason, PK, 114. A shrug of the shoulders, which said "Zany" as plain as writing. *ibid.* 59.
- As *plain as that two and two make four*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. The notion is as clear as that two and two makes four. Collier, 1697, NED. Cf. When will you acknowledge that two and two make four, and call a pikestaff a pikestaff. Thackeray, 1848, NED. There must be numerous phrases referring to the same idea in English, as well as in other languages.
- Plain as a pipe-stem*. (Peoples', 17 cent. on). Utterly plain. — Nothing could be plainer than the stem of the white clay pipe from the cutty of the time of Charles II., to the long churchwarden — *tempo* George III. Ware.
- I'll make it as *plain as Peter Pasley's pike-staff*. Scott, RR, xxvi. As plain as a *pikestaff without gilding*. Cotton, *Virgil Trav.*, 1664, N. & Q. 8, X, 141.
- Playne as a *pyke staff*. Schacklock, *Hatchet of Her.*, 1565, N. & Q., 2, V, 411. A new game . . . that hath no policie nor knaverie, but plaine as pikestaffe. Greene, 1591, NED. I understand thee not. Be plain, my son. — As a pikestaff, mother. Dekker, *Witch of Edm.*, 1622, N. & Q., 8, XI, 33. In Scotland . . . religion is . . . pure and spotless without ceremonie, and plain as a pikestaffe without a surplice. Weever, 1631, NED. You make a doubt where all is as plain as a pikestaff. Bernard, 1641, *Slang*. I see, as plain as pikestaff, that 'tis no thing but a cork. Villiers, 1685. When a Reason's as plain as a Pikestaff. D'Urfey, 1719, To me it is as plain as a pikestaff. Tatler, 75, NED. Continual intercourse gave me opportunity of prying into the duke's inmost soul, . . . a masked battery to all mankind beside, but plain as pikestaff to me. Smollet, 1749, *Slang*. You've got my meaning as plain as a pikestaff. Hood, 1834, NED. The evidence against him was as plain as a pikestaff. Trollope, 1867, NED. The thing's as plain as a pikestaff. Besant, RMM, 18. There was my own spoor as plain as pikestaff. 1894, NED. Hope, PZ, 93. It reads as plain as pikestaff. MacLaren, YB. Consequently, as is plain as a pikestaff, we cannot possibly take you into the ship. Baring-Gould, BS, 285. That June would have trouble with the fellow, was as plain as a pikestaff. Galsworthy, MP, 27. Ray; Hewett, Dev. 11. Yks. EDD. Blakeborough, NRY, 240. Rather many modern insts of this sim. have been given, as a cor. of N. & Q. 8, IX, 140, maintained that it is

“falling into desuetude”. — *Pikestaff*, a long staff with a sharp ‘pike’ in it, rec. fr. 1356, is now, apart from the sim., in use in Sc. only. According to NED our sim. is “an alteration” of the earlier phrase *as plain as a packstaff*. See below.

He is no dissembler, his heart and tongue goeth together, He is as plain as a packstaff. Becon, 1542, *Slang*. For I intend to speak of wounds which to all men be as plain as packstaff. I say that wounds be manifest to all men. Bullein, *Bulw. of Def.*, 1562 (Lean, II, ii). Further insts of 1580, 1599, 1608, 1639 in Lean. To make all as plain as a packstaff. Bradford, 1657, *Slang*. As plain as any packstaff. Dryden, *Amphytryon*, VIII, 55. Jackson & Burne, 595. Chs. Lei. EDD. Our every day sim. So plain’s a packstave, which literature has corrupted into ‘plain as a pikestaff’. Elworthy, WSG, 552. Not, riddle like, obscuring their intent: But, packe-staffe plaine, uttring what thing they ment. Hall, 1597, NED. — It is hard to see where the corruption or alteration (NED) set in, as both sim. are very nearly twins in the language. The difference of the earliest dates is simply some twenty years. ‘As plain as a pikestaff’ is practically as old as the other form of the sim. But it is worth noticing that ‘as . . . *packstaff*’ is not rec. in Ray, and is not found in lit. since Dryden.

An honest true dealing seruant out of doubt, *plaine* as a *packsaddle*. Wilson, 1533, NED. Packsaddle rec. fr. 1388, NED. Plain perhaps originally-smooth.

As *plaan* as a *yatstoup*. — It denotes plainness of appearance and a thing not difficult to understand. A pikestaff was just a bare pole, and a gate-post is usually lacking of all ornamentation; and both are fairly conspicuous objects. Blakeborough, NRY, 243.

It was as *plain* as the *town-pump* that &c. Hardy, MC, 218. The sim. mentioned in NED but no inst. given. What is said of the gate-post above applies also to the town-pump.

‘Tis father’s voot and daughter’s voot to me, as *plain* as *houses*. Hardy, UGT, 24 See *Safe*, p. 352.

We see many times, might overcometh right — Were not you as good then to say the crow is white? And so, rather let fair words make fools fain, Than be plain without pleats, and plant your own pain. For were you as *plain* as *Dunstable highway*, Yet should ye that way rather break a love day Than make one thus. Heywood, PE, 69. Indeed for the devise, I grant it as plain as *Dunstable highway*. Hartington, 1596, NED. The following is also practically an instance of the sim., Here up the Alps (not so plain as to *Dunstable*) Hee’s carried like a cripple. Jonson, 1611, NED. Your reader’s tongue at euery leafe doth tyre: Then for a bayte of fresher breath doth stay, Each lync he thinks a lane, and doth desire, / It were as plaine as *Dunstable highway*; When I dare speak it at the

best man's table/ You deale as plaine as any Dunse is able." North Breton, ed. Grosart, i, xxvi. N. & Q., 6, VI, 377.

Quoting this sim. in the form 'as plain as Dunstable road' Fuller says, It is applied to things plain and simple, without either welt or guard to adorn them, as also to matters easy and obvious to be found without any difficulty or direction. Such this road; being broad and beaten, as the confluence of many leading to London from the north and north-west parts of this land. W. I, 167. And Ray adds, I conceive, beside this, there is an allusion to the first syllable of this name Dunstable; for there are other roads in England as broad, plain, and well beaten as this."

Cf. the following passages: Whilst pathes vnticed former steps vntroad, become as Dunstable more worne, more broad. 1614, NED. 'Tis of the making of Dunstable way, Plain without turning. D'Urfey, 1719, NED. I would advice him to return again as fast as he can into the old Dunstable Road of Moses and the future state for ever. Warberton, 1744, NED. Howbeit there be some good walkers among them, that walked in the kynges hyghe waye ordinarilye, vprightlye, playne Dunstable waye. Latimer, *Sermons*, 1549, ed. Arber p. 56. Men who used old and ancient simplicitie, and were (as man would say) plaine Dunstable. 1607, NED. Their Fore-fathers lov'd plain downright Dunstable. Bracken, 1787, NED. "Plain (downright) Dunstable" is used in this way of a person whose manners and words are so simple and straightforward that any dunce might understand him. — By misquotation from Heywood this sim. has crept into some collections in the form 'as plain as Dunstable by-way'.

Dunstable stands on an old Roman road, which may well have been plain, i. e. smooth, flat, well-beaten, at a time when other highways from a modern point of view were nothing but shapeless tracks. But as Ray said, there are other roads 'as well beaten as this'. There must be in the sim. an allusion to what he calls the first syllable of this name. In this respect the passage quoted in N. & Q., 6, VI, 377 is very interesting, as it gives, intentionally as it seems, the two parts of this word, as it was folk-etymologically divided: duns (dunce) and table. As yet no such sim. as 'plain, smooth, flat, level as a table' have been found, but the Chaucerian 'as plain as a board' (Lean, II, ii) seems to give a hint to the existence of a sim. 'as plain as a table', which may have helped to create our sim. Cf. the following sim.

To make the point as *plaine* as the *King's highway*. Hering, 1604, NED.

The why is *plain* as *way* to *parish church*. Shak., AYL, II, vii, 52. "Your chumage ticket", replied Mr. Roker; "you're up to that?"

"Not quite," replied Mr. Pickwick . . . "Why," said Mr. Roker,"

it's as *plain* as *Salisbury*." A pun on Salisbury Plain, where Plain is given the same sense as in packstaff-plain. It does not seem to be a modernism, for already in Udall, 1542, NED, we read 'Thom trouthe, or plain Sarisbury'.

It was as *plain* as *blessed daylight*. Gissing, FC, 6.

It was as plain as daylight that . . . *ibid.*, 60. Caine, EC, 104.

A case as plain, as clear as day. May, H, IV, i. [The situation] was as plain as day. Stevenson, TI, 53.

My *Minor* is as *plain* as the *Sun at Noonday*. Brown, 1700, NED.

It was plain as the sun at midday. Froude, 1879, NED.

There's nothing like plain speaking . . . so we'll be as plain as the sun. Phillpotts, WF, 210.

This affair of the waterpower had been a tangled business somehow, for all it seemed . . . as *plain* as *water's water*. Eliot, MF, 11.

Right, Sound.

Fear nothing. All's well and as *right* as my *leg*. Wilson, 1662, *Slang*. Lean quotes this fr. Shirley, *The Ball*, i, x, 1639, and Wilson, *Cheats*, II, iv, 1671. She's as right as my leg. Said of a whore. Ray. Jolly Ralph was in with Peg, Though freckled like a Turkey Egg, And she as right as is my leg, Shee gave him leave to towze her. D'Urfey, 1719, *Slang*. Does this refer to persons or things that are "right", only when they go wrong in some way or other? Or could it be used both ways like 'clear as mud'? See *Crooked*, p. 277.

As *right* as *pie*. Yks. Stf. War. Glo., EDD, Northall, FPh, 10. See *Good*, p. 5.

Right, Caxon, *right* as my *glove* — by-the-bye, I fancy that phrase comes from the custom of pledging a glove as the signal of irrefragable faith. Scott, A, 275. — In spite of Sir Walter's authority, one is far more tempted to associate it with the sim. 'to fit like a glove', p. 319.

As *right* as a *ribben*. Northall, WW, 276. Does this originally mean 'straight'?

Well, let her say 'no' as if she meant it, said L.; women can, if they like, eh? and then it will be as *right* as *ninepence*. Smedley, 1850, *Slang*. I thought I was as right as ninepence. Boldrewood, 1890, NED. Then find the cheeld right as ninepence. Cor. EDD. Northall, FPh., 10. See p. 152. "Implies a sense of comfort rather than security." J. H. Holden MacMichael, N. & Q.

As *right* as *twopence*. Lean, II, ii.

Nay, now I guess *right* as a *die*. Davies, *Sc. of Fol.*, 116, 1614 (Lean, II, ii). See p. 273.

You're about as *right side up* as a *billiard ball* . . . whatever you do. Wells, *Kipps*, 110.

Which is his methods *right* as a *fiddle*. Nashe, III, 113, 1596. Cf. Rimes . . . that go as *umpe* as a Fiddle with euery ballet-makers note. *ibid.* I, 265, 1592. See p. 152.

Sound as a *bell*. Chapman, *All Fools*, III, i, 1605. A man of holy zeal, sound as a bell, In all things perfect as the word itself. Sc., 1869, EDD. He came from Scotland sound as a bell on the five points of Calvinism. 1874, NED. He's a little dogmatic, perhaps, but clear and sound as a bell. Harrison, A, 139. She's as sound as a bell for me, that I'll swear. Hardy, LLI, 235 (undefiled). Used of anything that is perfectly sound, in perfect condition, without flaw or defect; orthodox in doctrine. The last sense of *sound* rec. fr. 1575. For other insts of the sim. see p. 152.

'I am *right*', thought Bunce, 'as any *trivet*.' Hood, 1835, NED. "Order a private room, and do not mention my name. You understand?" — "Right as a trivet, sir," replied Mr. Weller. Dickens, PP, I, 223. Go home! You'll find there all as right as a trivet. Barham, IL, 467, see also *ibid.* 287. As to the letter you're as right as a trivet. Dickens, 1865, *Slang*. She'll be right as a trivet, doctor, and you'll be right too. Caine, EC, 70. [said of a girl who was to be fixed up with a baker]. [Trivet] is the superlative absolute of right, when applied to fitness of construction. A machine repaired would be said to go so right's a trivet. Elworthy, WSG, 776. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. — For some other insts see p. 153. The sim. has not been found earlier than 1835, but as it appears both in the *Pickwick Papers* (twice) and in the *Ingoldsby Legends*, it must have been widely current already then, and have arisen a good deal before that time. Of his own use of sim. Barham says, "I don't call these similes new ones, But in metaphors, freely confess I am leaning/ To such, new or old, as convey best one's meaning. IL, 248.

Many explanations have been given. It is supposed to refer to the veteran campaigner Sir Thomas Trivet who escaped when a great part of the English fleet suffered shipwreck. N. & Q., 10, XII, 435. Ware says, "A famous etymologist has assumed 'Right as a trivet' to refer to a kitchen stove, whereas the 'trivet' is the last century pronunciation of Truefit, the supreme Bondstreet wig-maker, whose wigs were perfect — hence the phrase." The secretary of this well-known firm informed the compiler that he had heard of this rendering of the sim., and he thought it possible, as the firm was founded before our earliest insts. But, as has already been said, we are justified in expecting earlier insts to crop up. The most current senses of *trivet* date fr. late ME or early MnE.

And further, what Ware says of 'last century pronunciation of Truefit' is, as far as the compiler can make out, wholly legendary, as no such pronunciation seems to be known to anybody anywhere. Trivet has also been regarded as a corruption of *trevat*, an instrument for cutting the pile threads of velvet. The allusion would be to the cutting edge which must be as perfect as human skill can make it. N. & Q., 10, XII, 376. It is most commonly regarded as an originally three-legged stand for a pot. Of this trivet Skeat says, "The rectitude of the trivet consists in its rectangularity. If that sort of trivet which is placed on the upper bar of a grate, is not accurately made, the kettle that stands upon it will not stand even, but most inconveniently slouch forward or backward. The trivet, to be a good one, must be right-angled, or made "right and true." N. & Q., 3, XI, 361. This sort of trivet consisting of an iron frame with two feet resting on the front of the grate and a third on the back is probably not the origin of our sim., but rather the good old really three-legged one, which will invariably stand firm on its three legs. "There is a considerable amount of skill and accuracy required to insure [a four-legged] stool resting on all four legs at once. I remember hearing a carpenter, who had succeeded in doing this, make the observation, 'There it is as firm as a trivet.'" N. & Q., 3, XI, 360.

You are right, master, *right* as a *gun*. Fletcher, 1622, NED.
See *Sure*, p. 357.

(Right as a wall. — This is a sim. quoted by Lean, II, ii, fr. *Towneley Myst.* p. 64. The passage runs, "On ayther syde the see mon stand . . . right as a walle," which simply means, may the sea stand on both sides just like a wall. Another inst. of Lean's philology.)

Lede us þederward, as *ryght* as a *lyne*, Seynt Myghell! To þat heuently kyngdome. c. 1540, NED. Here *right* means straight, straightway, which sense it probably also has in the early MnE insts quoted by Lean. See *Straight*, p. 275.

Stod y in my stirop streyt . . . As *ryt* as *ramis horn*. 1327, NED. Do ryght and doe no wronge, As ryght as a rammes horne. Skelton, 1529, *Slang. ibid.* two further insts fr. Skelton. See *Crooked*, p. 278. This must be one of the double-barrelled sim. like 'clear as mud' &c.

'As *sound* as an *acorn*' is a local proverb applied to everything from a horse to a nut. w. Wor. Chs., EDD. Bridge, CP, 20 (achern). *Seound* as an achern. Lan., 1878, EDD. *Right* as an acorn. Waugh, 1865, Lan. Come aw think o's rect an' square. Rect as hatch-horn, Lan, 1865, EDD. — 'As sound as an acorn' refers to the same idea as 'sound as a nut'. 'As right &c. may refer to the same thing, or perhaps to the upright position of the acorns in their cups. See *Proud*, p. 85.

As *right* as *rain.*, Insts in W fr. Tauchn. Mag. 22, 69, Herman and Mary Gholmondeley. See p. 156. — Does it refer to the right, or straight, descent of a heavy downpour of rain?

Consistent with Facts, True.

Note. Many of the sim. given under the heading *Honest, Faithful* &c. p. 9 may probably also be used of statements that are in accordance with facts. Cf. also *Sure*, p. 354.

It is as *true* as the *living God*. Caine, D, xlv.

As true as *God is in heaven*. Ray. Cf. the Chaucerian, And certainly, as soth as god is king.

As *true* as *God's word*. Lean, II, ii.

As true as the *ould Book* itself. Caine, D., xviii.

As *true* as the *Creed*. Skelton, *Magnyf.*, 220 (Lean, II, ii).

These tidinges newe Whiche be as *trewe* As the *Gospell*. Skelton, 1529, NED. Lean has several sixteenth c. insts, but without any context. *Songs*, 110. It is strange, but as true as gospel, that at every new and full moon down we all go here with fever. Sir Charles Napier, *Life* &c., iii, 27. What the gentleman said . . . was as true as gospel, Baring-Gould, BS, 271. But it's true — true as gospel, s'elp me! *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, '14, 94, &c. Cf. What she says this night about her brother is Gospel-truth. Kingsley, 1862, *Slang*. Also G., Fr., and Sw.

This is euen as *true* as e'er was *text*. Sharpham, F, III, 59.

This principle is old, but *true* as *fate*. Dekker, HWh., Ia, xii.

It's a delightful book, and all true and real . . . *true* as the *Bank of England*. See *Safe*, p. 352.

It's as *true* as the *multiplication table*. Scott, RR, ii. Cf. Our conclusions . . . are as absolute as the truths of the multiplication table. Bowen, 1864, NED. *Multiplication table* rec. in NED fr. 1674.

Nicholas, I think, your name is. — *Nich.* *True* as the *skin between your brows*. Porter, TAW, 41. See p. 10.

As *true* as *clock*. Tusser, *Husb.*, p. 4, 1573. Does not this rather mean 'exact, punctual'?

True as the *dial* to the *sun*. Butler, H, II, 104. H.; Roget, s. v. *Veracity*.

Ez *true* ez a *die*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. Cf. You'll know me truer than a die. Gay, NS, where it means faithful.

Tis right; he has spoke as *true* as a *gun*, believe it. Jonson, 1633, *Slang*. See *Right*, p. 370, *Safe* p. 352.

Hodg. . . . hast hard gammer in deed, or dost but jest? *Gam.* Tis as true as steel. GGN, III, ii. He has almost undone us all, that is as *true* as *steel*. *ibid.* You have spoken as true

as steele. — Father, theres a proverb well applied. Porter, TAW, 41.

If thou lovest me too much It will not prove as *true* as *touch*. *Love me Little*, &c., 1570, Brewer, Dict., 1250. But this must mean 'reliable, lasting'. *Slang* has this sim. but without any inst. and renders it 'absolutely true', which may mean anything. It is probably not used of a true, i. e. correct, statement.

As *true* as the *needle to the pole*. Roget, s. v. *Veracity*. For the more common application of the sim. see p. 10.

As *true* as *I am standing* here. Lean, II, ii. As true as I stand here. *Slang*.

As *true* as *I live*. Shak., KH IV, III, i, 250. Twain, TS, 147.

As true as thou art alive. Palsgrave, *Acol.*, 1540 (Lean, II, ii), See *Sure*, p. 355.

There must be numerous other sim. of the same type as the last two sim.

Punctual.

As *punctual* as *Charley*. Thornton. — Charley was a popular name of the night-watch prior to the introduction of the present police force. The origin of the term is by some traced to Charles I, who reorganised the watch system of the metropolis in 1640. But the term is not recognized before 1812. How did this character become known in America? Or is it something else?

[The clock] is as *true* as the *Squire's time*. Hardy, UGT.

Punctual as the *counting-house* dial, which he maintained to be the best time-keeper in London, . . . the clerk performed the minutest actions of the day. Dickens, NN, xxxvii.

He's as *sharp to the hour* as the *haun o' a clock*. Ayr. EDD.

He came as *regular* every evening as the *town clock*. Kingsley, WH, 248.

The king's last years passed as *regularly* as *clockwork*. Walpole, 1789.

Hardy, UGT. "Q", MV, 232. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, &c.

There is the boy with the basket, *punctual* as clockwork.

Dickens, PP, 269. As regular as the *clock ticks*. Oxf. EDD.

They will bring me in 150 a year as regular as the clock.

Bennet, BA, 48. Hardy, HE, 473, &c.

In punctuality she was *inevitable* as a clock. Stowe, UTC, 188.

Sheridan . . . assured him . . . all his affairs were now proceeding with the regularity of clockwork. N. & Q., June, 1851,

502. Phrases referring to the regularity of clock and clock-

works are rec. in NED. fr. the end of the seventeenth c. Cf.

He payes and takes as *dulie* as the clock strikes. Nashe, II,

94, 1593.

As *right* as the *mail*. Northall, FPh., 10. True to time.

I am always so *punctual* as the *sun*. Phillpotts, SW.

Not in Accordance with Facts, False.

Note. See *False* &c. p. 20 ff.

As *true* as the *barber's news* on Saturday night. Middleton, *Roar. Girl*, III, iii. (Lean, II, ii). See p. 129, where the barber-surgeon is spoken of. From Roman times the barber's shop has been the place to which the town-talk converged and from which it spread again.

As *true* as a *curranto*. Lupton, *London and Country* &c., 1632 (Lean, II, ii). *Curanto*, or *corante*, newspaper; rec. fr. 1622.

That is as *true* as that *the cat crew and the cock rocked the cradle*. Bohn. Lean has another form of this prov. probably fr. Kelly, *Scot. Proverbs*, 1721, As true as that Biglam's cat crew and the cock &c.

As *true* as the *sea burns*. Warmstray, *England's Wound* &c., 1628, H.; Clarke (Lean II, ii). Cf. As like as [that] the sea burneth. Baret, *Alvearie*, 1580 (Lean, II, ii).

Slow.

As *slow* as *John Walker's chimes*. — There is an old rhyme to this effect: —

Young John Walker's chimes

They went so very slow

That young John Walker scarce could tell

Whether they went or no. N. & Q., 7, VIII, 368. The sim. is called a popular phrase.

To run as *fast* as *pudding can creep*. Armin, 1608, H. Lean quotes the same passage, but substitutes *swift*. Cf. It would vex a dog to see a pudding creep. *Slang*.

"I have heard '*slow as molasses in January*' several times in the United States. Molasses, being viscous, flows slowly; more viscous when cold; January usually cold. Hence the meaning." N. & Q., 12, III, 77.

As *slow* as a *horn-top*. — Excessively slow. Yks. Durh. EDD.

Go and hye the, as *fast* as a *snayle*. Heywood, 1533, NED.

A man may be as *slowe* as a *snaille*. Porter, TAW, 105. As slaw as a snail. Robinson, *Dial. of Leeds*, 1862, NED. Ez slow ez a snahl. Blakeborough, NRY. Cf. the Shak., The whining schoolboy with his satchel And shining morning face creeping like snail Unwillingly to school. AYL, II, vii, 145; and in OE, Me is snaeg! swiftra. NED, c. 1000. We have also 'snail-slow' in Shak., MV, II, vi, 46; also in MnE, DNL, 1900, NED, Phillpotts, 1901, Rnf., EDD.

Quick, Swift.

- The exotic had sprung up, *suddenly* as the *prophet's* gourd. Hardy, T, 489. See Jonah, 4, 6. This famous gourd is sometimes alluded to as the symbol of what is shortlived. See NED.
- Thither he flew as *swift* as *Mercury*. Nashe, III, 207. Cf. We give the Winds Wings, and the Angels too, as being the Swift Messengers of God, the nimble Mercuries of Heaven. Sancroft, 1678, NED.
- As *hasty* as *Hopkins*, that came to jail over night, and was hanged the next morning. Ray. — There may be some tale to back this sim., but no one seems to know the telling of it. Cf. *Aproprate, Fit, Welcome*, p. 318. There is an Amer., originally Kentucky, expression, 'Don't hurry, Hopkins,' applied to a person slow to meet an obligation. The supposed origin of this saying is given in N. & Q., 2, V, 211.
- As *quick* as a *lamplighter*. Roget. *Lamplighter* rec. fr. 1750. Cf. T'lass bein new, off sho went like a lampleeter ta do az shoo war bid. w. Yks., 1861, EDD. I did the hurdles over two or three garden walls, but so did the flyer who was on my tracks, and he drove me back into the straight and down to High Street like any lamplighter. Hornung, TN, 33. To run like a lamplighter. Lean, II, ii. 'Run like a l.' in NED fr. 1813. An allusion to the swiftness with which the lamplighter ran on his rounds.
- Faster than thought or time*. Shak., WT, IV, iv, 565.
- Haste me to knowe it, that with wings as *swift* as *meditation* or the thought of it, may sweep to my reuenge. Shak., *Hamlet*, I, v (quarto 1).
- Fleeter* than arrows, bullet, wind, *thought*. Shak., LLL, V, ii, 261. I'll haunt thee like a wicked conscience still, That mouldeth goblins *swift* as frenzy's thoughts. Shak., TC, V, x, 28.
- Ase swift ase is nu monnes poult, and ase is pe sunne gleam. 1225, NED. Wings more momentary swift than thought. Shak., TC, IV, ii, 13. Love . . . Courses as swift as thought. Shak., LLL, IV, iii, 326. I would as swift as thought flie this life. Sharpham, F, II, 520. Marston, *Insat. Count.*, III, ii, 1613 (Lean, II, ii).
- As *quick* as whut, as thought. *Cov. Myst*, p. 298 (Lean, II, ii). For to appeare as quick as thought. VW, 40. Change and cogge as quick as thought. Nashe, I, 340, 1593. *Wit Restor'd*, 1658 (Lean, II, ii), Thackeray, BL, vi. Stevenson, TI, 98; Hardy, DR, 127; Harrison, A, 148; Merriman, LH, 121, &c. — It is rather noteworthy that no inst. of this sim. has been found fr. 1658 to Thackeray. It is not in Ray, or Bohn or Hazlitt. In Sw. and probably in most other languages.
- The monster *swifte* as *word* that from her went, Went forth in haste. *Sudden* as *winking*, the ornery old cretur went all to smash. Twain, HF, 211.

You cry the same sense up and down again,/ Just like brass-money once a year in Spain: Take you in the mood, whate'er base metal come,/ You coin as *fast* as *groats* at Birmingham. Dryden, SF, IV, 412. Although no intensifying sim. in the proper sense of the word, this deserves to be chronicled here, as the comparison seems to have been used proverbially. Cf. I coined heroes as fast as Brumingham groats. Tom Brown, 1688, NED. "Birmingham was the term of reproach with which Monmouth's assumed titles and his party in general were ridiculed. In a verse of 1682 mention is thus made of Shaftesbury's medal: —

"The wretch thut stamped it got immortal fame;
'Twas coined by stealth, like groats at Birmingham."

See Dryden, Wks, IX, 210 f. Cf. Bromicham, particularly noted a few years ago for the counterfeit groats made here, and from hence dispersed all over the Kingdom. Miege, 1691, NED. Hence a synonym of sham.

Shrinke *faster* than *Northern cloth*. Nashe, I, 384, 1593. — What is said of the above comparison also applies here. The shrinking of the northern cloth is so often alluded to that it is well worth being registered here. Cf. Charing-crosse was old, and old things must shrinke as well as new Northern cloth. Dekker, *Westward' Ho* (Dekker's Wks, ed. Pearson, II, 294). Wits that were spent, and like northern cloth shrunk in the wetting. Taylor, NL, 23. Three great evils come out of the North; a cold Wind, a cunning knave, and a shrinking cloth. Bohn. This appears to be a very old saying. Lean quotes from Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, IV, iii, Three ills come out of the north, a cold wind, a cunning knave, and a sleezy cloth. *Sleezy*, sleazy, not rec. before 1644, means either 'rough from projecting fibers', or 'thin, flimsy'. An old Sw. proverb said, *Stoor Lofwen och okrympt Kläde minskas alltid*. (great promises and unshrunk cloth always fall short). "Out of the north All ill comes forth" was the opinion, not altogether unfounded upon experience, from the border war times, of Englishmen generally and Northerners especially.

Your dayes are as *swyft* as a post, yea, *swifter* then a *weauers shettle*. Nashe, Copied from the Bible, Job, 7, 6. See below. A feller with an eye like hawk, and *quick* as a *steeltrap* for a trade. 1830, Thornton.

Than schal your soule up to heven skippe *Swifter* than doth an *arwe out of a bowe*. Chaucer, MaT. Some tye bones to their feete and under their heeles, and shoving themselves by a little picked staffe doe slide as swiftly as a birde flyeth in the air, or an arrow from the cross bow. Stowe's *Survey of London*, 1603. Swift as an arrow from the bow. Drayton, *Nymphidia*, 1627 (Lean, II, ii). Look how I go; Swifter than arrow from

a Tartar's bow. Shak., MND, III, ii, 110. Cf. All as sudden As arrows from a Tartar's bow, and speeding. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Humourous Lieut.*, I, i, 1647. — Swift as an arrow from a bow he flew. Butler, H, III, 46. They can swim as swift as an arrow can be shot out of a bow. Walton, CA, 71. Like an arrow swift he flew Shot by an archer strong. Cowper, 1782, NED. Cf. More swift than shot out of an archer's bow. *Paradise of Dainty Dev.*, 1576 (Lean, II, ii). — No insts of the sim. in PE have been found, except in Roget, but allusions to the swiftness of an arrow are not unknown, e. g., Kipps with the speed of an arrow leaving the bow, would start hanging wrappers over the fixtures. Wells, *Kipps*, 44. — The arrow has been used as the symbol of great speed in many languages from very ancient times. It is not unfrequently coupled with other words denoting great swiftness. See e. g. Shak., LLL, V, ii, 260. Cf. also, *Ocior et jaculo, et ventos aequante sagitta*. Virg., *Aen.*, x, 248. See Heise, GS, 146. The dinghy was travelling with us as *fast* as a *canon-ball*. Conrad, *Romance*, 248. Had she affections and warm youthful blood, She would be as swift in motion as a *ball*. Shak., RJ, II, v, 13.

[Wenches'] conceits have wings *Fleeter* than arrows, *bullets*, wind, thought, swifter things. Shak., LLL, V, ii, 260.

It flew as *swift* as a bullet towards his ribs. Doyle, AG, 187. But two months later falled the tag-end of the history, so *sudden* as a *gun-shot*. Phillpotts, 1901, Dev., EDD. Also in s. Lan., *ibid.*

Throughout euery Region Went this foule trumpes soun As swift as *pelet* out of gonne. Chaucer, 1384, NED.

I go away/ As swift as *lead*, sir. Shak., LLL, III, i, 52. (Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow? — Is that lead slow which is fired from a gun? *ibid.*, 54, 57).

And make them skirr away, as swift as *stones* Enforced from the old Assyrian slings. Shak., KH V, IV, viii, 56.

Your dayes are as *swyft* as a *post*, yea, swifter then a weuers shettle. Nashe, II, 90. The first part of this is taken fr. Job, 9, 25. Cf. All these things are passed away like a shadow, and as a post that passeth by. Northbroke, DD, 183.

My pen was as swift as the *post-horse* of the towne. Nashe, I, 100, 1589. Cf. the adverbial use of *post* in connection with verbs of motion and in the seventeenth c. also with other verbs. 'Twere no good manners to speak hastily to a gentlewoman, to talk *post* (as they say) to his mistress. Shirley, 1632, *Slang*. And the adv. (sb. and adj.) *posthaste*, which according to NED has arisen fr. the old direction on letters 'Haste, post, haste!'

In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel *faster* than a *stage-coach*. Goldsmith, SSC,

215. Cf. The horse of quick work, the stage-coach horse and the poster. 1838, NED. Modern conveyances, except the American "greased lightning" (see p. 379), do not seem to have entered the domain of similes.

He would cracke neckes as *fast* as a *cooke cracks egges*. Nashe, II, 237.
His wife would often try the density Of his poor skull, and strike with all her might, As *fast* as *kitchen-wenches strike a light*. Barham, II, 71.

He can talk French as *fast* as a *maid can eat blackberries*. Hardy, RN, 130.

Wonne townes, Noure, as *fast* as thou canst *make apples*. Udall, RRD, 22. See *Sure*, p. 354. There are probably many other sim. of the same type as the last four.

But hetherward she comes as *fast* as her *legs can her carry*. GGN, II, ii. As fast as her legs will carry her. Nashe, *Unfortunate Trav.* Swift, PC; Roget. The following inst. of this sim. is rather interesting: He ranne away no faster than his legges could carye him. Proctor, 1555, NED. Cf. also, As fast as my hand can trot. Nashe, I, 195.

As fast as one's *heels* will carry one. Roget.

And he's *quick* as a *cat*, and instantly obedient. London, MF, 154. Charley was quick and alert as a cat. *ibid.*, FP, 67.

Turning as *swift* as a cat. Conrad, *Romance*, 248.

They affyrme them to bee *swifter* then *greyhoundes*. Eden, 1555, NED. To ren as swiftly as the greyhound yonder go'th. Heywood, PE, 118. Cf. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth, it catches. Shak., MA, V, ii. The swiftness of the greyhound is often alluded to. An inst. is the Dev. phrase, Her rinnth like a *long-dog*. Hewett, Dev., 13.

As *fast* as a *dog will lick a dish*. Heywood, PE, 78. See *Easy*, p. 347 and *False*, p. 23.

For he was *swift* as any *Bucke* in chace. Spenser, FQ, VII, vii, 52. Their feet unshod, their bodies wrapt in rags, And both as *swift* on foot as chased *Stags*. Spenser, FQ, II, xi, 23. Thy greyhounds are as swift As breathed stags. Shak., TS, Ind., ii, 44.

But he, more speedy from them fled, more *fast* Then any *Deere*. Spenser, FQ, VII, vi, 52. They were fifteen warriors in all . . . as *swift-footed* as deer. Doyle, R, 373.

Except you run swifter than a *Hart*. Dekker, OF, 113.

Flying *fast* as *roebuck* through the fen. Spenser, FQ, II, x, 7. Cf. Never went roe-bucks swifter on the downes. *George a Greene*, Dodsley, I, 202.

As swift as the *roe*. *Ch. Plays*, i, 186, 1328 (Lean, II, ii). Men of armes, which . . . were as swift as the Roes vpon y^e mountaines. Coverdale, 1535, NED.

Thy greyhounds are . . . *fleeter* than the ro. Shak., TS, Ind., ii, 44. Their Coursers, than the Mountaine Roe More fleet.

Somerville, 1735, NED. Cf. I, my good Lord, being roefooted, outstript him in running. Chettle, 1631, NED.

He ran upstairs as *quick* as a *squirrel*. Hardy, TM, 55. See p. 159. [The cossacks] were as *swift* as *eagles* and as elusive. M. Pemberton, *Cassel's Mag. of Fiction.*, 76, '14. The powerful flight of the eagle is proverbial, and is mentioned already in the Old Testament, Swiftere then eglis his hors. Jer., 4, 13, 1382, NED. His horses swifter than eagles. AVE.

As *swift* as *swallowes* on the waves they went [of dolphins]. Spenser, FQ, III, iv 33. For he was swift as swallow in her flight. Spenser, FQ, V, i, 20. See also *ibid.*, II, vi, 5 (of a ship). Now to the Goths as swift as swallow flies. Shak., TA, IV, iii, 173. Withals (Lean, II, ii). Cf. also, True hope is swift and flies with swallow's wings. Shak., KR III, V, iii, 23.

Greyhoundes he hadde as *swifte* as *fowel in flight*. Chaucer, *Prol.* CT, 190. The following sim. also refer to the swiftness of a bird:

Kitty's heart beat *quick* as a *fluttering bird*. Castle, IB, 44.

Fluttering her hand as quickly as a bird's wing. Hardy, RN, 500.

Montigny leaped up, *swift* as an *adder*. Stevenson, NAN, 294. The darting forth of the adder is frequently alluded to.

He grew so perverse and so slippery in his conclusions, that he proued as *quick* as an *eele* in euery quirke. Nashe, I, 98. See *False*, p. 24.

As *swift* as a *bee*. Draxe, 1633 (Lean, II, ii).

The water drops from you as *fast* as *hops*. Porter, TAW, 103. Ray. — We have already had 'as mad as hops', p. 93, and there is also 'as thick as hops', p. 395. To what has been said of the former phrase may be added that a simple, although not fully satisfactory, solution of the difficulty is to explain the sim. as an ellipse, 'as mad as hops (could make one)', meaning originally 'mad-drunk'. 'As thick as hops' is still more easily explained as an allusion to the thick-standing rows of hops as one sees them in Kent and elsewhere. But how are we to explain 'fast as hops'? It might be regarded as a case of sense-shifting, 'fast' originally meaning 'firm' and alluding to the bine firmly entwined round its pole. Such sense-shiftings are in no way uncommon, see e. g. p. 321, but we do not *know* that *fast* had this sense, and almost any other plausible solution might be preferable. Of course it may be, as NED thinks, the other word *hop*, a short spring or leap. But although we have the dial. saying 'all of a hop,' suddenly, it is not in accordance with the nature of a sim. Its character of an intensive requires that the second member shall be represented by some word that is emphatic or, so to speak, visible enough to impress itself upon the speaker's mind. The number of cases in which the second member is formed by an abstract noun are extremely rare, 'as quick as thought',

'as hot as love' and 'as cold as charity' being some of them. Altogether, *hop*, leap, is too poor a word to serve. But what is it then? The compiler very much suspects the existence of some other word hop. There seems to be some sort of connection between hops and harlots. First we have the more accidental collocation in the word hopharlot < hapharlot, where hap < ME happen means wrap. We read further in Middleton, *Michaelmas Term*, Induction, 1607 (Lean, II, ii), Come they up thick enough? — O, like hops and harlots. In Dutch we have in Kilian, *Hoppe, obscena, spurca mulier*. The following early sixteenth c. sim. is also of some interest, *De Meysjes benne . . . so licht als Hop*. But this *Hop* is said to be the bird *Upupa epops*, remarkable chiefly for its large movable crest and dirty nest. Does it behave in any way that makes it the apt symbol of what is light and swift? But there is no need to import any Dutch name for this bird, as there is an old English, hoopoe or hoop. Of this bird Holland writes, The houpe or Vpupa . . . is a nasty and filthy bird, but a goodly faire crest or comb it hath. 1601, NED. Because of this filthiness and nastiness it has also been called dunghill-cock. It is the same thing that according to dict. has occasioned in D. the secondary use of the word as applied to a woman. Cf. also the D. sim. *stinken gelijk een hop*. It is not altogether impossible, though not very likely, that a D. phrase '*zoo licht als hop*' may have been introduced and turned out 'as light, nimble, swift &c. as hop(s)', where hops, not being understood, was associated with existing words. Further information required.

Make up pretty things out of her head as *fast as sticks a-breaking*. Hardy, HE, 47. Cf. You won't pay her any more attentions, for you shall come out of this place in quick sticks. Besant, RMM, 375.

All was as *quick as electricity*. Hardy, FMC, 214. *Electricity* fr. 1734, NED.

Quick as flash, de Catinat had caught up the axe. Doyle, R, 210. Quick as flash I darted out from my hiding-place. *ibid.*, AG, 151. Phillpotts, SW.

The dum-dum as *rapid* and effective as the *thunderbolt*. London, GF, 189. Swift as *thunderclap* follows flash, retribution descended. Castle, IB, 266.

More *hastefully* than *thunder* falleth fro heuen. *Mel.*, 281.

If I didn't fetch old dug-out through slicker than snakes and *faster* than a *greased thunderbolt*. 1837, Thornton.

He spoke as *quick* as '*greased lightning*'. Thornton, 1833. Quicker than greased lightnin', My covies, I was dead. 1848, *Slang*. Frequently overheard in Oxford in 1914. — There are numerous other expressions in which *like greased lightning* denotes great speed: "I will come," as the Americans say,

“like greased lightning.” T. Hood, 1842, Thornton. The dog, that made himself into a greased streak of lightning, as a coloured woman described him, bounded on. 1888, Thornton. He is whiskered all over town like greased lightning. 1890, *Slang*. He measured again, and then off went his coat like greased lightning. 1891, *Slang*, &c.

This Americanism has spread not only to England, but is well known in Sweden (*som en oljad blix*), Germany (*ein geölter Blitz*), and Holland (*de gesmeerde bliksem*). Some people have regarded this as an allusion to Amer. express trains called “greased lightnings”. There may have been railway trains in America in 1833, but being rather risky and doubtful and not very much known, they cannot have created the term. It is a piece of humorous intensification of ‘quick as lightning’. The simple every-day lightning may be swift enough for continental people, but it does not satisfy an American, who wants “big proportions” and something “real” quick. He must put some more go into the world’s machinery, and therefore he greases his lightning to make it extra quick. And in this way he has managed to get into an every-day sim. a bit of his active mind with its respectless humour and a touch of his machine-cut life.

The twinkle came into her eyes, and vanished again as swiftly as *sheet-lightning*. Smith, *Strand Mag.*, 61, ‘17.

Whilst I in curses, *swifter* in pursute/, Then *winged lightning*, execrate your soles. VW, 18.

Be swift like *lightning* in the execution. Shak., KR II, I, iii, 79.

Swift as lightning to the combat flies. Pope, *Rape*, V, 38.

As *quick* as lightning. Butler, H, II, 39. Dickens, NN, xlv.

We’ll snatch that box quicker’n lightning. Twain, TS, 212. *ibid.*, 183, HF, 46. Castle, IB, 112. London, R, 71. Hewett, Dev., 12, &c.

The allusion was *transient* as lightning. Hardy, T, 105.

As *sudden* as lightning. s. Lan., EDD. Cf. It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden, Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be Ere one can say ‘It lightens’. Shak., RJ, II, ii, 118. — ‘Quick as lightning’ is a very old sim., and is found in Virgil and other Latin poets, and being a thing of common occurrence, it is frequent in all times and languages. See e. g. Heise, GS, 126.

Lo! ther the rais, running *swift* as *fyre*. Douglas, 1513, NED.

Quick as *light* Bob and Mike sprang forward. White, BT, 17.

Well, said M., *swift* as light. *ibid.*, 155. Cf. It advanced with the rapidity of light. Phillpotts, AP, 218.

Goeth more *swift* away than doth the *summer shade*. *Paradise of Dainty Dev.*, 1576 (Lean, II, ii). War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it, Making it momentary as a sound, Swift as a *shadow*, short as any dream; Brief as the lightning in

the collied night. Shak., MND, I, i, 42 f. Swift as a shadow. DNL, 21/3, '13.

The waters were *rapid* as the shadow of a cloud. Hardy, T, 133. Cf. And thus I chaunge in euey shoure, And fle away ryght as a shade. c. 1400, NED.

“Hold,” cried the captain, *quick* as an *echo*. Stevenson, TI, 67. Be then as *swift* as *whirlwind*, and as boisterous in tossing all thy clothes in a rude heap together. Dekker, GH, 25.

In battle swifter than the *northern wind*. Taylor, NL, 47.

Sent her winged thought, more swift then *wind*. Spenser, FQ, V, vi, 7. About the wood go swifter than the wind.

Shak., MND, III, ii, 94. He sees a dun horse come swifter than the wind. Barham, IL, 247.

As *fast* as the wind. Lean, II, ii. Cf. *windswift* in Shak., RJ, II, v, 8. Cf. also, Oh the times, when my tongue have ran as fast upon the Scene, as a Windebanke pens over the Ocean. SC, 4.

As *fast* as *hail*. Withals, 1521 (Lean, II, ii). The carabines of the troopers, that rappit aff the tane after the tother as fast as hail. Scott, RR, xxxvi. See *Common, Numerous* &c. p. 398.

Once more thus winged by horrid fate, I come/, *Swift* as a falling *meteor*. Dryden, *Oed.*, VI, 236. Here they are Swift as a star, / They shot in mid air. Barham, IL, 541. Cf. Such is Human Life; . . . It glimmers like a meteor and is gone. Rogers, 1819, NED, and the term ‘meteorlike.’

Running.

Note. The following sim. are more descriptive than intensifying in the proper sense of the word, but they have been given here, as they imply an intens. of the underlying idea of going or moving swiftly. There are probably many more sim. than these.

He'll run like a *redshank* with the news to the castle. Edgworth, 1804, NED. Off it's goan agean like a red shenk. Yks., 1847, EDD. He ran . . . like a ridshank. Wm., 1877, EDD. He cut like a redshank when Aw turnt up. 1896, Lan. EDD. They're off like redshanks. Lan. Current also in some parts of Ireland, otherwise chiefly in north western dial. — According to NED this refers to the redshank, a wading bird of the snipe family. But as these birds are not uncommon in other parts of England, and the sphere of the phrase is restricted to those parts of England that witnessed the ignominious retreat of the Scotch redshanks in 1745, the sim. is far more likely to refer to them than to the birds. “The saying has

been commonly used in Lancashire ever since the retreat of the bare-legged Scotch rebels". EDD.

To run like a *lamplighter*. See p. 374.

'E run like a *knife*, you bet. Pain, DO, 48.

To run like a *whutreek*. Descriptive of something going fast upon its legs. Nhb. EDD.

Trembling.

Note. As most of the following sim. refer to a nervous or frightened state of the human body, they might with equal justice have been given in Ch. II. See also *Nervous*, (*Appendix*).

Her soft frame *quivered* like a *jelly*. Mason, PK, 26.

Hadst thou been ought but gossamer, feathers, air, So many fathoms down precipitating, Thou'dst *shiver'd* like an *egg*: but thou dost breathe; hast heavy substance. Shak., KL, IV, vi, 49. This must be an allusion to a soft-boiled egg deprived of its shell.

To *quake* like an *oven*. Ray. In what way does, or did, an oven quake?

You'd *shiver like* a *dog* in a briar path on a warm day in July. White, BT, 65. Cf. the G. *zittern wie ein nasser Hund*. Also Sw.

[The monster] *trembled* like a *lamb* fled from the pray. Spenser, FQ, III, vii, 36.

Lyk an *aspen leaf* he *quok* for ire. Chaucer, *Sompn. Prol.*, 3, NED.

And quok as dooth the leefe of aspe grene. *ibid.*, LGW, 2645.

To quake like an aspen leaf. Bullein, *Bulw. of Def.* Ray.

Those lily hands *Tremble*, like aspen-leaves, upon a lute.

Shak., TA, II, iv, 44. Cf. I shake an 'twere an aspen leaf.

ibid., KH IVb, II, iv, 99. I tremble (as they say) as 'twere an

aspen leaf. Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, III, i. Like an aspen

leaf he trembled. Southey, 1829, NED. Trimmel'd like an

espen leafe. *Yorkshire Dial.*, 10. Thur lass noo began teh

shadder and trimmel like esp leaves. Sargison, 1881, Cum. EDD.

Bevering like an *apsen tree*. — Aps is a form current in several

southern and some few midl. counties. *Bever*, shiver, occurs

in many Sc. and E. dial., but can hardly be said to have

existed in lit. MnE.

And like an *Aspin shakes* his coward ioyns. VW, 27. Shaking

like a asp. Chs. EDD. — Why the aspen trembles, is told by

Mrs Hemans, in her *Wood Walk*, see Folkard, PL, 503; see also

ibid., 229. — This sim. probably in most European languages.

Sw.: *Darra, skälva, som ett asplöv*. G.: *Er bibent unde wagate*

vor sorgen als ein espin loub. MHG. *Das Mädchen zitterte wie*

eine Espe. Grim, where further insts are collected with some

other verbs beside *zittern*. Fr.: *Tout le cuer me tremble Aussi comme foille de tremble*. 13th c. *Il se mue et tourne plus que feuille de pouplier*. 15th c., &c. — It must be remembered that the L. name of the tree is *Populus tremula*.

Mi fleshe it *qwakes* as *lefe on lynde*. Townel. *Myst.*, 303. See *Light*, p. 298.

I *tremble* as doth a *leaf upon a tree*. 1413, NED,

As *restless* as the *last leaf upon tree*. Hardy, W, 311.

All was unstable, *quivering* as *leaves*, evanescent as lightning. Hardy, RN, 19. Cf. *Tremble comme la feuille en l'arbre*. 15th c. *Il tremble comme la feuille*. Rousseau. *Beven gelijk en blad*.

An oaken plant . . . which he so sternly shooke, that like an *hazell wand* it *quivered* and *quake*. Spenser, *FQ*, VI, vii, 24.

Bev'rin' like at *shakin' reed*. A Scott, 1808, NED. Cf. D., *Beven gelijk en riet*.

Motionless, Still, Quiet.

For some other sim. with *quiet* see *Calm* &c. p. 60. Some of the following sim. with *still* refer to silence just as much as to absence of motion.

Motionless as *death*. Galsworthy, CH, 28.

The house was as *still* as death. Twain, HF, 15. (i. e. no one stirring). She remained still as death while one might count ten; then she turned her back upon him. Hardy, Lao., 450. Silent and still as death. Hardy, MC, 17.

Dan lay as *quiet* as the *dead*. Caine, D, xxxiii. Cf. The village was quiet as you came through? — Quiet as my poor husband in his grave. Merriman, LH, 94.

As *still* as the dead. Hardy, FMC.

Hah! No more moving? *Still* as the grave. Shak., Oth., V, ii, 94.

As *quiet* as the grave. Lean, II, ii.

As *still* as one in *sleep*. Barclay, *Ecl.*, ante 1530 (Lean, II, ii). Stretched himself out and went to sleep *peaceful* as a *child*. See *Sleeping*, p. 167. Quiet as a child, p. 61.

The tranter stood *still* as a *sentinel* at the challenge. Hardy, UGT, 56.

Motionless as a *model*. Hardy, FMC.

As *quiet* as a *clock*. Yks. *Folk-Lore*, XLV, 430. See p. 61.

I feel tempted to sit *still* as a *chimney* and snooze to my dying day. Kingsley, WH, 346.

Dare was standing as *still* as a *caryatid*. Hardy, Lao., 238.

The stranger smiled again and remained *immovable* as a *statue*.

Dickens, PP, I, 307. [They] lay in front . . . immovable as statues. *Strand Mag.*, 92, '17.

Standing *motionless* as a statue. Smollet, RR, 49. Harraden, I, 444. A little negro boy . . . who stood as motionless as a small swart statuette. Doyle, R, 103.

Still as a *statue* he stood. Byron, 1823, NED. W. has insts fr. Longfellow, Dickens, Gaskell. Hope, RH, 85; Galsworthy, MP, 216, &c. — These standard forms are sometimes added to in various ways to make them better suit the context, and to render them more emphatic: Still as a garden statue. Ch. Brontë, W. Horse and rider remained perfectly still, like an equestrian statue set up on the edge of a precipice. Conrad, *Romance*, 377. I would stand as intrepid, as firm, and as unmoved, as the statue of a Roman gladiator. Dryden, L, VI, 100. Breathing heavily, but as rigid and motionless in other respects as if he had been a brazen statue. Dickens, NN, lvi. The cat that was chasing the little wee thing/ Lay couched as a statue in act to spring. Barham, IL, 39. Mrs. L. had stood the whole time perfectly motionless, a pale and scarcely breathing statue. Kingsley, WH, 435, &c. — *Statue* is very frequently used as a type of absence of movement. This use of the word rec. fr. Caxton in NED.

Aw'll stand here as *still* as a *yate stump*. Lan. EDD. *Yate stump*, yate stoup, (see p. 44, 60), gate-post.

Ez still ez a *finger-post*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.

Still as a *post*. Roget. Cf. She could not stand, yet she stirred no more than a post. *Long Meg*, 7. See *Deaf*, p. 173, 7.

Bot þar he stod als *still* os *stake*. 1300, NED. He stood as still as any stake. Spenser, V, iii, 34. Cf. I fro hire go Ne mai, bot as it were a stake, I stonde. Gower, 1390, NED.

Motionless as a *log*. Cf. *Sleeping*, p. 169.

The centre [of a pool] *still* as *jet*. Blackmore, LD, 42. See *Smooth*, 270.

As *still* as a *millers horse* when he's loading. Rowley, *Match at Midn.*, IV, 1633 (Lean, II, ii). But compare *Ill-mannered*, p. 105, *mill-horse*, 125, *Sober*, p. 190.

As *quiet* as a *sucking lamb* Close by the window will I rest all night. Barry, RA, V, i. I will sit as quiet as a lamb. Shak., KJ, IV, i, 80. Lying by her side broad awake and as quiet as a lamb. Tatler, 243. Eliot, MF, 349 (of a dog). See p. 65.

As *calm's* a *mouse*. Ferguson, ante 1598, Sc. Prov. (Lean, II, ii). As *quiet* as a mouse in cheese. Torriano, 1666 (Lean, II, ii). See *Silent*, p. 387. Cf. the G. *Still als de Mûs in de Mâlkist* (as the mouse in the bin), Wander; and the D. *zijn eigen stil houden gelijk 'n muis in 't meel*. (like a mouse in the meal) Stoett, NS, II, 55.

Rebecka's rights once obtained we will be as quiet as mice. Miall, 1843, NED. She looks as quiet as a mouse. Eliot, 1859, NED. [The place is] as quiet as mice. *Strand Mag.*, &c. Hewett, *Still* as a mouse. Roget. Well, I gets up, a-wondering,

and goes downstairs — nobody around; everything as still as a mouse. Twain, HF, 151. Blakeborough, NRY, in daily use. This form mentioned in NED, but no inst. given. — “As still as a mouse (Peoples’ 18 cent.). Quite still. But a mouse is never still! Good example of bad translation. No doubt from the half Dutch court of William III. Mr. Rees (U. S. A.) says very keenly: ‘Expressive of noiseless action. The Dutch phrase is evidently its origin: *als stille als in mee hose*, as still as one in his stockings — a listener.’ Or it may be ‘Still as Amos’, though what Amos is beyond ken.” — Good example of bad philology! The only thing of value in these lines is the statement that this form of the sim. dates fr. the eighteenth c. It is no doubt much earlier, probably about as old as the earliest form, if not older, as *calm* is not rec. before c. 1400. And if we are to go across the Channel for the origin of this sim., we have something far better to look to than Mr. Rees’s very doubtful Dutch, i. e. the D. sim. *Zoo stil als een muis*, which dates already from the Middle Ages. It is also in G. *Er ist so still wie eine Maus* (see above), and the cp sim. *mausestill*, and in Sw., and Fr., *Tranquille comme une souris*. (Stoett, NS, II, 54). But the sim., or something very like it, must have existed already in the 4th c.: *Tanta in Oriente quies fuit, ut, quemadmodum vulgo loquebantur, nullus mures rebelles audiret*. Vopiscus (Stoett, *ibid.*), Wander explains, ‘Owing to its fearfulness the mouse keeps absolutely still at the very least noise.’ But does it not rather refer to the noiseless motion? ‘As still, i. e. silent, as a mouse’ must be the origin. A widening of the sphere to include other senses of still and its synonyms is a natural development.

I stood as *stille* as dased *quayle*. 13., *E. E. Allit. Poems*, NED. Cf. Thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille. Chaucer, CIT, 1150. See ‘Deaf as a doted doo,’ p. 174.

As *still* as a *bee*. — This may refer to the quiet humming of the insect on a bright, calm day, which does make the prevailing peace more impressive. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. Cf. No water came, and the organ notes, faint as a bee’s hum, rolled in as before. Hardy, JO, 510.

Winds calm, and water *quiet* as a *well*. Taylor, MV, 28. See *Smooth*, 270.

Gregorij stod *stille* so *stone*. c. 1300, NED. ‘As still as (any) stone, is very common in ME. Several insts in Chaucer, *Townel. Myst.*, Gower. — W. has half a dozen insts fr. the first half of the fourteenth c. to Bunyan. NED an inst. of 1450. *Song*, 112 (of women). There they sit as still as stones in the street. GGN, I, ii. Wherewith astonisht, still he stood as sencelesse stone. Spenser, FQ, II, vi, 31. He sat as still as

a stone. Twain, TS, 113. Cf. the OE *stane-still*, which is obs. in st. lit. E., but still current in mod. Sc. dial. — The absence of insts fr. Bunyan to modern times is rather remarkable.

So stood these twaine, *unmoved* as a *rocke*. Spenser, FQ, I, ii, 16. Cf. The hand that held the candle was as steady as a rock. Harwood, 1865, NED. See p. 62. I poked along well on to an hour, everything still as rocks and sound asleep. Twain, HF, 61.

Euere heo lai *stille* as an *hul*. 1305, NED.

The form stood *motionless* as the hill. Hardy, RN, 14.

Silence.

Note. For some sim. belonging to the same sphere of ideas see *Dumb, Mute*, p. 177 ff. and *Secretive*, p. 129.

I thought my house was as *quiet* as a *church*. Hardy, TM, 79.

The room was as silent as a *tomb*. Hardy, FMC, 349. The whole street was still as silent as the tomb. Hornung, TN, 189. Cf. No murmur broke The silence of that tomb-like spot. Hirst, 1845, NED.

It was as *peaceful* as the grave might be. *Strand Mag.*, 92, '17.

The house was *silent* as the *grave*. Dickens, NN, lvi. His huge side [of a man-of-war that did not shoot] stood silent as the grave. Kingsley, WH, 488. Everything was silent as the grave. Hardy, FMC, 451, W, 307, TT, 38. I'll be as silent as the grave. Stevenson, TI, 28. The battle roared behind me, but in front all was as silent as that grave in which so many brave men should shortly sleep. Doyle, AG, 277. Yoxall, RS, 250.

But as we often see, against some storm A silence in the heavens . . . The bold wind speechless and the orb below As *hush* as *death*, anon the dreadful thunder Doth rend the region. Shak., *Hamlet*, II, ii, 461. *Hush*, silent, rec. fr. this passage and onward. Everything else [except the clock] was *silent* as death. Caine, D, xx.

It was still. Any sound . . . had died away. It was *still* as death. Wells, FMM, 196.

She came *silently* as a *phantom*. Hardy, TM, 364.

Carlos silent as an *apparition* at the foot of the ladder, put a finger to his lips. Conrad, *Romance*, 45. — *Phantom* is the earlier word, already in Wyclif; *apparition* rec. fr. 1601.

Sat *silent* like a *disciple of Pythagoras*. Smollet, RR, 357. Cf. Giue him his fiddle once againe, Or he's more mute then a

Pythagorean. Marston, 1599, NED. And the Latin, *Pythagoreis taciturnior*, and the Greek Καὶ σιωπηλότερος ἔσομαι καὶ τῶν Πυθαγόρα τελεσθέντων.

As *silent* as a *stoic*. Taylor (W. P.; Lean, II, ii).

They were as *silent* as *relations* at the reading of a will. Hardy, TM, 121.

Save for the quiver of the engines it was as *noiseless* as a *dream*. Wells, WA, 150.

But he never meddled at all; just slid the lid along, as *soft* as *mush*, and screwed it down tight and fast. Twain, HF, 236. A curious inst. of sense-shifting. *Mush* is a kind of Amer. porridge made with maize-meal boiled in water or milk. A dish of this kind must be soft, i. e. semi-fluid, but when used of a man's action soft must mean 'cautiously still and noiseless.' Another word *mush*, is given below, 'mush as a mackerel'.

The vast panorama had been as *silent* as a *painted picture*. Wells, WA, 84. See *Beautiful*, p. 219.

It is no fun to sit motionless and *noiseless* as a *statue* with a cold musket in your hand. Kane, 1853, NED. See *Motionless*, p. 383 f.

Soft as a *tom-cat*, he crossed the room. Galsworthy, MP, 101. *Tom-cat* is a rather late word, being rec. only fr. 1760.

As *whisht* as a *mouse*. Cum. EDD. *Whisht*, hushed, quiet, silent, chiefly in Sc. and n. Cy dial.

Steal to bed as *quietly* as any *mouse*. Dryden, *Amphitruon*, VII, 49. As quiet as mice they crept into the open. White, SE, 76.

He was always sure to be as *silent* as a mouse when any [seaman] was present. Stevenson, TI, 12. Cf. Hush, then; mum, mouse in cheese; cat is neere. Porter, TAW, 71. See *Dumb, Mute*, p. 178, and *Motionless*, p. 384.

As *mush* as a *mackerel*. e. An. EDD. See p. 178. *Mush*, cautiously silent.

I makes 'em *whisht* as *fishes*. Stowe, UTC, 77. [the slavedriver of his slaves].

The hunters fell *silent* as *clams*. Phillpotts, SW, 165. Cf. As silently as a snail slips over a cabbage leaf on a dewy morning. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).

He is as *silent* as a *stone*. Fulke, 1580, NED.

The river slid along *noiselessly* as a *shade*. Hardy, MC, 143.

The next moment, as *silently* as a *shadow*, he disappeared among the thick shrub. *The Royal Mag.*, 271, '14.

If I breathe too loud, Tell me; for I would be as *still* as *night*. Beaumont & Fletcher, KK, V, iv. T. Heywood, *Fair Maid* &c., II, ii (Lean, II, ii). His look Drew audience and attention still as night. Milton, 1667. They were all as silent and

serious as night. Benson, 1795, NED. I'll be as silent as the night. Song of 1691. *Materialien* &c., XXXV, 94.

Note. Zwijgen als een mof. Stoett, NS, II, 34. Hij kan zwijgen als en hoen dat de keel is afgestoken. Schweigen wie ein abgeschlachtet Huhn, wie ein Stein den man ins Wasser geworfen hat, wie eine Maus, wie die Frösche, wenn ein Licht an den Teich gestellt wird. Still sein wie das Grab, ein Hammel, ein Ohrwürmchen, &c. Wander.

Loud; Noises.

Shrieking like a *demon*. London, BA, 81.

They *yelled* as *feendes* doon in helle. Chaucer, NPT, 570. They yellen as fends do in hell. Camden, 1605, NED.

Shrieking like a chaos of *lost souls*. Phillpotts, SW, 6.

To *roar*, or *howl* like *Tregeagle*. Cor. A common expression amongst the vulgar. Hunt, 1865, EDD. But the tay wor so hot that aw scalded my mouth, And I roared like "Tregeagle." Forfar, *Poems*, 1885, EDD. — There are various stories concerning this Tregeagle. It is said to be the giant of Dozmare Pool on Bodmin Downs, between St. Neots and the Cheesewring; it is his allotted task to bale the pool with a limpet shell. When the blast howls over the downs, the people say it is the giant roaring. Brewer, Dict., 1244. Another story makes him the steward to John, Earl of Radnor, of Llanhydrock. He was a very wicked man, who by his craft and cruelty became very rich. In his lifetime he had disposed of his body and soul to the Wicked One, and after his death the devil sometimes amused himself by hunting him over the moors with his hellhounds. EDD. He is also said to base his claim to notoriety on his being a Cornish Bluebeard, who married several heiresses for their money and afterwards murdered them. — No mention of these stories seems to be found before the eighteenth c. — *Tregeagle* is most probably an old Cornish word, and the saying may have existed already in old Cornish, and the stories were perhaps invented to explain it. Does it ultimately go back to some nature myth, and is Tregeagle an impersonation of the wind howling round the Cornish mountain dwellings? (Cornish *tre*, dwelling). — It may be worth adding that Dozmare Pool is supposed to be the mere into which Arthur threw his sword Excalibur.

To *roar* like a *bar-ghest*. Dur. Henderson, *Folk-Lore*, 1879, EDD.

A barghest is a hobgoblin or ghost described in various ways, usually provided with fearful claws and teeth, saucer-eyes and sometimes an enormously long tail &c. According to Palmer,

WCC, 162, the word means barrow-ghost < bargh-ghest. See Wright, RS, 193 f.

She will be so impatient, raving still, and *roaring* like *Juno in the tragedy*, there's nothing but tempests, all is an uproar. Burton, AM, III, 255. What tragedy?

As *loud as Tom o' Lincoln*. Ray. Fuller, W, II, 267. "This shire carries away the *bell* for *round-ringing* from all in England; though other places may surpass it for changes, more pleasant for the variety theiroy; seeing it may be demonstrated that twelve bells will afford more changes than there have been hours since the creation. Tom of Lincoln may be called the Stentor (fifty lesser bells may be made out of him) of all in this county. Expect not of me to enter into the discourse of Popish baptising and naming of bells, many charging it on them for a profane, and they confessing enough to make it a superstitious, action." Ray adds, 'This present Tom was cast in King James's time, anno 1610.' In *Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain*, 1742, quoted by H., there is a description of this "present Tom." ". . . the finest great bell in England. As loud as Tom o' Lincoln is a proverb. It weighs four tons, 1894 pounds, and will hold 424 gallons ale-measure . . ." But it is not this "present Tom" that is referred to in the sim. It occurs already in Beaumont & Fletcher, *Woman's Prize*, III, ii (Lean, II, ii), and cf. But that is no credite, Galpogas, to discharge a Cannon gainst a lowse, thou shouldst not call in vaine: thou shouldst heare Tom a Lincolne roar with a witness. Nashe, I, 321.

He *geeaps* and *hollers* like a *ploughman* on a moor. *Clevel. Gloss.*, 210. *Gape*, to bawl or shout, rec. fr. 1579, is now obs. except dial.

Ez *noisy* as a *tinker*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

As *sharp* as *bagpipe* shrill or *oysterstrumpet*. Swift, *Hor. Od.*, II, i (Lean, II, ii). For the noisy oysterwomen see p. 107 f. — "The noise of bagpipers on distant Highland hills" was known long before Wordsworth, and it is still a joy to some, and something else to others.

The high and secrete matters of Lordes, Ladies . . . and Monarchs of the world did ring every day as *shrill* as a *Bason* about my doores. Nashe, I, 72. Of this passage McKerrow says in his *Notes*, p. 48, "A basin hung out by a barber seems also to have served the purpose of a gong or bell to summon him when required." But does this really refer to the barber's basin? NED has only one inst. of the word, dated 1755, which of course must not be taken as a proof that the expression and the article did not exist before. (See p. 286). But there is another sense of *basin* that fits the context much better, as appears from the following contemporary inst. Why before her does the Bason ring? Dekker, 1604, NED.

The explanation given is that the beating of basins, i. e. hollow metal dishes, was formerly part of the mocking accompaniment when infamous persons were condemned to be publicly carted. Our sim. only refers to the ringing noise of these basins.

As *loud* as a *trumpet*. Swift, *Hor. Od.*, II, i (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Trumpet-loud. Thornbury, 1857, NED; His voys was a trompe thunderinge. Chaucer, KT, 2174. Cf. The band playing as loud as Tamerlane's trumpet. Hardy, MC, 294. Fr. Marlowe's play? Cf. The true artificer will not fly from all humanity with the Tamerlans . . . of the late age, which had nothing in them but the scenical strutting and furious vociferation to warrant them to the ignorant gapers. Jonson, *Discoveries* (DNB).

Loud as a *foghorn*. Harraden, I, 366.

As loud as a *horn*. Ray.

As *loud* as a *water mill*. Lean, II, ii. Cf. [Saturday's Lecture] Exercised by a miller's wife in her husband's watermill, instead of a barn where her tongue went faster and louder than the *mill-clapper*. *Vinegar & Mu.* Cf. further, As soft and still as clapper in a mill. Skelton, *Ymage of Hyp.* (Lean, II, ii). See p. 129.

He fell a-roaring like any *town-bull*. Kingsley, WH, 282, 165. Cum. EDD. Rec. in *Slang* fr. Grose. See p. 91.

Made him roar like a *thousand bulls*. Eliot, MF, 184. He bunden him ful swiþe faste. . . þat he rorede als a bole. Havelok, 2438. Cf. Don't roar like a *bull of Bashan*. Phillpotts, P, 356. See Ps. 22,12. One of the numerous puns on (Pope's) bulls may be worth quoting here. I hail fell *Nemesis*, from *Dis* his den, To aid and guide my sharp revenging pen That fifty Pope's bulls never shall roar louder, Nor fourscore cannons when men fire their powder. Taylor, KW, 15. Cf. also, Doe but permit Luther to keep close till the Popes Bull hath done roaring. Harwood, 1645, NED.

To me she appears sensible and silent. — Ay, before company. But when she is with her playmate, she's as *loud* as a *hog in a gate*. Goldsmith, SSC, 242. Is it the part of a man to howl like a *pig in a gate* because he thinks that is there which is not there. Kingsley, WH, 284.

A *shruck* like a *stuck pig*. Suf. EDD. To cry like 'a stuck pig. Cf. the D. *Schreewen als een mager varken, gelijk een verken onder't mes; als een varken dat gekeeld wordt*. Stoett, NS, II, 354. So cries a pig prepared to the spit. Shak., TA, IV, ii, 147. Cf. also 'to stare like a stuck pig.' He was a scowling Finn — yelled like a pig in pain. *Cassel's Mag. of Fict.*, 173, '14.

To *rattle* like a *boar in a holme bush*. New Forest, H.

Hir song, it was as *lowde* and yerne As *sualwe* chiteryng on a berne. Chaucer, MiT, 70.

Sometimes she song as *lowd* as *larke* in ayre. Spenser, FQ, II, vi, 8.

The click of safety locks sounded as *loud* as a *crash*. Hardy, GND, 181.

For I will board her, though she chide as loud As *thunder* when the clouds in autumn crack. Shak., TS, I, ii, 92.

Thanks the holy gods as loud As thunder threatens us. *ibid.* Per., V, i, 197. Cf. This Nicholas anon let flee a fart As greet as it had been a thonder dent. Chaucer, MiT, 3806.

Strong.

He that will be cheated to the last, Delusions *strong* as *Hell* shall bind him fast. Cowper, 1780, NED.

'You bet' or 'you bet yer life', or 'you bet yer bones', while 'to bet yer boots' is confirmation *strong* as *holy writ*. *All the Year round*, Oct., 1868. See *Sure*, p. 355, *True*, 371.

Luf is *strange* als *dede*. 1347, Kluge, 23. As strong as age or death. Gascoigne, *Grief of Joy*, 1576 (Lean, II, ii). Hardy, FMC, 469 (love). Habit be stronger than death, as we all know. Phillpotts, WF, 53. Cf. *Fortis ut mors dilectio*, *Songs*, 84. See Song of Sol., 8,6.

As *kecn* as *Samson*. w. Yks. EDD. *Keen*, strong. Cf. the ME *kene king*.

As *strong* as *Samson*. A. Brome, 1604 (Lean, II, ii). She marvelled that anyone, be he strong as *Samson*, could carry such a load. Vachell, SB, 117. Cf. Such mighty *Samsons*. Harding, 1565, NED. Give band or land, / Or mighty statues able by their strength / To tie up *Samson* were he now alive. Beaumont & Fletcher, NG, I, i; and the Sc. dial. saying, Neither her father nor her mither are *Samsons* at learning. EDD. Allusions to *Samson's* strength frequent.

His *nekke whit* was as the flour de lys Ther to he *strong* was as a *champion*. Chaucer, CT, Prol., 238.

Strong as *brandy*. Brewer, Dict., 1143. Roget. See *Safe*, p. 352. My passion is as *mustard strong*. Gay, NS. Ray.

Ez *strong* ez an *onion*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. Refers of course to the strong pungent flavour.

Ez *strang* ez a *teeagle chaan*. Blakeborough, NRY, 241. These chains are used to drag very heavy timber. *ibid.* 244. *Teeagle*, teagle, a movable crane or hoisting apparatus.

His teeth were tightly shut, and his jaws as *strong* as *iron*. Stevenson, TI, 16. Brewer, Dict., 1143.

Ez *strang* ez a *steeple*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. Strong as a *tower* in hope I cry amen. Shak., KR II, I,

iii, 102. Cf. The name of the lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. Prov., 18,10. Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight: My goodness and my fortress; my high tower and my deliverer . . . Ps., 144,1,2. In Palestine towers were erected in the country for the protection of the flocks and to safeguard the roads, quite apart from their use as strongholds of fortified places.

As *strong* as *Hull*. — Very strong indeed. The allusion is to the fortifications of this place, which were formerly much renowned in these parts. Lin. EDD.

Look at them limbs — broad-chested, *strong* as a *horse*. Stowe, UTC, 177. Ez strang ez a horse. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use. Brewer, Dict., 1143; Roget. Mentioned in NED but no inst. given. *Slang*; Baumann.

As greddy as a gull And *rank* as any *bull*. Skelton, 1528, NED. *Rank* may mean stout and strong, or excessively great or large.

He's as *strong* as a bull, and cares for nothing, nor nobody but himself. Shaw, LA, 72.

A big strapping chap as strong as a *black ox*. Caine, D, xxiii. Is a *black ox* supposed to be stronger than other oxen? — Zo strang's a ox. Hewett, Dev. 12.

For he was *strong* as *Lyon* in his lordly might. Spenser, FQ, V, i, 20. Strong as a lion. Roget.

Virtue maketh man . . . *strang* as e *olifont*. 1340, NED.

Mad, by Jupiter: gone off as *strong* as a *March hare*; catch him who can. Rowland Hurst, *The Knight and the Mason*, ii, 62 (N. & Q., 12, III, 297). See *Mad*, p. 40. *Strong*, in a violent fit?

Straight and *strong* as a swooping *kestrel* she flung herself on the man. Phillpotts, WF, 201.

As *strong* as a little *ground toad*. See *Healthy, Hardy*, p. 155.

As *strong* as a *tree*. Withals, (Lean, II, ii).

He was a tall man about fifty years of age, still as *vigorous* as an *oak*. Benecke, PA, 70.

Ez *strang* ez an oak. Blakeborough, NRY, 241, in daily use.

To the king I'll say't; and make my vouch as *strong*/ As *shore of rock*. Shak., KH VIII, I, i.

Built as *strong* as the *world*. *Illustr. London News, Xmas Numb.*, '15, p. 28.

Note. So stark wie Simson, wie ein Türke, ein Pferd, ein Ochs, wie ein Baum. Cf. also, bärenmässig stark. Hij is zoo sterk als een paard. Wander. Zoo sterk als mosterd. Stoctt, NS, I, 412. Sw. stark som en björn.

Weak.

- A nervous reaction which made me as *weak* as a *baby*. Hope, PZ, 269.
- I was as *weak* as a little *child*. Hocking, MF, 87, Roget.
- Mack her as *wake* as a *wassel*. w. Yks. EDD. Wassail is a Christmas drink, hence a symbol of what is very weak.
- As *weak* as *watergruel*. Roget.
- As weak as *milk and water*. Roget. Cf. the use of the expression milk and water for something insipid, harmless, undistinguished, rec. in *Slang* fr. 1823. But cf. Change the milk-and-water stile of your last memorial. 1783, NED. Said to have originated in the U. S. A. Cf. also milk-faced, milk-hearted, milk for babies and meat for men, &c.
- Weak* as *gingerbread*. Roget. Gingerbread used fig. of anything showy and unsubstantial and, dial., of anything of a fragile nature. "What's the good vor to put up a gingerbread thing of a linhay like that?" w. Som.
- As *weak* as a *wet dishclout*. Lan. EDD. I was on foot again — but weak as a *dishclout*. Mrs. Carlyle, 1863, NED. Cf. You are now weak as water and have no more Spirits than a Dishclout. Tryon, 1692, NED.
- Zo *limp*'s a dishclout. Hewett, Dev. II. See p. 162, 266.
- Ez *waak* ez a *kitten*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240.
- As weak as a *cat*. Rog. Lean, II, ii. Zo wayk's a cat. Hewett, Dev., 13. See p. 162 f.
- You're as *weak* as a *bled calf*. Hardy, *Tess*, 434.
- As *weak* as a *rat*. Roget. See *Drunk*, p. 208.
- As *weak* as a *midsummer gosling*. Hrf. EDD. See p. 50.
- As weak as a *goose-chick*. Dev. Cor. EDD.
- As weak as a *chicken*. Roget.
- Zo *wayke*'s a *rabin*. Hewett, Dev., 13. See *Wet*, p. 302.
- Zo *wayke*'s as *winnel*. Hewett, Dev. 13. *Winnel*, windle, windle-thrush, the redwing, *Turdus iliacus*, a w. Cy word.
- The whinalen chaps in town Wi' backs so *weak* as *rollers*. Dor. *Roller*, a roll of carded wool ready for spinning. From its weakness arose the expression 'weak as a roller'. — Lean quotes fr. Williams & Jones, *E. Som. Gloss.*, As weak as a *rawler*, which is rendered 'a bundle of reed'. Probably the same word in both cases.
- He bellows like a bull, but is as *weak* as a *bull-rush*. Clarke, H.
- Ez *walsh* ez *pumpwater*. — Containing as little sustenance. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use. *Walsh*, insipid, flat, nauseous, rec. in CD fr. Hakluyt; obs. or dial. See *Tasteless*, 308.
- This tack's as weak as *well-water*. Oxf.; used of any weak drink.

As *wankle* as *water*. Yks (Lean, II, ii). *Wankle*, unsteady, weak, feeble.

As *weak* as *water*. Rec. in Lean fr. 1599, 1611, 1639. See above 'weak as a dishclout'. Dickens, *Ol. Twist*, W. A boast as weak as water. Hardy, FMC, 174. I am weak as water and easy as a woman. London, CF, 191. The young men were weak as water. *ibid.*, 249. *ibid.*, CW, 97 (of dogs). Masfield, *Multitude*, 264. — This is probably a biblical phrase: All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water. Ezek., 7,17; every spirit shall be faint, and all knees as weak as water. *ibid.*, 21,7.

In a voice as *weak* as a *summer's breeze*. Hardy, DR, 460. Cf. As weak as *wind*. Gascoigne, *Voyage to Holland*, ante 1577 (Lean, II, ii).

Solitary, Lonely.

Lone as *Lot's wife*. Kipling, W. *Lone* rec. fr. Langland.

Solitary as *death*. Hardy, PBE, 21. *Solitary* rec. fr. the middle of the fourteenth c.

As *solitary* as *Robinson Crusoe*. Hardy, DR, 70.

Ez *lonely* ez a *mile-steean*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

As *lonely* as a *catamount*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii). *Catamount* is the U. S. word for the puma or cougar, but the sim. can hardly have been in general use, at least not in Pennsylvania, for we read that "In Pennsylvania, bears and catamounts are so numerous . . . in Pike county to be a perfect nuisance to the farmers." 1884, NED. The other sense of the word, a pard or panther, is obs.

As *desolate* as the *Pellican* in the wilderness or the *Owle* on the house top. Nashe, II, 57. Cf. I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and I am as a sparrow alone on the house top. Ps. 102,6,7. On the identification of this bird see NED.

The warren was as *lonely* as a *prairie*. Galsworthy, MP, 70.

Common, Numerous, Plentiful.

[Hope is] as *universal* as *death*. Dickens, NN, I, xix.

[The terrors of the night] are as *many* as our *sinnes*. Nashe, I, 345, 1593.

To pen Gods iudgement upon such and such a one, as *thick* as *watermen at Westminster Bridge*. Nashe, III, 84, 1596. Probably a very appropriate sim. in Nashe's time and also

much later. Pepys has a good deal to say on the subject. "The river swarmed with watermen." Wheatly, 92. — The following passage also tells us something about sixteenth c. life: But his *ipse dixit*, his report, otherwise is nothing so *currant* as *beggers* about the Courts remoue. Nashe, III, 132, 1596. See 'drunk as a beggar', p. 201.

They [coaches] are as *common* as *whores*, and may be hired as easy as Knights of the Post. Taylor, (W. P.), 1630 (Dodsley, V, 423). See 'thick as hops', p. 397. The frequency of coaches can hardly have been very great in 1630. According to Stow their use was introduced in England in 1564, and they cannot have grown so very common fifty years later.

If I had as *many* lives as *hairs on my head*. Mr. Calamy's speech at Guildhall, 1643 (Butler, H, note p. 34). Cf. If I had as many Mayden-heads, as I have hayres on my head. Dekker, SM, 10.

As *numerous* as hairs on the head. Roget.

Seals ahead, sir, hundreds of 'em, lying about on the ice as *thick* as *coffee*. Harraden, I, 185. For other sim. with the same adj. see *Thick*, p. 293, *Intimacy*, p. 326 ff.

Suddenly it rained apes. They came down as *thick* as *apples* out of a tree. *Strand Mag.*, 1912.

Sandwiches wor as *plentiful* as *bilbers* on a moor. Yks., 1879, EDD.

If reasons were as *plenty* as *blackberries*, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion. Shak., KH IVa, II, iv, 230. Horses . . . are now as plenty as blackberries. Scott, W, xlix. Roget.

The 'Thank yous' we got for our pains were not as *plentiful* as blackberries. Arch, 1898, NED.

There are other things to be got, aren't there? — *Thick* as blackberries. Galsworthy, F, 75.

Lords are as *common* as blackberries about Hunslope. Besant, RMM, 387. Crises were becoming with her as common as blackberries, Hardy, HE, 1876. Earthworks, square and not square, were as common as blackberries hereabout. *ibid.*, MC, 124. The cowslip is quite unknown, but nightingales are common as blackberries there (Sussex). N. & Q., 5, IX, 492. The great are rare, but rascals are common as blackberries. Phillpotts, WF, 36, &c.

Attractive young women are *plentiful* as *cranberries* in Colorado. Vachell, SB, 99. Used by an American.

Th' vish be za *thick* as *haaves*. Dev. EDD. *Haaves*, haws, hawthorn-berries.

Fights are as *common* as *raspberries* in August. White, BT, 171.

Then they must be thrown over the pulpit as *thicke* as *hoppes*.

First Part of Pasquils Apologie, Nashe, I, 120. At the bake-houses As thick as hops The tatling women . . . thy fourefold

praises knead. Taylor (W. P.), 1630, NED. Other amusements presented themselves as thick as hops. Brown, 1700, NED. *P. Robin, Alman.*, 1702 (Lean, II, ii) Roget. Cf. Come they up thick enough? — O, like hops and harlots, sir. Middleton, *Michael. Term, Induction*, 1607. (Lean, II, ii). Cf. above 'common as whores', and see 'as fast as hops', p. 378.

As *many* pimples in his face as there are *jewels* in *Lombard street*. T. Brown, Wks, i, 162, 1708 (Lean, II, ii).

Though it be as *common* as *Simony*, as clear and as manifest as the nose in a man's face, yet it cannot be evidently proved. Burton, AM, III, 355. See *Sure* p. 355.

As *common* as *bribery*. Dekker, *Northw. Hoe*, 1607 (Lean, II, ii).

As *common* as *scolding* at Billingsgate. Lean, II, ii. See *Scolding*, p. 108.

As *common* as the *cracking of nuts*. Day, *Law Tr.*, IV, 1608 (Lean, II, ii).

As *common* as *get out*. H. See p. 348.

An everyday thing in heaven — as *common* as *letters through the post*. Phillpotts, M, 197.

Brother Kempe, as *many* alhailes to thy person as their be *haicocks* in *July* at *Pancredge*. *An Almond for a Parrot*, Nashe, III, 341, 1590. Fields and haycocks are utterly gone from the neighbourhood of St. Pancras. 'As cabs at Euston' would be a fairly correct modern rendering.

As *rank* as *nice*. Cum., 1867, EDD. *Rank*, numerous, common. They lie as *thick* as *doos* in a *dooket*. Scott, 1815, EDD. *Doos*, doves; *dooket*, dowcate, dove-cot, pigeon-house.

Wild boars and other dangerous animalcules be as *common* as *blackbirds* hereabout. Hardy, MC, 64.

Haggard cliffs, of every ugly altitude, are as *common* as *sea-fowl*. Hardy, PBE.

Virtues *thick* as *herrings* in their souls. Wolcott, 1795, NED. See *Near, Close*, p. 324.

[Practised sailors are in Portsmouth] as *plentiful* as *oysters* in the street. Dickens, NN, I, xxi. — This sense of *plentiful* fr. 1510.

As *thick* as *bees* in a *buck-wheat field*. Bartlett (Lean, II, ii).

As thykke as been fleen from an hyve. Chaucer.

As thick as a swarm of bees. *Disob. Child*, (H., Old Plays, II, 310). Skelton, *Ym. of Hyp.*

The people were round as thick as bees. Hope, RH, 249. Cf. They're swarming like bees at No. I gate from the yard. Phillpotts, AP, 416, &c. Cf. Thou shalt be pinch'd As *thick* as *honey-comb*, each pinch more stinging Than bees that made 'em. Shak., *Tempest*, I, ii, 328.

As *thick* as *wopses* round a plum. Brks., 1902, EDD.

Ther stickin' as *rank* ez *flesh-flees* on a sheep pluck. Dur., 1877, EDD. *Rank*, numerous, common.

If I'd my pockets full they'd be round me again as *thick* as *flies* on a cow's nose. Baring-Gould, RS, 145. They were as thick as flies all around our outposts. Doyle, AG, 137.

As thick as *fly-blows*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Custom of the C.*, III, iii (Lean, II, ii).

As *common* as *lice* in Ireland and scabs in France. Dekker, *Westw. Hoe*, III, iii. See *Dirty*, 229.

You set bad projectors a work, as *thick* as *crab-lice* or *caterpillars*. Taylor, ST, 41.

It is always those Germans: They are always so *plentiful* as *worms*. Benecke, PA, 82. English?

All the fairest faces and the brightest eyes of France are as *thick* in his saloons as the *tulips* in a *Dutch flower-bed*. Doyle, R, 23. Cf. A vast number of shimmering, glittering yellow points, as thick as *flowers* in a *garden*. They were the lights of Paris. *ibid.* 150. As *many* hopes hang on his noble head As *blossoms* on a bough in May . . . Beaumont & Fletcher, *Lover's Progr.*, II, i (Lean, II, ii).

Ez *common* ez *weeds*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239, in daily use.

His legions . . . *Thick* as *autumnal leaves* that strow the brooks in Vallombrosa. Milton, 1667, NED.

Perles as *common* as *chaffe*. Eden, 1555, NED.

Ez *common* ez *brack-k'ns*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use. *Brack-k'ns*, a fanciful spelling of *bracken*, *brecken*, a Sc., Ir. or n. Cy word for fern, especially of the larger kinds.

As *common* as *coals* from Newcastle. Junius, *Nomenclat.*, 1585 (Lean, II, ii). Heywood, 1606, NED. Cf. the well known proverb 'to carry coals to Newcastle.'

A country where silver's as *common* as *clay*. Barham, IL, 271.

As *common* as the *stones* in our streets. T. Adams, Wks, p. 9, 1629 (Lean, II, ii).

They . . . Swarm populous, *unnumber'd* as the *Sands* Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil. Milton, 1667, NED.

My naughty deeds — they were *multitudinous* as the sands on the seashore. Barham, IL, 328. As *numerous* as the sand on the seashore. Roget.

As *many* kisses as the sea hath Sands. *Dido*, III, 87. [Cares] are as many in number as the sea sands. Burton, AM, I, 313. Cf. A heart as full of sorrows as the sea of sands. Shak., TGV, IV, iii, 32. — The references to the innumera- bility of the grains composing sand are of frequent occurrence, and go back to biblical or classical origin or prototypes. Some may be quoted. *Quaeris, quot mihi basiationes Tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque. Quam magnus numerus Libyssae harenae Lasarpiciferis iacet Cyrenis Oraclum Iovis inter aestuosi Et Batti veteris sacrum sepulcrum.* Catullus. In multiplying

I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore. Gen., 22, 17. More eath it were for mortal wight To tell the sands, or count the starres on high. Spenser, 1596, NED. The task he undertakes Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry. Shak., KR II, II, ii, 145. You may sooner number the Sea sands and Snow falling from the skies, than my several loves. Burton, AM, III, 66, &c.

Ez *common ez muck*. Blakeborough, NRY, 240, in daily use.

As *thick as dust*. Lean, II, ii.

I shalle thi seed multiply, As thick as powder on erthe may ly. *Townel. Myst.*, 45. Cf. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Gen., 13, 16.

Thicker then in sunne are *Atomies*, Flew bullets, fier, and slaughtered dead mens cries. Arber 29, 70. Cf. It is as easy to count atomies as to resolve the propositions of a lover. Shak., AYL, III, ii, 245. I would hew thy flesh Smaller than *Attomés*. 1620, NED. *Atomy*, atom, mote, rec. fr. our earliest inst.

As *rank as moats i't sun*. Yks., EDD.

As *thikke* as motes in the sonne. *Mel.*, 174. At Westminster Hall [they] houer as thick as moats in the sunne. Nashe, I, 349. These eels did lie on the top of that water, as thick as motes are said to be in the sun. Walton, CA, 221. Cf. You may as well reckon up motes in the sun as them. Burton, AM, I, 324.

There's so *many* ridiculous instances, as motes in the Sun. Burton, AM, I, 73. Cf. Moving freely about like the motes we see in the sunbeam. Wallace, 1880, NED. Cf. *Zoo dicht als stofregen*. Stoett, NS, II, 52.

Strokes which that went as *thik* as *hayle*. Chaucer, Leg., I, 76.

With teares thick as hail. Barclay, *Ship of F.*, 1509 (Lean, II, ii). Stubbes, 1583, NED. *Mel.*, 165. Arber 29, 66. Heaping huge strokes as *thicke* as showre of hayle. Spenser, FQ, IV, vi, 16. With heapes of strokes which he at him let flie As thick as hayle forth poureth from the skie. *ibid.*, IV, iii, 25. As thick as haile Came post with post. Shak., Mb, I, iii, 97. Roget.

Thenne bygan the shotte to be grete and *thikk* as *snow* in the ayer. *Mel.*, 250. Their fluttering arrows, *thicke* as flakes of snow. Spenser, FQ, II, xi, 18. [Some] will have the air to be as full of [spirits] as snow falling in the skies. Burton, AM, I, 209.

There fell upon the kyng gret and pesaunt strokes, as *thykk* as *rayn* falleth from the skye. *Mel.*, 367.

As thyke as dropis of rain, shall wormes all to chewe us.
Songs, 52.

From farre sent shot, as thicke as winters showers. Arber
29, 76.

As *many* Moores as in the Sea are little *waterdrops*. Nashe, *Dido*,
IV, 210.

I believe, Sir John, ale is as *plenty* as *water* at your house. Swift,
PC, 286. I . . . kept champagne and burgundy running
there . . . as *commonly* as water. Thackeray, BL, xviii. Cf.
I would have poured out [money] as freely as water. Dickens,
NN, xivi.

Had I as *many* lives as there be *stars*. Kyd, *Span. Trag.*, V.

Had I as many souls as there be stars. Marlowe, F, 31.

As many farewells as be stars in heaven. Shak., TC, IV,
iv, 42. There be as many superstitions in the world, as
there be stars in heaven. Burton, AM, III, 399.

England, a fortune-telling host, As *numerous* as the stars,
could boast. Churchill, *The Ghost*, I, 115, 1763 (Lean, II, ii).
As numerous as the stars in the firmament. Roget.

Hips, haws, sloes, and such cates Are as *common* as the *air* to
take and eat. Davies, *Wit's Pilgr.* 16 . . (Lean, II, ii).

The word God save ye, it is as common as the air with them.
Taylor, NL, 29. See *Lecherous*, p. 19.

Rare, Scarce.

As *many* civil and religious men as there be *saints in hell*. Lupton,
London and the Country &c. 1632 (Lean, II, ii).

As *scarce* as *guineas*. Blakeborough, NRY, 239.

As *rare* to be found as *black swans*. Rogers, *Naaman*, 1642
(Lean, II, ii). Before the discovery of the black species 'black
swan' was the name given to extreme rarity. COD.

There are great critics, but they are as *rare* as *comets*. London,
ME, 268.

CHAPTER V.

Indefinite or General Similes.

Note. The following collection does not pretend to be complete. It only aims at giving the most common types and some insts of them.

1. *As good, bad &c. as ever . . .*

I was as arrant a Roman as ever *went to mass*. Smollet, RR, 225.

An honest maid as ever *broke bread*. Shak., MW, I, iv, 161.

This is an ellipse of Mistress Quickly's for 'as honest a maid as &c.' See below *cracked biscuit*. As industrious a woman as ever broke bread. Smollet, RR, 125. As honest a man as ever brake bread. Ray.

A good seaman he is, as ever stept upon forecandle — and a brave fellow as ever *crackt bisket*. Smollet, RR, 188. One of the fattest cooks that ever *broke ship's biscuit*. Jacobs, MC, 110.

I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever *knapped ginger*.

Shak., MV, III, i, 7. *Knapp*, to nibble off; probably refers to ginger candied as sweetmeat.

So fine a sailor as ever *drank liquor*. Kingsley, WH, 467.

He was as brave a fellow as ever *tossed a bumper* or *called a main*. Thackeray.

As fine a spoken tailor as ever *blew froth from full pot*. Goldsmith, GNM, 194.

The wine was as good as ever was *tipped over tongue*. Smollet,

RR, 169. As good claret as ever was tip'd. Bage, 1784, NED. I have a drop in the house of as pretty a raspberry as ever tipt over tongue. Goldsmith, GNM, 194. *Tip*, toss off; the intransitive use in the last inst. is not recognized by NED.

As gude brandy as was e'er *coupit over craig*. Scott, RR, xviii.

Craig, neck, throat; *coup*, to drink off. *Ower*, through or down?

As prime a buttock of beef as e'er *hungry man stuck fork in*. Scott, RR, iv.

P. is as tall a man as ever *opened oysters*. Dekker, HWh, Ia, xi.

As very a knave, a whore as ever *p—d*. Ray. She is as good for the game as ever pissed. D'Urfey, 1719, *Slang*. As

good as ever pissed. A qualification of extreme excellence. *Ibid.* Cf the following passages, I have A whore, shall p— them out, next day. Jonson, *Alch.*, II, i, 44. There are some Quacks as honest Fellows as you would desire to piss upon. Brown, 1700, NED.

The footsteps of as tight a lad as ever *put pipeclay to belt* sounded along the gallery. Barham, 9. *Pipeclay* rec. fr. c. 1800. You were as arrant a whore as ever *stiffened tiffany neckcloaths* in waterstarch upon a Saturday i' th' afternoon. Dekker, HWh Ib.

The gentlest mannered little man who ever *wore brass buttons*. Copping, GG, 69.

If he be perjured, see you now, his reputation is as arrant a villain and a Jack-sauce, as ever his *black shoe trod upon God's ground* and his earth. Shak., KH V, IV, vii, 135.

As comfortable a man (to a woman in my case) as ever *trod* — uh — *shoeleather*. Middleton, *A Mad World &c.*, 1608 (Lean, II, ii). It is e'en the kindest young man that ever trod on shoe-leather. Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, I, i. As good as ever trod upon shoeleather. *London Chanticleers*, I, xii, 330 (Lean, II, ii). As honest a man &c. Ray. A better man never trod shoeleather. Smith, 1826, NED. The following is a ludicrous perversion, I haue as fayre a face as euer trod on *shoe sole* and as free a foot as euer lookt with two eyes. Lyly, MB, II, iii, 19.

As good a lad as ever *stepped in shoeleather*. Lady Morgan, 1818, NED.

As honest a man as ever *wore shoe-leather*. Lean, II, ii. — *Shoe-leather* rec. in NED fr. 1660.

As neat a stripling as euer *went on neats leather*. Lyly, MB, I, iii, 45. As proper a man as ever *trod* upon neat's leather. Shak., JC, I, i, 29.

I can milk, kern, fother . . . an' deea ivvery thing 'at belongs tiv an husband man, as weel as onny lass 'at ivver *were clog-shun*. *Yorkshire Dial.* 8. *Clogshoes* rec. in EDD fr. 1796.

As thriving a lad as ever *dusted a duodecimo*. Scott, A, 15. — In all the really proverbial sim. of this section the noun(s) of the second member is (are) not preceeded by any article, except 'ratched a rape' and 'trod a deck', where rhythmical reasons seem to require the art. Cf. also Thackeray's 'tossed a bumper', 'called a main', 'wore a sword'. Perhaps the presence of the article is enough to indicate that the sim. was not a popular one, and simply a nonce-phrase, and probably of Scott's coinage.

As brave a little soul as ever *wore a sword*. Thackeray, HE, 320. As brave a man as ever drew a sword. Merriman, *Flotsam*, XIV.

- As good as ever *drove top over tiled house*. Ray. Cf. I shall as soon try him, or take him this way, As drive a top over a tiled house. Heywood, PE, 71. He that has not a tilde house must bee glad of a thatch house. 1609, NED. A tiled house is also mentioned in a quotation of 1450. It seems to be used as a proverbial expression for a noble or splendid, consequently large and lofty house, and to drive a top over it would be almost as impossible as to set the Thames on fire, and he who succeeds would be excellency itself.
- As rank a rogue as ever *ratched a rape*. Carr, *Craven Gloss.* (Lean, II, ii). As big a roague &c. EDD. — i. e. was hung. *Ratch, retch*, stretch, extend, common dial., rec. in NED fr. 1529, but obs. now.
- As rank a witch as ever *rode on ragweed*. Burns Gloss. (Lean, II, ii). Cf. Wither'd hags, . . . on ragweed nags They skim the muirs. Burns, 1785, NED. On auld broom-besoms, and rag-weed naigs, They flew owre burns, hills and craigs. Henderson, 1856, Bwk, EDD. She could flie through the drumlie sky on the stem o' the ragweed green. Walker, 1887, Bbd., EDD. *Ragweed, Senecio Jacobaea*.
- As skilful a seaman as ever *trod a deck*. 1748, NED. Best man who ever trod deck. The July *Royal*, 243, '14. See above 'cracked biscuit'. For the use of the art. see 'dust a duodecimo'.
- As good a sarvant Ah've been, as ivver *com within a pair o' deears*. *York. Dial.*
- As ungracious a graft, so mot I thrive, As any *goeth on God's ground alive*. *Jacke Jugeler*, (H., Old Plays, ii, 139). She's a dainty chuckie, As c'er *tread clay*. Burns, 1789, NED.
- As good (&c) a man as ever *stepped*. NED. As honest a man &c. Lean, II, ii. Major Fancourt, as fine a young aristocrat as *steps*. 1834, NED.
- As good as ever *went endways*. Ray. *Endways* rec. fr. 1575.
- As honest a man as ever *lived by bread*. Heywood, *Fair Maid of W.*, 1631, (Lean, II, ii). As kindhearted a gentleman as ever *lived*. Scott, W, lxiii.
- He was the cruellest, wickedest, out-and-outerest old flint that ever *drawed breath*. Dickens, NN, xli. She is my friend and as good a woman as ever drew breath. Marchmont, CF, 96.
- A minstrel y^e worst that euer *twanged*. Udall, 1542, NED. His skill is showne too make his Scholer as good as euer twangde. Gosson, 1579, NED. There's as good beer and ale as ever twanged. Taylor, PP, 5. The worst that ever twanged. He has all the ill qualities you can name. Robertson, 1681, NED. As good as ever twanged. Ray. For 'twanged' as applied to beer cf. the use of 'humming' in reference to ale and beer, which was heard far down into last century. See N. & Q., 10, IX, 107.

As good as ever the *ground went upon*. Ray.

As good as ever *water wet*. Ray.

As good as ever *flew in the air*. Ray.

The following passage contains an interesting collection of such sim.:

I know you are as good a man as euer drew sword, or as ere was girt in a girdle, or as ere went on neats leather, or as one shall see vpon a summers day, or as ere lookt man in the face, or as ere trode on Gods earth, or as ere broke bread or drunk drink. Porter, TAW, 104.

There are of course numerous other phrases of the same kind, but in most cases too vague and general, and not enough fixed as to their form to be proverbial, such as, It was as confounded a bad answer as ever was sent. Goldsmith, GNM, 202. As nate a little figure of fun as ever I wish to see. Hardy, UGT. It was a beautiful, handsome waistcoat inside, yes, as anybody ever saw. *ibid*, &c.

2. Some similar types.

As free make I thee as *hert may think or eye may see*. 1415, NED. Mr. Arthur will use you as well as heart can think. Heywood, CGW, 2473. So rascally printed and ill interpreted as heart can thinke and tongue can tell. Nashe, III, 33.

As goodly a youth as *one shall see in a summer's day*, Lyly, MB, I, v. As good as one shall meet in a day's walk. Lean, II, ii.

'E were as 'ard as *they mike 'em*. Pain, DO, 96, 97. As good, bad, hot, drunk as they make them. *Slang*. "In the *Strand Magazine* for Jan. '94 W. L. Alden writes: 'He was about as vicious as they make them'. I have frequently heard and come across this phrase of late, and it seems to be taking its place among our colloquialisms as a new superlative absolute . . . Is it an Americanism, or of native growth?" N. & Q., 8, V, 249. Thornton. Cf. My wife's brother, Balty, as fine as *hands could make him*. Pepys, II, 101.

Then he went off as *cool as you please*. Shaw, IK, 103. As saucy as you please. Hardy, UGT,.

As joyfully as *may be*. Mundy, 1594, *Lied.*, 81. As common as thing *can be*. Marston, *Insat. Count.*, 1613. Common in PE as well.

As good as *any between Bagshot and Barwaw*. — There is but the breadth of a street between these two. Ray.

As good as *any in Kent or Christendom*. Clarke. Cf. Erith . . . Next London, greatest Mayor town in Kent or Christendom. Taylor, DS, 5. I can live in christendom as well as in Kent. Lyly, MB, III, IV, 5. Neither in Kent nor Christendom.

Fuller, W, II, 122. "That is, saith Dr. Fuller, our English Christendom, of which Kent was first converted to the Christian faith, as much as to say; as Rome and all Italy, or the first cut, and the loaf besides: not by way of opposition, as if Kent were no part of Christendom, as some have understood it. I rather think that it is to be understood by way of opposition; and that it had its original upon occasion of Kent being given by the ancient Britons to the Saxons, who were then pagans. So that Kent may well be opposed to all the rest of England in this respect, it being pagan when all the rest was christian". Ray. But Fuller says "that there passes a report that Henry the Fourth, king of France, mustering his soldiers at the siege of a city found more Kentish men therein than foreigners of all Christendom beside, which (being but twenty years since) is by some made the original of this proverb, which was more ancient in use". Speculations of this kind are very little profitable until we know more of early use referred to by Fuller. It is most probably obsolete long ago.

As honest a woman as *any in the parish*. Wilson, *Cheats*, IV, ii (Lean, II, ii). "In the country, the (whole, 'varsal) world", &c. sometimes substituted.

As desperate a ballad-maker as *the best of them*. Nashe, III, 63.

3. (*To do something*) *Like (somebody, something)*.

Note. In many, perhaps in most, cases, the following comparisons have a wider sphere than that of an intensive, being largely descriptive and expressive of rapid and vigorous action. They will eat like wolves and fight like *devils*. Shak., KH V, III, vii, 162. The distressed protestants . . . over whom they domineered like Divells. Lithgow, 1632, NED. We were bowling along right before it, rolling like the very devil. Scott, 1836, NED. My horse . . . pulls like the devil. Gambado, 1791, NED. He disputed like a devil on these two points. Emerson, 1847, NED. She was working like the devil. Robins, OQ, 242, He coughs like the divvle. Yoxall, RS, 41. Cf. A tongue like the divvle. *ibid.* 54, &c. See also pp. 7, 20, 26, 27, 35, 53, 68, 80, 95, 122, 137, 194, 214, 228, 237, 239, 258, &c. In spite of the frequency of 'the devil' in sim., it is not so extensively used in E, as far as lit. evidences go, as a corresponding word in Sw. The Sw. *som fan* (like the fiend, the devil) is used, especially on the drill-ground, to intensify anything. The army chaplain spouts, or stutters, like the devil, the rifle is good or rotten as the devil, a woman is strict, or light of heels, ugly or beautiful as the devil. The sun is as hot and the water as cold as the devil, &c. "To swear like a Swede" would not be far wrong. In Fr. *comme*

le diable, tous les diables. De firs' time I done lef' him, jes fur a minute, standin' in de big arm-cheer by de winder, he turn roun' w'en he see I wusn't holdin' on t'him, an' he yelled like forty—' Robins, OQ, 73. In this sim. we probably have to substitute 'devils'.

It rains like *Old Boots*. Hazlitt, DFF, 176. I'll stick to you like old boots. Introduced in the story a pleasing change by such a phrase as jawing away like old boots. 1874, *Slang*. Braddon, 1865, NED. To do it like Old Boots. To do it with great energy, vehemence. N. & Q., 12, III, 276. Cf. Sly as old boots. Brewer, Dict., 1143. She's tough as old boots. Bridgeman, 1870, NED. According to H. *Old Boots* stands for the devil. The origin of the term does not seem to be known.

She sets her face against gals working in mills like *blazes*. Disraeli, 1845, NED. The horse . . . went like blazes. De Quincey, 1853, NED. It's going to rain like blazes. Courlander., MS, 178. There are others who grouse and grumble and work like blazes. White, SE, 126. They fight like blazes. *ibid.* 37. To drink like blazes. See p. 194.

I tried every place . . . and played like *hell*. Thackeray, 1855, NED. The phrase is common, but being distinctly colloquial it is not often met with in lit.

"He wasn't hurt, for he went off as quiet and comfortable as — as *demnition*", said Mr. Mantalini, rather at a loss for a simile. Dickens, NN, xxxiv. "Demnition" was Mr. Mantalini's favorite intensive. See e. g. *Deaf*, p. 174.

Singing and whooping like *all possessed*. Stowe, UTC, 9.

My reeling head! which aches like *any mad*. Fielding, 1732, NED. They fell a making a bonfires and fire-works like mad, and rejoicing and triumphing for the great victory. 1690, *Slang*. They were shooting at the standard like mad. Hamilton, 1745, NED. We are writing like mad for the post. Granville, 1824, NED. Screechin' like mad all the time. Stowe, UTC, 6. His deeam [mother] did rave like mad. *Yorksh. Dial.* 11. If ever they were dull or sad, the captain danced to them like mad. Gilbert, 1869, *Slang*. We heard our fellows cheering like mad. Forbes-Mitchell, 1893, NED. I pulled and dragged like mad. Yoxall, RS, 48. As clever as mad. Northall, FPh. Does this inst. refer to the shrewdness sometimes found in mad people? Or is it a rather extreme inst. of this gen. sim.? Cf. Running about like mad. More, 1653, NED; and, I go madde, I go up and down lyke a madde body, *je cours les rues*. Palsgrave, 1530, NED. 'Like any mad' shows the origin of the sim. The modern rendering would be, like *one mad*, in the manner of one who is mad, hence with excessive violence. — Cf. Made them fight like mad or *drunk*. Butler, H, 7. The use of *like* immediately followed by an adj. is

now obs. according to NED. It ought be have been added that 'like mad' is an exception.

He is swearing *like-i-go mad*. He's working this morning after his spree like-i-go mad. *Chs. Gloss.*

Stickin' together like *fun*. Lowell, 1848, NED. Cf. The bolts went to like fun. Hughes, 1857. I could ha' read i' the books like fun. Eliot, MF, 350.

Mr. Gutty and Mr. Jobling find Krook still sleeping like *one o'clock* quite insensible to any external sound. Dickens, 1852, NED. Beginning to talk like one o'clock. Shaw, IK, 139. Chiefly used of rapid or easy movement or action. Then he trotted on like one o'clock. Mayhew, 1851, NED. We pulled everything to pieces like one o'clock. Bridgeman, 1870, NED. I gambolled over that stile like one o'clock. Wor. EDD, &c.

To work like a *brick*, or *bricks*. Lyly, MB, IV, i, He sighed like bricks as he lugged out the money. Dickens, PP, I, 278. Gibbs has worked like a brick. Forbes, 1853, NED. Kingsley, 1856, NED. She sits her horse as if she were part of him . . . hunts like a brick. Paget, 1856, NED. — Does this refer to the fig. use of brick to denote a good fellow, or do the following insts give a hint to its origin? He lit upon the upper town and its member like a thousand of brick. Robb, 1847, *Slang*. When we wanted to turn him out, he fell upon us like a thousand of bricks. 1860, *Slang*. Mr. Stewart . . . came down upon him like a thousand of bricks, till he was utterly crushed. 1864, *Slang*. All the insts seem to be American. Is the reference, as NED points out, to the crash with which a quantity of bricks fall?

He storms and splutters like . . . What I prithee? — Why, — like *any think*. Flatman, 1631, NED. I have been looking up and down for you like anything. Congreve, 1695, NED. [Tell] Dear Molly, I like her like anything. Croker, 1716, *Slang*. She loved like anything. Gay, NS. All the people in the pits are without hats, depressed like anything. Burney, 1778, NED. He cried like onything. Barham, IL. They laugh and fleer at a body like anything. *Yorksh. Dial.* 4. They wept like anything To see such quantities of sand. Carrol, 1872, NED. He's turned right round, and he's staring at her like anything. 1894, NED. Cf. The young maiden . . . daunced without any feare at all emong swards and kniues, beyng as sharp *as anythyng*. Udall, 1542, *Slang*. As ioyfully as may be, as glad as anything. Mundy, 1594, *Licd.*, 81. 'Shloy gow and tell him again?' I says as cool as ennything. Shaw, IK, 157. Ordered two threes of rum, as cool as anythink. Pain, DO, 54.

What's he send for me for, and then be as jealous as a *billy*. Yoxall, RS, 207. Cf. 'Twid burn like Billy-oh. Som. Not preach! Yes, he can, like Billy-oh. *ibid.* He ran like Billy.

Yks. Also in Stf. Not. Wor. Ox. Chs., EDD. But what this Billy (billy) is, does not seem to be known.

4. *As right as right.*

Hee was my brother, as right as right. *Puritan*, I, i, 11.

Your hands 'ull get as hard as hard. Eliot, MF, 308.

I hear that old song coming out as clear as clear. Stevenson, TI, 118.

Old Ready Money is as rich as rich. Besant, RMM, 105.

The man was free, as free as free. Caine, D, xxii.

If I didn't dream it all as fresh as fresh. *ibid.*, xx.

I saw him as plain as plain. *ibid.*, xviii.

It was truly as easy as easy. Oxenham, MSS, 12.

The squire's as squar' as squar'. Yoxall, RS, 105.

As sour as sour. s. Lan. EDD.

He's as near as near wi' ivverything. Yks. Lin. EDD.

Lincolnshire is one of the counties in which it is customary to hear idioms like "as cruel as cruel", meaning very cruel, extremely cruel. One often remarks such phrases as "I am as glad as glad to see you". "Buttercups is as yellow as yellow". "He was as foul as foul", as ill-tempered as possible. "Them clothes is as wet as wet". N. & Q., 12, III, 276.

In Cambridgeshire the ordinary phrase "very hot" is expressed by "as hot as hot" or sometimes (but more rarely) by "as hot" alone, and the same with other adjectives and adverbs. Skeat, Notes on Langland, PPI, XIV b, 189 (Lean II, ii). Also in Lei. Shr. To judge from the lit. insts above it must be current in many other parts as well. The origin of this type appears from the following passages: And are not these as faire as faire may be. Nashe, *Dido*, III, 139 (His attire was as base as might be. Nashe, II, 8). My good Lady . . . made me as proud as proud can be. Richardson, 1742, NED. Soa he falls to makkin on his-sen as awkward as awkward can be. Lin. EDD.

Appendix.

- P. 4. You shall be as *white* as *innocence* herself. Beaumont & Fletcher, KK, III, i.
- P. 5. I'm sure I am as *innocent* as the *babe unborn*. Eliot, MF 5.
The poor fellow's innocent as an unborn baby. Phillpotts, M, 114.
Providence turns out this man weak as water, though *good* as *gold*. And another may be hard as the nether millstone and bad to the heart. Phillpotts, WF, 71.
- P. 6. Make your name/ *Spotless* as *lilies* are. Longfellow, SSt. II, iv.
- P. 7. She's *innocent* as *morning light*. Beaumont & Fletcher, Fl., V, ii.
- P. 8. His blood, his entrails, liver, heart, and bowels, Be *blacker* than the place I wish him, *hell'd* Dryden, *Oed.*, VI, 170.
- P. 9. I know thar ways — *mean* as *irt*, they is. Stowe, UTC, 114.
- P. 10. *True* as the *needle* to the pole. Cf. There's something about a needle and a pole . . . To cast up to her that her father's a barber, and has a pole at his door, and that she's but a manty-maker herself. Scott, A, 132.
- P. 11. Thou was alway well wirkand, to me *trew* as *stele*. *Townel. Myst.*, 23, I never had a braver, better fellow — trusty and true as steel. Stowe, UTC, 279.
- P. 12. A sweet maiden, and as *trustful* as a *robin*. Phillpotts, WF, 439.
Just to all, and *honest* as the *light*, Phillpotts, M, 312.
- P. 13. "That don't fright me, because I'm *straight* as a *line* in the matter." Phillpotts, TK, 195. See also *Straight*, p. 273 f.
His heart was *open* as the *days*; his feelings all were true. Greene, 1824, Thornton. In most affairs of life they were open as the day. Phillpotts, M, 32. She expects everybody else to be as open as a day. *ibid.*, WF., 108.
- P. 14. *Chaste*, as *ice*, for anything I know. Beaumont & Fletcher, BB, IV, v.

- P. 15. Mere *common* than *tobacco*. Cf. *Germany* hath not so many drunkards, *England* Tobacconists . . . as Italy alone hath jealous husbands. Burton, AM, III, 303.
- P. 19. As *lecherous* as is a *sparwe*. Cf. *Vernis passeribus salaciores*. "Aristotle gives instance in sparrows, which are *parum vivaces ob salacitatem*, short lived because of their salacity . . ., which is very frequent, as Scioppius, in *Priapeis*, will better inform you." Burton, AM, II, 39. See also *ibid.*, III, 348.
- P. 20. She has been false to both of us. — Ay, *false as hell* itself. Longfellow, SSt., II, vi.
Lied like a *Cretan*. Cf. *Cretizare cum Crete*. Burton, AM, I, 70. Crete . . . whose inhabitants — (Cretans are liars: Cretans are men. Therefore all men are liars) had furnished the stock example of fallacy in syllogism. William J. Locke, *The Wonderful Year*, 1916, p. 259 (N. & Q., 12, III, 117).
- P. 21. To *lie* like a *courtier*. Cf. My land is gone, My credit of less trust Than Courtier's words. Barry, RA, I, i.
- P. 22. Began to *lie* like the *proverbial trooper*. Besant, RMM, 96. Two respeckerble lookin' nicely-dressed ole lyedies, and both of 'em lying like troopers for the sike of thrupence each. Pain, DO, 29.
As *hollow* as an *old shoe*, or, As hollow as a shoe when the foot's out. — Used of a deceitful person, *Chs. Gloss.*
- P. 23. As *Dutch* as a *mastiff*. Said of one who assumes an air of innocence after having done some mischief. Yks. EDD.
- P. 24. As *slape* as an *eel-tail*. Often applied metaphorically to a person who cannot be trusted. *Clevel. Gloss.* Cf. *Il est glissant comme une anguille*, Λείος ὄσπερ ἐγγελυς. *Hij is te vangen als een aal bij den staart. Een aal bij den staar, hebben. Qui tenet anguillam per caudam non habet illam. Qui prend l'anguille par la queue et la femme par la parole. peut dire qu'il ne tient rien.* Stoett, NS, I, 2f.
- P. 25. Their words are as *soft as oil*, but bitterness is in their hearts. Burton, AM, III, 447. Wi' language *glibe* as oolie. Ramsay, 1722, EDD.
Out comes the gentleman-partner to *fawn* like a *spaniel*. Scott, A, 388.
- P. 28. As *deep* as *Garrick*. Add: There is a figure called *Karick*, who represents the devil, in the Sw. school-drama *Judas Redivivus*, acted in 1614 and written by one Jacobus Rondeletius, who died in 1662. The origin of the word and the character does not seem to be known. The play is said to be founded on mediæval legends. Perhaps the name occurred in some mystery play on the Continent which became known in England, and hence spread.

- P. 33. *Down as a hammer.* Common; wide-awake, knowing. To be down to anything is pretty much the same thing as to be up to it, and *down as a hammer* is of course the *intensivum* of the phrase. More, 1819, *Slang*.
 He'd come home again as *smart as a steeltrap*. 1833, Thornton. A little girl with sparkling intelligent eye, thin, expressive lips, and "as smart as a steeltrap". 1856, Thornton. Must refer to a person quick and alert in thought and movement.
 You're a lad, you are, but you are as *smart as paint*. Stevenson, TI, 35. Cf. as *pretty as paint*, p. 219.
 As *subtle as a dead pig*. Add: *Sat edepol certe scio! Occisam sæpe sapere plus multo suem*. Plantus, *Miles Glor.*, 586, 7 (II, vi, 106) N. & Q., 12, III, 233.
 He has *more items* than a *dancing bear*. Add: *item*, crafty design, trick.
 Zo *itemy's* a bear wi' a zore head. Hewett, Dev. 11.
 You've so many megrims as a dancing bear. Nhp. EDD.
 As *subtle as a fox*. Burton, AM, I, 82.
- P. 34. The boy was full of hookemsnivey ways, an' *cummin'* as a *stoat*. Phillpotts, *Dartmoor*, 43, EDD.
Clever as a snake. Phillpotts, P. 178.
- P. 35. As *sharp as a lop*. Gibson, 1877, Wm. EDD.
 He's *quick as lightning* about the detail. Phillpotts, WF, 332.
 As *mad as the man in the moon*. Add: They are a company of giddy-heads, afternoon men, it is midsummer moon still, and the dog-days last all the year long, they are all mad. Burton, AM, I, 134.
- P. 36. She's as *mad as Bedlam*. Sheridan, R, IV, ii.
Mad as a weaver. 'Weaver' is said to refer to the weaver-beetle or whirlygig that circles round and round on the surface of water. N. & Q., 12, III, 277. Doubtful.
 As *mad as a hatter*. Used in the fifties. N. & Q., 12, III, 277, and in Thackeray, *Pendennis*, x, 1849, NED.
- P. 39. As *mad as a dog*. Add: Put a bird in a cage, he will die from sullenness, or a beast in a pen, or take his young ones . . . from him, and see what the effect of it will be. But who perceives not these common passions of sensible creatures, fear, sorrow &c.? Of all other, dogs are most subject to this malady, insomuch some hold they dream as men do, and through violence of melancholy run mad. Burton, AM, I, 87.
- P. 40. As *mad as a March hare*. "Ye're mad, Rob", said the Bailie, "as mad as a March hare, — though wherefore a hare suld be mad at March mair than at Martinmas, is mair than I can weel say". Scott, RR, xxiii.
- P. 42. As *crazy as loons, a loon*. Frequently heard in the Midland Counties. N. & Q., 12, III, 277.

- P. 43. As *fond* as a *besom*. Add: As *duft* as a buzzom. Tyn-
side, N. & Q., 12, III, 277.
- P. 47. *Banbury* foolishness; cf.: She is more devout than a weaver
of Banbury, that hopes to intice heaven, by singing, to
make him lord of twenty looms. Porter, *The Wits*, I,
i (Dodsley, VIII, 344). — Add: A tinker stops one hole
and makes two. Burton, AM, II, 66.
- P. 48. "No, no, my fine fellow", said Thornton with a coarse
chuckle, "You have as much wit as three folks — two
fools and a madman, but you won't *do* me for all that".
Lytton, *Pelham*, lxxvii (Bridge, CP, 19). The sim. is al-
ready in Ray, who gives it as a Cheshire proverb.
- P. 49. Great, pious brown eyes — *stupid* as a *calf's*. Phillpotts,
M, 288.
- P. 50. As *stupid* as a *jackass*. *Chs. Gloss.* Cf. the Som. ex-
pression 'a jackass fool',
He came flynging home to Rome again as *wyse* as a
capon. Udall, 1542, EDD. See p. 54.
- P. 51. As *dizzy* as a *goose*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
As *stupid* as an *owl*. Thackeray, *Pendennis*, (N. & Q., 12,
III, 277).
- P. 52. He ain't as *intellectual* as a *common-sized shad*. 1858,
Thornton.
Thee's *no moore brains* nor a *maggot*. 1858, Wor., EDD.
- P. 53. As *dull* as a *whetstone*. Cf. "Blue as a whetstone"
White BT, 76. See below.
My hearth became *heavy* as *lead*. Hocking, MF, 117. See
Heavy, p. 296.
As *dull* as *dun in the mire*. "Dun' is a donkey. The
meaning is one greatly embarrassed." N. & Q., 12, III,
277. Does the cor. mean that a donkey having stumbled
into the mire has not wit enough to get out again?
- P. 54. As *dull* as a *fish*. Cf. "You seem one of the jolly sort
— looks as convivial as a live trout in a lime-basket,"
added Mr. Weller in an undertone. Dickens, PP, I, 225.
- P. 55. All sitting as *glum* as *mutes at a funeral*. Phillpotts, WF,
416.
- P. 56. "Old man is as *blue* as a *whetstone*", commented Jackson
Hines, "an' I don't blame him. This weather'd make a
man mad enough to eat the devil with his horns left on.
White, BT, 76.
As *long* as a *hay-rake shaft*. Said when anyone looks
melancholy, and "pulls a long face". N. & Q., 12, III,
275.
He sits as *glum* as a *monkey*. Galsworthy, MP, 142.
As for that architect chap, he was as *glum* as a *bear with
a sore head*. Galsworthy, MP, 227.
As *melancholy* as a *hare*. Add: The Egyptians therefore

in their Hieroglyphics expressed a melancholy man by an hare sitting in her form. Burton, AM, I, 445.

- P. 58. He looked as *dour* as *thunner*. Yks. *Dour*, sullen, gloomy.
- P. 59. She was as *solemn* as a *mourner*. Harland, MFP, 72.
His housekeeper, . . . as *precise* and *starch* as an *old picture*. Disraeli, 1837, NED.
As *stiff* as their own *starch* is. Dickens, *L. Dorrit*, W.
Footmen standing stiff as starch. Bret Harte, *Prose and Poet.*, W.
- P. 60. Lady Oxford . . . stood *stiff* as a *ramrod*. Mason, PK, 157.
As *stiff* as a *cart*. Which is stiff when the wheels need greasing. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
As *solid* as a *bee*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
- P. 61. He was as *cool* as the *proverbial soldier on parade*. Hocking, MF, 13.
Steady as *old time*. Add: Steady as *time* where drink was concerned — a self-denying sort of man in that matter. Phillpotts, WF, 20.
A hook-nosed, glib fellow, as *cool* as a *cucumber*. Eliot, MF, 177.
- P. 62. Trelawney was as *cool* as *steel*. Stevenson, TI, 67.
Well, gentlemen, are you *determined* to go on this cruise? — Like *iron*. Stevenson, TI, 38.
As *solid* as a *brick*. Chs. Gl.
- P. 63. As *patient* as a *Job*. Barclay, *Ship of F.*, 1509, Wright, *Displ. of Duty*, 1589. (Lean, II, ii). We have seen fit to say "the patience of Job's turkey" instead of the common phrase "as patient as Job". — And so it must go for this time at any rate. 'Twould worry out the patience of Job's turkey to be picked and pillaged from in this way. 1824, Thornton. Cf. [She would] starve as contentedly as Job. London, GF, 83. You would provoke the patience of Job. Fielding, 1749, NED.
[A pretty girl] *sweet* as *sugar*, and as rich as a *goldmine*. Phillpotts, WF, 439, 81.
- P. 64. The proprietor of the *Horse and Jockey* was proverbially *easy* as an *old shoe*. Besant, RMM, 22. See *Easy*, p, 347.
Ez *patient* ez a *cat*. Add: She will be quiet as a cat purring in front of the fire. Mason, PK, 160.
- P. 65. Silver'll bring 'em all again as *mild* as *lambs*. Stevenson, TI, 52.
- P. 69. *Civil* as an *orange*. Add: That dronell, that drowsy, drake-nosed drivill. He never learned his manners in Sivill. AV, (Dodsley, xii, 375). The Shak. inst. of the sim. does not refer to politeness, but to one who is neither sad nor merry, *aigre-doux*, and rather a bit sourish, as he has "something of that jealous complexion".

- P. 69. As *merry* as *David* afore the ark. Phillpotts, M, 307.
- P. 70. We will send for . . . the Miss Dawkins, and your cousins, and have old Cobs the fiddler, and he as *merry* as the *maids*. Scott, RR, ix. See p. 71.
I was as *light-hearted* as a *boy*. Hocking, MF, 70. His heart was as light as a child's. Besant, RMM, 201.
- P. 71. As *merie* as a *magge pie*. Rowley, 1605, NED.
- P. 72. 'As *merry* as a *Greek*', an inst. of this sim. occurs in Cotton, *Virgil Travestie*, bk IV (p. 72, ed. 1725): Trojans round besiege her Boards, Merry as Greeks and drunk as lords. (*Slang*). But it does not follow that one of the two sim. is a perversion of the other. There are two distinct sim., one is 'as merry as a grig', a native originally dial. and colloquial saying, the other, 'as merry as a Greek', a more literary phrase, current, perhaps, in the 16th and 17th c. drama with its numerous classical allusions. — Cf. *Dies noctesque pergræcari et bibere*. Plautus, *Mostellaria*, I, i, 21 (Burton, AM, II, 141).
- P. 77. As *happy* as a *prince*. Used by an old man who had been elected to an alms-house at Harbledown, Kent. N. & Q., 12, III, 127.
- P. 78. As *happy* as a *pig in muck*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
As *happy* as *ducks in mud*, or *in rain*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
Lizzie's *happy* as a *lark*. Phillpotts, M, 200.
As *happy* and *content* as the *day was long*. Scott, A, 228.
- P. 79. To *grin* like a *basket of chips*. Add: The whole population flashed the white grin like a basket of chips. More, 1819, *Slang*.
To *grin* like a *Cheshire cat*. The saying is discussed at some length in Bridge, CP, 135, where it is stated that it is not, and never has been, a very common saying in the County. As it is not traced back above 1800, it must be a modernism, and consequently, according to Bridge, we are not likely to find its origin in an heraldic source. He further states that he has never heard of Cheshire cheese being made in moulds resembling cats or any other animals. It has also been suggested that the sim. should be 'to grin like a Cheshire polecat', but polecats are too rare in Cheshire, says Dr. Bridge, to become part of a popular saying. One might also ask why a *Cheshire* polecat should grin more than a Berkshire or Sommerset one. He winds up, "*Egerton Leigh* hits the nail on the head when he says, 'one need not go far to account for a Cheshire cat grinning. A cat's paradise must naturally be placed in a county like Cheshire, flowing with milk'. It seems to me likely that the origin is in some such connection." But there would be a cat's paradise just as much in Derbyshire,

Devon, and Somerset, far more important dairy districts than Cheshire. We are still in the dark as to the origin of the saying, and what we want in order to elucidate it is not conjecture but facts.

- P. 81. He seems to be as *proud* as *Lucifer*. Eliot, MF, 409.
- P. 82. A head as *big* as *brass*. — Is this an allusion to the gigantic head kept in the castle of the giant Ferragus in Portugal, spoken of in *Valentine and Orson*, or is it Friar Bacon's brazen head, mentioned e. g. by Byron, DJ, I, 217?
- P. 84. As *bug* as a *thrush*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
As *bug* as a *louse*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116.
- P. 85. Now my pretie else, as *proud* as *the day is long*. Lyly, MB, I, iii, 48. See *Happy*, p. 78.
As *nice* as the *Mayor of Banbury*. Misquotation or misprint for *wise*? See p. 47.
- P. 86. Some say as much of *Elephants*, that they are *more jealous* than any other creatures whatsoever. Burton, AM, III, 301.
- P. 87. *Unrelenting* as *death*. Stowe, UTC, 41.
[The features] were as *remorseless* as a *red Indian's*. Phillpotts, TK, 211. See p. 61, *Stolid* as a *red Indian*.
Gerard's face was *impassive* as that of a *statue*. Marchmont, CF, 57.
- P. 89. I used to think you were capable of some depths of feeling . . . But you're not. You're as *cold* as a *fish*. Nash's, '17, April, 84.
As *cruel* as a *spider*. Cf. the Dutch '*boos, kwaad*(*artij*), *nijdig* as eene *spin*. Stoett, NS, II, 273.
You'd find me as *unyielding* as *adamant*. Harland, MFP, 131.
As fair and *hard* as a *diamond*, she will not respect me. Burton, AM, III, 266.
I make my moan to her, but she is *hard* as *flint*. Burton, AM, III, 266.
Ban't a soft woman, you understand, Avisia. Hard as flint in fact. Phillpotts, M, 120.
Hard as a *stone*. Add: They are no more moved, — *quam si dura silex aut stet Marpesia cautes*, than so many stocks and stones. Burton, AM, III, 437. *Caute, feris, quercu durior Eurydice*, *ibid.*, III, 266.
- P. 90. He looked as *savage* as a *meat-axe*. Holland, 1857. Thornton; insts *ibid.* fr. 1835. Cf. She was . . . as *wicked* as a *meat-axe*. Haliburton, 1835, NED.
- P. 91. As *lawless* as a *town-bull*. Add: Thou rangest like a town-bull. Burton, AM, III, 335.
As *mad* as a *tup*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
- P. 92. Musick makes some men *mad* as a *tiger*. Burton, AM, II, 136.

As *fell* as a *fox*. — When a fox breaks into a henroost, it will often kill a great number of birds, leaving some where they fall and carrying others away to bery. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. See p. 128.

P. 93. As *mad* as *hops*. Cf. the Dutch '*zoo kwaad als een hoppe*'. Antwerp, Stoett, NS, II, 273.

P. 95. She's as *obstinate* as *fate*. Galsworthy, MP, 143. A *cross* as *old Wilkes*. Nhp. EDD. Is this another name for the devil, or an allusion to the word or name Wilkes in 'as deep as Wilkes', p. 27.

As *sour* as *Hector*. Add: 'Hector is one of the seven worthies. He appears as such in Shak., LLL. Nothing was once more common than the portraits of these heroes; and therefore they might have found their way occasionally into shops, which we know to have been anciently decorated with pictures . . . Of the Seven Worthies, the Ten Sibyls, and the Twelve Cæsars I have seen many complete sets in old halls and old staircases.' Dodsley, VI, 34⁸.

P. 98. As *cross* as *Dick's hatband*. Add: As cross as Dicks hatband, half-way round and tucked. N. & Q., 12, III, 233.

P. 99. The following passages also illustrate the importance of having a hatband for any one who did not want to be looked upon as a crank: I was once like thee/ A sigher, mélancholy, humorist,/ Crosser of arms, a goer without garters/ A hatband-hater, and a busk-point wearer. Heywood, CGW, 361. Shall I that have ieasted of lovers sighes now raise whirlwinds? Shall I that have flowted ay-mees once a quarter, now practise ay-mees every minute? Shall I defie hatbands, and tread garters and shoo-strings under my feet? Heywood, Dram. Wks. Vol. II, p. 20. See *ibid.* p. 16 for a similar passage. But that a Rooke, in wearing a pyed feather,/ The cable hatband, or the three-pild ruffe,/ A yard of shoetie, or the Switzer's knot/ On his French garters, should affect a Humour:/ O, 'tis more than most ridiculous. Jonsson, *Every Man out of his Humour*. I have seen a man come by my door with a serious face, in a black cloak, without a hatband, carrying his head as if he look'd for pins in the street: I have look'd out of my window half a year after, and have spied that man's head on London Bridge. Beaumont & Fletcher, KBP, II, v.

P. 102. An obstinate beggar like Swithin, *pigheaded* as a *mule*. Galsworthy, MP, 59. The farmer, the sowl, was as *twrawn* as a mule. Ir., 1884, EDD; *Thrawn*, obstinate, cross-grained.

P. 103. The state often makes a man as *vicious* as a *trapped rat*. Phillpotts, M, 64.

- P. 103. His wife's just as *thrawn* as a *wuddy*. Rnf., 1835, EDD. I'll be as thrawn's you, though you were as thrawn as the woody. Jamieson (EDD). *Thrawn* originally means twisted, and the woody, or wuddy, is a band or hoop of twisted willow.
- P. 104. As *rough* as a *Bolton chap*. Murray, *Handbook* (Lean, II, ii). Bolton in Lancashire figures in other proverbial expressions, *Bolton quarters*, death without mercy (see EDD), and *Bolton trotter*, one who practises the kind of chaff common in Bolton. EDD.
- P. 105. How shall I know thee to be a man, when thou kickest like an ass, neighest like a horse after women, ravest in lust like a bull, ravenest like a bear, stingest like a scorpion, rakest like a wolf, as subtle as a fox, as *impudent* as a *dog*? Burton, AM, I, 82 (fr. Chrysostomus).
- P. 106. *Cadger's horse*. Add: Cadgers maun aye be speaking about cart saddles. Scott, RR, xxvi. She [a mare] wad ha' rein'd as cannily as a cadger's pownie, Scott, W, xlvi.
They are as *cocky* as *monkeys with tin tools*. *Slang*. Impudently conceited.
Looking at the girls as *perky* as a *bantam cock*. Jerome, 1896, EDD. *Perky*, impudent, saucy.
- P. 107. To *scold* like a *wych-waller*. Add: "The wallers — which are commonly women." *King's Vale Royal*, 1659 (Bridge, CP, 142). Ray's "missing the connection of women with this saying" is probably due to the circumstance that it was too well known to require any comment.
- P. 108. You may hear them . . . *Abuse* one another like *Fish-women*. Crull, 1698, NED. Cf. In those private letters . . . the Princess expressed the sentiments of a fury in the style of a fish-woman. Macaulay, 1855, EDD.
I see grave learned men *rail* and *scold* like *butter-women*. Burton, AM, III, 398.
- P. 110. To *swear* like a *cutter*. — A *cutter* is a robber or bully. This ancient cant word now survives only in this phrase. *Slang*. Cf. His infirmities were passion, in which he would swear like a cutter. North, 1734, NED. According to NED this sense of cutter is altogether obs. now. He *swore* like a *Turk*. Ayr. EDD.
As *wild* as *Orson*. Add: He was a great tall, bristling Orson of a fellow, full six feet and some inches in his stockings, and arrayed in a flannel hunting shirt. Stowe, UTC, 107.
- P. 111. And when thuo seest my heart to mirth incline/ . . . Then of sweet sport let no occasion scape,/ But be as *wanton-toying* as an *ape*. John Harrington, Epigr. IV, 45 (Burton, AM, II, 141).

As *wild* as the *wind*. Lin., N. & Q., 12, III, 276.
 Jim is a giant in strength, and *brave* as *death* and *despair*.
 Stowe, UTC, 224.

B. 112. As *good* as *George-a-Green*. *Wit's Recreations*, 1640, H.

Although he has no riches,
 And walks with dangling breeches,
 And skirts that want their stitches,
 And shows his naked flitches,
 Yet he'll be thought or seen
 As good as George-a-Green.

Herrick, *Hesp.*, II, 264, 1648 (Lean II, ii).

And were y'as good as George-a-Green/ I should make
 bold to turn again. Butler, H, 167; Ray. This George-
 a-Green is the famous Pinder or Poundkeeper, of Wake-
 field. The saying applies to his courageous conduct and
 impartialities in his discharge of his public duties; and
 more particularly when he resisted, single-handed, Robin
 Hood, Will Scarlet and Little John, in their joint attempt
 to commit a trespass in Wakefield. See *The Folly Pin-
 dar of Wakefield* in Ritson's Collection of Robin Hood
 Ballads. N. & Q., 2, XI, 310. Cf. also the drama *The
 Pindar of Wakefield*, published in 1599, attributed to
 Greene.

As *bold* as *blind Bayard*. Add: Cf. the D. term *rosbeier*,
Ros Beyaert. See Stoett, NS, II, 197.

She've borne it so *brave* as a *regiment*. Phillpotts, M,
 276.

P. 113. He was as *bold* as a *lion*. Scott, RR, iv. Stowe, UTC, 105.

P. 114. *Stout* as a *stockfish*. This is perhaps originally an allu-
 sion to the toughness and hardness of the dried fish.

To' get a divorce, Vigil, you must be as hard as nails
 and as *wary* as a *cat*. Galsworthy, CH, 80.

P. 115. As *scared* as a *rabbit*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. — The
 arrangement of the sim. under the Section *Coward* &c. is
 not satisfactory. The order should be *dog, cat, horse,*
sheep, rabbit, hare, mouse, &c.

P. 121. As *idle* as a *dog is hairy*. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.
 The coachman, *sluggish* as a *bearded loach*. Walker,
 1882, NED.

P. 124. As *throng* as *Knot Mill Fair*, p. 294, is said to mean
very busy.

They tell me he *works* like a *nigger*. Galsworthy, MP, 142.

P. 125. Sir Thomas More will . . . have no man labour over-hard,
 to be *toiled out* like a *horse*. Burton, AM, II, 98.

P. 131. *Don't know more* than the *deaa'* how to set about 'em.
 Phillpotts, M, 28.

I *know no more* than *Adam*. Baumann.

- P. 133. You . . . *doan't know no more* about a woman than a *cow*. Phillpotts, M, 13.
He had *no more idea* of money than a cow. Galsworthy, MP, 27.
- P. 148. Her wrizled skin, as *rough* as *maple rind*. Spenser, FQ, I, viii, 47.
- P. 155. As *hard* as a *nut*. Add: I am a man at the top of his prosperity, and as hard as a nut in wind and limb. Phillpotts, M, 132.
- P. 158. As *pcart* as a *spoon*. Said to mean 'unusually bright and cheerful'. EDD.
The creature was as *lithe* as a *cat*. Stowe, UTC, 295.
- P. 159. As *dapper* as any *crowe* and *pert* as any *pie*. *Ym. of Hypocr.*, 1533, NED.
- P. 161. A while ago he was all down in the mouth, and now he is *pcart* as a *cricket*. Stowe, UTC, 465.
He is as *game* as a *pebble*, the Squire. Galsworthy, CH, 181. *Strand Mag.*, '18, 285.
- P. 162. As *wick* as *fire*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. *Wick*, quick.
- P. 163. As *sick* as a *horse*. Add: Thou thyself hast peradventure more diseases than a horse. Burton, AM, III, 336.
- P. 164. The Section *Lame* should be preceded by the following Section:—

Nervous, Fidgety, Fretting.

- As for the bull, he got perceptibly thinner and thinner . . . and as *nervous* as a *schoolmarm* on the wrong side of matrimony. London, MF, 14. School-ma'am, U. S., rec. fr. 1840, Thornton.
- To *fret* like a *grogram*. Sharpham, *Cupid's Whirlig.*, 1607. (Lean, II, ii). Stamp and fret like gumm'd grograne. Brathwait, 1630, NED. Go, thou art as fretting as an old grogrum. Ford, LS, I, ii. *Grogrum*, a coarse fabric of silk, or mohair and wool, often stiffened with gum, or a garment made of this stuff.
- To *fret* like *gum taffety*, Ray, 1678 (Lean, II, ii; it is not in Bohn). You have made her fret like gum taffety. Swift, PC. Cf. How now, gummed Taffeta? Shirley, 1632, NED. Gum-taffeta, not rec. in NED before Swift, PC., taffeta stiffened with gum.
- To *fret* like *tinsel*. Beaumont & Fletcher, *Pilgr.*, III, iii (Lean, II, ii). *Tinsel*, tinselled cloth.
- To *fret* like *gummed velvet*. Shak., KH IVa, II, ii, 2.
- I feel as *nervous* as a *cat*. Hardy, UGT. Doyle, *Firm*, 305. You can all see that he is as weak and nervous as a cat, and that he doesn't know how to fight. Shaw, CBP, 148. The

poor old soul had been as nervous as a cat the whole time. Galsworthy, MP, 145, *ibid.* CH, 199. Not known to C.

The Parson was become as *uneasy* as a *restive horse*. Mason, PK, 165.

Restless as a *hyaena*. Roget.

He was as *nervous* as a *mouse in a cage*. J. Webster, JP, 222. Cf. Touchy as a rat in a trap, p. 104; as vicious as a trapped rat, p. 416.

As *busy* as a *hen with one chicken*. Ray, Roget. Nhp. Oxf., EDD. Unnecessary fussy and active over trifles. EDD. As *fussy* &c. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. She was as *flustered* as an old hen with one chicken. J. Webster, JP, 83. See *Busy*, p. 124.

Zo *fidgety's* a *maggot*. Hewett, Dev. 11. Cf. the adj. *maggoty*, queer-tempered, irritable. Maggot, a maggot-fly.

P. 171. *Blind* as a *beetle*. Add: Madmen, fools, dizzards . . . beside themselves, and as blind as Beetles. Burton, AM, III, 176.

P. 181. As *greedy* as a *wolf*. Add: The men had *fed* like wolves. White, SE, 33.

P. 184. As *fat* as a *parson's horse*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. She stoops, is lame, splay-footed, as *slender in the middle* as a *cow in the waist*. Burton, AM, III, 178.

P. 187. As *thin* as a *rail*. N. & Q., 12, III, 116. She's as *thin* as a *lath*. Galsworthy, MP, 50. As *gaunt* as a *greyhound*. Add: As thin as a grew. Grew, greyhound. N. & Q., 12, III, 275.

P. 188. *Poor* as a *crow*. Add: As poor as a *craw* in a Candlemas blast. Lin. N. & Q., 12, III, 275. A blast is a long-continued frost.

P. 189. Mas'r St. Clare is gettin' *thin* as a *shadder*. Stowe, UTC, 357.

As *dry* as a *hake*. Nrf. Ken. 1695, EDD. This is said to be the fish. Dried hake, probably. Another word *hake* in 'as black as the hake up the chimney', p. 243.

P. 198. As *drunk* as a *parson*. Add: What is said of the ministers of religion also applies to the old Knight Templars, as appears from the continental sim. *Drinken, zuipen* als een *Tempelier*. *Boire* (also *jurer*) *comme un templier* (already in Rabelais); *er trinkt wie ein Templer*. Stoett, NS, I, 171. Wander. Cf. *Être gris comme un Cordelier*, a Franciscan Friar. Stoett, *ibid.*

P. 204. *Martin-drunk*, cf. A little learning is a dangerous thing: Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring: There shall deep draughts intoxicate the brain, And drinking largely sobers us again. Pope, *Essay on Crit.*, I, 215.

As *drunk* as a *swine*. Add: Some men ladeð here lif on etinge and on *drinkinge* else *swin*. c. 1200, NED.

- P. 208. As *drunk* as an *owl*. Cf. Why do you goggle like an owl? Kipling, *Nash's*, April, '17, 108.
- P. 222. When she is in the meadow, she is *fairer* than any *flower*. Burton, AM, III, 194.
Jerusha . . . went *brave* as an *autumn sunset*. Robins, OQ, 273.
The following passages aptly illustrate what is said in the *Note*: —
Stars, Suns, Moons, Metals, sweet-smelling Flowers, Odours, Perfumes, Colours, Gold, Silver, Ivory, Pearls, Precious Stones, Snow, Painted Birds, Doves, Honey, Sugar, Spice, cannot express her, so soft, so tender, so radiant, sweet, so fair is she. Burton, AM, III, 181. The Sun itself, and all that we can imagine, are but shadows of it, 'tis *visio praezellens* . . . the quintessence of beauty this, which far exceeds the beauty of Heavens, Sun and Moon, Stars, Angels, gold and silver, woods, fair fields, and whatsoever is pleasant to behold. *ibid.* 362.
- P. 223. As *bright* as a *new pin*. *Slang*.
Bright as silver. Thetis feet were as bright as silver. Burton, AM, III, 186.
- P. 234. His woolen hose as *white* as the *driven snow*. Porter, TAW, 25.
- P. 238. As *dark* as *bellows*. Yks. EDD.
- P. 248. As *red* as a *ep*. Yks. EDD. *Ep*, hip.
- P. 254. Afore a hog knew what he was about, he was as *bare* as a *punkin*. 1854, Thornton.
- P. 256. The *fig.* use of *sharp*, *keen* in connection with edge-tools. Add: He was upon a sudden now spruce and keen, as a new-ground hatchet, Burton, AM, III, 202.
- P. 264. They shut up as *tight* as a *rat-trap*. Lan. EDD.
- P. 271. As *flat* as a *pancake*. The following passage shows that this sim. existed already in the 16th c.: Her wit's a sunne that melts him down like butter, And makes him sit at table pancake wise, Flat, flat, God knowes, and nere a word to say. Porter, TAW, 50.
- P. 273. His hair, which now hung like a dozen of wet dip candles down his forehead straight for his eyes. Caine, D, 225.
- P. 288. She wore at her neck a large topaz-coloured stone, as *large* as a *saucer*, Courlander, MS, 55.
- P. 292. When mortar is mixed too thin a bricksetter will say: 'Aw conna use this, it's as thin as papes; it winna lie on my trowel.' Chs. *Papes*, a sort of gruel made by boiling flour and water together. EDD.
- P. 294. As *full* as my *stocking*. When the leg is in, I suppose. N. & Q., 12, III, 116.
- P. 321. 'As clean as a whistle' is said to be due to Byrom (1692-1763). N. & Q., 8, IX, 140.

- P. 335. Diuerse times I am cupshotten, on my feet I cannot stand; . . . Than I wyl pyse in my felowes shoes and hose, Than I am as *necessary* as a *waspe in ones nose*. Boorde, *Introd.*, 156. Must refer to one who makes himself a nuisance. Cf. 'as quiet as a wasp in one's (a man's) nose', p. 161. This sim. is rec. already in Withals (Lean).
- P. 353. As *safe* as a *crow* in a gutter. Cf. I lye as *still* as *cat in a gutter*. AV, (Dodsley, xii, 472). But does a cat lie still in a gutter? Perhaps both sim. are ironical?
- P. 364. As *plain* as the *nose in a man's face*. Cf. and though it be as common as simony, as clear and as *manifest* as the nose in a man's face, yet it cannot be evidently proved. Burton, AM, III, 355.
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CHAPTER VI.

General Survey.

Sources of Similes.

The following Section will deal with the aspects of life and nature that have predominated in the minds of those who have created and used the preceding sim., i. e. the provinces and departments of life and nature from which they are drawn. A systematic arrangement of these sources will show us something about the interests and circumstances of life of the people who gave rise to all the sim. collected. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the users and creators do not form an homogeneous group of persons with the same range of interest and outlook upon life. A west country farmer and a Yorkshire ploughboy may perhaps use different words, but their spheres of ideas probably do not differ very widely. But a Lancashire weaver and a London cabman cannot be expected to have more than a certain stock of sim. in common. A Scotch shepherd, a Yarmouth fisherman, a Cornish miner, a country doctor or parson, a London merchant and an Oxford professor may differ still more. And we must further bear in mind that old and new, PE and early MnE and ME are mixed up without distinction. And one thing more, numerous sim. represent neither general nor dialect usage, but simply individual or occasional usage. To get a tolerably correct and fair idea of the English people in its sim. an investigation ought to be based upon strictly proverbial PE sim. But in spite of the above mentioned inaccuracies the following list has something to tell us about the interests of the English people collectively during the last four centuries.

1. *God, Heaven, Hell, the Devil.*

God: As false as ~ is true, (20), true (correct; 371), as sure as ~ mad Moses (354), little apples (354), rain (355), ~ sees me (355), ~ is in Gloucestershire (354), as stern as the *Lord* (90), . . . goes on God's ground alive. Gen. sim. (402).

Angel: contented (77), innocent (4), to love like an ~ (135), lovely (214), soft as an ~ 's whisper (265); *Cherubim*: happy (77).

Heaven: beautiful (214), innocent (4), differ like ~ and hell (332). *Jerusalem* (the New Jerusalem of the Rev.): glorious, beautiful (214).

Devil: beautiful (214), crafty, cunning (27), dark (237), dull (53), drunk (194), false (20 f), hate like the ~ (137), sour, ugly, i. e. ill-tempered (95), mad (35), polite (68), proud (80), (see also gen. sim. 404), *arrant ~*: bad character (7), ~ *unknotted*: ill-tempered (95), ~ *of two years old*: innocent (7), ~ in a high wind: busy (122), love a thing as the ~ loves holy water (137), as like as the ~ and his dam (329), great (friends) as the ~ (old Nick) and the Earl of Kent (326), devil and a *collier*: like (330), *Old Bogie*: laugh (78); *Old Boots*: (gen. sim. 405); *Lucifer*: black (239), cunning (27), proud (80); *Satan*: absolute in sin (7), clever (27), sane (26), sure (355), *Old Nick*: ill-conditioned, i. e. ill-tempered (95), see also above. For other names of the devil, see p. 31. The ~ 's *forehead*: hard (258); of a person's health (151)? The ~ 's *cloven feet*: false tongue (20); ~ 's *nagails*: hard (258); ~ 's *shoe-sole*: tough (264); ~ *or his dam*: haughty (80 f), ~ 's *dam*: ugly (228); ~ 's *disciple*: crafty (27); ~ 's (*Old Sam's*) *nutting-bag*: black (239 f); ~ 's *kitchen*: hot (310); *demon*: busy, hard-working (122), shrieking (388); *fury of hell*: fierce (90); *fiends in hell*: yell (388).

Hell: angry (90), beautiful (214), black (241), clever (27), conscience wide as ~ (9), cruel (87), dark (237), drunk (194), foul (morally polluted; 7), hate something like ~ (138); low (298), proud (81), sure (355), terrible (339), see also gen. sim. (404); ~ *beating tan-bark* (Amer.): busy (123); ~ *on a stoker's holiday* (Amer.): cold (312); *hell-gate*: wide (285); *hell-pains*: hate something like ~ (138); *pit* (= bottomless pit): hot (310); *blazes* (stands for the infernal regions generally): drunk (194); see also gen. sim. (404); *Hummer* (hell, devil): dark (237). *First snake*: false (20).

Thus we find that hell and the devil are of far greater importance for the making of sim. than God and Heaven. But is not this a thing of universal occurrence? Do not in all forms of religion the powers for evil and the attempts to propitiate them play a greater part, at least in the daily life of the superstitious and fear-haunted masses, than the powers for good? The comparative scarcity of sim. in which God and heaven occur may also be an outcome of the reverence for things divine that we find among the Hebrews, who were forbidden even to mention the name of the Most High.

2. Other Aspects of Man's Religious Life (see also below 3—6).

Soul: love something like one's ~ (135), shrieking like a chaos of lost ~ (388).

Sin: bad character (7), black (241), dark (237), old (149), ~ s: numerous (394), ugly (228); *sinner*: as sure as I am a ~ (358). *Bribery*: common (395); *buggery*: drunk (195); *lies*: cheap (346); *simony*: common, (395), sure (355) *vanity*: light (297).

Virtue: calm (61), poor (342). *Charity*: cold (312), dead (142), cold (= hardhearted; 87); *faith*: trustworthy (9); *honour*: sure (356); *truth*: innocent (4), poor (342), straight (273).

Glory: bright (223); *grace*: innocent (4), tender, mild (63).

Doomsday: grave (59); *Judgement*: sure (355). *Damnation*, gen. sim. (405).

Fate: sure (355), obstinate (415), unavoidable (318), true, in accordance with facts (371).

3. *Death and the Grave.*

Death: cold (312), dumb (177), fell, fierce (90), greedy (126), ill, sick (162), jealous (86), pale (234), safe (350), silent (386), sinful (black; 8), solitary (394), still (383), strong (391), sure (355), terrible (339), universal (394), white (230). *The dead*: sleep like ~ (167), still (383); cf. my poor husband in his grave: still (383).

The Grave: black (241), cruel (87, see also p. 20), damp (301), dark (237), secret (129), silent (386); *tomb*: silent (386), still (383). *Grave-stone*: naked (253), *coffins*: calm (62); *hearse*: gloomy (55); *funeral of negroes*: black (242).

4. *Religious Documents, Public Worship.*

Bible: sure (355); *God's word*: true, correct (371); *holy writ*: strong confirmation (391); *Old Book*: true, correct (371), *scripture story*: simple (346); *Gospel*: true (371); *text*: true (371); *Testament, Psalter, lady's prayer-book*: big (287); *Crede*: sure (355), true (371); *Paternoster*: to know a thing as perfectly as one's ~ (131).

Mass: as . . . as ever went to ~ (400); *sermon*: dry (299), thanksgiving ~ : long (283); *Amen*: sure (358).

Abbey: high (284); *chapel*: big (289), *church*: big (289), safe (351), sleep (167), stable (261), steady (60); dogs unto a ~ : inappropriate (334); (devil and) *holy water*: hatred (137).

5. *Persons mentioned in the Bible, Saints, Sects.*

Abel: innocent (4); *Adam*: dead (141), ignorant (418) old (149); *Daniel*: sly, cunning (31); *David*: merry (413), *David's heart*: dry (299), King ~ 's *goslings*: poor (342); *Haman*: high (280); *Jacob's ladder*: straight (273); *Fael's tent-nail*: long (281); *Job*: patient (412), poor (341); ~ 's wife: wicked (8), ~ 's *turkey*: lean (188), poor (342); *Lot's*

wife: lonely (394), ~ 's backbone: salt (395); *Methuselah*: old (149); *Moses*: meek (62), sure (354), see also *God made* ~ above; ~ in the bulrushes: innocent (4); *Nebuchadnezzar*: crazy (35), proud (81); *Pharaoh*: dead (141); Philistine's greaves of brass: stiff (262), *Samson*: strong (391); *Solomon*: wise (96), this also refers to drunkenness (196). Cf. also, the prophet's gourd: suddenly (374).

Dives entering heaven: difficult (350); *St. John*: chaste (13); *Judas Iscariot*: false (20); *Lazarus*: poor (342), ragged (230); *Zebedee's hen*: rotten (338). But this is probably some other Zebedee.

St. Robert: niggard (126); see also *St. Blaize*: drinking (194); *Peraner*: drunk (196). *Saint*: modest (66), ~ in hell: rare (399), *lenten saint*: self-denying (126), *lenten lover*: bashful (66 f); *martyr*: mild (63).

Quaker: calm (60), grave, stiff (59), queer (340), ~ meeting house: melancholy (55).

As appears from the above, Roman Catholicism, which kept England under its sway for about five centuries, has left very few traces indeed.

6. Bible Place-names.

Bashan: bulls of ~: roaring loud (390); *Bethesda*, difficult to be in the pool of ~ (350); *Egypt*, ninth plague of: black (241); *Kedar*, tents of ~: comely (215), *Hinnom*, *Tophet*: black (241); *Saba* (the Queen of ~): wise (26).

The last two paragraphs show us that the Old Testament is a far more fruitful source of sim. than the New Testament, as it to be expected from a puritan people.

7. Non-christian Religions.

Bacchus: drunk (195); *Cupid's forehead*: plain (364); *Diana*: chaste (13); *Mercury*: swift (374). *Momus*: merry (69). *Vestal*: chaste (13).

Hades: black (241); *Acheron*: black (241); *Erebus*: dark (237); *Phlegethon*: hot (310); *Styx*: black (moral blackness; 20).

Alcoran: false (20); *Demogorgon*: terrible (339); *termagant*: swearing (109).

Geirrod: deep, cunning (doubtful case; 30). — The allusions to non-christian religions are very rare indeed in PE current sim.

8. Superstitious Beliefs.

Apparition: silent (386); *phantom*: silent (386); *ghost*: grim (87), lean (185), pale (234), white (230).

Witch: drunk (195), ill-tempered (95f), ill, sick (162), wicked (8); *Pendle* ~ : fause, clever (27), ~ of *Wokey*: wicked (8); *Change-lings*: thin, lean (185); *giant*: steady (60). *Boggart*: fause, clever (27); *bar-ghest*: roar (388); *Pixy*: laughing (78); *Man in the Moon*: ignorant (132), mad (35), melancholy (54); *Merman*: drink (195); *Tregeagle*: roaring (388); *Robin Goodfellow*: laugh (79). — Only the belief in ghosts and witches has been of any importance for the creation of sim.

9. *Individuals known to History and Tradition and Animals and Things belonging to them.*

- Alexander's ass*: stupid (50); *Cræsus*: rich (340); *Hector*: ill-tempered (95), impudent (104); *Irus*: poor (342); *Julius Cæsar*: dead (141); *Penelope*: chaste (13). To this we may add *Pythagorean*: silent (387); *Stoic*: calm (60), silent (387).
- Bayard*: bold (112), blind (170); *Dr. Faustus*, the devil and ~ : intimate (326). *Maid Marian*: fine, gaudy (215), merry (70); *Orson*: wild (110); *Pope Joan*: merry (60 f); *Robin Hood and the Rood of Chester*: kinship (325); *Robin Hood's bow*: crooked (277), see also p. 70. *Seven-sleepers*: sleeping (169), snug, comfortable (349). *Punch*: pleased (77), proud (81).
- Robinson Crusoe*: solitary (394). Cf. also the occasional sim., as humble as *Uriah Heap*.
- Queen Anne*: dead (141); *Queen Elizabeth*: dead (141); *Lord Baldwin*: dead (141); *Beauchamp*: bold (111 f); *Lady Done*: fair, beautiful (215); *Captain Drake*: cunning (28); *Garrick*: deep (= clever, crafty; 28, see also *Appendix*); *Earl of Kent*, the devil and the ~ : intimate (326); *Jeffries*: bad, wicked (8).
- Cock's* canny hinnies: rich (341); *Craddock*: crafty (27); *John Damer*: rich (341). *Demoivre*: sure (356); *Ketherick's* pie: big (287); *Job Orton*: sure (356). To this may be added: the *Bishop of Chester*: rich (341).
- Burton's* bank: sure (357); *Barker's knee*: stiff, lame (164); *Batty*: beat, i. e. tired (167), busy; (123) *Beck's* wife: busy (123); *Billy Rûke's* wife: fine (215); *Billy Whitlam's* dog: tough (264), also of good health? (153); *Brassy*: bold (112); *Byard's* dog, bitch: black (244); *Charley* (the nightwatch): punctual (372); *Chloe*: drunk (196); *Cole's* dog: proud (82); *Croker's* mare: coy (67); *Crowder* (? a crowder): cunning (31); *Daimport's* bitch: affected in language (85); *Dain's* dog: lazy (121); *Darby and Joan*: intimate (326); *David's* sow: drunk (204); *Dick and Leddy*: intimate (326); *Dick's* hatband: crooked (277), cross,

ill-tempered (97 ff and 415), fine (216), fond (43), queer, i. e. ill (162), queer (340), tight (263); *Dick's* pepper-box: hot, ill-tempered (97); *Dr. Dodypoll*: ignorant (131); *Dol Common*: lecherous (14); *Eckie's* mare: lame (164); cf. *Fletcher's* mare (15); *Fadge*: fond (43); *Floey*: drunk (196); *Forty Poke's* wife: fine (215); *George-a-Green*: good (417); *Harry and Mary*: intimate (326); (*H*)*ines*: lazy (120); *Hodge's* wife: firm (261); *Hopkins*: welcome (318), hasty (374); *Jack athrum*: stupid (44); *Jack Fletcher* and his bolt: different (332); *Jack Nokes*: ignorant (131); *Joe the Marine*: lazy (120); *Kate Mullet*: ignorant, stupid (45); *John of Gotchan's* calf: stupid (49); *Kittenhallet's* dog: lazy (121); *Larriman's* dog: lazy (121); *Lawrence*: lazy (115 ff); *Ludlam's* (*Lumley's*) dog: lazy (121); *Mac Keachan's* elshin: sharp, clever (33); *Mary Palmer*: hot (310); *Meg of Westminster*: long (218 f); *Mullins's* roadside fence: crooked (277); *Peter Pasley's* pike-staff: plain (365); *Periwinkle*, the drunken tinker: ill-tempered (95); *Jack Robinson*: easy as to say ~ (347); *Roger's* nose: red (246); *Russel's* wagon: big (288); *Simmie* and his brother: kindred (325); *Throp's* wife: busy (123); *Thump-o-Dolly*: dirty (229); *Tim's* wife: queer (339); *Toal's* cloak: black (242); *Toby*: black (241); *Tom athrum*: stupid (44); *Tom Thumb*: little, small (290); *Tommy Harrison*: stiff (59, 262); *Tom Payne* (*Pepper*): lying (21); *Waghorn*: false (21); *John Walker's* chimes: slow (373); *Wilkes*: deep, clever (27, 415); *Wood's* dog: lazy (101); *Wrag* lad: hardy (151); to this may be added: *Laird of Whinethly*: bold (112).

No individual outside English and classical *history* is mentioned. From mediæval romance and literary tradition, outside England, have been drawn *Dr. Faustus*, *Orson*, and the horse *Bayard*. English history, general or local, is a very unimportant source for sim. compared with (local) tradition. There are nearly a hundred sim. containing some personal name concerning whose bearer nothing is known. And in some few cases we are entitled to suspect that the personal names are not genuine. *Croker*, *Crowder*, *Fletcher* are most probably not names but designations of trades. And *Dr. Dodypoll* cannot be called a personal name. It is a fictitious one, invented to personify stupid ignorance (cf. *Tom Thumb* and *meacock* p. 63). And all these *Dicks* and *Dols*, and *Toms* and *Joans* are, properly speaking, no personal names at all. They have simply the functions of a condensed indefinite pronoun (if such a *contradictio in adiecto* may be used). They are some sort of dummies made to figure as one thing to-day and another to-morrow. (On the appellative and pronominal use of personal names, see *Östberg*, *passim*). On the other hand, sim. coupled with such personal names as *Kate Mullet*, *Kittenhallet*, *Billy Rook* &c. may

have come down from some local anecdote, ballad or rustic play, and a search for the missing links is probably both impossible and worthless.

10. *Classes, Professions, Trades, &c.*

- Church:** *Pope:* drunk (198), ~'s bulls: roaring (390), ~ of Rome: ignorant (131); *cardinal:* red (246); *priest's ear:* foul (338); *confessor:* secret (129); *friar:* bald (179); *Franciscan ~ :* crafty (32); ~'s mouth, fit as a fritter for ~ (318); see also p. 21, *friar:* liar. *Veiled nun:* chaste (13).
- Parson:** drunk (198), pale (234), ~'s coat: long (283), *presbyter ~'s wife:* proud (81), ~'s pig: peart (158), ~'s barn: big (289); to this may be added *thorn-bush:* sure (289); *reader of the parish:* grave (59); *sexton:* sure (356); *mutts:* melancholy (55); *mutts at a funeral:* glum (411). *undertaker:* gloomy (55), mum (177).
- Royalty:** *Emperor:* drunk (196), swearing (109); *king:* comely (216), happy (79, 196, where it refers to drunkenness), merry (70), proud (81), rich (341), ~'s highway: plain (367), safe (353), wide conscience (8); *queen:* proud (81), ~'s coachman: proud (81); *prince:* fine (216), happy (77, 196, where it refers to drunkenness), *princess:* fine, gaudy (216), proud (67, 81).
- Court and Nobility:** *Courtier:* false (21); *countess:* fine, gaudy (216); *duchess:* proud (81), ~'s hand: supple (265); *marquesses of bullbeef* (whatever that refers to): proud (82); *grandee:* proud (81); *knight:* bold (112); *lord:* bold (112), brave, i. e. fine, gaudy (216), drunk (196), lazy (120), proud (81), rich (341), swearing (109), ~'s bastard: gaudy (216), proud (81); *peer,* proud (81). Cf. also *Squire's time:* punctual (372).
- Army and Navy:** *admiral:* bold (112); *colonel of the guards:* fine (216); *commander:* fierce, angry (90); *militia officer:* wrathful (90); *sergeants:* hungry (180); *corporal of hussars:* swearing (109); *dragoon:* swearing (109); *grenadier:* tall (292); *soldier:* brave (112), upright (273); *trooper:* hungry (180), lying (22, 409), sound asleep (167), swearing (109); *tired foot-post:* hungry (180); *sentinel:* still (383).
- Government and Law.** *Lord Mayor's horse:* ignorant (133); *Mayor of Banbury:* stupid (47), nice, i. e. fastidious (85; see *Appendix*); *alderman:* dull (53), sleep (167), ~'s eldest daughter: coy (67), ~'s bond: sure (357); *M. P.:* drunk (197); *Lawyer:* cunning (32), false (21), polite (68), charity in a ~'s heart, pocket: cold (312); *attorney at an Assizes:* busy (124); *judge:* grave (59), sober (190); *apparitor's nails:* sharp (255); *bumbailiff:* deaf (173); *cess gatherer:* sure (356); *constable:* sleep (167), midnight ~ :

bluff, ill-tempered (95), *constable*: (the parish constable): wise (26); *watchman*: sleep (167).

Musicians and Sportsmen: *fiddler*: drunk (199), merry (70), two ~: welcome (318), ~'s bitch: drunk (199); *gleoman*: glad (70); *piper*: drunk (199), hot (310), mad, i. e. angry (90), ~'s bag: full (294); *trumpeters*: welcome (318); *juggler's box*: sure (iron.? 360); sixteen *bearwarders*: stinking (309); *champion*: strong (391); *hunter*: hungry (180). To this may be added: *pay-passenger*: big, proud (82).

School, the Medical Profession, Barbers: *schoolma'am*: nervous (416), *schoolmaster*: lousy (229), a new set-up ~: melancholy (55), *Sunday school teacher*: harmless (317); *schoolboy*: cruel (87). *Apothecary*: lying (21), proud (81), stinking (308), a thump with a stone in an ~'s eye: inappropriate (334); *midwife*: secret (iron., 129); *physician*: stinking (308); *barber-surgeon*: secret (iron., 129); *barber*: ill-mannered (104); *hairdressers*: jealous (86); *barber's basins*: wide (286), ~'s chair: common, lewd (15), ~'s cittern: common, lewd (15), ~'s news: false (373), ~'s pole: slim, lean (186).

Trades: 1) producing and repairing: *Cobbler*: drunk (198), ~'s dog: proud (83), ~'s Monday: busy (iron., 121, 198); *collier*: black (242), devil and the ~: alike (330); *cooks* crack eggs: fast (377); *kitchen wenches* strike a light: fast (377); *curier's hands*: stinking (309); *farmer*: fat (182), feeding (180); *freeholders*: feeding (180); *ploughboy*: robust (152); *ploughman*: hollow, i. e. shout (389), a ~'s hand: hard (258); *thresher*: work (124); *milkmaid*: humble (67, 81); *goldsmith's shop*: shining (223); *hatter*: drunk (198), mad (36, mad, i. e. furious 90); *inkle-makers, inkle-weavers*: intimate (326 f), inkle-weaver: busy (124), ~ swill (198); *weaver*: mad (36, but see *Appendix*). Spitalfield ~: busy (124); weaver's clog: heavy (296), ~'s shuttle: swift (375); *lanplighter*: run (382), quick (374); *lime-burner*: proud (81), ~'s mouth, wig: dry, i. e. thirsty (189), *clerk of the limekilne*: dry, (299), *brewer's fart*: drunk (199); *maltman*: merry (70); *miller's shirt*, waistcoat: bold (113), ~'s horse: still (384), ~'s mare: simper (80), sober (190), cf. also mill-horse: toiling (125), see also, miller as the thief in the mill (35); *sweep*: black (241), master ~: smart (216); *tailor*: pert (156), ~'s thimble: deep, crafty (32); *trunk-maker*: deaf (173); *turnspit*: hot, warm (310); *tinker*: drunk (200), lazy (120), loud (389), lying (22), merry (70), quarrelsome (95), swearing (109), thieving pat to a ~ (318), Banbury ~: drunk (199), ~'s wife: scold (107), ~'s budget (257, ~'s wallet, see 120), ~'s bitch: drunk (201); *wych-waller*: scolding (107, 412).

2) Transport and Distribution: *bargee*: swear (109); *carter*: merry (70); *porter*: drunk (198), quarrel (107); *butterquean*, *whore*, *woman*: scold (107 f); *costermonger*: rail (107); *fishmonger* and *lent*: agree (134), ~'s sleeves: stink (309); *fish-wife*, *woman*: scold (108); *flax-wench*: common, lewd (14); *market-woman*: scold (108); *milliner*: perfumed (306); *oyster-strumpet*: loud (389), *oysterwench*: common, lewd (15), *oysterwench*, *wife*, *woman*: scold (107 f); *pearmonger*: (157), ~'s mare: peart (157); *tapster*: drunk (199); *bar-keep*: mad, i. e. angry (90).

3) Other Callings and Occupations: *ragman*: light on his foot (157); *ragman's prentice*: thirsty (189); *prentices*: agree (134); *cot-quean*: scold (107); *beggar*: big (287), drunk (201), ~ or forty ~ s : merry (70), ~ s : numerous (395), ragged (230), ~ and his dish : faithful (9), ~ knows his dish: knowledge (130); *clapperdudgeon*: poor (342), *pauper*: poor (342); *cutter*: swear (416); *ruffian*: swear (109); *convict*: hard-working (124); *galley-slave*, *slave*: hardworking (124); *cutpurse*: scold (107); *pick-pockets in a fair*: agree (134); *thief*: lie (22), ~ or forty ~ s : intimate (327), welcome (iron. 334); rope for a ~ : fit (318); *strumpet*: common, lewd (15); *whore*: demure (67) lying, false (22), common, lewd (14), plentiful (395); *prostitute's favours*: common, lewd (15).

There are two things to be noticed about this paragraph, in the first place, how very little complimentary most of these sim. are. Soldiers, admirals and knights are bold, and so is occasionally the lord, but he is far more often regarded in an unfavourable light, unless he is envied because of his high position. The same thing applies to royalty and nobility generally. In very few cases do we find that a sim. alludes to the useful work that the follower of a certain profession, trade, or calling has to do. Spitalfield weavers may be busy, threshers work hard, an alderman's bond be sure, the judge sober, and the milk-maid humble, but otherwise all sim. are either neutral or depreciatory. To judge from this circumstance it is not so much a man's useful work in his calling as his failings and short-comings, the inconveniences of his surroundings and circumstances, or, when we regard the upper classes, their enviably fortunate position, that have given rise to sim. The other thing to be noticed is the absence of certain classes. Apart from the parson, the judge, and the alderman, the middle classes have scarcely any representative. Art, letters, science, and technique, modern commerce and banking, and present-day administration are practically never alluded to. We meet no absent-minded professors, vain artists, or lieutenants, no hard-working or clever engineer, no pale or anaemic shop-girl, no heartless or crafty broker. And further, practically the whole of the industrial army is conspicuous by its absence. Numerous artisans, e. g. the blacksmith, the carpenter, and the mason, &c. are never mentioned. It is remark-

able also that apart from the selling of fish, no trade or calling connected with the sea is mentioned, with one exception: a conscience as wide as a *shipman's* hose.

11. Human Beings generally, Sexes, Ages, Family Relations, Nationalities.

Folk: queer (340); cf. also three folks (48); *Christian*: fawse (32), drunk (202); *any man*: fawse (32); *lad* of nineteen: lively (157), ~'s skin: healthy (152); *boy*: healthy (152); *woman*: contrarious (96), talkative (129), scolding (108); any ~: common, lewd (15), ~ backward: flat (of speech 271); ~'s tongue: busy (124). *Girl*: changeful (22), light in the foot (157), softspoken (63), ~ of sixteen: vain (85); (young) *lady*: fastidious (85), ~'s skin: soft (265); *maid(en)*: bashful (67), blushing (246), merry (70), mild, gentle (63), mute (177), ~ of ten: secret (129); cf. also, as good a maid as her mother (14); maid can eat blackberries: fast (377); old maid: ill-natured (95); *virgin*: bashful (67); *maidenhead*: secret (129). *Child*: fretful (96), ignorant (133), meek (63), open (13), peaceful (383), quiet (61), weak (393), wanton (110), ~ (newborn): innocent (4), *chrisom* ~ ren: safe (350); *baby*: fretful (96), weak (363), (newborn) *babe*: gentle (63), innocent (4), ~'s hand: soft (266); *cradle-babe*: mild, gentle (63); (*unborn*) *babe*: ignorant (133); (newborn) *infant*: innocent (4), sleeping (167), ~'s hand: soft (266); *infancy*: tender, gentle (63). *Bridegroom*: fresh (222), merry (70), spruce (216); *bride*: simper (79); *man and wife*: intimate (328); *barren wife*: jealous (86); young *widow*: wanton (110); *father*: loving his child (136); *mother*: as good a maid as her ~ (14); ~'s milk: mild, gentle (63); *good-wife* at oven: busy (124); *grand dad*: grave (59), *great grandfather*: dead (142), rotten (338); *grannum*: dead (142), *grandmother*: solid, grave (59); *brother*: agreement (134), intimate knowledge (130), intimate (328), love (136); *relations at the reading of a will*: silent (387).

Blind man: free of his eye, i. e. niggard (127); *darling*: dear, loved (136); *drunkard*: fearless (113); *fool*: drunk (201), fat (182), see also (48) three folks, two fools and a madman: stupid; *madman*: swear (110), see (48); *meacock*: meak (63); *rakehells*: necessary in the army (318); *three in bed*: throng, full (294), intimate (328); *two in bed*: intimate (328).

Englishman: swearing (110), wanton (after a long peace, 110); *Irishwoman*: dirty (229); *Connaught man*: poor (342); *Scotchman*: cautious (114), false (22), Scot of Galloway, of Scotland: cruel (87), ~ and a *Redshank*: similar (330), *Redshank*: lively (157), running (381), Scots colours in Westminster Hall: ragged (230); *Welshman*: love something as a ~ loves cheese (136), Welsh pedigree: long (283); *Dutchman*, *Hollander*: drinking (202), dull (53); Dutch *Tanikin*: wanton (110); *German*: drinking (201); *Greek*: merry (74, and *Appendix*, 413); *Cretan*: lying (20), *Trojan*: working (123);

Jew: greedy (127; cf. also Jew's eye *ibid.*), rich (341), as stern as the Lord upon the ~s (90); *Poles*: drinking (202); *Spaniard*: cruel (87), proud (82), swearing (110), Spanish don: stiff (59); *Turk*: cruel (87), fierce, angry (90) swearing (416); *Tartar's bow*: swift (376); *Red Indian*: stolid (61); *tawny Indian*: black (241); *Blowman, Moor*: black (241); *Mulatto*: proud (82); *negro*: black (242), working (124), nigger in treacle: snug, comfortable (349).

There are one or two things to be learned from this list: there are no sim. with *son, daughter, sister*; there are far more sim. alluding to *woman* than to *man*, another evidence of the man-made character of language. As to foreign nationalities, we gather that those who have given the English their sim. have seen very little of any other non-British people than their old-time foes, the Dutch and the Spaniards. No French, Russian, or Scandinavian national characteristics seem to have impressed themselves sufficiently upon the English mind to create any sim.

12. Human Body, its Parts and Functions.

Life: broad (285), large (287), love something like ~ (136), safe (350), sure (355); *breath of life*: welcome (319); *breath*: love something like ~ (136); *sleep*: familiar (328), patient (63), secure (350), soft (266), welcome (319), one in ~: still (383); *slumbers*: welcome (319); *dream*: silent (387); *pissing a bed*: easy (348); cf. also, as ever pissed (400); *winking*: sudden (374).

Anatomy (natomy, natamus &c), *cradda, raymes, skeleton*: lean (185); *skeleton*: bare (253); *corpse*: pale (234), ugly (228); *bald head*: bare (253), bright (223); *skull*: bare (253); *hairs on my head*: numerous (395); *brows, skin between*: honest (10), true (371); *eye*: easy (346), apple of one's ~, eyeball, eye-sight: love something like ~ (136); *ears*: plain (364); *nose on a man's face* (364); *craig* (neck): . . . as ever croupit ower ~ (400); *arm*: bare (254), long (283); (my) *hand*: bare (253), smooth (269), back of my ~: bare (253), flat (271); loof of my hand: plain (364); palm of one's hand: bald (179), bare (253), plain (364); fingers of one's hand: plain (364), *finger and thumb*: agree (134); (my) *nail*: bare (253), nice (216), white (230), ~ faithful to one's fingers (10); *heart*: welcome (319), ~ in bosom: love something like ~ (136); *blood*(spot): red (246); *gall*: bitter (303), sour (304); *back*: broad (285); skin on one's back: tight, i. e. niggard (127); *skin*: near (324); *arse*: bare (253); *leg*: crooked (277), long (283), right, healthy (152), right (368), *baby's leg*: clean (320); *maid's knee*: cold (312); *heels, legs* will carry: fast (377).

13. Diseases.

Ague: familiar (328), ~'s fit: lean (185); *cloy*: drunk (202); *D. T.*: familiar (328), sure (356); *headache*: useless (336); *itch*: old

(149); *measles*: plain (364); *proudflesh*: touchy, ill-tempered (96). — As we see, an Englishman has quite a natural interest in his body and its parts, but diseases and ailments have very little hold on his imagination. Not even the ubiquitous gout has crept into any sim.

14. *Smoke, Perfumes, Meals, Seasonings, Drink and Food.*

Cigar: brown (252); *tobacco*: common, lewd (15); ~ box: dry (190); pipe-stem: plain (365); *elder-pipe*: stinking (but what is such a pipe? 309).

Amber, balm, musk: sweet smell (307).

Feast: good (316); *breakfast*: long (283); *dinner of broth*: appropriate (319).

Aloes, coloquintida: bitter (303); *ginger*: hot (311), knapped ~: as good &c. as ever ~ ~ (400); *liquorice*: sweet (307); *mustard*: keen, eager (121), sharp, i. e. clever (32), strong (391), ~ seed: small (291), Durham ~: peppery, i. e. ill-tempered (97); *pepper*: hot (311), ill-tempered (96); *saffron*: dear (345), yellow (251); *Setwal*: sweet (307); *spice*: fine (217); *wormwood*: bitter (303), ill-tempered (96); *eysel, verjuice, vinegar*: sour (304), ill-tempered (97); to this may be added, *poison*: hate something like ~ (138); (*Hybla*)*honey, molasses, sugar, sugar-candy, syrup, grout*: sweet (306 f); honey, treacle: sweet-tempered (63 f), molasses: smooth-spoken (25), molasses in January: slow (373); *honey-comb*: thick, frequent (396); *treacle-foot*: stiff (262).

Meat and drink: familiar (328); *drink*: good (316); drank *liquor*, tossed a bumper, blew froth from full pot, coupit ower craig, tipped over tongue: as good &c. as ever ~ ~ ~ (400); *ale* bottled: brisk, lively (157), halfpenny ~: lean (186), thin (292), sour ~: ill-tempered (96), sour ~ in summer: welcome, iron.? (319); small *beer*: dead (142), dull (54); *grout* (kind of thick ale): thick (293); *wort*: sweet (306); *hops*: fast (378), mad, furious (93, 415), thick (395); *bragot, metheglin*: sweet (306); *brandy*: safe (352), strong (391), *aqua fortis*: fierce (90); *coffee*: thick, plentiful (395), ~ berry: brown (252); *ginger beer* bottle full of prop: clever (32); *furmety kettle*: simpering (79); *sack*: clear (361); *wassail*: weak (393); *new wine, must*: sweet (306); old wine: sound (157), pricked ~: eager (121), cup of ~: brisk (157), lees of ~: sour (304).

Barley: field of ripe ~: yellow (252); *oat-meal*: thick (293), egg full of ~: ill-mannered (104); *wheat*: clean (320), good (316); *flour*: thin (292), white (230); *dough*: soft (266); meal and dough, see *Busy* (124).

Bread: innocent (317), daily ~: familiar (328); cf. as ever broke bread, ship's biscuit, cracked biscuit (402); *bag*: warm (310); *biscuit*: dead (142), dry (299); remainder ~: dry brain, i. e. stupid (48), campaigner's ~: dry (299); *bun*: warm (310); (*pan*)*cake, flawn, froise* (fraise): flat (271); *dumpling*: plumb (183), round (279);

fritter: fit for a friar's mouth (318); *gingerbread*: weak (393); three *horse-loaves*: high, iron. (290); *pancakes*: flat, depressed (55); *payn-demayn*: white (230); *slapdragon*: familiar (328); *slapjack* (griddle-cake): level, flat, dull (271); *toast*: dry (299), hot (310 f), splenetic, touchy (96); twitter of a *twin'd rusky*: small (291).

Pea soup, *loblolly*, *porridge*, *stirabout*, (*s*)*todge*: thick (293); *mush*: soft, cautiously silent (387); *pap*: soft (266); *papes*: thin (421); *porridge*: plain (364), ugly (228), bottled ~ : sharp, clever (32).

Butter: civil (68), fat (183), soft (266), yellow (251), May ~ : mad (38 f), yellow (251), mould ~ : thick (293), sealed with ~ : sure, iron. (360); *buttermilk*: lively (157); *whig*: sour (304). *Cheese*: bug, fine (217), pale (235), rotten ~ : strong smell (309); *toasted cheese*: love something as a Welshman loves ~ ~ (136); Banbury ~ : thin (185), chalk and ~ : differ (333). *Cream*: sweet-tempered (63), new ~ : fair complexion (217); *curds*, *costard*: white (230); *custard*: cool, calm (61); *milk*: mild-tempered (63), pale (235), similar (330), sweet taste (307), (morne) ~ : white (230); ~ and water: weak (393); *watergruel*: weak (393).

Egg: naked (254), safe (352), similar (330), sure (356), *two eggs a penny*: dear (344), white of ~ : tasteless (308), ~ full of meat: full (294), ~ full of oatmeal: ill-mannered (104), ~ at Easter: hard, bashful (258), blawn ~ , *eggshell*: empty (295), dry (299), light (297), sailing over the sea in an ~ : difficult (350).

Raw *beef*: red (246), shin of beef: useful (317), *bull-beef*: big (288), i. e. intimate (328), ~ proud (82), stout and hearty (152), cheap (346), tough (264), ugly (228), ~ at Candlemas: big, i. e. proud (82); *neck-beef*: cheap (346), worthless (336); *brawn*: fat (183), hard (258); *mutton*: dead (142), shoulder of ~ for a sick horse: inappropriate (334); *ham*: big (288); *blether of saim*: bald (179); *pork*: dead (142).

Pudding: fit (318), can creep: fast, iron. (373), skin of white ~ : limber (266), *pudding-clout*: white (231), *bag-pudding*: big (287), full (294), *black-pudding*: hot (310); *blood-pudding*: red (246); *polony* (for *Polonais*): drunk (202); *sausage*: round (279), *saster*: stiff (262); *flesh to pot*, *pie meat*: small (290); *pie*: appropriate (319), contented (77), good (5), jolly (71), polite (68), right (368); pennypie: hot (310); *marrowbone* full of honey: dishonest (9); *jelly*: quiver (382).

Apple(s): numerous (396), red (248), round (279, fat 183), sound (155), halves of an ~ : similar (330), make apples: fast (377), *apple john*, *russet apple*, *winter apple*: wrinkled (148), *cooling*: fat (183), ~ s and apples: similar (331), *deusan*: pale (235), *apple dumpling*, stop a rathole with an ~ : useless (336), ~ and nut: ~ s and crabs, different (332), *bask apples*: bitter (303), crabs ain't garden apples: sure (360), *crab-apple*: sour (304), wrinkled (148), God made ~ : sure (355); crab: sour (304); *crab-verjuice*, *wherr*: sour-tempered (97), sour (304), bitter (303). *Pear*: rotten (338), dried ~ : crestfallen, melancholy (55); *lemon (peel)*: sour, ill-tempered (97); *medlar*: soft (266), *open arse*: poor (343), rotten (338), ~

gathered green: useless (336); *orange*: civil (69), round (279), yellow (251), *crab-orange*: sour, ill-tempered (97), parched skin of orange: dry (299). *Cherry*: plump (183), red (248), similar (331), sweet (307); *plum*: sweet (307), *damson*: plump (183); *fig*: similar (331); *grapes*: plump (183); *raisin*: wrinkled (148); *peach*: plump (183).

Berry: black (245); brown (252), round (279); *bilberries*: blue (251), plentiful (395), *blackberries*: plentiful (395), thick, i. e. intimate (329), *cranberries*: plentiful (395); *haws*: numerous (395); *raspberries*: numerous (395); *wimberries*: blue (251).

(*Hazel*) *nut*: brown (253), deaf (177), hollow (296), safe (352), sweet (307), cracking of ~s: common (395), apples and ~s: different (332); *chestnut*: brown (253); *walnut*: dark (239); *acorn*: proud (85), sound, healthy (370, 155).

Beans: mad (94), pretty (218), sure (357), sweet (307); jay with a ~ : pleased (78), three ~s in a blue bladder: merry (77), how many blue beans make five: simple (347); *fitch* (*vetch*): full (295); *peas*: plain (364), similar (331) small (290), ~ in a pod: close (324); *beet*(*root*): red (248); *carrot*: brittle (265), clean (320), (a new scraped) ~ : fine, smart (217); *cucumber*: cool, calm (61), cold (313); *leek*: green (250), clean (320), *onion*: spruce (217), strong (391), *garlic*: rank smell (309), *sybie*: clean (321); *parsnip*: pale (235); *raw potatoes*: tasteless (308); *rhubarb*: common, lewd (15); *turnip*: rotten (338) soft (266), soft, given to tears (64); *herbs*: small (290), sour (305).

'As familiar as meat and drink', said the old sim., and this list amply bears it out. It is as varied as it is long. There is only one paragraph that can vie with it, Domestic Animals. And domestic animals, just like fish, § 31, are to a very large extent utilized as food-stuff. One may conjecture that between 10 and 15 % of all sim. refer to eating and drinking or something that may be used as food, drink, or seasoning.

15. Coins.

Crusado: fine (218); *dollar*: sound, healthy (152); *ducat*: fine (218), *clipped angel*: light (297); *golden noble*: yellow (251), noble i-forged newe: bright (223); *groat and fourpence*: approximate (323), like (331); *groat*: broad (285), thin, lean (185), poor (342), Queen's ~ : light (297); *farthings*: bright (223); two halfpennies to a penny: near, approximately (323), *halfpence*: like (331); *penny*: clean (321), fine (218), new ~ : bright (223), fine (218); *twopence*: right (368), sure (357), ~ in a rag: tight (263); *fivepence*, *sixpence*: fine (218); *ninepence*: easy (346), neat (218), nimble (158), right (healthy 152, otherwise 368); *eleven pence*: light (297); *shilling*: big (288), *guinea*: yellow (251), ~ in a miser's purse: safe (352), ~ gold: good (316); we may add the following sim. that refer to money: *treasure in a kist*: safe (352), *iron safe*: heavy (296), *want of money*: familiar (328). — The jingling coins have given rise to rather many alliterative jingles.

16. Articles of Clothing, Things Spun and Woven, Wool and Fur.

Clothes on one's back: sure (357), *old clothes*: cheap (346); *Northern cloth*: shrinking fast *coat on one's back*: true (10); *frieze-jerkin*: rough (257); *petticoat*: red (246); *smock*: pale (235), white (231) *pocket*: dark (238), soft, i. e. foolish (48), pocket in a shirt: handy (317); *sidepocket*: useless (to dog, cow, monkey, toad 336 f); *apron string*: stupid (48), put pipeclay to *belt*, gen. sim. (401); *button*: bright (223), ~ at the *flap of your pocket*: handy (317); wore brass buttons, gen. sim. (401); *hat*: black (242), dark (238), old ~ : worthless (336), beaver ~ : smooth (269), grandfather's ~ : old (149); *cap*: white (231); *kercher*: white (231); *sweep's soot bag*: dark (238), dirty (229); *tiffany neck-cloth*, gen. sim. (401); *glove*: easy (346), fit (319), gentle, mild (64), right (368), lady's ~ : smooth, soft (266); *mitten*: dead (142), easy (346); *strad*: stiff (262); *boot*: black (242), dark (238); old boots: cheeky (104, but see 405; it is said to stand for the devil); *shoe*: black (242), old ~ : easy (346), easy-tempered (412), hollow, false (409), worthless (336); *water in one's shoes*: inappropriate (234); wore clog-shoes, gen. sim. (401); *shoeleather*: tough (264), as . . . as ever went on shoeleather (401); *cushion*: sick (162); *goose-down pillow*, pillow-down: soft (267); *pincushion*: fat (182); *pulpit cushion*: red (246); *napkin*: white (231); *sheet*: pale (235), white (231); *carpet*: smooth (269); *mat*, *carpet*: thick (293); *rug*, bug in a ~ : safe (354); *clout*: pale (235), unstable (23), white (231); *dishclout*: pliant (266), sick (162), weak (393), wet (301), Throp's wife hanged herself in a ~ (busy, 123); *rag*: limp, tired (167); *clue*: round (279); *thread*: slender (186), straight (275), thin (292); *ribbon*: right (368); *inkle-tape* (327); *rope for a thief*: meet, fit (318 f); *clothes-line*: tight (264); ratched a rope, gen. sim. (402).

Buckram: stiff (262); *Dutch cloth*: soft (266); *satin*: soft (266), smooth (269), smooth, i. e. glibly (346); *silk*: soft (266), thin (292); *taffeta*: changeable (22); *velvet*: soft (266); grogrum, gum-taffeta, tinsel, gummed velvet: fretting (418f).

Roller (of carded wool): weak (393); *flocks*: light (297), *wool*: warm (311), white (231); *down*: gentle (64), soft (267), swan's ~ : soft (267); *beaver's skins*: soft (268); see also §§ 28, 30.

17. Learning, Books, Government, Banking, Modern Industry and Technique.

A.B.C.: easy (347), plain (364); *A's and B's*: crooked (277); (*Letter*) *S*: plain (364), big, i. e. proud (82), solid, serious (ess = ashes? 60); *letter Z* (*Izzart*, *Huzzats*): crooked (277); *multiplication table*:

true (371); *line*: right (370), straight (275); *meridian*: straight (275); *surveyor's line*: straight (275); *pen*: sharp (255); *ink*: black (242); *writing*: plain (365); *letters through the post*: common, frequent (395); *print*: clear (361), easy (347), neat (219), plain (364 f); *book*: knowledge (131), dusted duodecimo, gen. sim. (401); *hornbook*: smooth (269); *almanack*: unmannerly (104), ~ out of date: worthless (336); *curranto*: true, iron. (373); *week-old copy of The Times*: uninteresting (336); *History*: old (149).

Staff of Government: stiff (262); *lawsuit*: long (283); *chancery seal*: broad (285); *pillory*: familiar (328); *whipping post*: fat, iron. (187); *taxes*: sure (357); *Exchequer pay, check*: sure (357); *bank*: good (317); *Bank of England*: safe (352), true (37); *bank-note*: broad (285); *mail*: true to time (372); *post(horse)*: swift (376).

Gas-meter: lying (23); *electricity*: fast (379). — To judge from their sim. the English have come very little in contact with books and learning, except the elements. State-affairs and things connected with them, except law and taxes, have not interested them sufficiently to leave any traces in sim. Noteworthy is also the all but complete absence of sim. alluding to modern industry and technique.

18. Art, Music, Playthings, Games, and other Amusements.

Play: good (316); *comedy*: good (316); *devil in a comedy*: black (239); *Juno in the tragedy*: roaring (389); *Mumchance*: mute (177); *pantomime, puppet show*: good (316); *images*: sleep (167), graven ~ : hungry (180); *copperplate*: clear (361); *paint*: beautiful (219), fresh (223, of good health 153), new ~ : wet (301); *picture*: beautiful (219), painted ~ : silent (387), new ~ cut in alabaster: chaste (13); *caryatid*: still (383); *statue*: mute (177), silent (387), still, motionless (383 f); *model*: motionless (383); *sphinx*: dumb (177); *waxwork*: upright (274).

Bagpipe: shrill (389); *basin*: loud (389); *bell*: clear (361), disagree (134), sound (369, healthy 152), marriage-~ : merry (70), *chapelbell*: clear (361); *drum*: drunk (203), hollow (295), tight (264), unbraced ~ : melancholy (56), ~ with a hole in it: dumb (177), ~-head: tight (264); *tabour*: hard (259), tight (263); *fiddle*: fit, healthy (152), long-favoured, gloomy (55), right (369); *fiddlestring*: straight (275); *horn* (foghorn), (Tamerlane's) *trumpet*: loud (390); *whistle*: clean (321), clear (361), dry (190), slick, easily (348), toom (321).

Maypole dance: merry (71); *dance floor*: even (272); *Maypole*: fine (217), tall (283); *greasy pole*: slippery (272); *bowling green*: even (272), smooth (270); *bowl*: round (280); *ninepin*: dead (142), small (291), bag of ~ : pliant (268); *billiard ball*: bald (179), right side up (369), smooth (270); *tennis ball*: round (280); *die*: close (324), fit (319), level (271), right (368), smooth (270), straight (273), true (371); *dicer's oaths*: false (22); *top*: drunk (203), round

(279), *top*, *humming-top*, *peg-top*, *peerie*: sleep (168); *horn-top*: slow (373); *drive top*, gen. sim. (402); *jumping-jack*: flat (271); *playing hookey* (Amer.): simple (347), *tit-tat-toe*: simple (347); *dun in the mire*: dull (53); *how many blue beans make five*: simple (347, see also 77). Add: *bell-cage*, squirrel in a ~: nimble (159). — As everybody knows, the English are not a musical people. Nevertheless, they have quite a noticeable interest in their good old musical instruments. But it is extraordinary how very little the hundred and odd different kinds of sport indulged in by the English have influenced their sim.

19. Implements and Tools for Domestic Work; Farming and Corn-grinding.

(For vessels and edge-tools, see below).

Baking-trendle: big (288); *baking-spittle*: dry (299); *bake-stone*: cat on a hot ~: nimble (158); *griddle* (gridiron): lean (186); *churn*: warm (311), sweet (307); (nutmeg) *grater*: rough (257, cf. also *hoofrasp*, of rough manners, 100); *slick-stone*: bright (224); *sieve full of holes*; untrustworthy (22), water in a ~: useless (338), ~ and riddle: kinship (325); *drab's distaff*: stiff (262); *tailor's goose* (iron): thin, lean (186), *tailor's iron*: flat (272); *thimble*: deep, i. e. clever (32), round (279); *sponge*: soft, gentle (64), thirsty (190); *powderpuff*: white (231); *washing-block*, frog on a ~: peart (160); *besom*: clumsy (165), drunk (203), fond (43), brant, i. e. stuck-up, proud (82); *broomstaff*: lean (187); *brush*: fond (44); rubbing ~: stiff (262); *mop*: drunk (203), untidy (229); *gaff* (an iron hook): crooked (278); *gavelock*: obstinate (100); (pair off) *tongs*: cross (100), lean (186), mean (127); *beetle* (mallet): deaf (176), dull (53), *mallet*: sad, i. e. dull (176); *hammer*: dead (142, thoroughly 321), down, wide awake (410), stunt, i. e. obstinate, sulky (100); *stiddy*: hard (260); *hagstock*: clumsy (165); *handsaw*: sharp (256); *teagle chain*: strong (391); *whetstone*: blue (251, 411), dry (190), dull (53, 411); *grindstone*: round (280).

Dig (mattock): straight (274); *pick* (pitchfork): clean (321); *harp and harrow*: disagree (134 f); *plough-slope*: smooth (270); *sickle*: crooked (277); sharp (256); *rake(steyl)*: lean (186); *gallicrow*: poor (342), *scarecrow*: ragged (230); *dung*: loathsome (140), wet (302); *ox-dung*: stink (309); *litter*: wet (302); *muck*: cheap (346), drunk (212), mucky (229), plentiful (398), soft (269), wet (302), *sore* (liquid manure): wet (302); *turd*: rotten (338), *turd-bed*: dry, i. e. thirsty; *dirt*: cheap (346), ignorant (134), mean (9), rotten (339); *ploughed ridge*: straight (275); *ditches*: dead (147); *haycocks in July at Pancredge*: numerous (395); *meadow*: fresh (225).

Windmill: round (280), wide (286); *milne-post*: slender, iron. (183), *water-mill*, *mill-clapper*: loud (390); *mill-clapper*: talkative

(129); *millstone*: big (289), (nether) ~: hard-hearted (88); *mill-wheel*: wet (301); *mill-pond*: smooth (270).

The following may be added as belonging more or less to the sphere of husbandry: *sheepnet*: warm, iron. (313); *cock in his ain cawie*: croose, bold (113); *duckpond*: dirty (229); (*bee*)*hive*: full (295), inflammable (301); *lodge in a warren*: melancholy (56); *pump*: good-natured (64); *town-pump*: plain (366); (*yard of*) *pumpwater*: straight (275).

20. Vessels and Receptacles.

Basin, bees in a ~: busy (160); *riven dish*: simper (79); beggar to his (alms-, clap-) *dish*: faithful (9), beggar knows his dish: knowledge (130); *platters*: broad (286); *trencher*: fine (219), round (280), trim (319), beechen ~: hard (259); *saucer*: large (288); *spoon*: peart (158); *ladle* for a porridge pot: meet (319); *cup*: deep (298), tight (263); *cup and can*: intimate (328), merry (70); *unfilled can*: to hate something like an ~ (138); *broken pot*: broken (265); *pint-pot*: high, iron. (291); *porridge-pot*: simper (79); *gluepot*, fly in a ~: excited (161); *pot-covers*: heavy (296); *iron boiler*: close (130); *kettle*: round (279); *pan*: black (242); *frying pan*: flat (271); *saucepan*: big (288); *milk pan*, *bowl*: calm (270); *bottle*: round (279), tight (263); *funnel*: drink (203); *barrel*: big (288), empty, i. e. stupid (48), thick (293), beer ~: drink (203); *bushel*: big (288), broad (286), round (280); *cow* (a large wooden tub): big (288), *tun*: big (288), fat (183), round (280); *hoop*: round (280).

Bandbox: neat, fine (218); *capcase*, cat in a ~: mild (64), sober (? 191); *bag*: black (242), dark (238); *flour-poak*: dusty (229); *nutting-bag*: black (239); *basket*: big (288); ~ of chips: grinning (79); *lime-basket*: dry (299, thirsty 190); *cylinder*: round (280); *thrunk* (pipe, tube, shaft?) hollow (259).

A wholesome interest in things connected with eating and drinking.

21. Edge-tools, other Pointed Tools, Weapons.

Knife: sharp (256, clever, 32), run (382), lad with a leather-~: proud (82); *razor*: blue (251, drunk 203), clean (321), sharp (255, clever 32); *bradawls*: sharp-sighted (169); *elshin* (awl): sharp, i. e. clever (33); *gimlet*: handy (317); *needle*: bare (254); fine, i. e. thin (292), sharp (255, clever, 32), darning-~: straight (274), stall-fed knitting ~: lean (186); *pin*: straight (274), pins (in a row): a like (331), new(made) pin: bright (223), fine (219) ~'s head: small (291), *pimvire*: tough (264); *preen*: neat, fine (218), sharp-sighted (169); *nail* (see also p. 143): dead (145), deaf (173), hardhearted (87), hardy (153), straight (273), sure (358), tight (263), (old) ~: hard (260); *rivet*: fast, firm (261); *tenter-hooks*: sharp (255); *tent-peg*, tent-nail: dead (145); *wedge*: dead (142). *Meat-axe*: savage (414).

Bowstring: straight (275), taut (264); *arrow*: straight (275), swift (375) *bolt*: straight, upright (274), *birdbolt*: stupid (48); *shaft*: dry (299); *dart*: sharp (256); *lance, pike*: straight (274); *spear*: sharp, clever (32), point of ~: sharp (256); wore *sword*, gen. sim. (401); *gun*: hollow (295), right (370), safe (352), sure (357), true, i. e. faithful (11), correct (371); *gunstick*: straight (274); *ramrod*: stiff (60); *pistol-rim*: round (280); *gunpowder*: ill-tempered (101); *powder-horn*: dry, thirsty (190); *canon ball*: swift (376), *bullet*: hard (260), round (280), swift (376); *gun-shot*: sudden (376); *pellet*: pale (235), swift (376); *club*: sure (358); *boss, buckler* (of a *shield*): broad (286).

The following implements for fishing, bird and rat-catching may be mentioned here: *fish-hook*: polite (69); *fishing-line*: long (283); *fishing-rod*: limber (268); *bird-lime*: mean, false (22); *mouse-trap*: close, niggard (127); *rat-trap*: tight (420); *steel-trap*: quick (375).

22. *Buildings, the House and its Parts, Implements about the Fireside, Means of Heating and Lighting, Furniture.*

Houses: big (289), high (283), plain (366), safe (352); tiled house, gen. sim. (402); *steeple*: long (284), strong (391); *tower*: big (289), strong (391); *jail*: full (294), close (325); *dungeon, cellar*: dark (238), wet (301), *close-stool*: close (325, secretive, 130); *ice-house, out-house*: cold (313); *pent house*: steep (299); *mediæval barn*: big (289); *barn-side, house-side*: big (289); *house-end, house-side*: steep (299); *end of a house*: big, fat (183); *wall*: constant (10), hard-hearted (90), thick (293), cow tied to a ~: safe (353), Cole's dog took the wall of a dungcart: proud (82); *dance-floor*: slippery (272); *ridge of a house, (house)-roof*: steep (299), ridge of house: straight (275); *thatch* (also thatcher): wet (301f), thick, i. e. intimate (329), *vane, weathercock*: fickle (23); *window-shutters*: heavy (296); *gargois*: grinning (79), solemn (60); *rain-shoot*: grinning (79); *stee* (ladder): lazy (121), *ladder*: long (283); *squire* (T-square): just, honest (10); *church-door, barndoor*: wide (286), come within a pair of doors, gen. sim. (402), *barn-door*: big (289); *tavern-door*: common, lewd (15); *door*: deaf (173), *door-post*: dead (145), deaf (173); *post*: clumsy (165), ignorant (133), deaf (173), dull (53), firm (261), mum (177), stiff (262), still (384), stupid (48); *pillar*: straight (275); *column*: upright (275); *door-tree*: dead (145); *door-sneck*: common, lewd (15); *clicket-nail*: tight (263); *bone-house-door-lock*: rusty, hoarse (165); *key*: cold (313); *door-nail*: daft (48), dead (142f), deaf (173), dumb (177), dour, obstinate (100).

(*Mill*) *chimney*: tall (283); still (283), back of a chimney: broad (286); *stock* (back or sides of fire-place): black (243); *furnace*: big (289); red (247); *lime kiln, stove*: dry, thirsty (190); *oven*: black (243), hot (311), quiet (382), English ~ at Christmas: busy (125), mouth of an ~: big (288); *aister* (*chimney-balk*), (*chimney*)-*crook, hake up the chimney, reekan-crook*: black (242f); *mantle-tree*: melancholy (55); *bellows* (is this the bellows used in making the fire?): dark (420), safe (352);

poker: grave, stiff (59), mute (177), stiff (262); *trivet*: right (369f, in good health 153), safe (352); *match* (with the brimstone off): lean (186); *matchwood*: rotten (338); *tunder (tinder)*: brisk, lively (158), dry (301), rotten (338); *bat*: warm (311); *brazzen*: hard (259), *coal*: black (243), plentiful (397), dark (238), hot (312), love as hot as ~ (137); *charcoal*: dead (147), chalk and ~: differ (333), lumps of coal: alike (331); *ashes*: bitter (303), dry (301), pale (235); *brand*: glitter (227); *clinkers*: black (244); *soot*: bitter (303), black (244), drunk (212).

(Pound of) *candles*: straight (273), *tallow* ~: white (232), *farthing* ~: fond, foolish (43), snuff of ~: stinking (309), wax and the wick of a ~: antipathy (135); *rushlight*: lean (185); *lamp with no light*: lewed, useless (336).

Clock: cold (313), quiet (61, 283), true (371), (town) clock, clock-works, hand of a clock, counting-house dial: punctual (372); *dial*: true (371); wooden clock: right, in good health (152), gloomy (55); *clock-case*: long-faced, gloomy (55), *clocks of England*: disagree (134); like one o'clock, gen. sim. (406); *bed-post*: deaf (173); *seeing-glass*: bright (223); *table*: hard (259), corner of a round ~: sharp, iron., i. e. stupid (48); *sofa*: broad (286).

The homeliness of it! The makers of these sim. were not at home in mansions and city drawing-rooms. Their lives were spent, when indoors, in the big kitchen, where the most notable and attractive thing was the great fire-place, the source and the focus of the simple country life.

23. *Wood, Horn, Bone &c. as Raw-materials, or otherwise worked upon than referred to before; Colours, Liquids, or Semi-liquids not used as Food.*

Wood: clumsy (155), hard (260), poor, lean (187), thick (293); *log*: heavy (296), still (384), log of wood: sleep (169); *block* (of course not always necessarily of wood): dead (147), deaf (174), dull (53), stupid (48); *brazil-wood*: hard (259); *ebony*: black (243, moral blackness, 9); *board*: flat, lean (187), hard (259), stiff (263); *bucker, camock, gaumeril* (a bent piece of wood): crooked (278); *lath*: lean (187); *shingle*: straight (275); *stake*: still (384); *tree* (staff): lean (187); *wand*: small (187), straight (275); *chips*: dry (300), grinning (79), merry (77); *chippings*: small (291); *sawdust*: dry (300); *stick*: dry (300), rigid (273), thin (292), two ~: cross (103); sticks a-breaking: fast (373); (*touch*) *wood*: dry (301), ill-tempered (104); *threadpaper*: thin, lean (186); *leather*: dry (300), (raw) ~: pale (235), pliant (268), tough (264), neat's ~ gen. sim. (401); *weshleather*: soft (268); *whiteleather*: tough (254); *cheverel's skin*: wide conscience (8); *burnt whang*: obstinate (101); *tongs*: tough (264); *bone*: brittle (265), dry (300), hard (261); *raglad* (gristle): tough (264); *horn*: crooked (see also ram's horn; 279), dry (300), fond (44), hard (261), sleep (168).

Rud.: red (248); *sable*: black (242); *scarlet*: red (246; of sins 6); *umber*: brown (253).

Glue: thick, intimate (328); *grease*: slick, easy (348); *tallow*: soft, gentle (64); *oil*: slick, easy (348); *pitch*: black (243); *bit* (bitumen?): dark (238); *putty*: soft (266); *soap*: soft (266), ha'p'orth of ~: ineffectual (336); *starch*: stiff (412); *wax*: close (325), miserly (127), neat (219), tight (263), white (232), yellow (252), ball of ~: fit (319).

24. Precious Stones, Metals, and other Minerals.

Adamant (in the first inst. it refers to the magnetic needle): faithful (10), hard (260), hard-hearted (89), hardy (153); *beryl*: bright (223), clear (361); *carbuncle*, *cat's eye*: clear (361); *coral*: red (247); *crystal*: clear (361), clean (322), shining (224), smooth (270); *diamond*: clear (362), hard-hearted (89), ~ dust: poisonous (339); *emerald*: green (250); *ivory*: (may be classed with precious stones, although no mineral): shining (224), smooth (270), white (232); *jet*: black (243, of moral blackness, 9), smooth (270); *jewel(s)*: bright (223), ~ in Lombard street: numerous (395); *pearl*: pale (235) pure (362), shining (224); *sapphire*: blue (251), bright (224).

Brass: big (288, bug or proud 82), bold (113, also Corinthian ~, shameless, 104f); *copper*: blush (247), brown (253), ~ *wire*: red (247); *gold*: bright (223), good (5), sure (367), yellow (252), ~ mine: rich (341); *iron*: cold (313), dry (299), faithful (10), firm (261), hard (260), hardy (153) rigid (263), strong (391); *steel*: cool (412), faithful, true (10), true, correct (371), hard (260), hard-hearted (88, 64), hardy (153), bar of ~: hard-hearted (88), *flint and steel*: differ (333); *lead*: blak (blake, or black? 243), blue (251), cold (313), dull (53), (molt ~, lump of ~): heavy (296); molten ~: hot (311); *pewter*: white (232); *silver*: clear (362), fair (220), white (232); *metal forged new*: true, (11); wire (cf. also pin-wire 264): hard (260); *touch(stone)*: true, faithful (21), correct (372), sure (357).

Alabaster: fair (219), smooth (270), white (232); *brick*: hard (260), red (260), like bricks, gen. sim. (406); *brickbat*: blind (247); *chalk*: white (232), ~ and charcoal, cheese: different (333); *flint*: hard (260), hardhearted (89), true (11); (Venice) *glass*: brittle (265), bright (224), clear (362), grey (236), slippery (272), smooth (270); *granite*: firm (261), hard-hearted (89), true (11), *marble*: cold (314), firm (261), hard (260), hardy (156), pale (235), rigid (263), white (232), slab of ~: smooth (270); *whinstone*: hard, i e. sour (305).

The presence of jewels and gold and other precious things among all the homeliness of the last two §§ is not difficult to explain. Some of the sim. alluding to them are distinctly literary. Of the popular ones some owe their allusions to gold and jewels, &c. to traditions handed down from ancient times in folk-songs and fairy tales; others again, such as those with alabaster and marble, may hint to things seen at church.

25. Street and Road and Things on them.

Pavement: hard-hearted (88), flat (272); *gutters*, safe as a crow in ~ (353); *town-sewer*: lewd (15); *tunnel*: dark (238); *road*: clear (362); *cartway*, *highway*: common, lewd (18); *nine highways*: cross, ill-tempered (101); *King's highway*: wide conscience (8), plain (367), safe (353); *way to parish church*: plain (367); *toll-bar*: grasping, niggard (127); *turnpike*: hard-hearted (88); *mile-iron*: rugged (230); *mile-stone*: lonely (394),.

Stage-coach: fast (376); *cart*: fond (44), stiff (262); *dungcart*: proud (82); *wagon tire*: cold, of low vitality (148); *wheel-barrow*: drunk (203), mad (90); barrow with a square wheel: awkward, clumsy (165); *wheel*: broad (286), fifth ~ to a wagon; useless (336), *wheelhead*: drunk (203); *packsaddle*, *packstaff*: plain (366), *pikestaff*: clear (361), plain (365); *walking-stick*: long (283); *whip*: straight, (274); *whipcord*: tough (153); *spurs* (Ripon rowels): true, faithful (11).

Gate: fond (44); *gate-post*: grave (60), *yatstoup*: plain (366), still (384); *finger-post*: still (384). — We note the absence of trains, bicycles, motor-cars, &c.

26. Seafaring.

Shipman's hose: wide conscience (8); *boat*: long (283); *water in a riven ship*: inappropriate (334); *trod a deck*, gen. sim. (402); *bilge*: dead (148); *mast*: long (283); *handspike*: stiff (265), hawk and ~: different (333); *needle* (the magnetic one): true, faithful (10), true, i. e. correct (372). — It is astonishing how little the sea and occupations connected with it have entered the domain of sim. But see also § 21 and § 31.

27. Abstract Ideas, Human Actions, Words &c.

Ages, chaos, time: old (149); *Old Time*: solid, grave (59); *time*: quick (374); like *fun*, gen. sim. (406); *ignorance*: blind (170), fond (43); *love* nine days old: hot (310); *matrimony*: comfortable (349); *murder*: quiet (170); *nip*: niggard (127); *pat*: easy (347); *pinch*: miserly (127); *pop*: approximately (323); *promises*: cheap (346); *thought*: quick (374); *thump* with a stone: inappropriate (334); *touch, toucher*: approximately (323). *Echo*: quick (381).

You're born: sure (358; cf. day on which one is born: good, 7); *I breathe*: sure (358); *cursing, falling off a chair, felling a log, hissing* (hands, my thumb), *lick* a dish: easy (348); you are a living man, alive: sure (358); he can look; alike (330); we are lying here: sure (358); *lying* (telling lies): easy (347); sail over the sea in an eggshell: difficult (350); *scolding*: common, frequent (395); I am sitting, standing, I am here, you are there, &c.: sure (357f); as ever *stepped, twanged*, gen. sim. (402) he can stare: alike (330); stop

a rathole with an apple dumpling: useless (336); *thieving* to a tinker: pat (318); *whistling psalms* to a dead horse: useless (336).

Household words: to know as well as ~ (131); *word*: swift (374); *damn it*: easy (349); *get out*: common, frequent (395), easy, impudent, mean (348); *goodmorrow and good even*: to know something as well as ~ (131); like *anything*, gen. sim. (406); *nobbut*: near, approximately (323); *little end of nothing*, sharp, clever (33); *nifles in a bag*: profitless (337); *fillyloo &c.*: fine, gaudy (217); *billy*, gen. sim. (406).

28. Place-Names.

Lice in *Ireland*: common (396); *Bedfordshire*: sleeping (169; see end of §); *Cheshire* cat: grinning, (79, 413); *Devonshire lane*: long (284); *Essex* calves: stupid (49), hogs: drunk (204), lions: timid (115); lass of *Kent*: lithe (157); as good as any in Kent or Christendom (403); *Kentish oyster*: fat (185); *summers in Lancashire*: necessary (318); *Lincolnshire* bagpipes: melancholy (55f); *Norfolk* dumpling: naked (254); *Norfolk* tumblers: nimble (158), necessary (318), gosling: ignorant (134); *Suffolk* cheese: bad (338).

Bartholomew babies: fine, gaudy (216f), dolls: jealous (86); goose and gander on *Bedlam green*: stupid (50), *Bedlam*: mad (410); scolding at *Billingsgate*: common (395, see also p. 107), *Charing Cross*: old (150); statue at ~: hard-hearted (87); *Chelsea*: dead (145); deep (299, deep, i. e. clever, 33); *Coleman hedge*: common, lewd (15ff); governour of *Covent Garden*: lewd (14f); *Fleet street*: melancholy (56); *Highgate Hill*: high (284); *Monument*: tall (284); *Newgate*: false (23), *Newgate knocker*: black (244, fig. 101), dark (238); *Spitalfield* weaver: busy (124); *St. Giles's Cripplegate*: lame (164); *St. Paul's* (steeple): blunt, old (149), high (284); *Paul's steeple* and a dagger sheath: different (332); *Strand Maypole*: naked (254); watermen at *Westminster Bridge*: numerous (394).

Way from *St. Albans* to London: common, lewd (18); *Babby Wood* gorst (Shrop.): rough (254); *Bagshot* and *Baw-waw*, gen. sim. (403); *Banbury Mayor*: nice (wise, iron. 85), tinker: drunk (199), cates and bells of Lincoln: no kin at all (325), cheese: thin (185, 292); *Belton men* (Lin.): fond, stupid (43); *Bolton chap*: rough (416); *Birmingham*, groats at ~: fast (375); *Brentford* (some few miles west of London): dirty (229); rising sun at *Bromford* (War.): red (250); *Cale Hill* (Kent): old (151); rock of *Cashel* (Ir.): firm (261); *Cheddle Wakes* (Chs.): throng, full (294); *Chiswick* nightingales: gay (75); lion of *Cotswold* (Glou.): fierce, iron. (91); *Crawborough Common* (Suss.): poor (344); *Crediton* (Kerton, Dev.) spinning: fine, soft (267), thin (292); *Crawley brook* (Bedf.): crooked (278); *Currie Well* (Sc.) deep (299); *Dean's Gate* (Manch.): long (284); *Dorchester butt* (tub?): big (288); *Dundon Hill* (Dev.): old (151); *Dunstable Highway* (Bedf.): plain (366); *Eccles Wakes* (Manch.): throng, full (294); *Glastonbury Tor* (Som.): old (150); *Gosport* fiddler (Portsmouth): drunk (199);

Gotham, men of: stupid (45ff); *Hickling* gorse: coarse, ill-mannered (107); *Holmby* (Northampton): shining (224); *Hull*: strong (392); *Kendal* fox (Westm.): crafty (33); *Knock Cross*: old (150); *Knott Mill Fair* (Manch.): throng, full (294); *Lammermoor* lion (Berw.): coward (115); *Lemster* (*Leominster*) wool: soft, fine (268); *Lewesden Pen* and *Pilsdon Pen* (Dors.): kindred (326); *Lincoln*: high (284), cates of Banbury and bells of ~: no kin at all (325), 'Tom o' ~: loud (389); freeholder of *Macclesfield* (Chs.): feeding (180); *Marchington* wake-cake (Staff.): ill-tempered (96); *Marlin* (Magdalen) tower (Taunton, Som.): high (284); *Martlesham* lion (e. An.): red, blushing (247); *Paignton* pudding (Dev.): big (287); *Panton gates* (York): old (150); *Pedwell*: deep (299); *Pendle Hill* (Lan.): old (151); louse in *Pomfret* (Yks): sure (359); *Pontypool* waiter (Monmouth): round (279); *Rimside Moor* (Northumb.): wide (286); *Rippon* (Yks.) rowels, spurs: trusty (11); *Roodie* (Chs.): rank, rich (341); *Salisbury*: plain (368); *Severn* salmon: hard (259); baiting bull at *Stamford* (Lin.): mad (39, 90); *Sutton* and *York*: different (332; where is this 'foul Sutton?') *Tamworth* pig (War.): sandy, red (247); *Tecton Brook* (Northampton): crooked (278); *Tewkesbury mustard* (Glou.): sharp, clever (32), thick wit (48); folks of *Token* (Cum.): fond, stupid (43); *Waltham's* calf (Ess.): stupid (48); *Weston brook* (Bedf.): crooked (278); *Wimpole street* (Cam.): long (284); *witch of Wokey* (Som.): wicked (8); *Wembury* (Wybury, Chs.) steeple: crooked (277); *Yarmouth* steeple: crooked (277).

Alps: craggy (258); *Baltic*: fou', drunk (212); stairs to *Capitol*: common, lewd (15); Black Hole in *Calcutta*: close (325); *Cyrene's* sand: numerous (397); scabs in *France*: common, frequent (396); *Hybla* honey: sweet (306); *Kalamazoo* bed bug (?): crazy (42); *Virginia* fence: crooked (277); *North*: cunning (35). — The following fictitious place-names are referred to: *Blanket Fair*, *Land of Nod*, *Sheet Alley* (sleeping) p. 169.

Of the numerous sim. referring to place-names only very few have any general currency. Several of them are playful hits at the inhabitants of a certain locality by their neighbours. Also this § shows us, as we have seen before, that the makers of these sim. have had very little contact with foreign countries.

28. Domestic animals.

Dog: big (289), bad conscience (9), dirty (229), dumb (178), faithful (11), familiar (328), greedy, hungry (181), hard-hearted (88), ill-tempered (101), lie (23), lewd (19), mad (39), melancholy (56), sick (162), sleep (168), stalled (184), stupid (48), tired (167), wary (115), wet (302), butcher's ~: surly (101), gardener's ~: proud, fine (220), black ~: blushing, shameless (105), new-gelt ~: nimble, iron. (165), water ~: wet (302), rotten ~: stink (309), three-legged ~: lame (165), ~ eating white pot, licking a dish: telling lies (23), ~ will lick a dish: fast (337), ~ loves a whip: antipathy (138), ~ is hairy: idle (417), ~ trots: tells lies as fast (23), ~ with two tails: pleased (78),

~ in a doublet: proud (83), affected (85), ~ with side-pockets: proud (83), side-pockets to a ~: useless (336), in dough: busy (125), ~ in kitchen: hende, ill-tempered (101), ~ in mill: sleeping (168), ~ in a ~ halfpenny: cheap (346), ~ in a briar-path: shiver (382), ~ in ditch: dead (145), in dyke: stinking (309), ~ at Dover: sure (359), ~ in Lent: lean (188); *bloodhound*: remorseless (88); *cur*: ill-tempered (101); *foxhound*: hungry (181); *greyhound* (long-dog): gaunt (187), swift (377); *hound*: hungry (181); *mastiff*: mad (39); *black sheep*: dark (238); *spaniel*: fawning (25), modest (67); *terrier*: keen (122); *bitch*: lewd (19); *pup*: blind (170), scalded ~: necessary (318), sore, ill-tempered (101); *whelp*: wanton (110); dogs and cats, hare and hound, tykes and swine, cat and cur: antipathy (135, 139); dogs isn't horses: sure (359); dogs' heads: intimate (328), ~'s elbow, ~ (hind)-leg: crooked (278); ~'s mouth: dark (238), ~'s nose: cold (313), ~'s tooth, hound's tooth: white (232).

Cat: cross (101), jealous (87), lame (165), lish, nimble (158), nervous (419), nice (85), mum (178), sick (162), snug, comfortable (349), weak (393); blind ~: nimble (158), roasted ~: mad (39), sunned ~: warm (311), white ~: deaf (174), wild ~: agile (158), grannum's ~: grey (236), Cheshire ~: grinning (79, see also *Appendix* 413), *Gib*, our cat, gib(ed) cat: demure (60), ignorant (133), melancholy (55), modest (67), sleepy (168), *Pussy Baudrons*: min, modest (67); stack of black cats: dark (238); cat in pattens: busy (125), ~ in a bowl: wanton (111), ~ in a capcase: mild (64), sober (191), ~ in a tripe-shop: busy, happy (125), ~ on a hot bake-stone: nimble (158), ~ (s) in the gutter: disagree (135), still (421), ~ with a mouse: mean, cruel (88), the ~ crew and the cock rocked the cradle: true, iron. (373); ~ loves mustard: antipathy (138); *kitten*: blind (170), mild (64), weak (393), drowned ~: wet (302); *ram-cat*: fierce (90); *tom-cat*: soft, noiseless (387), swearing (110); cats and dogs (135; see above); *cat's back*: soft (270); *cat-fat*: brittle (265).

Horse: hungry (181), ignorant (133), proud (83), sick (163, 418), silly (49), snorting (166), strong (392), trust worthy (11), working (125); badger's ~: ill-mannered (105 f), brewer's ~: simpering (80), collier's ~: melancholy (57), miller's horse: ill-mannered (105), parson's horse: fat (419); miller's mare: simpering (80), crooker's mare: coy (67); blind ~: wary (115), dead horse: niggard (123), old ~: tough (264), restive ~: nervous (419), bell-~: proud (83), ~ in bells, fore-~: fine (220), dray-~, mill-~, mill-jade: work (125), war-horse: pleased (78); *Ball*, my horse: ignorant (133); *colt*: nimble (158), ragged (230), shy (63), strong (153); *foal*: lazy (121), ragged (230), *two-year-old*: merry (71), *four-year-old*: in good health (154); *stallion* after coitum: melancholy (57); *mare*: merry (ghostword; 71), simper (80), see also 67, 112; *steed* of brass: stout, bold (113); *nag*: stuffy (165); short-winded *hackney*: puffing (165), *jade*: full, drunk (203), tired (167); *horse's head*: big (289), ugly (228), ~ *hoof*: soft, iron. (261), ~ *piss*, *mare's piss*: hot (311), *horse-cloth*: rough (257), *horse-shoe*: rusty (229).

Ass: drunk (203), dull (54), naked (254), obstinate (102), stupid (50) ~ with a squib in his breeches: angry (91); *jackass*: stupid (411); *donkey*, *mule*: pot-mule, obstinate (101), mule: working hard (125).

Bull: big (290), dry (300), fell, fierce, rank (91), mad (39 f), strong (392), surly (101); *townbull*: lawless, lecherous (19), furious (91), roaring (390); *baiting bull* at Stamford: mad (39); *bull-calf*: blush, iron. (105); *bullocks*: lusty, sound (154); *ox*: big (289), fat (184), black ~ : strong (392); *steer*: big (289).

Cow: happy (78), ignorant (133), solemn (60), stolid (64), ~ in a cage: clumsy (165); ~ tied to a wall: safe (353), ruffled shirt, side-pocket for a ~ : useless (337), saddle for a ~ : inappropriate (334); *kyloes*, highland cattle: ignorant (138). Black cow's skin: dark (239).

Calf: lusty (71), wanton (111), weak (393), ~ with five legs: wonderful (340), ~'s eye: stupid (411).

Pig: drunk (206), greedy (181), ignorant (133), lousy (229), narrow in the nose, i. e. miserly (128), wilful (101); Cox's pig eager (122), black ~ : dark (238), dead ~ : subtle (33, 410); flying ~ s: fine, smart (220), sucking ~ : sleep (168), stuck ~ : shrieking (390), Christmas ~ : big (290), tithe ~ : mad (40), ~ (hog) in a gate: loud (390); ~ in a pen: safe (353), ~ in new straw: happy (7), ~ in pea-straw: sleep (168), snug, comfortable (349), ~ with a musket: clumsy (165).

Hog: contrary (101), dark (238), fat (183), greedy (181), high, iron. (291), sleep (168); black ~ : dark (238), bacon- ~ : fat (183), lusty (71).

Sow: dishonest (24), drunk (204), necessary (318), stupid (50), vile (9); ~ in muck: happy (78), saddle for a ~ : inappropriate (335).

Swine: drunk (204), sleep (168), ~ and tykes: antipathy (135); driving black pig: difficult (350); pigs' chitterlings: long (283); *pigsty*: mucky (229); *pig-ring*: safe (353).

Sheep: harmless (317), maze, i. e. mad (40), hog ~ : comfortable (349); ~ new shorn: poor (343).

Ram: rank, stinking (309), ~'s horn, crooked (278), right (370), stiff (263); *tup*: fawse, i. e. clever (33), mad, furious (91); black-faced *wedder*: bald (179).

Lamb: disagree (135), frisky (71), innocent (6), meek (64), quiet (62), tremble (382), white (232), skipping lamb: innocent (6), sucking ~ : still (384); sheep's head: grin (80).

Goat: full, drunk (206), ignorant (133), lewd (19), stinking (309), wanton (111); billy-goat: fond (44), he-goat: lewd (19); hip on a goat: sure (359); *kid*: wanton (71, 111).

Cock: fighting cock: game, quarrelsome (108), old ~ : testy (103), banty ~ : cross (103), proud (84), game- ~ : fierce (92), peart (159), roost ~ : red (247), rooster: mean (9), stupid (50); cock in his own cavié: bold (113), ~ on his own dunghill: proud (84).

Hen. Nun's hen: nice, fastidious (85, 67), broody ~ : ill-tempered (103), wet ~ : wanton (111), ~ in the forehead: lean (188), ~

with one chick(en): busy (125, 419), jealous (86), ~ with ten, fifteen chickens: busy (125).

Chick(en): sick (163), tender (68), weak (393), barndoor ~ : fat (184), spring ~ : tender (66), ~ : in wool: comfortable (349). *Hennuck*: fierce (92).

Capon: dull (54); *dove*: faithful (12), harmless (317), innocent (6), loving (137), mild (65); ~ 's in dove-cot: numerous (395), doted doo: deaf (174); *cock-pigeon*: jealous (86); *turtle*: chaste, faithful (12f), loving (137), mild (65); *culver down*, white (232), dove's down: soft (267).

Duck. Calling ~ : lucky (78), umbrella for a ~ : useless (337), *dig*: fierce (93); duck's foot: yellow (352).

Goose: grey (237), fierce (92), stupid (48, 50), goose-chick: innocent (6), weak (393); *gosling*: one like the other (332), ignorant (134), stupid (50 f), May ~ : stupid (50), Midsummer ~ : weak (393); *gull*, *gully*, *gander* on a green, at goose-fair: stupid (50 f); *goose-grease*: slick, easily (348), *goose-milk*: mild (63); *goose-skin*: good (317).

Peacock: gaudy (221), proud (82), vain (84).

Swan: white (232), black ~ s : rare (399), ~ 's down: soft (267).

Turkey (cock): bold (113), jealous (86), poor, i. e. lean (188), tame ~ : proud (83), red (247), *turkey-cock's jowl*: red (247).

Tame things: fat (184). — What strikes us most in this paragraph is the large number of sim. with *dog*, *cat*, and *horse*. Some 2 per cent of all sim. collected allude to the *dog*. But we notice also that many of these dog-sim. are rather uncomplimentary to man's faithful companion. It is also noteworthy that the race-horse is not mentioned. We see clearly that the makers of these sim. must have kept both dogs and cats, been very much at home in byre and stable, and have had a good working knowledge of pigs and fowl.

29. *Non-domestic Mammals.*

Ape: angry (92), bare (254), drunk (206), sharp, fawse (33), wanton (19), wise, iron. (50); ~ in purple: ugly (228); ~ with tin tools: cocky (416), ~ and whip and a bell: antipathy (138); *monkey*: agile (159), foolish (50), glum (57, 411), lewd (19); sidepocket for a monkey: useless (337), bag, basketful of ~ s : fawse (33); *marmoset*: harmless (318); *monkey's grease*: useless (337).

Aye-aye: stupid (50). *Badger*: bold (113), grey (236), obstinate (102), rough (257), stink (309), *brock*: stink (309); *bat*: blind (171), (backbearaway), sleepy (169).

Bear: cross (102), drunk (207), clumsy (165), rude (106), ugly (229), dancing ~ : many items, tricks (33), lugged ~ : melancholy (55), Russian ~ : crabbed (102), ill-mannered (106); ~ with a sore head: glum (412), savage (92); ~ 's backside: rough, ill-mannered (106), ~ 's teeth: white (232), bearskin: rough in behaviour (106).

Beaver: busy (125), dull (54), mad, furious (92).

(Forest) *Boar*: fierce (91 f), forest *pig*: hardy (154), boar in a holme bush: rattle loud (390).

Buck: hardy (154), mad (40), merry (71), nimble (158), swift (377), wanton (111); *deer*: agile (158), panting (166), swift (377), *doe*: nimble (159), wanton (111); *hart*: swift (377); *hind*: light of foot (159); *pricket*: merry (71); *roe*: light, nimble (159), roe buck fast, swift: (377); *stag*: swift (377); spent ~ : tired (167).

Catamount: lonely (394); *elephant*: strong (392), vindictive (86, 414), ~'s leg; stubborn (102); *ferret*: red (247), she ~ : lewd (19).

Fox: crafty (33), false (24), greedy (128), red (247), stinking (309); young ~ : gamesome (111); ~ in a trap, in earth (353); *clicket*: cunning (34); *vixen*: ill-tempered (102).

Hare: clever (34), mad (40, mad, furious 92), melancholy (50), supple (159), timorous (114), wild (111); ~ in thicket: full of tricks (33), new sprung hare: healthy (154); *March-hare*: mad (40, mad, furious 92), merry (71), strong, in a violent fit? (392), wild (111); *hare and hound*: antipathy (135).

Hedgehog, prickly-back-urchin: rough (257); *Hippopotamus*: clumsy (165); *Hyaena*: restless (419), grinning to ~ : natural (319); *Lion(ess)*: bold (113), cruel (88), strong (392). *Lynx*: sharp-sighed (169).

Mole: blind (170), dead (145), smooth (270); *mou die*: bashful: (68); modewart, moulwattes: blind (170), mowdywarp: fat (184), soft (268); *want*: blind (170), plump (184), soft (268); fur of mole, *want-pile* (mole-hill): soft (268).

Mouse: calm, quiet, still (384), drunk (208), mute (178), poor (343), still, silent (387), snug (349), mice: rank, numerous (395), small (291), mouse: trig, well-fed (184), blowed, drowned ~ : drunk (208); *church-mouse*: hungry (181), poor (343); mouse in a cage: nervous (419), ~ in cheese, in a malt-heap, in a mill: safe (353), ~ in a churn: warm (311); mice in malt: merry (70 f), mouse tied to a thread: sure, iron. (360); *mouse and frog*: antipathy (139). *Rat*: cold (314), dead (145), drunk (208), lean (188), poor (343), red (247), sick (163), weak (393); *buck-rat*: fierce (92); drowned rat: pale (236), wet (302); mawky ratten: dead (145); poisoned rat: stink (309); trapped ~, ~ in a trap: vicious, ill-tempered (103, 416), rat in a trap: safe (353). — *Docrmouse*: dull (54), harmless (317), sleep (169).

Otter: dainty (86), greedy (128).

Polecat, *fitch(et)*, *fumard*: stink (309), fitchet: ill-tempered (102).

Rabbit: shuttle, quick (159), poor (343), scared (417); *coney*: happy (78), hair of a ~ : soft (268).

Squirrel: nimble (159), quick (378).

Skunk: stink (310). *Tiger*: cruel (88), furious (92), Bengal ~ : brave (114).

Weasel: cross (102), cruel, (*ressil*, 88), cunning (*rezzil*, 34, *stoat*, 410, *whitterick*, 34), grinning (80), small, lean (188), whitterick,

whitred &c.: supple, nimble (159), run (382); ~ without teeth: harmless (317).

Wolf: hungry (181), she-wolf: lewd (19); ~ and sheep: antipathy (139); wolf's mouth: dark (239).

Beast: drunk (207), mad (42), ugly (229), new-caged ~ : ill-tempered (102), ~ s in the rain: wet (302).

30. *Non-domestic Birds.*

Ak: stupid (52). *Blackbirds*: common, frequent (394). *Bull-spink*: peart (159). *Buzzard* (insect?): blind (172), differ from hawk (333). *Canary* in a thorn-hedge: out of place (335).

Coot: bald (179), bare (254), black (244), bold (114), lousy (229), mad (42, mad, furious 93), poor (343), stupid (52).

Cormorant: greedy, hungry (181); *shag*: wet (302).

Crow: black (244, also bub-craw), hoarse (166), lame (165), poor (343, poor, lean, 188), straight (275), June ~ : hungry (182); ~ in a gutter: safe (353).

Cuckoo: crabbed (103), lousy (229), mean (9); *gowk*: lazy (121). *Daw*: stupid (51). *Dodo*: dead (146).

Eagle: lusty (154), sharp-eyed (170), swift (378), ~ 's claw: sharp (256). *Falcon*: grey (237), hard-hearted (89), straight (275).

Finch: lively (159), ~ 's feather: light (297). *Gled*: hungry (182). *Gorpin*: (bird): naked (254). *Gull*: hungry (182). *Haggard*: wild (111).

Hawk: eager (122), hungry (182), ~ and handspike: differ (333).

Jay: gentle (66), merry (71), proud (68), peart (160), ~ with a bean: pleased (78); *jay-pie*, *pynot*: peart (160); *mag-pie*: drunk (210), proud (84), saving (128), talkative (129); *maggot* (see also *Insects*): peart (160).

Kestrel: strong (392). *Kite*: keen (182), light (297), miserly (128), ~ 's claw (252). *Lapwing*: lie (24).

Lark: brisk (159), fresh, in good health (154), happy (78), light (297), loud song (391), merry (71).

Lennard (linnet): spruce, fine (220). *Loon*: crazy (42), drunk (212), ~ 's leg: straight (275). *Nightingale*: merry (71), awake (170). *Ostrich*: cruel (89). *Ouzel*: black (245).

Owl: drunk (208), grave (60), mum (178), sharp-sighted (170), sleepy (169), stupid (51), ugly (229), hooping to ~ s : natural (320); owl: lazy (131), ullot: wise (26); boiled ~ : drunk (208 f), ~ at noonday: blind (171).

Partridge: plump (184). *Pelican*: desolate (394). *Plover*: plump (184). *Poll-parrot*: peart (159); *popinjay*: merry (71). *Puffin*, fat (184). *Quail*: still (385), fat (184).

Raven, *corbie*: black (244), hoarse (166), ~ 's raven plume: black (244).

Robin: bold (114), naked (254), peart (159), trustful (408), weak

(393), wet (302); cock-robin: peart (150); Robin Reddock: merry (71), peart (159).

Rook: black (245), busy (125), withered (148). *Snipe*: lean (188). *Snite*: stupid (52).

Sparrow: lewd (19, 409), out of breath (166), peart (160), cock-sparrow: impudent (106). *Sparrow-hawk*: prest, eager (122).

Swallow: singing loud (391), swift (378). *hrush*: bug (414), drunk (212). *Tom tit*: happy (78). *Wheatears*: near, close (324).

Whinnard: cold and starved (148), wisht, sickly (163). *Willock*: mad stupid (42). *Winnel* (windelthrush): weak (393). *Woodcock*: stupid (51). (*Cock*)*wren*: peart (159).

Bird: free (340), hale, in good health (154), light (297), meek (66), peart (160), poor (343); fluttering ~: quick (378), ~ in bush: safe (354), ~ of prey: keen-eyed (170). *Fowl*: glad (72), ~ in flight: swift (378); *seafowl*: plentiful (395). *Bub*(lin): bare (254). *Bird's arse, tail*: bare (254), poor (343). *Feather*: light (297, light, easy 348, light, of no value 337).

The last two sections only confirm what has been said before of the homely character of these sim. We note the large number of sim. alluding to mouse and rat, weasel and mole. The many sim. with hare and deer bear witness to the hunting interests of the makers of these sim. The old sport of bearbaiting has left not a few traces in sim. alluding to bears. It is true that there are exotic things like lions, tigers, elephants, &c., but in most cases the sim. alluding to these animals are distinctly literary, and, ultimately, of classical origin. One or two of them are Amer. The same thing applies to birds. Some fifty different kinds of non-domestic birds are mentioned. Of these only the *crow*, the *coot*, the *magpie*, the *lark*, the *owl*, and the *robin* have occasioned more than just one or two sim. Sim. with *eagle* and *pelican* are of classical and biblical origin. Otherwise, with very few exceptions, all the birds are such as are daily seen in the country, round about the farmer's house and barn and hedge, or are hunted for the sake of their flesh or for sport.

31. *Fish*.

Carp: ignorant (134). *Catfish*: snoring (166). *Cod*: fresh, in good health (154), codshead: big (290). *Conger*: flat (272). *Cuttlefish*: cunning (34). *Dab*: flat (272). *Dolphin's eye*: beautiful (221), *mereswine, porpus*: fat (184).

Eel: fresh, in good health (154), nimble (160), quick (378), slippery unreliable (24 f), ~ in a sandbag: nimble (160), inappropriate (335), ~ by the tail: sure, iron. (360), couple of eels: inseparable, intimate (329), ~'s tail: slippery (272).

Flounder: flat (272), mute (178). (Stranded) *grampus*: breathing hard (166). *Haddock*: deaf (175), long-favoured (58), stupid (52), boiled haddy: smiling (80). *Hake*: dry: (419).

Herring: close-packed (324), dead (146 f), limp (268), lusty (51), stink (310), thick, plentiful (395), thin, lean (189), ~ s in a barrel: safe (352), backbone of a ~ : straight (276), shotten- ~ : thin, lean (189); shotten-shad: lean (189); shad: deaf (175), intellectual, iron., (411), thin (189).

Loach: straight (276), bearded ~ : sluggish (417).

Mackerel: cheap (346), clean (322), dead (146), mute (178), cautiously silent (387). *Pikes* in a pond: disagree (135). *Pink* (minnow or smelt, smolt): clean (322). *Roach*: sound (154).

Salmon: dead (146), Severn ~ : hard (259); smelt: clean (322), dead (146).

Sardines: close-packed (324). *Shark*: hungry (182). *Stockfish*: dead (146), empty (295). *Trout*: sound (155), ~ in a lime-basket (411). *Whale*: large (290), ~ : fat (184), whale-bone: white (232).

Fish: drink (212), dry, thirsty (190), dull (54), dumb (178), silent (387), wet (302), ~ loves water: love, sympathy (138).

Some marine mammals are included in the above list, as they are commonly classed with fishes by the majority of those who use or used the sim. Some twenty and odd different kinds of fish are referred to. Nearly all of them are used as food. It is noteworthy that *eel*, *herring* and *mackerel* have occasioned the largest number of sim.

32. Reptiles, Shell-fish, Insects.

Adder: deaf (174), fierce (93), intimate (329), swift (378). *Crocodile*: jealous (86).

Frog: cold (314), of low vitality (148), naked (254), wet (302), ~ upon a washing-block: pert (160); *paddock*: cold (314); *puddock*: gleg, nimble (160), May-puddock: grave (60), mim (68).

Newt: dumb (178), sick (164); *asker* (newt): rotten (338). *Snake*: clever (410), venomous (164), ~ s and ash-trees: antipathy (138), ~ s in Virginia: sure (359); *serpent*: old (151), wise (27).

Toad: black (245), flat (272), full of poison (295), hated (140), ill-tempered (103), lazy (121), sick (164), silly (52), ugly (229), blown, ~ : angry (93), *groundtoad*: hardy (155), ill-tempered (103); woodpile toad: hardy (155), ~ bare of feathers: poor (343); side-pocket to a toad: useless (337), ~ 's skin: dead (147), ~ and spider: antipathy (139). *Hagworm* (*viper*), bitter, ill-tempered (103), viper: cunning (34). *Octopus*: ugly (229).

Clam: happy (78), silent (387). *Cockle*: close (325). *Crab*: silly (52). *Lobster*: dead (147), red (248), ~ and apples: different (333). *Oyster*: dumb (178), comfortable (349), fresh, in good health (155), ~ and apples: different (333), as ever opened ~, gen. sim. (400). *Prawn*: red (248). *Snail*: slow (373). *Hodmandod*: snug (349). *Wilk*: close, reticent (130), full, having eaten one's fill (185).

Ant: busy (126); *pismire*: angry (93), busy (126), brant, i. e. conceited (84), merry (76), proud (84). *Bed bug*: crazy (42).

Bee: blind (173), brisk (160 f), still (385), swift (378), thick, intimate (329), ~ in a bason: busy (126), ~ in a bottle: brisk, lively (161), ~ in a box: snug (349), ~ in a sugar cask: busy (126), ~ in a tar pot: brisk (160), white ~ in hive: cunning (34), swarm of ~ s: plentiful, numerous (390), ~ with thyme: full (295), ~ s in a buckwheat field: plentiful, numerous (396), wasp and ~ : disagree (135), ~'s knee: small (291).

Beetle: blind (171). *Bluebottle*: quarrelsome (108). *Brock* (*Cicada spumeria*): perspiring (166). *Bug* in a blanket: comfortable (349), ~ in a rug: comfortable (349), safe (354). *Bumbee's knee*: bare (254). *Butterfly*: beautiful (221), bright (224), light (297). *Cleg*(gadfly): clinging, intimate (329). *Clock*: clean (322). *Cock-roach*: quarrelsome (108). *Cricket*: lively (161), merry (73, 76); *grasshopper*: lively (161), afraid (115); *grig*: drunk (212), merry (72 f), *Crawling clock*: clean (322). *Dorr-head*: deaf (173).

Flea: fit, in good health (155), nimble (34, 161), ~ in a blanket: close reticent or hidden? (130), ~ in a bottom of flax: intricate, difficult (350), bag of ~ s : busy (126); fleabite: small (292). *Biddy*: lish, lively (161), *lop*, nimble (161). *Louse*: proud (84), timorous (115), *body-louse*: brag, brisk, lively (51, 161), busy (126), new-washen louse: lively (161), ~ in bosom, in Pomfret: sure (359), *crab-lice*: numerous (396); wood louse: coward (115).

Fly: drunk (212), light (297), weak (66), flies: numerous (396), small (292), *flesh-flies*: numerous (396); *fly-blows*: numerous (396).

Maggot (it is not impossible that this word in the first case refers to the magpie): brave, bold (114), dead (147), fidgety (419); *mawk*: dead (147), fat (185), silly (52), white (233, sickly looking, 164), ~ in cheese: welcome, iron. (335). *Midge*: light (297). *Sand-boy*: jolly (76). *Sheep-cade*: bonny, iron. (229). *Silk-worms*: soft (267).

Spider: cruel (89), ill-natured (103 see p. 414); *cobwebs*: dingy, dirty (229), soft (268); *gossamer*: light (297); *musweb*: thin (292).

Tick: full (295), having eaten one's fill, 185).

Wasp: angry (93), sharp, clever (35), touchy (103), wopses: thick, numerous (391), October ~ : sleepy (169), ~ in one's ear: necessary, troublesome, (350, also p. 421), ~ in one's nose: very much alive (161, 421); ~ and bee: antipathy (135), *hornet*: angry (93).

Worm: humble (68), naked (254), plentiful (396), dead ~ : obstinate (103); *earthworm*: humble (68). *Caterpillar*: mean (9), numerous (396).

It is interesting to notice that the *frog* and *toad* have occasioned more sim. than all the other reptiles put together. Another evidence of the well-known fact that these animals, especially the toad, always kept a strong hold of popular imagination. That of shell-fish only the edible ones are of any importance in this respect, is only what was to be expected. But it is rather astonishing to find that insects have given rise to some few sim. more than fishes. We see that the makers of these sim. must have taken a good deal of interest in *bees*. Wax and honey, bee-hive and bees are

alluded to in more than a score of sim. It is not without its significance that among the other insects the *wasp* and the *maggot* or mawk, the *flea*, and the *louse* have occasioned most sim.

33. *Plants.*

Flowers. *Blawort, cornflower:* blue (251). *Carnation, gilliflower:* pale (236). *Cowslip:* yellow (252); *paigle:* blake, yellow; *primrose:* pale (236), soft (268). *Daisy:* dink, finely dressed (221), fresh, in good health (156), red (248), white (233), ~ and dock: different (334). *Dandelion* in the bosom of winter: welcome (320); see also *pissimire* p. 84. *Dock* and daisy: differ (334). *Forget-me-not:* blue (251). *Hollyhock:* red (248). *Lily:* fair (221), innocent (6), sweet (308), white (233). *Marygold:* yellow (252). *Meadow bout:* yellow (252). *Peony:* red (249), smart, beautiful (221). *Privet blossom:* pale (236). *Ragweed,* rode on ~, gen. sim. (402). *Rose:* chaste (13), fair (221), fresh, in good health (155), red (249), sweet (308), wild ~ : pale (236), morning ~ : fresh (225). *Snowdrops:* alike (332). *Sunflower:* brazen, impudent (106). *Tulip:* gaudy (221), green (250), ~ in a Dutch flower bed: numerous (397). *Violet:* modest (68), sweet (308).

Blossoms: numerous (397), ~ on briar: bright (225); *flower:* fair (221), sweet (308), ~ in a garden: numerous (397), ~ in May: fresh (225), welcome (320). *Bouquet, posy:* sweet (308). *Bud:* chaste (13); bud of the briar: lovely (221).

Trees, Bushes. *Apple tree:* upright (276); apple-blooth: red (248). *Aspen, aspen leaf:* tremble (382). *Ash:* slender (187). *Birk,* ~ at Yule Even: bare (255, bare, poor 344). *Box:* pale (236). *Bramble bush:* friendly (137). *Briar:* rough (258), sharp (256, sharp, clever 35); *thorn:* sharp (256). *Cedar:* tall (284), upright (276). *Fir tree, pine stump:* straight (276). *Hawthorn:* pale (236). *Hazel twig:* straight (276). *Hedge:* coarse (107), common, lewd (17), mad, furious (94), thick (293), ~ in May: fine (222). *Hickory:* tough (265, of health 156), ~ stump: stolid (62). *Holly:* brave, beautiful (221). *Leaf of lind:* light (298). *Oak:* close (325), hard (260), sound health (156), stout, bold (114), strong (392). *Poplar:* tall (284). *Rowan:* (rong): red (249). *Willow:* limber (161), willow-wand, withy-wind: soft, pliant (268); *widdy* (wuddy, withy) for a thief: meet, fit (319), stiff 263, tough (265).

Tree and some of its parts. *Tree:* dumb (178), lame (165), stiff (263), stiff, stout (114), strong (392), tall (284); bark of a tree: tight (264), bark on ~ : sure (360), bark to the ~ near (325). *Touchwood:* rotten (338). *Spray, bird on the ~ :* merry (72). *Leaf:* green (250), light (298), ~ upon tree: light (298), tremble (383), ~ of spring, soft (269), autumnal ~ s : thick, numerous (397).

Fruits and Seeds not mentioned in 14. *Bullace:* black (245), bright (225). *Burr:* close (325), intimate (329), rugged (258).

Grig: sour (305). *Hip*: red (420). *Sloe*: black (245), bitter (303), sour (305).

Other Plants and their Parts. *Bracken*: common, frequent (397). *Bulrush*: smooth (285), straight (276), weak (393); *rush*: smooth (271), straight (276). *Charlock*: deep, clever (28). *Grass*: coarse (107), green (250); *hay*: dry (300), withered fr. old age (148), chopped ~: rough (258). *Heather, hemp*: coarse (107). *Hemlock*: (hambuck &c): cold (314), dry (300), hollow (182); *kex, kix, kisk, kecksy*: dry (300, dry, thirsty 190), hollow (296), light (298), light, jolly (77), withered fr. old age (148). *Moss*, bank of ~: soft (269). *Nettle*: ill-tempered (103). *Puckfist*: dry (190). *Sorrel*: sour (305). *Straw*: pale (236), yellow (252); *bean-staw*: coarse (107); *corn-stalk*: thin (292); *chaff*: common, plentiful (397), light (298). *Thistle*: sharp (256, sharp, ill-mannered 35); *thistledown*: light (298), soft (269), worthless (337). *Weeds*: common, frequent (397); *sea-weeds*: slippery (273). *Wisp*: wise, iron. (52). *Plantage* to the moon: true (12).

Not a few of the sim. alluding to flowers are poetical, handed down fr. mediæval romance and classical poetry. Only some twenty flowers are mentioned in this book, and about half of them are grown in the garden. Daffodil and honeysuckle, hare-bell and stone-crop, and all the host of flowers, purple, yellow, and blue, in garden, meadow, and lane, are all forgotten. The makers of these sim. have taken very little interest in this aspect of nature. Of trees only about half a score are mentioned, a remarkably small number, and two of them are scarcely English, the *cedar* and the *hickory*. It is worthy of note that the *oak* is the tree that has given rise to the largest number of sim. The rest of the paragraph shows us that the interest in the individual plant and knowledge about it is rather limited, as the majority of sim. refer to classes or groups of plants rather than to individuals.

34. *Earth, Land, Sea, Water.*

World: strong (392), wide conscience (9). *Globe*: round (280). *Poles*: wide asunder (286), *pole*, needle to the ~: faithful (10). (Rocky). *Mountain*: firm (262); white-headed (234). *Hill(s)*: old (151), stable (62), still (386), *hill*, a common: poor (344). *Cave, cavern, pit*: dark (238). *Rock*: firm, reliable (62), in other senses (261), sleeping sound (169), still (386), sure (360), shore of ~: strong. *Desert*: dry (190), empty (296). *Prairie*: lonely (394). *Earth*: cold (314). *Ground*: quiet (62), gen. sim. (402). *Moorland, rushy land*: poor, said of ground (344). *Juggle-mear*: plum, soft (269). *Mire*: thick (293). *Sump*: wet (302). *Mud*: clear (362), fat (185), sure (360), thick (293), thick, i. e. intimate (329), gutter ~: thick (293). *Clot*: dead (147). *Divot*, a piece of sod, tasteless (308). *Peat*: sick (164). *Sod*: heavy (296), heavy, i. e. melancholy (58). *Clay*: cold (314), common (397), tread *clay*, gen. sim. (402).

Stone: blind (173), cold (314), deaf (177), dour (104), dumb (178), firm (261), hard (260), hard-hearted (89), pale (235), silent (387), stiff (263), still (385), ~s in our streets: plentiful (397); *cobble*: hard (260). *Gravel*: small (292). *Pebble game* (418), *Sand*: false: numerous (397), heaps, stairs of ~: false (25). *Atom, mote*: small (292); *atomies, motes* in the sun: thick, many, numerous (398). *Dust*: dry (301), thirsty (190), plentiful (398); *powder*: thick, plentiful (398).

Water: clear (362), false (25), insipid, weak (394), plenty (399), ~ in a sieve: false (22), sure, iron. (360), as ever ~ wet, gen. sim. (403), ~ water: plain (368), ~, air, and fire: necessary (318); *waterdrops*: many (399); drink of water: thin (189); *pumpwater*: weak (393), *spring-water*: clear (362); (*mountain*) *bourne*: cold (314), *fonts*: clear (362); *well*: cold (314), deep (299), deep, i. e. cunning (35), still (385), *draw-well*: deep (298), i. e. cunning (27, 35), deep knowledge (131). *Ditch-water*: dead (147), dull (54), light, easy (348), proud (85); *water in wore*: dirty (229). *Pond*: level (272). *River*: wide (286). *Brack* (brine): salt (305); *salt water*: blue (251); *sea water*: salt (305). *Sea*: deaf (177), deep, i. e. cunning (35), faithless (25), grey (237), mad (42), raging (95), wide (286), the sea burns: true, iron. (373), ocean sea: wide (286). *Foam*: white (234); *froth*: light (298); *bubble skin*: thin (292).

34. Sky and Air, Metereological Phenomena.

Firmament: bright (227). *Heaven*: bright (227), clear (363), high (285), wide (286); *sky*: blue (251), bright (227), broad (286), clear (363). *Air*: clear (362), common (399, i. e. lewd 19), empty (296), -faithless (25), free (340), light, not heavy (338), soft (269), as ever flew in the ~, gen. sim. (403). *Cloud*: soft (269), *summer-cloud*: pale (236). *Thunder-cloud*: gloomy (58), grue, sullen (104). *Thunder*: black (246), gloomy (58), loud (391), snoring (166), welcome, iron. (335), winter ~: wild (111). *Thunderbolt*: rapid (379), unexpected (335); *thunderclap*: swift (379); *crash*: loud (391); *flash*, (*winged, greased, sheet-*) *lightning, greased thunderbolt*: swift, rapid (379f), lightning: quick brains (35); *wildfire*: full of life (162). *Thunderstorm*: gloomy (58).

Wind: false (25), free (340), light (298), mad (42), nimble (161), sharp (256), soft (269), swift (381), weak (394), northern ~: swift (381), rasher of ~ lean (189), ~ of March: keen-bitten, eager (122). *Summer's breeze*: weak (394); *storm of Wind* in March: not welcome (335); *whirlwind*: swift (381). *Calm* (sb.): even-tempered (62).

Morning dew: chaste (14), fresh (226). *Hail*: fast (381), sharp (256), thick, many (398). *Ice*: chaste (14), hard (261), slippery (273); *iceberg*: bright (227), cool, fig. (62); *icicle*: chaste (14). *Drip* (snow): wet (302), white (234); *snow*: chaste (14), cold (315), innocent (6), plentiful (398), white (234), driven ~: white (234); unsunned, untrodden ~: chaste (14), ~ in harvest, in summer: inappropriate (335); *snowball*: cold (314); *snowflake*: soft (260). *Frost*: cold (315), sharp (256). *Thaw*: dull (54). *Rain*: plentiful (398), right (371),

right, of good health (156), ~ at harvest: not welcome (335), ~ to water: like (332); *winter's showers*: plentiful (399). *Rainbow*: splendid (222).

35. Celestial Bodies, Light, Fire, Darkness.

Sun: bright, shining (226), clear (363), free (340), plain (368), punctual (372), sure (360), midday ~: piercing (170), noonday ~: beautiful (222), clear (363), plain (368); morning sun: faithful (12); sunset, rising sun at Bromford: red (250); *sunbeam*: light, not heavy (298); *sunshine*: clear (363), fair (222); *sunlight*: true, trustworthy (12); *heaven's light*: truthful (12), *daylight*: clear (363), dear, loved (137), honest (12), open (13), plain (368), sure (360); *Phoebus*: shining (226).

Light: clear (363), quick (380), ~ and darkness: different (332). *Shade*: silent (388); *shadow*: friendly (137), silent (388), swift (380), summer-shade: swift (380). *Darkness* and light: different (332). *Humber*: (shade) black (246). *Fire*: bright (227,) fell (94), hot (312), innocent (7), red, blushing (249), salt (305), swift (380). *Flame*: clear (363), hot (312); *gleed*: fierce (94), glitter (227), hot (312), red (249).

Moon: bright (227), full (295), high above (285), pale (236), round (280), spotless (7), unreachable (350); new ~: lean (189), *Crescent*: crooked (279), full moon: flat (272), round (280); plantage to the ~: true (12); *moonbeam*: mild (66), *moonlight*: clear (363).

Comets: rare (399); *meteor*: swift (381). *Star(s)*: bright (227), clear (363), fair (222), numerous (399); morning ~: shining (227); *North star*: constant (12), deep, cunning (35), fair (222); *polestar*: steadfast (12). *Venus*: bright (277), clear (363).

All outdoors: big (290).

36. Seasons, Days, Time of Day.

Spring: healthful (156), ~ to earth: welcome (320); *lent* and fishmongers: agree (134); *March in Lent*: sure (360); *Lady-day*: welcome (320); *summer*: green (251), sweet (308), warm (312); *midsummer-day*: bright (226); *day in summer*: fair (222); *hayharvest*: warm (312); *wet week in harvest*: long (285); *dog-days*: warm (312); *autumn*: brown: (253); winter: poor (344), ~'s morning: sharp (256); ~'s night: chaste (14). *Christmas*: cold (315), *Yule midnight*: dark (239), *birk at Yule-even*: bare (255, 344). *January*: bare (255), cold (315), *April*: sweet (308), *May*: blithe (77), fair (222), fresh (225f), mild (66), bird in ~: merry (72), month of ~: fresh, good health (156); *May-morning*: lovely (222), mild (66). *Week*: wide (286). *Day*: bright (226), clear (363), fresh, of good health (156), happy (78), honest (12), merry (77), sure (360). *Dawn*: beautiful (222), bright (226), rosyfingered ~: radiant (226); *morn(ing)*: blushing (250), fair (222); *morrow*: fresh, healthful (156); *midday*: straightforward (13); *noonday*: clear (363). *Night*: black (246), dark (239), dull (54), naked (255), sad, gloomy

(58), secret (130), serious (60), silent (387); *midnight*: black (246).
To-day and to-morn: long (285).

The last four paragraphs contain a large number of poetical sim., some of which are inherited from Greek and Latin epics. There are also numerous sim. not specifically English, but, referring to phenomena of every-day occurrence all the world over, probably common to most languages. But if we are to judge from all we find we must come to the conclusion that the English are more interested in the various aspects of inanimate nature than e. g. in vegetable life. We notice, among things that may be specifically English, the rather large number of sim. with *stone*, *hill*, *mud*, and *ditch-water*, and the absence of allusions to *lake* and *brook* or *beck*. In § 34 there are rather many international and poetical sim., but the large number of sim. with *air* seem to be characteristic of English. It is, on the other hand, very remarkable that the English *fog* is never mentioned. The fog itself is said to be as thick as *pea-soup*, but nothing has been found to be as thick, grey, yellow, dull, nasty &c. as a fog. The last two §§ contain little of interest. The sim. with *Christmas*, *Yule* are no doubt national. Noteworthy is also the fairly large number of sim. in which *sun* and *moon* and *May* occur.

The preceding paragraphs have given us, broadly and generally, an answer to the question: what are the interests of the English people as evidenced by their sim.? We have noticed, in the first place, that our hypothetic Englishman cares comparatively little for nature and its various aspects, but he is immensely interested in *man* and *human life*. If we consider further his interests in things human, we notice that, in spite of the sim. with *sea* — they are largely literary — he is not much of a traveller, and not much mixed up with the activities connected with the sea and the seaside. He is an inland man, and he is no townsman. Apart from the localities in London and some few other places, the holders of some offices necessary to church, town, and state, and the two words *sewer* and *pavement*, there is extremely little to remind us of city life. And life in factories and mines and mills has left very few traces in these sim. Our Englishman's home is the quiet country-side where modern technique in industry and means of communication is as yet scarcely heard of. But on the other hand, he knows something about cattle and farming, mole-catching, deer-stalking, and some other branches of hunting. Otherwise he does not go in for sports very much, except perhaps bowling on the village green and a game of dice at the inn. He goes to church and knows his bible well, but he fears the devil more than God. He keeps away, on the whole, from politics, and what he has seen of state-representatives with whom he has come in touch has not impressed him favourably. He is fond of his joke, in a mild way, and ready to poke fun at his neighbours and to criticize the craftsmen he has had dealings with. Although he does not seem to have

gone very much beyond his three R's, he has some acquaintance with theatrical performances, and regards a play as a good thing. But even if he enjoys a piece of mummery and a Maypole dance on the green, he is far more interested in his own home. The word home does not occur in any sim., but the different parts of the house, and the house itself, which, by the way, seems to be rather scantily furnished, enter very largely into his stock of sim. Being a strong and healthy man, ailments and diseases have very little hold on his imagination, but he cares a good deal for his body, its parts and its normal functions. Not being a dandy, he does not speak much about his clothes, but he does not altogether neglect them. Nor does he neglect his food. As a matter of fact, he is profoundly interested in food and drink. Food, drink, seasonings, and things that may be utilized as such have created a very large portion of our sim. That the fog is said to be 'as thick as peasoup' is characteristic of the state of things. To illustrate things natural with human, or let us say, things eatable, seems to come natural to the creators of these sim. We understand now that the sim. "to feed like a farmer" is not only a piece of meaningless alliteration. — One might be tempted to say that the *home of the English Simile is the Farm.*

What characterizes the English Simile as we have found it on the preceding pages is its old-worldness and the strong predominance of elementary human interests.

Literary Sources.

When discussing the origin and sources of these sim. there is something else to be borne in mind too. How far are all these sim. the outcome of personal experience and individual observation, and how far are they taken on trust, inherited from other languages and literatures? We find at once that the vast majority of sim. refer to things of so common occurrence and so typically English that a borrowing is altogether needless or impossible. But there are a certain number of sim. alluding to things with which the common people could have no personal acquaintance. In the preceding pages reference has sometimes been made to sim. as 'distinctly literary'. This may mean two things, either that the sim. is of native non-literary origin, or international, used in lit. and poetical style, but not met with in the every-day speech of the common people, or that it is of lit. origin, but nevertheless enjoys a certain currency in colloquial language and dial. It is the latter kind of lit. sim. that chiefly interest us here. Their sources are *Latin Literature*, classical or later, *Mediæval Romance* and the *Bible*. The occurrence of such sim. as 'brassant as Hector', 'merry as Momus' in E. dial. can be explained only as an outcome of the extraordinary strong Latin influence on early MnE that made classi-

cal allusions filter down to classes of the people that could not have the slightest personal acquaintance with things classical. 'As wild as Orson', 'as bold as Beauchamp', 'as blind as Bayard', may be quoted as influences of Mediæval Romance. These are things on the surface, but if we compare Walker's sim. 'as subtle as a dead pig' with the L. *Sat edepol scio occisam saepo sapere multo plus suem*, we begin to suspect that many sim. in which no classical influence is apparent may go back to Latin or Greek sources. A thorough search of mediæval L. lit. and classical comedies might perhaps make it evident that many of the proverbial expressions that have found their way into modern collections, and are regarded as native English have their prototypes e. g. in Plautus. Similarly of Mediæval Romance. How far it has influenced English imagery as a whole and these sim. especially, is a problem that can be solved only by a detailed comparative study, for which there is here neither space nor time.

It is a well-known fact that the Bible is a fruitful source of E. phraseology, and attention has repeatedly been drawn to the biblical origin of sim. It is natural that the majority of sim. in §§ 1—6 should hail from the Bible, but there are many others drawn from the same source. Sim. speaking of such animals as *lion, eagle, dove, pelican, lamb, serpent (snake), ant*, and of *lily, sand, stars*, &c. must be scripture references, at least to some extent. And further, when Dekker writes, Go, attire yourself Fresh as a bride groom, when he meets his bride, we are reminded of Rev. 21, 2, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. A scripture passage may have been at the back of the mind of the writer who coined a phrase that caught on, and developed into a proverbial sim., but it would require a good deal of search to recognize it.

The discovery of the Dutch sim. *zoo kwaad als een hoppe* (as mad as hops) and the numerous continental sayings alluding to "lazy Lauwrence" have also something to tell us. They show that sim. that appear to be distinctly native, and are of a very homely character may have their exact parallels abroad. To decide whether they are originally English or foreign, if they have travelled from one country to the other by means of literary tradition or "lateral diffusion", to find out their approximate dates and the changes in form and sense they may have undergone in the process, are all problems that would require a comparative study of the proverbial literature of Western Europe of an extent that would have been impossible for a work with the limited scope of this book.

Frequency.

It would be quite possible to get up elaborate statistics indicating the numerical growth — and decay — of sim. down through

the centuries. But philological statistics are valuable only when the material to be investigated is strictly limited. When it comes to the whole range of a language in all its periods and different kinds of style a belief in figures becomes a superstition. If it is extremely difficult to make a complete inventory of the sim. that exist in Great Britain and Ireland to-day, it must be absolutely impossible to ascertain what was used all over England a hundred years ago. If we could be absolutely certain that the readings on which a collection is founded are fairly representative of different kinds of style and speech, some store might be set by the statistics arrived at, but this can never be the case. Literature, as it has hitherto existed, always represented the educated minority, and we know little of the language of the uneducated majority. Therefore, statistics must be discarded, and we have to be satisfied with some generalities. Very few sim. indeed have been rec. before 1000. A syntetic language like OE no doubt preferred the cp sim. of the type *stane-still*. The state of things in the fourteenth c. is illustrated by the following passage in Chaucer:—

Fful brighter was the shynyng of her hewe
 Than in the toun the noble yforgesd newe,
 But of hir song it was is loud and yerne,
 As any swalwe, sittyng on a berne;
 Ther to she coude skippe and make game,
 As any kyde or calf folwyng his dame;
 Hir mouth was sweete, as bragot or the Meeth
 Or hoord of Apples leyd in hey or heeth;
 Wynsyng she was, as is a iolly colt,
 Long as a mast and prighte as a bolt;
 A brooch she baar vp on hir loue coler
 As brood as is the boos of a bokeler.

Elisabethan English, with its unchecked attempts at creation and its strong interest in imagery added immensely to the existing stock. The following century is rather barren This is perfectly in keeping with the general character and the mental attitude of the period. Attention has more than once been drawn to the circumstance that a sim. existing already in Elisabethan E. is not recorded since, until we come to modern times. The same thing has frequently been noticed to be the case in NED. Of course many of the sim. added to the stock in the 16th and 17th cc dropped out of use with the things they alluded to, but others came instead. The largest additions, naturally, date from our own time. But it must not be believed that they are of recent growth. They are largely due to the progress of lexicography. The various dialect Glossaries and especially the English Dialect Dictionary have made them known, but they are probably much older than their various dates of record.

In PE sim. are extensively used in dialects. "We have an equivalent of the superlative absolute. . . It is the almost constant application of similes to nearly all the actions and qualities of life. Indeed nearly every adj. in daily use has its own special one belonging to it, and these similes are so generally used that they may be taken to be the natural superlatives of the adjectives to which they belong." Elworthy, WSG, 22. The extensive use of sim. in Som. and the adjoining counties is amply confirmed by the novels of Hardy and Phillpotts. They are full of them. The number of sim. recorded from Shropshire and Yorkshire is also very considerable. We have seen that a farming district like "Wessex" is very rich in sim. Can the same thing be said of Norfolk and Suffolk, and how do these agricultural districts compare with the mining and industrial ones in the North? That is a problem that cannot be solved by the compiler in the present state of things.

If we turn from dialects to educated speech and lit., we find, in the first place, that modern descriptive prose, such as we have it in newspapers, technical and scientific works, &c, has altogether discarded this figure of speech. But if we go to imaginative language, whether it be highly literary and poetical, or colloquial, we are certain to meet with sim. again, either the individual or occasional ones of poetry or the homely ones of every-day life. We may call them colloquial, but this must be taken *cum grano salis*. In this respect the following passage is of some interest: "So fat as a maggot he is, and as happy as a coney". But Mr. Shillingford little liked these coarse similitudes. Phillpotts, WF, 451. There seems to be a certain standard of educated speech — or shall we say education? — to which sim. easily become too "coarse" or at least just a shade too familiar or homely or personal to suit the taste of a well-bred person. This is at least the impression we get from reading modern plays. Their people hardly ever indulge in such a thing as a sim. The same thing largely applies to novels describing high-class city-life. Similes are very rare in them. It is noteworthy also that a writer like George Gissing, whose life was an uninterrupted struggle for individual literary expression, makes very sparing use of sim., in spite of the fact that he moves among "all sorts and conditions of men". Is this an outcome of his own strong personality, or is it a faithful representation of the actual state of thing among the people he described? Both alternatives seem true, as we know from other sources that the London working class population is not so altogether emancipated from sim., as Gissing apparently would make them. But apart from his writings it seems to hold true that, the more we get away from Clubland and "society", and the more we mix with different kinds of people, the more we notice the conservative influence of the soil. — When we speak of sim. as colloquial we must also remember, what has already been pointed

out before, that many of them are not at all colloquial. A writer describing a woman's face as being radiant as the dawn and her hand as clear and cool as ice could not be accused of indulging in colloquialisms, much sooner of using old-fashioned poetical *clichés*.

Industrial and modern city life and its means of lit. expression seem to be growing away from old-fashioned formulas and imaginative and round-about ways of speech to something colourless and abstract, it is true, but at the same time more shorter, more sharp-cut and exact.

Form of Similes.

Some General Remarks.

There is not much to be said about the form of the sim. It is a simple comparison consisting of two members, the first of which denotes a quality or an action, the second the standard of comparison, or degree. Consequently, the first member is invariably expressed by an adj., a verb, or, in some few cases, an agent-noun qualified by some attributive adjunct. Concerning this adj. we can observe a certain tendency to substitute a word used in a fig. sense for the literal matter-of-fact word. To express a high degree of thirst we find the word *thirsty* used in only one of the sim., in all the rest we have *dry*. In the *Section Ill-tempered* &c. there are many sim. with such words as ill-conditioned, touchy, bad-tempered, savage &c, but just as many with fig. words like, *black, bitter, crusty, hot, sour, &c.* Attention may also in this place be drawn to the extensive use of irony in its simplest form of saying the opposite of what is meant, as slender as a cow, as clear as mud, &c. It would seem that in some few cases, as right as a ram's horn, as right as my leg, &c. the iron. character is lost sight of, and the sim. has been taken at its face value, at least by some users.

The second member practically always consists of a substantive. In ME and early MnE this sb. was often preceded by the indefinite pronoun *any*: as still as any stone, &c. This is occasionally met with still: glum as any monkey (Galsworthy), as proud as any peer (Bret Harte), stiff as any poker (Hornung), &c. Some variations are also found in the use of the articles. We have stiff, rigid as stone, but also rigid as a stone. Straight as a line, but also 'straight as line', 'as black as the hake', but 'as black as a chimney crook', 'as black as a raven's wing', but 'the raven's plume', &c. But the *normal* is that material nouns take no article, unless they can be regarded as appellatives at the same

time; appellatives in the sing. the indefinite art., in the plur. no art. An exception is formed by sbs. like the devil, the sky, &c., existing only in the sing. Abstract nouns take no art.

When a sim. 'as drunk as a mouse' is applied to a plur. it usually turns out 'as drunk as *mouse*', but exceptions are by no means rare. We have, My arms as limp as a herring (268), their feet as broad as a bushel (286), they are as tall as *a tree* (284), but, Shadows tall as poplar trees (283), the people commonly healthy, and as sound as a bell (152), but, We, as sound as bells, they walked as fresh as an oyster, &c. — They were as fresh unchanged plural (for this phenomenon see E. Ekwall, *The History of the unchanged Plural in English*, Lund, 1912). There are as fresh-caught cod, we are as mute as mackerel, are insts. of the some few insts in which only the plur. is used, as old as *the hills*, where we also have to observe the art. Notice also the distinction, hard, right as *nails*, but dead, &c. as a (door)nail.

Use of Numerals.

If one bull makes a good deal of noise, it is clear that twenty or a hundred or a thousand bulls must make ever so much more. Consequently one can expect to find numerals used to express an indefinite high number, if, by this means, the sim. can be still further intensified. As a matter of fact, we come across some few such insts, but they are comparatively rare. Such as have been noticed are given here: There's more deceit in him than in *16* potecaries (Dekker); as merry as *forty* beggars (Dekker); swore like a *dozen* drunken tinkers (Dekker); To stink worse than *fifty* polecats (Dekker); She swure like *twunty* drunk Englishmen (Sc); as drunk as *ten* bears (Lean); as cross as *nine* highways; to roar like *thousand* bulls; thick as *forty* thieves (see *Intimacy*, p. 327). Cf. also as busy as a hen with one chick, or with *ten, fifteen* chickens. The first form of this sim. refers to one that is very busy over trifles, the other forms may allude to a person who has more to do and look after than he can easily manage. *Two* or *three* are used in some few sim. without any intensifying connotation: as thick as *two* thieves, as natthert as *two* tinkers (perhaps addressed to two persons), as cross as *two* sticks (they must be at least two, otherwise they cannot be "cross"); as much wit as three folks — two fools and a madman (three folks, i. e. two fools and one madman); as jealous as *three* Bartelmy dolls in a wicker basket (why three?), as thick as *three* in a bed (one could not sleep more than two, at the utmost, three in a bed; "to sleep three in bed" seems to have been used proverbially)¹. Other words denoting indefinite number and quantity are also sometimes used: as obstinate as *all* the donkeys

¹ Cf. also, As proud as a dog with two tails.

on Dartmoor, like *all* possessed; I worked like a team of horses (which must work more than one horse); as busy as a bag of fleas (there would not be much quiet in a whole *bag* of fleas); as fause as a bag of monkeys, cunning as a basketful of monkeys; as merry as chips, but to grin like a basket of chips; shrieking like a *chaos* of lost souls.

Alliteration.

There is already in Ray a list of some 40 sim. "in which the quality and the subject begin with the same letter." And in the preceding pages attention has more than once been drawn to the important part played by alliteration. It appears that about *one fifth of all sim.* in this collection *are alliterated.* A short alphabetical list may be given:

Vowels:

As angry as an ape, as old as the itch, as ugly as an owl.

Consonants:

Bold as brass, as big as a beggar.
 Dry as dust, dink as a daisy, drunk as the devil.
 Fine as a fool, feed like a farmer, fresh as farthings.
 Good as gold, glitter as a gleed, grey as glass.
 High as a house, hungry as a hunter.
 Gentle as a jay, just as German lips.
 Crooked as a camock, cunning as a crowder.
 Long as my leg, large as life.
 Mild as milk, meek as a maid, mum as a mouse.
 Naked as a needle, neat as ninepence.
 Pretty as paint, plain as parritch, pale as a parson.
 Red as rats, red as a rong.
 Soft as silk, smooth as satin, stiff as a stone.
 Tall as a tree, tough as tongs, trim as a trencher.
 Wide as a wind-mill, white as wax.

The above insts all belong to the most common type, which may be graphically represented by $a : a (b)$, i. e. both members consist of one stressed word each, or the allit. word of the second member may be followed by another word. Very nearly four fifths of all cases of alliteration belong to this group. Another type is this, 'As *weak* as milk and *water*', 'as *loud* as Tom o' Lincoln', 'as *lean* as a dog in *Lent*', '*slope* as a plough-*slope*', '*still* as a yate-*stump*', &c, $a : b a$; in this case the word (or syllable) represented by b or the following a may have less than full stress. A type $a : b c a$ is also found, 'as *black* as the devil's nutting *bag*'. Of this type only one or two insts occur. Of the former about 30.

A fairly frequent type is *a : b b*, 'as bashful as a *lenten lover*', 'as merry as *cup and can*', 'as blithe as *Robin Reddock*', 'to simper as a *millers' mare*', 'as big as *pay-passengers*', 'as proud as a *dog in a doublet*', 'as rough as a *bear's backside*', &c. There are about a hundred sim. of this kind. The type *a : b c c c* also occurs, though very rarely, 'as merry as three *beans in a blue bladder*'. Cf. also, as simple as *tit tat-toe*, *a : b b b*.

Another not uncommon type is *a : a a*, 'as *big as bull-beef*', as *dutch as a dog in a doublet*, as *fain as a fowl of a fair day*, as '*good as guinea gold*', 'as *hard as horse-hoofs*', 'as *cunning as a crafty Cradock*', '*light as leaf on lind*', '*melancholy as the man in the moon*', '*pretty as a painted picture*', 'as *snug as seven sleepers*', '*wery so water in wore*'. They form some 5 % of all cases of alliteration. The type *a : a a a* is found once, as plain as Peter Pasley's pikestaff (Scott).

The types *a a : b* and *a a : a (b)* are very rare indeed, '*familiar in our mouths as household words*', '*no more manners than a miller's horse*'. Of the type *a a : a a* there are some few insts: *poor and peart as a parson's pig*, *slept as sound as sebem-sleepers*.

There are some very few cases of double alliteration: the types *a a : b b* and *a b : b a*, as *peart as a peartmonger's mare*, as *stiff as a drab's distaff*. Cf. also, as *narrow in the nose as a pig at nine-pence*. But the insts are not very good.

The *influence of alliteration* is twofold. It has *helped to preserve*. Many of the allit. sim. rec. in Chaucer or earlier are still frequently used. 'As mild as milk', 'as busy as a bee', 'as dead as a door-nail', 'as proud as a peacock' are some insts dating from the fourteenth c. The dial. saying 'as merry as Momus' and numerous others must have been preserved thanks to alliteration, although we have no means of ascertaining their age. Alliteration has also to a certain extent *influenced the choice of words*. 'Dead as a door-nail' is a case to the point. This subst. is probably not very much used except in the sim. Because of the allit. it is preferred to the simplex *nail*. See also 'plain as a pikestaff', p. 366. The same thing applies to many other sim. Words otherwise not common in every day speech are kept alive in sim. or other proverbial expressions, and to a large extent in allit. ones. Cf. also the sim. '*nimble as a nag*', but '*kipper as a colt*', '*dumb as a dog*, but '*mute, mum as a mouse*', '*feed like a farmer*', but '*hungry as a hunter*', '*greedy as a gull*', but '*hungry as a hawk*', '*fine as five-pence*', but '*neat, nice as nine-pence*', 'as *dink as a daisy*', but 'as *fair as any flower*'. In all these cases, and they could be multiplied, the adj. is chosen so as to alliterate with the noun. Cf. also 'as busy as Beck's wife', 'as throng as Throp's wife', where it is difficult to decide whether the adj. is chosen to suit the names or vice versa.

Assonance.

In 3000 similes one must of course come across not a few cases of *assonance*, but it can hardly be regarded as a formative element of any importance. It is found in sim. like 'hungry as a hunter', 'drunk as a drum', 'cunning as a cuttle', &c where it is used to intensify the alliteration. 'Sound as a trout', 'clean as a leek', 'fine as spice' are some of the insts of unallit. assonance. But in scarcely any of them does assonance seem to have played any part in forming and preserving the sim.

Rhyme.

What has been said as to the frequency of assonance also largely applies to *rhyme*. These are the insts collected: as *coarse* as Hickling *gorse*, as *crowse* as a new washen *louse*, as washed out as a dish-*clout*, as sick as *cats* with eating *rats*, as *sick* as a *chick*, as *dumb* as a *drum*, as dark as a *stack* of *black* cats (also assonance), as *big* as a Christmas *pig*, as *thick* as a *stick*, as *light* as a *kite*, as *thick* as *Dick* and *Leddy*, *snug* as a *bug* in a blanket, safe as a *bug* in a *rug*, *snug* as a *bug* in a *rug*. Unlike assonance, rhyme is always an important factor, and in the few sim. where it occurs it has the same formative and conservative functions as alliteration.

Rhythm.

In wise saws, riddles, and proverbial expressions of all kinds, one often discovers some sort of rhythm. Sim. such as have been collected here especially lend themselves to rhythmical movements. In all of them two ideas are emphasized, the quality or action and its standard of comparison. The words expressing these ideas will be stressed, separated and followed by unstressed or weak-stressed words, thus forming more or less rhythmical groups. These groups must vary considerably, according to the word or words used to form the two members of the sim. The old-established metrical unities are very frequently met with. The most common rhythmical types are these: as hard as stone, as weak as water, i. e. $\sim\text{---}\sim\text{---}(\sim)$, $\sim\text{---}\sim\text{---}(\sim)$, as mad as a hatter, as lean as a rake, i. e. a(n hypercatalectic) iambic dipody, and what might be called a (catalectic) dactylic dimeter with anacrusis. The latter type, i. e. sim. like these, as ancient as history, as old as Methuselah, as plump as a dumpling, as round as an apple, as thin as a goate, as dry as a fish, are by far the most common. There are nearly 300 sim. of this type in Ch. II, while there are less than 100 sim. of the former

type. There are also not a few extended dactylic types: as drunk as a tinker at Banbury, as light on his foot as a ragman, as brisk as a bee in a tar-pot, as busy as bees in a basin, as crouse as a new-washen louse, i. e. ————, ————, ————, and, as thin as a newcome snipe, as slim as a barber's pole, as fat as a bacon hog, as drunk as a fiddler's bitch, &c. i. e. ————, as thin as a shotten herring, as plump as a barndoor chicken, to sleep like a graven image, as hard as the devil's forehead, as fat as a country whipping post, as thin as a stallfed knitting needle, i. e. ————, ————, ————, although in these cases trochaic (or iambic) elements predominate.

A very common type is also ————(—), ex. as merry as a grig, as happy as a king, as sober as a judge, as hungry as a trooper, as hungry as a fox-hound, as dapper as a cock-wren, as lively as a Red-shank, which may be regarded as regular catalectic paeonic dimeters with anacrusis, if we are to stick to classical terminology. There are also some insts of hypercatalectic dimeters of the same kind: as slender in the middle as a cow in the waist, as awkward as a barrow with a square wheel, i. e. ———— ————(—). Cf. also the following sim: as nimble as a cow in a cage, as quiet as a wasp in one's nose, i. e. ———— ———— and, as lissom as a lad of nineteen, as active as a Norfolk tumbler, i. e. ———— ———— as hardy as a forest pig, as nimble as a new-gelt dog, as hearty as a new-sprungn hare, as limber as a willow wand, i. e. ————. If put into a verse these sim. would of course scan like iambs. See e. g. Gay's *Song of New Similes*, but in such cases the natural conversational rhythm is sacrificed for the sake of the verse. It is true that Skeat says, "Never use three consecutive weak syllables, unless you desire to ruin your verse" (Transaction of the Phil. Soc., 1895—8, p. 484). But, like other dictatorial commands and assertions not founded upon facts, this lies buried in the back volume of an English periodical never opened by an English poet, and English poetry passes on, unheeding, unknowing, and living splendidly and magnificently in Swinburne and Masfield and many others, in spite of "three consecutive weak syllables".

There are also sim., although not very many, with more than three consecutive weak syllables: as contrarious as a woman, as impudent as a badger's horse, as ignorant as a cow, as ravenous as a shark, as ravenous as a hound, &c. Sim. with more than four weak sim. are scarcely possible, as they imply the use of a polysyllabic adj. stressed on the antepenultimate or a syllable before the antepenultimate and, as a second member, a subst. preceded by the art. and beginning with an unstressed syllable. And this does not seem to occur. In such sim. as 'as melancholy as a hare' the adj. has a secondary stress on the penultimate. And similarly in 'as clumsy as a hippopotamus', the first syllable of the

subst. receives secondary stress. — It is of course wrong to apply the intricacies of Greek and Latin prosody to these and all other E. sim. and proverbs, as well as to E. prose-rhythm generally, it is far simpler to say that the majority of sim., from a rhythmical point of view, consist of two centroids, to adopt Scripture's terminology, and to classify them, very much as has been done above—according to the number of the unstressed syllables of the first centroid. In this way we arrive at four general types, as good as gold, as good as a pie, as happy as a king, as ignorant as a cow. To attempt any further classification, e. g. according to the number of unstressed syllables of the second centroid, or the cases where there are more than two centroids, would lead us to the barren desert of classification for its own sake.

There are of course numerous sim. in which the initial rhythm is broken and the effect becomes a-rhythmical. The following three sim. will give us an inst.: as old as the hills, as old as Pendle Hill, as old as Cale Hill; cf. also, as black as the devil's nutting-bag, but, as black as Old Sam's nutting bag, as red as beef, but, as red as raw beef, as red as a turkey-cock, but, as red as a turkey-cock's jowls, &c. but probably *more than* $\frac{3}{4}$ of all *proverbial sim. are clearly and distinctly rhythmical*. This being the case, we must come to the conclusion that a sim. like the fifteenth c. red as ripe cherrees, is likely to give good rhythm, even if we could not infer or know it from other sources. It is also possible that a form like 'new-washen' is introduced or at least kept up for the sake of rhythmic uniformity. Otherwise we do not find many insts where the vocabulary and the form of words have been influenced by rhythm.

It must be added that in some dialects, chiefly SW it would seem, the second *as* of the sim. is often reduced to 's, which brings about a clashing of two strong-stressed syllables, ex g. cheap's dirt.

Errata.

page	9 line	10 Ch. XX	should be	Ch. III
"	9	15 Ch. XX	"	Ch. III
"	10	36 but is was	"	but it was
"	12	4 on tree	"	on tree
"	16	9 throws any light	"	throw any light
"	17	15 compell	"	compel
"	18	3 rythm	"	rhythm
"	20	2 <i>Love</i> , Ch. IV	"	p. 135
"	23	10 prodigeously	"	prodigiously
"	30	13 accounted	"	accounted
"	32	11 contemptuous	"	contemptible
"	32	14 as lawyer	"	as a lawyer

page	line	35	Quick, Ch. III	should be	Ch. IV
"	41	1	dates form	"	from
"	45	4	Plain, Ch. III	"	Ch. IV
"	45	47	until	"	until
"	52	39	Antipathy, Ch. IV	"	p. 137
"	54	38	Ignorance, Ch. IV	"	p. 131
"	63	22	nother's dug	"	mother's
"	63	41	Sweet, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	77	12	Weight, Ch. IV	"	Light, Ch. III.
"	77	15	flowers	"	flowers
"	80	15	of s cat	"	of a cat
"	87	29	Cold, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	88	3, 4	Healthy and Strong	"	Healthy, Hardy
"	94	47	Hot, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	97	33	Sour, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	103	18	Strong and Healthy	"	Healthy, Hardy
"	105	43	p. 124	"	p. 125.
"	105	47	p. 112	"	p. 113
"	117	33	Angly-Normand	"	Anglo-Norman
"	124	42	like slave	"	like a slave
"	127	33	ex a toll-bar	"	ez a toll-bar
"	130	20	Tight, Ch. IV	"	Close
"	131	19	whicrafts	"	witchcrafts
"	145	29	Stiff, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	146	45	as herring	"	as a herring
"	148	38	Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	152	14	read: Coaches' Overthrow, Roxb. Ball., III, 338. Cf. Straight, III, Right, Ch. IV. Dele these words in the following line.		
"	153	18	Tough, Ch. IV	should be	Ch. III
"	153	32	Hard, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	157	25	Swift, Ch. IV	"	Running
"	157	35	lish a young 'un	"	as a young
"	160	37	Cold, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
"	161	11	as as wasp	"	as a wasp
"	182	35	Well-feeding	"	Well-fed
"	190	24, 29, 31	Dry, Ch. IV	"	Ch. III
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"	408	16	irt	"	dirt.

Several other minor mistakes must be left to the indulgence of the reader.

Owing to the hurry of the last moments, some of the errors of the last proof-sheets have not been corrected. They are as follows: —

page	III	line	27	aquaintance	should be	acquaintance
"	IV	"	3	inconsistances	" "	inconsistences
"	XXII	"	5,7	methaphorical	" "	metaphorical
"	451	"	18	sections	" "	paragraphs
"	460	"	33	Lauwrence	" "	Lawrence
"	461	"	28	prighte	" "	vprighte
"	463	"	9	more shorter	" "	shorter
"	464	"	13	should be placed after line 10.		

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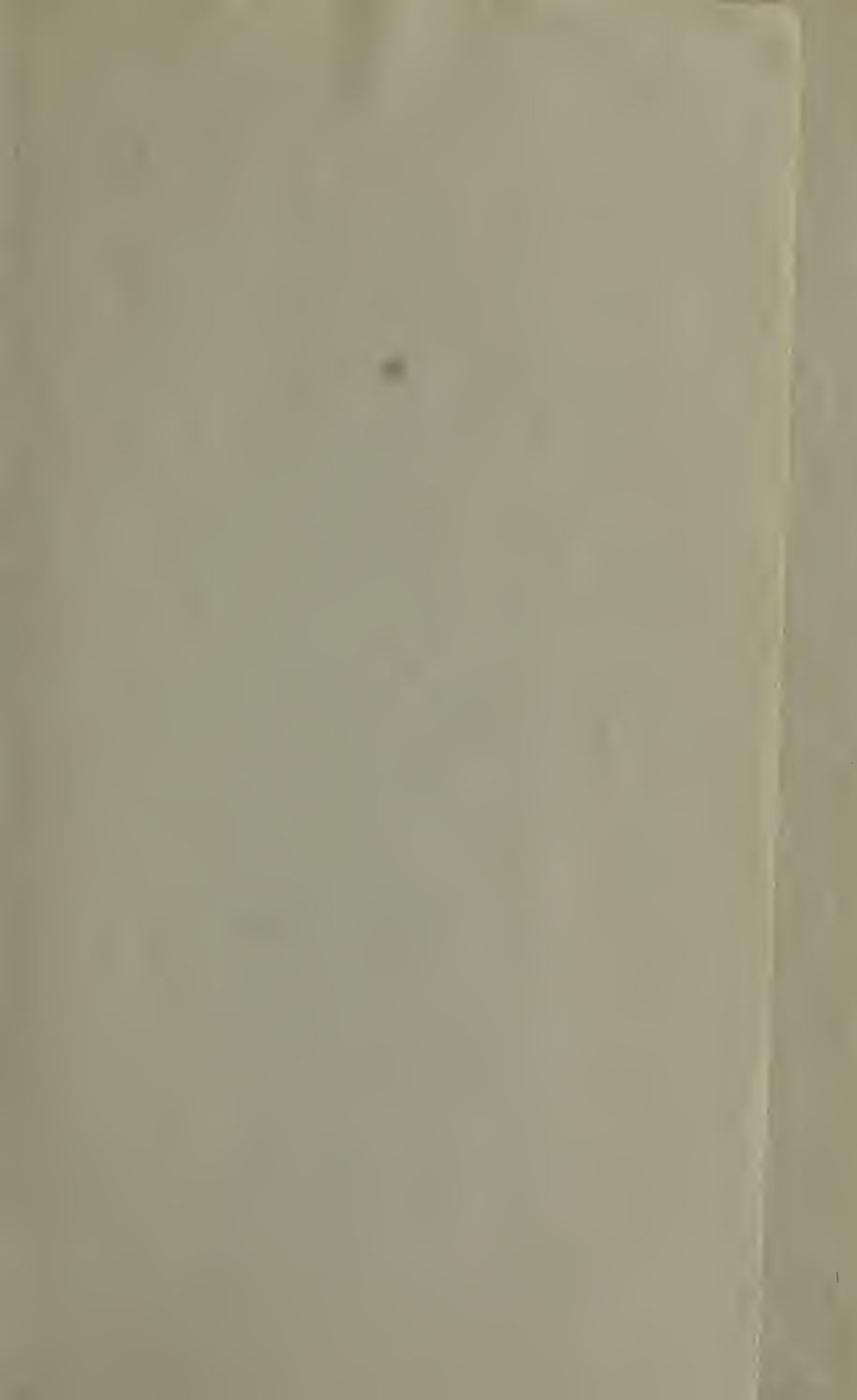
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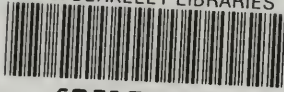
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