THESIS

on

A STUDY OF SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS

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I

INTRODUCTION

Studies within the realm of educational psychology, especially within the past two or three decades, have indicated that high school pupils, college students, and even faculty members in our universities and colleges are influenced by a great number of superstitious beliefs. These beliefs range from a simple faith in luck to delusions bordering upon paranoia. From an educational standpoint, this widespread acceptance of superstitions raises certain important and interesting questions. What, for instance, constitutes a superstitious belief? What was its origin? How has it been preserved in the culture of the race and, if useless or harmful, how can it be eradicated? What are the particular objections regarding superstitious notions? Courses in natural science are working to reduce the number of superstitions and to implant, in our population, a rational method for the elimination of unfounded beliefs. Why, then, after receiving a high school or a college or university training, do students' minds remain befogged with beliefs in magic and animism? Considering the frequency or ease with which superstitions are lost or renounced, or received and adopted, and considering the influence of such beliefs upon intellects and characters
of individuals, and upon the courses of action of the race, what predictions, based upon a historical study, are possible?

The purpose of this study is to search for an answer to such questions as those listed above. This investigation has led to a review of studies which have been made in secondary and higher education, and to a consideration of work done in the fields of ethnology and psychology.

The studies in the field of education have been reviewed in order to discover the prevalence of superstitious beliefs among students, to compile lists of superstitions commonly believed in by students, and to ascertain the nature and extensiveness of the work being done in secondary and higher education in the direction of the correction of such beliefs. These studies have been, for the most part, concerned with common misconceptions of nature and common superstitions. In this respect, the controversial and unfortunately antagonistic nature of many of the superstitious beliefs which are connected in some way with the lesser and superficial philosophical systems has had the effect of limiting the educational studies to realms which touch most lightly the human emotions. The annotations on previous studies and the lists of superstitions included in this thesis are, for
the most part, of this milder nature.

The fields of ethnology and psychology have been drawn upon in order to discover something of the history, the development, and the identification of superstitions. Among the first considerations to be discovered in this field of investigation, was the fact that the work being done, or which has been done, upon the subject of superstitions in the general fields of anthropology, ethnology, sociology, psychology, mythology, and similar fields is so voluminous that a reasonably careful review of it would be physically impossible within the time allowed for a thesis of this nature. It has also been found that there are many books of a philosophical as well as of a purely literary content which, although ostensibly of a semi-scientific nature, are likely to lead an investigator into unproductive by-paths of speculation and phantasy. In order, however, to contribute to an understanding of the total significance of superstitious beliefs, a consideration of the more objective judgments of certain philosophical anthropologists has been included. The relationships between beliefs in superstitions and delusional and other types of mental disorders are being investigated from a careful scientific standpoint by various psychiatrists, especially in Germany. The writer believes that these studies, especially with reference to civil law and
psychopathic therapeutics, will probably prove to be the most significant and beneficial studies made upon the subject of superstitions. These fields, however, are restricted to the legal, the medical, and the purely psychological professions, and, in accordance with the purpose of this thesis, they have been omitted.

Some consideration has been given to contributions from the field of analytical psychology, especially with reference to the analysis of dreams and myths. An important hypothesis of this school of psychology is the theory that when an idea is very old, and is generally believed, it is probably true in some way. This does not mean that dreams and myths are literally true, but that they may be psychologically true. This hypothesis is in no way related to the superstitious belief in onirocritics or other common uses of dreams for fortune-telling. On the contrary, it is a scientifically controlled method for tracing subconscious mental activity through the history of the individual or of the race. It offers some reasonable clues regarding the origin of some of the more universally persistent common superstitions, and for this reason, some notice of analytical psychology has been included.

Before commencing upon the body of this thesis, the reader's attention is called to some of the more
objectionable elements connected with the acceptance of superstitious notions. Numerology, astrology, occultism, and other psychological "gold-bricks" are exceedingly popular among credulous people. According to present knowledge and present production, these activities are all forms of superstitious belief. A survey of such activities relating to the realm of pseudo-guidance in Portland, Oregon (300,000 population), was made by Jones (38) in 1932. In the report of this survey, he estimated that a sum in excess of $80,000.00 yearly is paid by the people of Portland to the support of such activities. The total economic loss to the population of the entire United States in similar activities is undoubtedly enormous. "Mind-readers" often combine their occult practices with hypnotic demonstrations and lectures on popular psychology. The publicity afforded them through these latter practices often arouses the interest and credulity of some of the more intelligent people, who, by patronizing such charlatans, add credence and popularity to occultism. Spiritism is also often believed in by many educated and intelligent individuals. Such individuals, in contributing to the popularity of psychological "gold-bricks," assist in the

1 These parenthetical numbers refer to the location of the reference in the bibliography. Where there is a second number, it refers to the page of the reference on which this particular reference is found.
intrenchment and growth of these practices within the community.

A belief in luck is one of the conditions which fills gambling houses to capacity. This factor is often overlooked by educators, and, although most states have legislation forbidding gambling, gambling actually exists, either under police protection or surreptitiously, to an almost unbelievable extent. New forms of this are continually appearing; punch-boards, sales-boards, ball machines, lotteries, and forms of betting are practiced by superstitious folk who believe in luck, hunches, and mystical signs. The attitude which permits people to support such games of chance is the same attitude upon which advertising agencies capitalize to extract their untold amounts from fake or worthless merchandise. Another significance of belief in luck is that it tends to relieve the individual from responsibility, for, if good luck and bad luck actually exist as magical forces, then the individual is helpless. If one fails, the blame may be placed upon luck, fate, or providence, and if such a person believes that others also are as credulous as he, he believes that they will accept his alibi. Again, such belief relieves one of study, work, or provision for the future because these are all useless if luck is believed in. Good luck renders them unnecessary; bad luck renders
them useless.

Esoteric cults practice their superstitious rites of torture, murder, and vice literally within the shadows of great scientific foundations. Unwarranted faith in quack doctors, psychic cures, and other forms of supposed healing causes untold misery to the ignorant and credulous. To carry this argument further, wars, bloodthirsty gods, devils, human sacrifice, monstrous creeds, terrifying fears, and other torments are superstitions. These have arisen in the past, have died out, are continually arising and dying, and will probably continue to so arise as long as people are content to place their faith and belief in superstitions instead of in rationality and effort. Our mission in life, according to Ward (67:321), has been to feel afraid of what the best minds imagine. Although the common superstitions listed within this thesis are not always as harmful as those enumerated above, they are psychologically identical, being the imaginative productions of human minds, and being countenanced by the same human attitudes.
The first significant study of the relationship of superstitions to Education and known to the writer was made by Dresslar (17) in 1907. This is a thoroughly scientific study of superstitions among 875 University of California students, between 16 and 28 years of age. Out of 7,176 expressions of opinion obtained from the students, 44.9 per cent were expressions of belief in some superstition. On a list of 30 of the most common superstitions, the percentage of belief was 47 per cent.

Dresslar defines superstition as "a willingness and a phyletic, instinctive desire to believe in certain causal relations, which have not and cannot be proved to exist through a course of reasoning, through revelation or through direct observation." He finds in them a strong element of fear, and states that they grow out of a naive belief in the all-pervasiveness of mind or spirit. He states that superstitions have been used to frighten people into behaving according to the dominant social ideals; that they have been useful in teaching people, by means of taboo, to be careful of their health; that they have been used as teaching devices to train people into habits of carefulness and economy; that they have been used as curative agents; and that they have
been used as a means of relieving minds from the strain of indecision. Belief in luck (17:159) prevents many people from reliance on a rational self-helpfulness, and it incites men to gamble where the odds are strongly against them.

Bruce (5) in 1911 made a study of the adherence to superstitious beliefs among some of the faculty members of Harvard University. Of the Harvard faculty members who were examined, and who were mostly from the departments of history, philosophy, and psychology, 26.6 per cent professed to be entirely free from superstition. 73.4 per cent admitted themselves to be more or less influenced by superstitions in their daily habits.

Peters (54) in 1916 compiled a list of superstitions collected from a study of 350 girls between 17 and 21 years of age. In another study and survey that he made of 280 girls, he found only 10 free from the superstitious fear of the number 13. He concludes that superstitions cause emphasis to be put in the wrong places at an impressionable period, and that they furnish irrational regulations which interfere with the most proficient freedom of development.

A questionnaire study was made among students in psychology classes at the University of Oregon by Conklin (12) in 1919. He found that 53 per cent of the 557
students filling out the questionnaire were influenced by superstitious belief and practice. 40 per cent of the males and 66 per cent of the females were so influenced. 61 per cent of those claiming no superstitious beliefs formerly had held to some belief in superstitions. 84 per cent attributed their knowledge of superstitions to parents, their elders, or other associates. Superstitions regarding domestic and social affairs were found to be more prevalent among the women. Superstitions regarding matters of sports and business were more prevalent among the men. Women were found to have a greater number of superstitions than men, and they do not apparently outgrow such beliefs as easily as men. 19 per cent of the students examined stated that verifying experiences were the sources of their superstitious beliefs. Conklin also states that new superstitions are created easily.

Gould (31) in 1921 made a study of the superstitions of 377 college girls and 7 college men in the psychology department of the normal school at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. The students were asked to recall, in 15 minutes, as many superstitions as possible. They were also asked to indicate the ones which they thought influenced their conduct. Superstitious belief
or practice was found in 44.9 per cent of the students examined.

Nixon (53) in 1925 made a questionnaire study among 359 students of elementary psychology. The questionnaire was composed of 30 statements common in current pseudo-psychology, common misconceptions, and common superstitions. The average number of statements which the students believed to be true was 10.5 for the men, and 12.3 for the women. Four men and one woman believed none of the statements, and no one admitted belief in more than 20 of the statements.

Garrett and Fisher (27) in 1926, using a modified form of Nixon's questionnaire, examined 140 senior high school girls and 115 senior high school boys in New York City. With the exception of three of the boys, all of both groups believed at least ten of the statements to be true. Correlations between the intelligence quotient and acceptance of false beliefs were -0.02 for the boys, and -0.11 for the girls. The average acceptance was 17.6 for the boys, and 19.9 for the girls. The authors believe that the largest single factor in the acceptance of such misbeliefs is lack of accurate information and reasonable explanation.

Fisher (22) in 1926 made a study of superstitious beliefs among 115 senior high school boys and 140 senior
high school girls. A modified form of Nixon's questionnaire was used. The correlations between the intelligence quotient and acceptance of superstitious beliefs, holding the chronological age constant, were -0.00 for the boys, and -0.01 for the girls.

Wagner (66) in 1928 made a study of 186 pupils from high schools in towns and cities. No influence of size of town upon the prevalence of superstitious belief was found. The correlation between chronological age and belief was -0.19. The correlation between the intelligence quotients and belief was -0.12. It was demonstrated that while information concerning superstitions increases with age, belief in superstitions decreases with age.

Miller (52) in 1929 made a questionnaire study among 395 junior college students in Sacramento, California. 20 per cent of the students claimed to be unaffected by any of the 19 superstitious ideas used in the questionnaire. 80 per cent were affected to some degree. 32 per cent were slightly affected by some of the ideas. 25 per cent were immensely by one or more. A conclusion drawn by this author was that the scientific attitude, which is incompatible with belief in superstition, is not very wide-spread among students of the college level.

Gilliland (30) in 1930, using a modified form of
Nixon's questionnaire, made a study among 103 sophomore and 46 freshman students in general psychology at the beginning of the semester and at the end. Only the items of Nixon's original questionnaire were used for scoring. The average number of acceptances for the freshmen was 11.98 for the first trial and 6.58 for the second. The average number of acceptances for the sophomores was 9.58 for the first trial and 6.15 for the second. He found that the average numbers of superstitions among a group in a liberal arts course were fewer than among the evening course group of executives and skilled workers.

Dudycha (18) in 1930 made a questionnaire study dealing with 25 popular beliefs and 25 moral propositions among 98 freshmen of Ripon College. The women were found to be more superstitious than the men. Superstitions concerning luck tended to be rejected by the group, but those concerning mental telepathy and phrenology had a high rate of acceptance.

Lehman and Fenton (44) in 1930 made a questionnaire study of 160 true-false statements among beginners and more advanced students in psychology. The results show less adherence to common misbeliefs after a course in psychology. The writers concluded that transfer of training does not overcome the student's weakness for phrenology, fortune-telling, and other forms of occultism.
They suggested that the students' most glaring superstitions be identified by means of a pre-test technique, and that direct attack be made upon these beliefs.

Smith (61) in 1930 conducted a controlled experiment with two groups of ninth-grade pupils in general science. One group was taught general science for one year by the text-book and recitation method. The other group, parallel in age, mental age, and school attitude was taught by the experimental and lecture-demonstration method entirely. The two groups were tested at the end of the year with several standardized general science tests, a reading test in general science, and a superstition test. The study of science was found to decrease belief in certain superstitions.

Caldwell and Lundeen (6) in 1930 made a questionnaire study in six rural and four urban high schools. 1,030 questionnaires of 200 questions each were examined. They found that high school seniors believe in and are influenced by about 20 of the items used. College students have heard of more of these beliefs and accept fewer of them than do the high school pupils. Both high school girls and college women accept and are influenced by more of the beliefs than are the men. The authors suggest that as about thirty unfounded ideas are the most prevalent and most influential, these should be incorpo-
rated into plans of instruction for correction.

Another study by the same authors (7), made in 1931, shows that the high school seniors examined had heard of 50 per cent of the 200 ideas included in the study; that they believed 20.1 per cent of them; and that they were affected by 22.6 per cent of those of which they had previously heard.

For the purpose of improving instruction in general science, these authors (9) in 1932 made a questionnaire study of 900 junior high school pupils before and after instruction in general science. The questionnaire contained 50 general science questions of which 12 were unfounded beliefs. They found that the instruction in general science produced a gain in the desirable responses of 33.3 per cent; the number of perfect scores following the instruction was more than 55 per cent of all of the pupils concerned. The authors concluded that the change of attitude in regard to the unfounded beliefs was produced by direct and specific instruction.

Whitelaw and Laslett (69) in 1932 made a study of unfounded beliefs among 431 students of general psychology at Oregon State College. Of these students, 193 were men and 238 were women. A modified form of Nixon's questionnaire was used. The average number of acceptances of these statements as true was 9.0 for the men and 9.3 for
the women. The combined scores of men and women show an average acceptance of 9.16 items as true. A conclusion of the authors is that three causes of retention of superstitions are: "removal of vague fears, increase of advantage of others, and self-justification for relative failures."

Mailer and Lundeen (49) in 1933 made a study to determine to what extent the home is a source of belief and disbelief in superstitions, and to determine the contributions of books and newspapers, schools and churches, friends and personal observations to such belief and disbelief. Their definition of a superstitious belief was that it is one that "ascribes causal relationship to phenomena and objects which bear no such relationship to one another." In their questionnaire of 50 items, they eliminated such questions as those relating to common misconceptions and included only such superstitions as might be identified with magic or animism. This list was presented to 179 junior and senior high school pupils. The average pupil expressed a belief in 30 per cent of the items, a disbelief in 55 per cent, and uncertainty about 15 per cent of the items. The correlation between belief and age was about -0.23. Girls expressed belief in a greater number of superstitions than boys. The sources fostering superstition, in order of importance as
determined by the pupils' estimates, are as follows: friends, home, educational sources, and observation. The order of the sources in correcting superstitions, also according to pupils' estimates, is: observation, education, home, friends. The authors also found some relationship between the number of superstitious beliefs and the type of reading preference. Those preferring books of science and invention expressed less adherence to superstitions than those preferring books of fiction, adventure, and mystery. The contention of the authors is that remedial work is only possible when the sources of the superstitions are known.
Anthropological research, apart from the departments of Education in colleges and universities, has contributed greatly to our knowledge of the development, the nature, and the implications of superstitious belief. Students of mythology, folk-lore, ethnology, psychology, and philosophy have accumulated an enormous body of information regarding the phenomena of superstition, and this information may be of value in developing a method for the removal of superstitious beliefs. For this reason, the following findings are presented. As this material is composed to a large degree of conclusions based upon reasoning rather than upon tabulatory material, the following chapters are given a somewhat more subjective method of treatment than was used with the previous chapter of this thesis.

Perception is, directly or indirectly, the basic cause of belief. Belief, however, being an attitude, refers not to the experience itself but to the judgment concerning the experience. In order to minimize this subjective element, judgments that become knowledge must be qualified by adequate experience and by careful
observation, analysis, and inference. The three types of thinking which contribute to this process are equations; parallels of premise and inference, according to causation or substance and attribute; and analogies of imagination. In case a judgment has been unduly influenced by poor observation, imagination, or the causes that excite free or uncontrolled imagination, the perception has resulted in belief but not knowledge, regardless of the amount of thinking which has been done.

Jastrow (37:37) points out that right belief and credulity refer to habits of mind as well as to standards of evidence. Standards of evidence have been mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, but in addition to these standards we must, before we may satisfactorily accept any given perceptual judgment as being knowledge, admit that all competent observers can verify the perception (reach a similar judgment) upon the same standards of evidence. We perceive at once that it is very difficult to actually distinguish between opinion and knowledge, and we are forced to accept skepticism as a dogmatic fact. Skepticism is suspended judgment, and this we may incorporate as a habit of mind requisite to the formation of accurate perceptual judgments. The other habits of mind requisite to an empirical scientific method are an attitude of willingness and desire to gather factual information, and
a willingness and desire to test or verify any judgments which arise in connection with the facts at hand. The primitive man did not consciously examine his perceptions in such a manner and, because he had no valid standards of evidence by which to verify his judgments, he had great difficulty in distinguishing between perception-beliefs and imagination-beliefs. The superstitious person of today is one who lacks the capacity for such habits of thought, or who is ignorant of these habits, or who, knowing them, is too indolent or too dependent on others to follow them.

The person lacking these scientific habits of thought, including valid standards of evidence, is liable, in his thinking, to factors which may cause belief, but which are not of the nature of genuine evidence. Among these are errors of interpretation, traditional beliefs, imagination, emotion, and pleasurable feelings. These factors may be explained as follows:

(1) errors caused by misinterpreted experience and tradition, illusions, dreams, myths, and coincidences mistaken for causation.

These factors sometimes form apperceptive nuclei which operate in the same way as nuclei formed around scientific systems. In the case of misapprehensions, each belief is usually strengthened by the others and the
mass tends to repel judgments which conflict with the total structure or any principal part of it. Illusions may be due to natural phenomena, i.e., mirages in which distant scenes are reflected by the atmosphere; poor perception due to various natural causes; or they may be due to inherent structural or functional defects of the neural system itself. The power of dreams over the primitive mind is illustrated by the following illustrations from Malisoff (51:98) When two Chiriguanos of South America meet they exchange the following greeting, "Are you alive?" "Yes, I am alive." Another illustration is that of a native of the French Congo who was accused of a murder of which he was innocent. When questioned, he said, "I will pay, because as a matter of fact I might have killed the man when I was asleep; but I have no conscious knowledge of it." The myth becomes functional, according to Malinowski (50:28), when rite, ceremony, or a social or moral rule demands justification. The myth, then, is a creation of imagination serving to strengthen tradition and endow it with greater prestige by tracing it back to a more supernatural reality of initial events. Coincidences which are mistaken for cause and effect are extremely common. Often, however, they lead to serious belief in supernaturalism and occultism, i.e., a child may be asked by his mother to perform some simple task of
which he has recently been thinking. This may lead him to believe that his mother injected her thought into him or that he had mysteriously read his mother's mind.

(2) imagination. This is always associated with experience, but contains an element of persuasiveness attached to the imaginative process which may make a superstition appear to be derived from experience, for instance, a stone from the tomb of a former hero has the effect of lending substance to stories told of him. The mechanical process of language may be partly responsible for imagination beliefs, for instance, it is noticed that a sunflower's head turns with the sun. The natural expression of this action would be something like this, "The sunflower turns its head in the direction of the sun." The effect of such language usage apparently attributes personal powers to the sunflower; whereas, the action of the plant was in reality merely a phototropic reaction to the light rays.

(3) emotion and feeling. The pleasurable pleasantness of a judgment, being a conclusion that is an end of suspended judgment, tends to draw attention to it. Because of this, beliefs are strengthened by their accompanying emotions and feelings. In some cases, i.e., fear, the attention may be held through a form of fascination. Although fear is unpleasant, its first cause may be prolonged or
intensified by both psychological and physiological reactions. To a person who lives in monotony, fear may be a relief. To a person who believes his surroundings unbearable, it may be a means of release.

(4) pleasurable feelings. Beliefs that are accompanied by pleasurable feelings from whatever source tend to divert attention from conflicting and unpleasant considerations. This principle makes it possible for a person to entertain incompatible desires and beliefs.

Persons of low mentality, or ignorant persons have not the ability to foresee future consequences of certain acts; they, therefore, have less inhibition in respect to certain courses of action which, although pleasurable in themselves, are likely to ultimately cause unpleasant results.

Voluntary actions resulting from beliefs cause circular responses which strengthen beliefs and tend to cause the actions to become habitual. Such responses are of the nature of reverberations, and they may be distinguished from circular reflexes in that they are conscious, although they often become automatic, while circular reflexes are not conscious unless something interferes with their operations or the results of their operations are unsatisfactory.

The gregarious instinct, suggestibility, and
contra-suggestibility, sympathies and antipathies between persons or groups, and certain elements of mob psychology cause beliefs to become fashionable, coercive, impassioned, and intolerant. It is through such social influence that most of our superstitions are maintained, for, as will be shown in another chapter, superstitions usually arise from the imagination of the "best minds," and these minds are widely separated in historical time and space. In the past have been periods during which education consisted almost entirely in memorization of superstitions, and a noticeable remnant of this practice may be observed in the present day conflict between dogmatic, memory education and education which emphasizes empirical method.

The factors contributing to belief operate in both mature and immature minds. They contribute both to man's practical, common-sense existence and to his uncritical or thoughtless acceptance of superstitions. The non-evidentiary causes of belief are proportionately stronger during the childhood, either of the race or of the individual. The influence of society is of great importance in causing belief, and many false beliefs have been of immense value to the development of society through the inculcation of social solidarity, habits of economy, and moral safeguards. These social consequences do not, however, affect the psychological character of the beliefs.
The same phenomena produce harmful and useless superstitions as produce beneficial ones. Beliefs caused by non-evidentiary factors become active or inactive from time to time. They are modifiable merely for convenience or for the conservation of energy; they are forgotten without any inherent change in them; they depend partly upon the assent of the crowd; and they often vary considerably among different people. These characteristics are not true of knowledge. Regarding this point, it has been argued (45) that beliefs or practices which are grounded upon, and have their place in, a system of explanation of life and nature, however primitive the system may be, have a legitimate place and are not superstitions. The writer is not in sympathy with this view, for, as has been previously pointed out, there is an inherent difference between belief based upon valid standards of evidence and belief caused by non-evidentiary factors. Ultimately, however, if better standards of evidence are established, we may be forced to admit that beliefs which today are considered knowledge might then be considered superstitions. Indeed, this has been the history of the development of knowledge.

Langley (42) places subjective beliefs in two categories. The first category includes all beliefs which are held on subjective grounds but which refer to objects
concerning which knowledge is attainable. All superstitions are placed in this category whether they are connected with religious practices or not. Beliefs in magic or charms and other such beliefs are included, also. Langley states that all beliefs of this class are promoted by "the will to believe." The second category, which includes the beliefs that refer to objects concerning which knowledge is not attainable, is composed of beliefs in values and religious beliefs. The author also emphasizes the importance of belief by explaining that our response to a situation is determined frequently, not by the actual character of the situation, but by our belief in regard to that character.

There are many theories regarding the nature of belief. They may all, however, be deemed to be, to greater or lesser extents, rationalizations regarding the thinking process. Our concern is with discriminations between imagination-beliefs and perception-beliefs. To the believer, there may be no apparent difference of cause between these two categories. It has been the writer's purpose to point out some of these differences; he now limits his analysis to discriminations between the different kinds of non-evidentiary beliefs.

This category includes unfounded beliefs and misconceptions, as well as superstitions. Our language usage
is very loose in this regard, and it is not unusual to see misconceptions mistaken for superstitions. The former are merely mistaken notions regarding certain factual knowledge, i.e., belief in phrenology and character reading. The latter, superstition, includes beliefs in magic, animism, omens, totems, or in supernaturalism. The word "superstition" is the French equivalent for the Latin word "superstitio" which is derived from "superstare," to stand in amazement and awe. Subjectively (71) it is a disposition or tendency to ascribe phenomena which admit of natural explanations to occult or supernatural causes; objectively - any system of belief or practice which manifests such a tendency. It is necessary at this point to define "supernaturalism." This term relates to that which in its being or operation transcends the powers or operations of nature. There are other conceptions as to the nature of superstitions, some dating from ancient times; but for the purpose of evolving a suitable technique for the indoctrination of a discipline guarding against them, it is sufficiently inclusive to limit our definition to beliefs of magical or animistic nature.
IV
BELIEF IN SUPERSTITIONS

From subjective judgments, which, as we have seen, always have their roots in perception, spring legitimate beliefs which we may term knowledge, and false beliefs which may be called superstitions. These judgments arise spontaneously as final or partial explanations of internal or external phenomena. These subsequent explanations not only refer to the understanding of objects, but also to their relationships as expressed in the motions of the images perceived; and the entire process is, except in illiterates, conceived, not only in mental imagery, but in terms of language, which, at best, is imperfect, inadequate, and variable. In addition to these considerations, the human mind is disposed to project itself onto the object of perception, i.e., a man projects his consciousness into inanimate objects or phenomena, or, as he imagines his birth to be a beginning of his own existence, he imagines that everything else in nature came into existence similarly. When these elements are thought of in addition to the other obstacles to which the forming of accurate perception-judgments are subject, it appears rather miraculous that scientific knowledge has advanced to its present status. Superstitions were in the past, and are possibly today to some extent, useful explanations
of the natural world without which the primitive man would have been unable to cope as successfully as he did with nature, and without which his actions would have been thwarted except on a purely reflexive basis. However, to act in accordance with superstitions is to act according to explanations which are now superseded by more adequate and rational ones.

Although any form of imagination-belief or other defective knowledge is of the nature of superstition, beliefs in magical and animistic processes are more strictly in accordance with our definition of superstition. These two processes, both of which are explanations for the supernatural or the mysterious, may be distinguished as the mechanical, which is magic, and the volitional, which is animism. Frazer (26:II:235) considers magic the older of the two systems of explanation because it is a simpler form of belief. It is found fully developed among people whose animism is feebly developed, and its beliefs are more uniform throughout the world. Others have pointed out that it is not unlikely that these two systems evolved together.

Read (57:110) defines magic as a connection of events imagined to be constant and to depend upon the agency of some thing or activity possessing an efficacious quality or force, and independent of the will of any particular person. This force differs from a law of nature
in that it is wholly imaginary and incapable of verification. Common magical things, objects, or actions are charms, spells, and rites. A defensive charm is called an amulet; an offensive charm is a talisman. Spells and rites, also, are either offensive or defensive.

The development of belief in magic begins with the necessity for all persons, and very likely the higher animals, to conceive of everything as a center of forces, weight, hardness, elasticity, etc. The primitive mind was acquainted, also, with many forces which work at a distance, e.g., wind, heat, sound, odor, light, dreams, etc. Magical force, then, is an idea derived from experience of natural forces and employed to account for events which can not be accounted for through the body of knowledge which has accounted for events of simpler causation.

The modern conception of mechanical causation requires the following principles: each event has a cause; causation is uniform; the cause is an accumulation of indispensable conditions of the effect; the cause is proportional to the effect. Magical explanation utilizes much the same classification. In magic, however, the causation is never traceable. This is its principal difference from modern science. In ancient times, with their savants and with their astrology and alchemy, this absence of clarity on this point led to confusion between
Most of the social significance of magic is in the growth of taboo. With taboo came social restrictions of either convenience or disadvantage. A taboo, for instance, might have been placed upon a certain social custom. If anything unusual happened to a man, he might be accused of having broken the taboo. Such a course would have tended to increase faith in the taboo and to be held as proof of its efficacy. The taboo might bring about valuable results even though the real factors involved were unknown. It might be merely a form or a means of attracting attention or financial rewards to a person or to an office.

Some forms of magic are practiced today among civilized races, but most of the survivals in practice have lost their original significance and are of small importance. In the breaking of a bottle, for instance, at the launching of a ship, it is forgotten that the wine used should be red. Most people, also, would consider the ship just as well launched if all ceremony had been eliminated. Other persons, however, would probably have a feeling of discomfort at such neglect of ritual although the strong fear that dominated the primitive man would not be present.

There are two conflicting theories regarding
animism. Psychological animism means that savages and children attribute to everything, animate and inanimate, a consciousness like their own, and regard all the actions and reactions of natural objects as voluntary and purposive. Read (57:146) considers this view unsound for the way that men came to conceive that the consciousness of a thing can be separated from it, enabling it to exist and act by itself, remains to be shown. In anthropology, animism usually means the proneness of people of unscientific culture to explain natural occurrences as due to the action of spirits. These spirits are ghosts (spirits which were formerly carnate); dream-spirits (spirits that have temporarily quitted a body during sleep or trance); or invisible, living, conscious beings that have never been carnate, i.e., totems, natural objects of awe, abstract ideas, etc. The connection between magic and animism is close. Spirits and ghosts operate by magic, teach magic, and are controlled by magic. Read (57:150) notes the following modes of belief in animism: that some things have, or are possessed by a separable conscious spirit; that things are themselves conscious, but the consciousness is not separable; that things are not conscious, but are informed by a separable essence, or soul; the extension or limitation of these beliefs to different classes of things.

Omens may operate by magic, animism, or both. At
any rate, the connection between the sign and the event is always mysterious, and on that account is all the more impressive and acceptable. Such an event is regarded as a miracle. The majority of our common superstitions are of this sort. Today, educated persons who have no belief in either magic or animism are often irritated or annoyed and often suffer unnecessary inconvenience in order to avoid contact with omens of ill luck. Vague feelings of discomfort arise in connection with affairs conducted on any Friday the thirteenth, outings are postponed if the ground-hog can see his shadow on February second, and corners are torn from two dollar bills in order to prevent bad luck befalling those accepting such money. A notable example of the persistence of superstition of this sort is in the use of forked sticks for locating water, mineral deposits, or criminals (20). Hundreds of books and articles have been written on this subject. Among the first investigators were Philippe Melanchthon, Bernhardus, and Agricola, all of whom wrote extensively upon this subject early in the sixteenth century. Scientific controversies and investigations are still being carried on, and in spite of much evidence against the probability that water, criminals, or minerals may be located by this device, individuals and corporations are still profitably exploiting the notion (20:25).
One of the most significant facts regarding superstitions is the use to which they have been put in order to gain or maintain power over the people. In simple societies, the leader or chief was often a wizard, medicine-man, or magician. When he was not, he was forced to rely greatly upon his advisor or some other dignitary whose object was the practice of the occult and the black arts. As animism of some degree is prevalent in all societies, the wizard's work is of different form and quality in different societies. Today he may be a king, priest, evangelist, quack doctor, or pathological swindler. The two reasons that people seek, or have sought, such positions are desire for wealth and for personal power (position and authority). Very often, however, the position is forced upon the person. Today, young men often drift into this kind of pursuit because of a few early successes.

The wizard's method of persuasion relies heavily upon the tendency of people to accept statements uncritically. These wizards often form a marked class because of their superior general abilities, and, as they are aware of this fact, they are naturally drawn into a mutual understanding and attitude of protection if their selfish interests do not conflict. When this happens, and these groups become organized, an anti-social tendency is usually
manifest. This protects the vested powers and the secrets of the members and establishes a trade tradition.

The wizard (57:259-276) is distinguished for his intelligence, penetration, and cunning. In all parts of the world some knowledge of drugs, methods of treatment (sweat-baths, massage, ligatures, cauterisation) has been possessed by the magical profession. Most of the sciences began as forms of magic. As weather-doctors, the magicians laid out the rudiments of astronomy and meteorology. Ventriloquism, the trick of palming; and practical knowledge of hypnotism have been utilized by them. Incantations have led to the development of poetry, dancing, and music. Although this body of information and skills was, to the wizard, recognized as common-sense, he exploited his less intelligent associates by claiming special magical powers. In many cases, however, and especially in the realm of psychology, the wizard was led through auto-suggestion to believe in his own powers as of supernatural origin.

The wizard is usually a man of great force of will and persistency of purpose. He could not probably otherwise undergo the rigors of training that are often exacted from candidates for the office. Some of these initiatory rites include boring holes in the tongue, forcing stones into the flesh, eating of all sorts of filth (such as
defecation, decomposing flesh of dead men, drinking tobacco-juice, etc.). Such severe training kills many novices, and only men of unusual powers can become wizards. They serve to keep alive traditions, beliefs in taboos, and spiritual ritual and values. The "profession," once formed, however, attracted not only men of sincerity but those who were ambitious for the advantage of power only.

To impress the imagination of others, the wizard usually affected a costume, or striking behavior, or some strange companionship of animals that distinguished him from the rest of his tribe. Rites of initiation marked this "superiority," and separated him from the crowd. The nature of his position was precarious, for if he failed, he was usually put to death. Also, as there was much hatred between certain different wizards, and as they were in constant fear of failure and discredit, the position was usually accompanied by a disposition of jealousy, suspicion, and cruelty.

The wizard was always a good actor, for most of his practice was imposture, whether he believed it or not. Sometimes this art was self-learned, and sometimes it was learned from others. Wizards were frequently men who manifested hysterical or epileptoid diathesis. Between fits or trances, however, it was imperative that they
master themselves. When becoming clearly insane, they were forced, by circumstances, to retire.

The wizardry of today is very similar to the practices among more primitive peoples, and regardless of the benefits derived, most of the practices are deceitful. These practices are not the invention of society but of an individual or a series of individuals - society invents nothing. The spirit of superstition upon which wizardry thrives is common to the society, but its professional exploitation is the work of those who profit by it. The writer believes that direct, specific instruction is of less use in guarding against superstition and the exploitation of magicians than is the inculcation of certain habits of thought, notably skepticism and the habit of suspending judgment. Both of these methods of attack, however, may be used simultaneously, and the person seeking to improve the intellectual status of others must certainly bear in mind that his efforts to remove superstition should not be confined within scientific fields but should be carried into the social activities, which, as we know, are powerful factors in engendering beliefs and habits of thought.
SUPERSTITION AND SCIENCE

The causes for belief are mathematical equations; parallels of premise and inference, according to causation or substance and attribute; and analogies of imagination. It is in the application of these principles that the chief difference between superstition and science lies. The natural evolution of reason has largely relegated the use of analogies of the imagination to other uses than to scientific thought. Science uses them mainly in order to formulate hypotheses which may be verified by experiment at a later time, and it is only when definite provision is made for such verification that experimentation becomes scientific. The evolution of reason has also brought about greater accuracy in the selection of judgments which serve as major premises, and greater caution in assuming minor premises. Mathematics has evolved from the rudimentary digital counting of the savage into highly complex systems of analysis and calculation. Underlying this development has been the assumption that causation follows certain universal laws - laws, moreover, that are permanent, e.g., if two and two are four today, the same will be true tomorrow. The reason that this is true may be unknown even to the scientist, but the scientist does
not attribute this to magic or to spiritual powers. He suspends judgment at this point, and awaits the time when logic (including the logic of equations) can amply demonstrate the nature of such cause and effect.

Magic, on the other hand, entertains hypotheses of universal cause and effect that are dogmatic finalities, and hence, not subject to further explanation. These laws are uniform, and any miracle is possible of magical explanation. The attitude, however, of the person accepting a magical explanation for any given phenomenon is one of dogmatic assent. The element of the scientist's critical judgment is not present. This continual search for causation and other relationships is the reason why science has reached its present stage while magical explanations are much the same as they were in the beginning.

In animistic systems of explanation, there is no universal hypothesis such as we find in either magic or science. Any natural object may be controlled by an evil spirit today and a friendly one tomorrow. The wind may be of great force or small force depending upon its own conscious whim or the fancy of a greater consciousness which may or may not be controlling it. The scientist has, for himself, a better and more complete explanation for the attributes of the wind. The
scientist's explanation for a spiritual phenomenon, like those of believers in magic, is of the nature of an imagination-belief regarding a first cause which he does not need for either prediction or control but upon which he may suspend judgment in order to test his knowledge further. A spiritual cause, to him, must have a spiritual effect, if any, and he keeps this material separate, for it is outside the realm of his investigations.

The primary conditions of thought provide for explanations for all kinds of phenomena, and, therefore, the mind of the savage is not a tabula rasa which needs only enlightenment but is a mind filled with self-conceived error and magic and animism which has been implanted there by himself and by others. The savage mind is often the repository for numerous and complex ideas, e.g., certain tribes of American Indians, before going on a hunting trip, customarily shot a poisoned arrow in the direction of the hunt on the day previous to the trip. This ritual, often accompanied by dances and chanting, was thought to make the prey more vulnerable. Should the hunter fail to find a deer, or whatever he was going hunting for, he had various explanations at hand to account for this apparent failure of his method. Science, at least from a certain point of view, is the dissolution of such superstition. Vignoli (65:159), commenting upon
the intrinsic identification of magic and science, explains that science, although beginning in myth, gradually divests itself of its anthropomorphic or magical character, until more nearly pure reason is attained, and with this comes the power of indefinitely prolonged progress in the development of freedom from superstition in any definitely chosen field. Other fields, not so divested of magic and animism, lag behind indefinitely until they are needed for use with the chosen fields or until some particularly interested group gives them serious attention.

The mythological element in superstitious beliefs, as we have seen, is apparently handed down from generation to generation through social interaction. Analytical psychology offers a somewhat different, although not necessarily incompatible, explanation of mythology. A fundamentally neurotic cause is offered by this school. It is reasoned that the avoidance of reality, or the attempted assurance against conflict with reality, is both a symptom and a cause of neurosis. The pathological importance of superstitions lies in this point and the operation of magic and animism is made evident in this connection in various ways. It was pointed out in a previous chapter that the word "superstition" also carries with it the connotation of excessive belief. Pathological
conditions which result from such beliefs are numerous. Erotic fetichism may lead the individual into overt actions which are in conflict with social standards of behavior, or, as is usually the case, the perverse tendencies are repressed and driven into the unconscious where nuclei are formed which may later become evident in the form of paranoid delusions or dementia praecox. Superstitious belief may also take the form of fetichism toward abstract ideas which offer escape from the difficult problems of life. When a complex has formed within the unconscious around a superstition of this sort, a neurosis may appear if the conditions of reality become too difficult for the individual to solve or to reconcile with the nucleus which he has built up. When such complexes have developed within a large social group the equivalent of a neurosis is often seen in an epidemic of irrationality, e.g., war, revolution, etc. It is the hypothesis of the analytic psychologists that the universal similarity of human beings and their experiences results in unanimity of autochthonous forms and themes of myths and superstitions.

Jung (40:451) has defined the productions of this universal possibility of a similar mental function as "collective psyche." It is his contention that the difficulty in protecting one's individuality against
this collective psyche causes neurosis. This struggle is also seen to be the basis for Adler's (64:282) highly complex psychological system. Jung and Adler, however, differ in opinion upon several important points. Adler believes that this conflict appears in the form of compensating mechanisms in the struggle to maintain and strengthen the ego against the hostile influences of the environment. To Jung the basis causes of neurosis are, in introverts, the conflict between thought and unconscious feeling, and in extraverts, the conflict between feeling and unconscious thought. He advances the theory that man's unconscious conflict between introversion and extraversion brings about a condition within the individual which is responsible for many of the inventions of his imagination. Myths, according to this hypothesis, arise universally in certain patterns, the elements of which may be traced through the neurosis of the individual. Adler may be said to emphasize the teleological aspect of the unconscious; Jung, whose view is more closely related to the Freudian viewpoint, may be said to emphasize both the teleological and the causal conceptions.

Freud's theory (40:297) holds the psychological life to be merely an effect or reaction resulting from sensation. He attempts to trace back complexes to their elemental factors by means of a method that limits itself
rigidly to empirical facts. He believes that neurosis is an erotic conflict between the moral consciousness and the unconscious infantile sexual world of phantasy and its transference to external objects or fetishes. The ego is held to be merely a kind of appendage to sexuality. To Adler, the sexuality is merely a means to power or the gratification of the ego, and everything is seen as a finally conditioned arrangement instead of a causal consequence of previously occurring facts. Superstitions, according to Adler's theory are unrealities behind which the neurotic tries to protect himself from reality. From the Freudian viewpoint, superstitions and myths may be the conscious expressions of symbolical wish-creations of the unconscious resulting from repression of the libido, the sexuality of the individual.

To Jung (40:410), superstitions and myths are kinds of indicators of mental development in that they arise more or less spontaneously out of various degrees of culture. They are of the nature of primordial images which are due to the inherited potentialities of the imagination and are related to the universal history of the human mind rather than to the sphere of personal reminiscences.

These views from the realm of analytical psychology may appear to be somewhat too speculative to many persons,
especially as explanations of common superstitions. Some of these superstitions, however, might have arisen, or are arising continually, from sources of neurotic conflict, and this brief mention of the work of this branch of psychology is made in order to indicate at least a partial explanation for the universality of myths and superstitions. To the writer, from what acquaintance he has with this field of psychology, Jung's work offers the most satisfactory system of thought in this field of psychology today available.
VI
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The studies pursued have indicated that the prevalence of superstitious beliefs is very wide-spread. About fifty per cent of our high school and college population believe in and are influenced by such beliefs. One popular article (3:57) shows that about ninety-eight per cent of the general population are so affected. According to these percentages, our educational institutions are noticeably effective in reducing the individual's irrationality in this respect. Nevertheless the number of misbeliefs and superstitious beliefs of a magical or animistic nature accepted by supposedly educated persons remains too high. Dresslar (17:4) believes that educators are likely to overestimate the rationality of the average man's thought processes and that, though the spirit of learning is necessarily of an optimistic tendency, they must not fail to recognize that underneath what passes for average culture there lies undisturbed a great mass of irrational predisposition, which, in the hour of emergency and excitement, rules the members of the mob to irrational conduct. One of the primary aims of modern education (17:231) is the removal of the elements of fear of the unknown and of blind superstitious faith
from the minds of people.

The majority of the common superstitions which are held by most persons are, in themselves, relatively harmless and inoffensive, but the attitude which permits their acceptance is not only incompatible with intellectual progress but is the attitude which permits epidemics of hysteria and irrationality to develop and become incorporated within our national consciousness. The individual who cannot protect himself against superstitious notions is likely to be readily swayed by insidious propaganda and is an easy prey for charlatans in all departments of society. Belief in these common superstitions causes the individual many small irritations and senseless worries which not only lessen his ability in the ordinary affairs of life but cause him no small amount of mental discomfort. The tendency of people to allow themselves to be influenced in their conduct by irrational beliefs which they themselves fully realize to be false produces an attitude of hypocrisy that is a barrier to intellectual progress. Huxley (36:7), in this respect, holds that if people will but adhere to the plain rule of not pretending to believe what they have no reason to believe, they will not have reached the lowest depth of immorality. We know that Friday and Sunday are just as good as any of the days of the week
upon which to transact matters of business or pleasure, yet business men often refuse to make decisive transactions upon Friday; and Sunday has been mutilated in many ways by serio-comic controversies and unfair legislative enactments. Superstitions relating to other communal affairs have effectively prevented the much-needed dissemination of eugenic information and other positive social controls. Belief in luck prevents the reliance upon self-helpfulness that is an indispensable asset in character development. This belief contributes to an attitude of carelessness toward all things and fosters the notion within the individual that the "world owes him a living." From such relatively insignificant sources springs an unfathomable amount of crime, injustice, vice and misery. The superstitious individual faces the realities of the world with the mind of a savage and with small protection against the cunning of avaricious schemers.

Aside from these real disadvantages in superstitious beliefs, is the pathological aspect. Superstitions are often both causes and symptoms of neurosis. The most simple superstitious association may become submerged within the unconscious to form psychic traumas which sooner or later come to the surface in the form of actual mental disease. The savage's inability to make use of
rational methods of experimentation and his lack of valid standards of evidence permitted his life to be ruled to a greater extent by superstition than is the case with the educated man of today. This fact permits us to reason that the incidence of neurosis among savages was probably greater than it is among people today although it was less noticeable in an inferior society. The writer is of the opinion that further reduction of the incidence of superstitions among people today will further reduce the present incidence of neurosis, especially functional disorders such as cyclical insanity, schizophrenia, and dementia praecox.

The probable causes of superstitions are errors in interpretation of sensory perceptions, faulty analogies of the imagination, and deceitful practices of those who have profited from the credulity of their less intelligent associates. Once conceived and established within the body of society, their retention has been due to the uses to which they have been put by individuals. They have been useful in relieving the mind from the strain of indecision and in the removal of vague fears; they have been useful to some in the gaining of advantage over others; they have served as devices for rationalization. The autochthonous forms and themes of superstitions are reasonably due, as Jung has pointed out, to universal
inherent potentialities of the human mind. There is probably no possibility of ever preventing this latter type of superstition, for the cause is apparently structural and although we may trace such superstitions through the evolution of the race or of man, their origins are as obscure as that of life itself.

As long as rulers, chiefs, wizards, priests, charlatans, and others who are superior in cunning to the majority of people find the use of superstition advantageous; as long as autochthonous forms appear; and as long as rationalization exists; superstitious notions will probably exist. The collective psyche, which is the cultural mythology of humanity, is a sociological factor which binds the individual to the fallacies of the past. Within the social body are philosophical systems which are based upon superstitions. All of these things resist the development and assimilation of enlightenment and true education. Some nations have progressed far since the Middle Ages; others have apparently regressed to more primitive forms of social organization. In fact, the whole philosophy of education is under controversy. Some nations are placing a taboo upon certain books and other works of knowledge which offer genuine and valuable contributions to social, economic, political, and scientific history. However, democratic education was
never more prevalent, empirical facts were never more systematized, the desire of the population for knowledge was never greater, and there are other optimistic indications of attack upon superstitious beliefs.

Superstitions may be corrected by direct specific instruction and through the development of a rational method of thinking. Both methods of attack may be used in our educational institutions. The most prevalent common superstitions may be determined by tests, and direct correction of these carried out. With the gradual indoctrination of scientific thinking, the individual will be better able to identify and correct other superstitions which are the products of the collective psyche and which are indigenous to his own mind.

The chief use of science is the dissolution of superstition, and most of our material progress has been made through the use of science for this purpose. This method, as has been pointed out, consists in collecting empirical facts, establishing generalizations regarding these facts, and verifying the generalizations through experimentation or making provision for verification by all competent observers. The logical methods which must accompany each of these steps of the scientific process are the examination of the analogies of the imagination by major and minor premises and the determination of their
relative probability through the use of equations. The accidentalities of nature require suspension of judgment. The previous knowledge which we have gained and recorded is so great that one person can master only a small portion of very restricted fields of it, and this, even, must be accepted critically and with reservations. But where causes for phenomena have been determined in accordance with this empirical method, and where magic and animism have been disproved, there is no reason for accepting superstitious explanations, and there is far less reason to impress others with superstitious beliefs.

Too often myths, which are thought valuable for the development of the imaginative function in children, are taught them as truths. This is a violation of sound psychological principles. Myths should always be labelled myths and recognized for what they are - interesting and, occasionally, valuable stories.

Scientific methods may also be utilized in the further examination of aesthetic and spiritual values, for, in so far as these values may be expressed in language, they have their roots in perception and, therefore, come under control by the same laws of science by which other forms of knowledge may be examined. Factual knowledge in this sphere of thought has lagged far behind knowledge of a more mechanical nature. It is in this field that
superstitions are used most for moral purposes. This is unfortunate, for it would be better that people were moral because there are legitimate and specific reasons for being so than to be moral for the sake of escaping terrifying devils or other vague and nameless fears.

People are able to find intellectual and moral freedom only in so far as they understand the processes with which they deal. Superstitions operate by magical or animistic forces which, according to our causal knowledge, do not exist, therefore, people are acting blindly and stupidly when they act according to superstitious beliefs. In so far as the process of education removes such beliefs, it frees people to act more reasonably in the world of reality as it is understood today. It has been the writer's aim to contribute to the understanding of the whole problem of superstitious belief - an understanding of the nature of such beliefs, how they have arisen and how they have been retained, why they are harmful to society as a whole and to the individual in particular, and what may be done toward their removal and prevention by educational means.
VII
CLASSIFIED LISTS OF COMMON SUPERSTITIONS

WILD ANIMALS AND INSECTS

Seeing, or dreaming about, a white elephant, is a sign of approaching good luck.

Carrying a rabbit's foot brings good luck.

A rabbit's foot carried in the pocket will keep away evil spirits.

Carrying a rabbit's left hind foot will prevent rheumatism.

The left forefoot of a rabbit, carried in the lower left-hand vest pocket, will bring good luck in horse races or lotteries.

If one finds, in a graveyard, the left hind foot of a rabbit, that one will be married before the next Easter.

It is especially lucky to carry the left hind foot of a rabbit that was killed in a cemetery near midnight on Friday the 13th.

If one receives the left hind foot of a rabbit while the moon is shining over one's left shoulder, bad luck will be prevented.

Carrying a rabbit's tail brings good luck.

If a rabbit should sit on a doorstep, those who live in the house will be bewitched.

A rabbit crossing the path behind one signifies good luck.

1 These superstitions have been gathered from various sources. The largest separate sources being Dresslar (17) and Laslett (43). The writer makes no claim to even approximate completeness in these lists.
A rabbit crossing the path before one signifies bad luck.

If someone is sick, or is dying, and a fly buzzes around a member of the family, the nurse, or the sick person, the sick person will die.

If a person is very ill, he will die if a great many flies gather nearby.

Toads have diamonds in their foreheads. If they can be gotten out without the toad knowing it, they will remain as diamonds; otherwise they will turn to water.

Toads have only one eye, i.e., the "diamond" in their foreheads.

The water from toads causes warts.

Snakes that have been killed during the day do not die until sunset.

A turtle that has bitten a person will not turn loose of its own accord, even though its head is cut off from its body, until sundown. However, it can be pried off.

To dream of snakes is to bring misfortune and to have an enemy.

Tadpoles grow out of the mud, as do turtles.

Water snakes grow out of horsehairs that have fallen into the water.

An elephant never forgets an enemy or a friend.

A spider embroidered on one's clothing will prevent the evil eye.

To kill a cricket brings bad luck.

If rats leave a ship before a voyage, the ship will meet disaster.

Rats are the forerunners of disease.

If the wood-rats build high, a hard winter will follow.
If one kills a frog, three days of rain will follow.
Killing a frog will make the cows give bloody milk.
Killing a frog brings bad luck.
When frogs croak, rain is coming.
A tree frog croaking is a sign of rain.
The croaking of frogs after a rain signifies that clear weather is coming.
If toads are seen hopping around in the daytime, there will be rain soon.
A toad hopping across one's path brings bad luck.
What you are doing when you hear frogs peep at the first of the season, you will be doing all the year.
To catch fish, you must first spit on your bait.
Goldfish bring bad luck.
A "sheep's eye-stone," from a fish's head is the luckiest thing in the world to carry.
A shark's tail upon a bowsprit will keep away bad spirits.
If a shark follows a vessel, someone is going to die.
It is a sign of good luck to find a pearl in an oyster.
Crickets coming into the house will bring good luck.
If a cricket sings in the house, there will be a death in the family.
If the crickets sing a great deal, it is a sign of rain.
A lizard's tail will bring good luck.
A snapping turtle will not let go until it thunders.
If a person is hungry and sings a wolf-song, he is likely to find food.
To hear wolves howl at night when one is ill brings bad luck or death.
A white deer has in his stomach a stone that will cure snake bite.

An opossum which has been killed on the ground should not be cooked with sweet potatoes or harmful results will follow.

If a bat comes into a room, it is a sign of bad luck or death.

When the fur of the foxes, or of other wild animals, is thicker than usual, the winter will be especially cold.

When on a journey, if you see a squirrel run to the left, you will have bad luck; if to the right, good luck.

If one sees a dead animal, the taste of it will be in his mouth at the next meal, unless he spits nine times successively.

If a bee comes into the house, a stranger is coming.

Bees buzzing near your head signify good news; near your feet, bad news.

Bees will leave their hives when one of the family dies.

If a measuring worm crawls over your dress, it means that you are to have a new one soon.

A skeleton moth seen flying around the house means there will be a death soon.

If a butterfly alights on you, you will receive a letter.

If a white butterfly crosses your path in the spring, you will be successful in your work.

Frost will occur within six weeks after the first katydid of the season has been heard to sing.

The devil's darning needle can sew up your ears.

If you have lost something, catch a grand-daddy-longlegs, and tell him about your loss. His front feet will then point in the direction in which you are to hunt.
If an ant-heap gathers in your house, it signifies coming wealth, but you may destroy the nest.

Repeat:

"Doodle-bug, doodle-bug!
Come out of your hole."

If he comes out, it means that something you desire will be granted; if he does not, it will not be granted.

Stepping on an ant is a sign of rain.

Anointing one's body with the juice of juniper berries will prevent snakes from biting one.

If you step over a snake in the road, you will have bad luck.

If a snake crosses your path, it is a sign of death.

Never cross over a snake-track in your path until you have made a wish. Your wish will then come true.

If you see a snake-track, spit on it and then make a wish. The wish will come true.

If you kill a snake, its mate will bite you.

Killing snakes brings luck.

If you are successful in killing the first snake you come across in the spring, the year will bring you good luck.

If you hang a snake on a tree, it will bring you bad luck.

If a snake is turned on its back after it has been killed, rain will follow.

Hanging a snake on a fence will bring rain.

If you hang a rattle-snake on its back over a log, rain will follow in three days.

The wearing of a rattle-snake skin will keep away disease.
Wearing rattle-snake rattles in your hair will prevent headache.

The dust in the rattles of a rattle-snake will cause blindness.

If one looks intently at a snake, one's eyes will become like a snake's eyes.

If one wears a rattlesnake hatband (real or beads), one can not be hit with bullets.

If you kill a spider, you will always be poor.

If you kill a black spider, you will have bad luck.

If a spider crawls across the floor, it is a sign of good luck.

If a spider drops from the ceiling in front of you, it will bring you good luck.

If you see a spider in the afternoon, it means bad luck.

If a spider drops near you, it is a sign that you are to get money soon.

If a spider weaves his web in front of you, you will receive a letter.

If a spider spins one thread from the ceiling and then runs up it, it is a sign of a death in the family.

If you put a spider in a nutshell and wear it around your neck, it will cure a fever.

Spider webs in the house are signs of bad luck to the occupants.

If there is a spider web in the room, there will be no kissing.

Cobwebs in the grass in the morning indicate rain before night.

If a spider gets on one's clothing, good luck will follow.

Killing a spider brings rain.

If a spider approaches you, you will receive a letter.
DOMESTIC ANIMALS

It is a sign of good luck to dream of a white horse. Sometimes it is a sign of a wedding; sometimes it is a sign of a death in the family.

A black cat crossing the road ahead of one is a sign of bad luck unless the person turns around and walks backward over the path of the cat at the point at which it crossed the road.

A cat has nine lives.

Cats, after they are fourteen years of age, can talk the human language. They should be killed before this age or they will tell all of the family secrets.

A horse with a convex face (Roman nose) or a white eye is vicious.

After a mare has borne a mule colt, horse colts born to this mare will be vicious and will resemble mules in appearance.

Dun and mouse colored horses are stronger than other horses. Gray horses are weaker. A horse with a dark stripe down its back and withers is the strongest of all.

Cutting off a pig's tail will cure it of cholera.

If a cat is allowed to lie on the chest of an infant, it will kill the infant by sucking the infant's breath.

A mule never dies but lies down and soon blows away. A mule can kick after it is dead.

To see a white horse is a sign of death.

To dream of a black cat brings death.

If a cat is your enemy, you will meet your death in a storm.

If a cat washes herself in the doorway, it is a sign of rain.

If a strange cat comes to the house, it will bring good luck.
If a cat follows you, it will bring you good luck.
If a strange cat follows you, you will have bad luck.
If a cat follows you at night, it will bring you good luck.
If a black cat follows you, it is a sign of death in the family.
To meet a black cat in one's path means bad luck.
If a cat crosses your path, bad luck will come to you.
If a cat runs across the path of a young couple, it is a sign that they will be married some day.
If a black cat crosses your path, and you make a wish, the wish will come true.
It is bad luck to take a cat with you when you move.
If you kill a cat, you will have seven years of bad luck.
Killing a cat sets the devil free.
A cat should be killed by hanging it by the tail; otherwise the evil spirit will escape and do you harm.
If you throw a cat overboard from a ship, it will cause a storm.
If a black cat appears in a room at a wedding, it is a sign of coming trouble.
If you will carry a black cat three times around the house on the first black night after New Year's eve, it will insure you good luck all the year.
A black cat is the embodiment of the devil, and its glance will give one the evil eye.
A three-colored cat will bring good luck.
If a cat sits with its back to the fire, rain will follow.
If a cat sleeps with its nose turned upward, it is a sign of rain.
If cat's fur stands straight up on its back, there will be a heavy storm.

If you see a cat washing its face, it is a sign of coming rain.

If a cat washes herself smoothly and slowly, fair weather is coming.

If a cat washes her face, then stops and looks at one person in the room, the one looked at will be married first.

If you notice which direction a cat's tail points, when she washes her face, it will point in the direction the wind will blow.

A cat seen eating grass indicates that rain will come soon.

If a cat lies with its back to the fire, the weather will turn cold.

The playing of old cats signifies that rain is coming.

If a cat scratches on the wall, it is the sign of rain.

If a cat cries under the window, it will bring bad luck.

If a cat gets on the roof and is noisy, it is a sign of death.

If a cat looks in at the window at night, it indicates that someone will die.

If a cat sneezes three times, the whole family will suffer from influenza.

Any person who despises cats will be carried to his grave in a howling storm.

If you grease a cat's feet, she will be sure to stay with you.

If a cat sneezes, luck will come to a bride married the following day.

Rubbing one's eye with the end of a cat's tail will cure a sty.
If one creeps between a cow's forelegs, the cow will never lose a horn.

If your cow dies, you will have bad luck for seven years.

If a white cow puts her head into the window and bawls, some one in the house is going to die.

If you meet a drove of sheep, you will have good luck.

The first time pigs cross the threshold, make them jump over the wife's garter, the man's girdle, or the maid's apron, and they will come home regularly.

If swine cross your path, it is a sign of bad luck.

When the pigs squeal, it indicates that it is going to rain.

If there are white horses in the barn, good luck will come to those who live in the house.

If you see a white horse and make a wish, your wish will come true.

If a horse can roll over three times, he is worth a hundred dollars.

If you see a white horse, you will see a red-headed woman.

If you see and "stamp" (by touching the fingers of one hand to the lips, and hitting that hand twice with the other one) one hundred white horses, without seeing a white mule, you will find something of value.

If a white horse strays into your yard, it is a sign that one of the family will die.

If a hair from the mane or tail of a horse is put in water, it will soon turn into a snake.

If a hair from the tail of a horse is put in water, it will turn into a hair-worm.

If you pick up the skull of a horse and throw it over the right shoulder without looking behind you, you will never have the smallpox.
The following is a good rule by which to select a horse:

One white foot, buy him;
Two white feet, try him;
Three, look well about him;
Four, go home without him;
If you add a white nose,
Throw his body to the crows.

If you see a colt coming with its head toward you, it is a sign of good luck.

If you make a wish when you see a white horse and a red-headed woman, the wish will come true.

If you find a horseshoe, you will have good luck.

If you find a horseshoe with the point turned up, you will have wealth.

Find a horseshoe turned the way you are going and you will have good luck; if it is turned the other way, you will not have good luck.

To find the same horseshoe twice brings bad luck.

If you find a horseshoe without any nails in it, do not touch it or it will bring bad luck.

If you hang a horseshoe over your door, you will have good luck.

Hang a horseshoe on the limb of a tree with the corks pointing away from the tree, and you will find something valuable to you.

Hang a horseshoe up with the open end up and it will hold luck. It will not hold luck if hung in the opposite way. If it is taken down, luck departs.

If you pick up a horseshoe and throw it over your right shoulder and then do not turn back, it will bring you good luck.

If you find a horseshoe and throw it over your left shoulder without turning back, it will bring you good luck.

If you spit on a horseshoe and throw it over your left shoulder, it will bring you good luck.
A red-hot horseshoe thrown into a churn will drive out the spirits which prevent the butter from forming.

Turning a horseshoe over brings good luck.

Seeing a load of hay brings good luck.

A wish made upon seeing a load of hay will come true.

If you look at a haystack and make a wish, and do not look at it again, the wish will come true.

If a howling dog holds his head up, it means a fire; if he holds his head down, it means a death.

If a dog howls at night, it is a sign of bad luck.

The howling of a dog is the sign of death.

If a dog howls at the front door of one's house, it is an indication of bad luck.

If a dog howls before the door at midnight, it is a sign of coming death.

If a dog howls in front of the house for several nights in succession, a person in the house will die.

If a dog howls under your window at night, you will hear of the death of a friend.

If a person is sick, and a dog constantly prowls around the house and whines, the sick person will die.

If you hear a dog bay at the moon, it is a sign that some one with whom you are acquainted is going to die.

If a dog howls at the moon, a death will occur in the neighborhood.

If a dog looks at you and howls, you are going to die.

To hear a dog bark at night brings bad luck.

If a stray dog follows you, it is a sign of bad luck.

If a dog rolls over, it is a sign that company is coming.

If a dog lies on its back, it is a sign of rain.
If a dog eats grass, it is a sign of rain.

If a dog bites a person, the person will not be harmed if the dog be immediately killed. If the dog be permitted to live, all sorts of bad luck will befall the one who was bitten.

If a dog is buried in the yard, someone will die.
If a dog has its picture taken, it will die.
If you kill a dog, you will have bad luck.
If a dog follows one, it is a sign of good luck.

BIRDS

If a wren builds a nest near a house, it is a sign of good fortune. Sometimes it is a sign of death.

If you make a wish, and then swallow the heart of a chicken whole, the wish will come true.

When you see the first robin in the spring, make a wish before he flies away, and the wish will come true.

If a person sees a flock of birds at a distance, that person will be married soon.

If a magpie crosses the road ahead of a person, the person will have trouble unless he kills the magpie.

A swan cannot sing except just before its death.
A stork's nest located about the house prevents the house from burning.

If a wren builds her nest near a house, it is a sign of good luck.

Feeding birds brings good luck.
A raven brings bad luck.
Killing a stork brings bad luck.
Killing a sea gull brings bad luck.
A robin entering the house brings snow.

Killing an albatross brings bad luck.

If a bird flies against a window, there will be a death in the family.

When birds are asked to make known the place where precious metals are hidden, they will always indicate where the richest mines are to be found.

If a bird flies into the house, a death will occur in the family within one year.

If a bird flies into the house and is caught, it is a sign of death to the person who catches the bird.

It is a sign of death if a bird flies down the chimney.

If a bird flies into a room where a person is sick, the sick person will die.

If a flock of birds is seen circling overhead, it is a sign of rain.

If a bird sings at night, some person will become ill.

If you put salt on a bird’s tail, you can catch it.

If you see a bird make three circles while flying, you are likely to have bad luck.

If a bird flies three times around the head of a person, that person will die soon.

If a bird gets a hair from your head and weaves it into its nest, your head will ache as long as the bird sits upon the nest.

If you kill a bird that has young, you will be punished later by the young.

If a bird accompanies a ship upon a journey, and is killed, a shipwreck will follow.

If a white pigeon roosts upon the house, there will be a death in the house within a year.

If a white dove comes over your house, you will have bad luck.
If a thrush sings through the day, it is a sign of rain.

If you kill a brown thrush, you will have twenty years of bad luck.

It will bring good luck to find a stone in a swallow's nest.

A large flock of blackbirds signifies that a storm will soon follow.

To see a flock of blackbirds when you are starting on an errand means that you will be unsuccessful in that errand.

If one climbs into a tree while a cuckoo is crying, and makes a wish, the wish will come true.

If a night owl cries during the day, it is a sign that a fire will break out.

If an owl hoots at you, you will have bad luck.

If an owl is heard to hoot at night, it is a sign of a death in the family.

If an owl hoots out
The witches are about.

If an owl shrieks as she flies over the house, that house is in danger.

The hooting of a screech owl indicates the presence of the death angel.

If an owl comes into the house, bad luck will follow.

A stuffed owl in the house brings bad luck.

If you meet an owl, you will soon learn something of great advantage to you.

Peacock feathers in the house bring bad luck.

If one sleeps in a room in which peacock feathers are kept, that one will never be married.

A whistling woman and a crowing hen
Are neither fit for God nor men.
Good luck will follow the crowing of a rooster at the door.

"Ill thrives the haplesse Family, that showes A cock that's silent, and a Hen that crowes."

If the rooster crows, it is a sign that company is coming.
If a rooster crows before the front door, it is a sign that company is coming.
If a rooster crows on the back steps, bad luck will follow.
If a rooster crows in front of the door, it is a sign of rain.
If a rooster crows with his tail toward the door, it is a sign that a lady visitor is coming.
If a rooster crows with his head toward the door, it is a sign that a male visitor is coming.
If you see a rooster crowing on the fence or on a board, it is a sign that you will have company soon.
If a rooster crows on the fence, it is a sign of clear weather.
If a rooster flies on the roof and crows, the house will burn.
If the chickens crow early in the morning, it is a sign that you are going to receive news.
   If a rooster crows when he goes to bed, He's sure to get up with a very wet head.
If a magpie crosses your path when you are starting on a journey, you must go back and commence again, or you will have bad luck.
It is a sign of rain to see crows flying.
Crows flying around a house indicate that death or sickness will soon follow.
If three black crows fly over the house, it is a sign of bad luck.
If you see a flock of twenty or more crows, and count them before they fly away, you may wish, and your wish will come true.

When a whip-poor-will frequently calls near the house, it is a sign of bad luck.

The cry of a whip-poor-will indicates the presence of a ghost.

To hear a bittern booming is a sign of bad luck.

It is a sign of good luck to see a flock of wild geese flying.

If a flock of geese flies over the house, there will be a death in the family.

The flying of geese toward the south signifies rain.

The flying of geese toward the north signifies rain.

When the geese fly south, expect cold weather: when they fly north, expect warm weather.

If wild geese fly at night, it is a sign of rain.

A hawk flying over the house is a sign that some one is coming to stay.

If storks build their nests in the chimney, good luck will befall the inmates of the house.

If a sea-gull hovers about a vessel many miles from land, it is a sign of bad luck.

If sea-gulls fly far inland, it is a sign there will be a storm at sea.

If an albatross is killed at sea, some harm will come to the ship which bears the killer of the bird.

Keeping ostrich feathers in the house brings bad luck.

If you see a buzzard's shadow, you will soon shake hands with a stranger.

If a lone vulture is seen in the sky, it is a sign that a visitor is coming soon.
If one makes a wish when seeing a lone buzzard, and if the buzzard flaps his wings three times, the wish will come true.

If a cock crows in the middle of the day, there will be a death in the family.

If a rooster crows during the night, it is a sign of a change of weather.

Roosters crowing in the middle of the night bring bad luck to their owners.

If a rooster crows before 3 o'clock in the morning, it is a sign of a death.

If a hen crows, it must be killed, or it will bring bad luck.

Fighting hens foretell the coming of lady visitors.

If chickens preen their feathers after a rain, the rain is definitely over.

If chickens stay on the ground and oil their feathers, it is a sign of rain.

If chickens walk about in the rain, it is a sign that it will rain all day.

A black hen cackling is a sign of good luck.

BABIES, PRENATAL INFLUENCE

The birth-stone is lucky for the person wearing it.

The seventh child of a seventh child is especially fortunate.

A child born with a caul over his face has supernatural powers in the way of predicting the events of the future.

Sailors carry caulss in order that they may not be drowned.

The belief that the mother can influence the child by practicing music or writing poetry is very common. If the mother has been frightened by any event,
the child is supposed to bear birthmarks similar to the source of fright.

Burying a baby's tooth causes the baby to have better teeth.

A child who cries at baptism will be strong.

Never pass anything over the baby's head, or it will not grow; but if such a thing happens, pull the hair on the top of the head upwards.

It will bring bad luck to a child to cut its nails during the first year of its life.

If you step over a child while it is lying on the floor, the child will not grow any more.

A baby will die if named for a deceased baby.

If a baby falls out of bed, it will not be a fool.

If a child does not fall out of bed before it is a year old, it will die young.

The first object that a baby is attracted by will indicate the profession that he will follow.

If you allow a child to see its face in a mirror before it is a year old, it will not live through the year.

If a baby is pretty, it will grow up ugly: if ugly, it will be beautiful when grown up.

You must say "God bless you!" when a baby sneezes, or the fairies may get him.

Let the baby creep as much as it will, because all persons have to crawl a certain amount of time during life.

If a baby keeps its hands closed, it will be stingy when grown.

If you tie a piece of buckskin around a baby's neck, it will not have the croup.

If a baby is gluttonous, it can be cured by being placed on a bread-shelf for a few minutes.
If you change the baby's name, it will die.

Cover a sleeping baby in black, and it will never grow to adult life.

Never call a baby an angel, or it will die before the year is out.

If you rock the cradle when it is empty, the baby will die.

If you kiss a baby's feet, it will not live to walk on them.

Always take a baby up into the garret before it goes into the kitchen, or bad luck will follow.

If a baby is passed out through a window, it will die.

CLOTHING, AMULETS, PERSONAL EFFECTS

Dropping a handkerchief is a sign of a letter coming soon.

Dropping a comb brings bad luck.

If you comb your hair after dark,
You will comb sorrow into your heart.

The comb and knife that have combed and shaved a dead man should be put in his coffin; if not, the hair of those who use them will fall out.

Opening an umbrella in the house brings bad luck.

Placing an umbrella upon a bed brings bad luck.

To be married beneath an open umbrella brings good luck.

It is unlucky for two people to dry their hands with the same towel at the same time.

Wash and wipe together,
Live in peace forever.

A red thread around a child's neck will keep the child in good health.

If one kisses the upturned hem of a skirt, and makes a wish, the wish will come true.
A ring placed upon a friend's finger should be accompanied by a wish.

If one makes a wish while putting on a new ring, the wish will come true.

If you wear a red flannel shirt, you will not have rheumatism.

If your skirt is turned up at the bottom, some one is thinking of you.

If a person allows her new dress to be worn by another before she herself has worn it, she will not live to wear it out.

If you tear any part of a new dress while you are making it, you will not live to wear it out.

If you mend a garment without first taking it off, you will have bad luck.

As many stitches as you take in a garment upon your person, so many will be the number of lies that will be told about you.

If there is a hole in the toe of your stocking, there is a letter in the postoffice for you.

A stocking tied around one's neck will cure sore throat.

A red ribbon hung on the bed will bring good luck.

A string of amber beads worn around the neck will prevent nose-bleed.

If you tie a red yarn string around your neck, it will stop nose-bleed.

If you will tie a string around your little finger, it will keep your nose from bleeding.

A string of coral beads put around a child's neck will prevent the child from having croup.

If you will wear a silk cord around your neck, it will prevent diseases of the throat.

If the ribbon around a diploma comes untied, bad luck will result.
Do not break a knot, but pick it out for good luck.

In Germany the oldest girl in the family inherits a key which will cure all diseases. If it is put in a chicken-coop where there are sick chickens, it will cure them.

A man wearing his hat in the house brings bad luck.

Losing a glove is a sign of bad luck.

A spider's bite may be cured by tying a string around one's finger.

It is lucky to throw an old shoe after a person when he is starting a journey.

If your shoe-string comes untied, someone is thinking of you.

If you put your right shoe on your left foot, you will have bad luck.

You will have bad luck if you lace up one shoe before you put on the other one.

If a pair of shoes is placed on the table, good luck will follow.

Turning one's shoes upside down at night will cure rheumatism.

If you place your shoes at an angle of 45 degrees near your bed and enter bed backwards, you will dream of your future home.

If you wear out your shoes at the heel, you will be rich; if at the sides, you will be wise; if at the middle of the sole, you will be poor.

If you place your shoes at the foot of the bed with the toes pointing away from the bed, you will sleep well.

Wearing an opal brings good luck.

Opals bring bad luck to all not born in October.

If an opal fades, the wearer will die.
Moonstones bring bad luck to the wearer.

Pearls bring tears.

Wearing a topaz causes the wearer to have many friends.

One should always wear his birth-stone in order to bring good luck.

Wearing a brass ring will prevent rheumatism.

Hanging a nutmeg around one's neck cures rheumatism.

Carrying a horse-chestnut in the pocket will cure rheumatism.

A nutshell hung around the neck prevents disease.

A piece of gum-camphor carried in the pocket will cure rheumatism.

Carrying a potato in the pocket will cure rheumatism.

Throwing old shoes or rice after a bridal couple brings the couple good luck.

If you put your rubbers in a dressing-room, it is a sign that they will be stolen.

Changing a garment that has been put on wrong side out brings bad luck.

If you have your ring wished on and do not take it off until the time for the wish to come true has passed, the wish will come true.

Removing a ring from another person's finger will break your friendship with that person.

Losing an engagement ring is a sign that some trouble will come to those engaged.

It is unlucky to break, wear out, or lose a wedding ring.
DAYS

If you see a pin pointing toward you on Friday, do not pick it up.

Sneezing on Friday brings bad luck. Some persons make the sign of the cross on their mouths if they sneeze on Friday.

The twenty-ninth of February is very lucky or unlucky. It is a sign of good fortune to be born on a Christmas Sunday. When Christmas is on Saturday, the day is unlucky.

Dropping a comb on Sunday means a death on Monday.

A candle burned to the socket on Christmas Eve brings happiness throughout the coming year.

Sweet peas should be planted on Saint Patrick's Day.

Irish potatoes should be planted on Saint Patrick's Day.

If you begin a quilt on Friday, you will never live to finish it.

If you cut your nails on Saturday, you will have bad luck.

It is lucky for a child to be born on Sunday.

Work done on Sunday will come to a bad end.

If a tree is planted on Sunday, it will not grow.

If you cut your nails on Sunday, you will have bad luck all the week.

If a sick person is worse on Friday and Saturday, and better on Sunday, he will never recover.

If the first horse you see on Sunday is a gray horse, you will receive a letter before night.

Never pay out money on Monday, or you will be paying it out all week.

If it rains on Monday, it will rain three days that week.

It is a sign of bad luck to be born on Friday.
If you have company on Monday, you will have company every day during the week.

If you go calling on Monday, you will do nothing else all week.

If you meet a woman with red hair on Monday, you will have bad luck during the week.

If you work hard on Monday, you will work hard all week.

Tear a dress on Monday, and you will tear other dresses that week.

Getting married or going on a journey on Tuesday brings bad luck.

If a task is commenced on Tuesday, nothing bad will happen to it.

If you spill salt on Wednesday, you will have a quarrel.

If you cut your nails on Thursday, you will have a pleasant surprise before the week is out.

Writing a letter on Sunday brings bad luck.

If you begin a garment on Friday, you will die within the year.

Almost anything done or started on Friday will bring bad luck.

If one works on the first Friday of the first month of the new year, the whole year will be unlucky for that person.

Whistling on Sunday brings bad luck.

It is a sign of good luck to be married on Friday.

It is a sign of bad luck to be married on Friday.

If anything is started on Saturday, it is quickly done or never done.

If you move on Saturday, you will not remain long in your new home.

The sun always shines during some part of Saturday.
When Friday comes as the thirteenth day of the month, it is an exceptionally unlucky day.

Marry on Monday, marry for wealth;
Marry on Tuesday, marry for health;
Wednesday's the best day of all;
Thursday for crosses, Friday for losses,
Saturday no luck at all.

Monday's child is fair of face;
Tuesday's child is full of grace;
Wednesday's child is full of woe;
Thursday's child has far to go;
Friday's child is loving and giving;
Saturday's child must work for a living;
The child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is blithe and bonny and good and gay.

Cut your nails on Monday, cut them for health;
Cut them on Tuesday, cut them for wealth;
Cut them on Wednesday, cut them for news;
Cut them on Thursday, a new pair of shoes;
Cut them on Friday, cut them for woe;
Cut them on Saturday, a journey to go;
Cut them on Sunday, you cut them for evil;
And all the week you'll be ruled by the devil.

Sneeze on Monday, sneeze for danger;
Sneeze on Tuesday, kiss a stranger;
Sneeze on Wednesday, sneeze for a letter;
Sneeze on Thursday, something better;
Sneeze on Friday, sneeze for sorrow;
Sneeze on Saturday, your sweetheart tomorrow;
Sneeze on Sunday, you safety seek,
Or the devil will have you all the week.

A man had better never be born
Than have his nails on a Sunday shorn.
Cut them on Monday, cut them for health;
Cut them on Tuesday, cut them for wealth;
Cut them on Wednesday, cut them for news;
Cut them on Thursday, a new pair of shoes;
Cut them on Friday, cut them for sorrow;
Cut them on Saturday, see your sweetheart tomorrow.

If a dark man bearing a green branch first enters the house on New Year's Day, good luck will follow.

At 12 o'clock on New Year's Eve, cows stand on their heads.
If a lame or deformed person is the first to enter a house on New Year's Day, bad luck will follow.

If a girl sweeps a room backwards at 12 o'clock on New Year's Eve, that girl will see the image of her future husband.

If there is an eclipse of the sun on New Year's Day, the year will be an unprosperous one.

At 12 o'clock on New Year's Eve the cows get down on their knees.

If the first lamb you see in the New Year is facing you, you will be lucky throughout the year.

What you do on New Year's Day, you will be doing all the rest of the year.

If you happen to break something on New Year's Day, you will have good luck throughout the year.

If your first caller on New Year's Day is a man, you will have good luck throughout the year; if a woman, you will have bad luck throughout the year.

If a ground-hog can see his shadow on the 2nd of February, it is a sign that there will be rain for six weeks.

The first man seen by a young girl on April Fool's Day will be her future husband.

If you will wash your face in dew before sunrise on Easter morning, you will have no freckles.

If it rains on Easter Sunday, it will rain on the five following Sundays.

A person who does not have something new to wear on Easter Sunday will have bad luck throughout the year.

If you put on one black garter and one yellow one on Easter morning, you will be married before the next Easter.

A child born on Hallowe'en will be possessed of evil spirits.
If you will hold a mirror over the well on May Day, the image of your future husband or wife will be reflected in it.

If a girl spreads her handkerchief on the grass on the 30th of April, on May Day morning her future husband's name will be written on it by the dew.

If a maiden does any of the following things on Hallowe'en she will see her future husband:

- runs around the house with her mouth full of water;
- runs around the house three times with a broom over her shoulder;
- goes into the garret and looks into a mirror;
- looks into a mirror at midnight;
- walks downstairs backward, in the dark, with a mirror, at midnight;
- walks around the house backward with a mirror;
- makes a mixture of equal amounts of flour and salt, and bakes a small cake of it in hot ashes, then eats the cake.

Blindfold yourself on Hallowe'en and place two dishes in front of you, one containing water, the other one containing a ring. If you first put your hand into the dish containing the ring, you will be married within a year; if into the other one, you will be an old maid.

It is bad luck to pass a Christmas stocking without putting a crooked piece of metal into it.

Oxen talk in their stalls at 12 o'clock on Christmas Eve.

If you hang out a washing in the open air on Christmas Eve, you will have bad luck.

If there be no snow on Christmas, the next year will have many deaths.

If a girl is whipped on her birthday, she will die soon.
If you will be good on your birthday, you will be good all the year.

If you do wrong on your birthday, you will do wrong throughout the year.

If you were born on a stormy day, you will have an unlucky life.

DREAMS

If you dream the same thing three times, it will come true.

If one dreams while lying on the right side, the dream will come true.

Dreams are visions and are full of meaning or warning.

If you dream one thing, the opposite will come true.

To dream of death means a wedding.

To dream of death means a friend is dying.

To dream of a baby is a sign of bad luck.

If you dream of an absent friend, you will hear from him soon.

It is a sign of bad luck to dream of birds.

If a young lady dreams of fish, cats, chickens, or birds, her admirers will be plentiful the next day.

If you dream that you see a lively, good-looking team drive up, it is a sign of good news.

It is lucky to dream of horses.

It is a sign of death to dream of black horses.

It is a sign of death to dream of white horses.

Dreaming of snakes indicates an enemy.

If you dream of spiders, you have enemies.
Dreaming of insects and bugs is a sign of illness.
If you dream of lice, you will get some money.
Dreaming of eggs brings good luck.
Dreaming of eggs brings bad luck.
Dreaming of a tooth dropping out means that some one will die soon.
If a person dreaming of falling strikes the bottom of whatever he is falling into, he dies.
If you dream of angels, you will die soon.¹

FOOD

Putting food into or on the graves of the dead so that they may eat on the way to heaven is sometimes practiced.

Fish and milk eaten at the same meal will cause indigestion.

Wishes made on the candles on a birthday cake will come true if the candles are supplicated for assistance.

Wishes on the wish-bones of chickens come true if the bones are broken honestly.

If one eats pickles and milk, he will have indigestion.

The last person to leave the table will live the longest.

If a friend comes in while you are churning and does not help you, you will get no butter.

Eating apples prevents warts.

Tomatoes are poisonous.

¹ Further and more complicated meanings of dreams are listed in "dream books," and to learn what a dream indicates one should consult such a book.
A ring found in a cake means marriage, a thimble means an old maid, a penny means wealth.

If the bubbles, which arise in a cup of coffee as the result of the dissolving sugar, cover the surface of the liquid, it means that you are to have much money.

If you leave the tea-kettle uncovered after filling it, company is coming.

One can foretell coming events by reading tea-grounds. Floating tea-grounds means that visitors are coming.

The number of floating leaves in your cup of tea indicates the number of visitors you may expect.

When a long stem of a tea-leaf rises to the surface of the cup, company is coming.

If a tea-leaf rises to the top of your cup, you are to have a visitor. If the leaf is soft, a lady; if hard, a gentleman.

If there is a stem in your tea, a visitor may be expected. If it sinks to the bottom of the cup, the visitor will remain all night.

If tea-grounds are found in your cup, you may expect a letter, company, or bad news.

If there are tea-leaves in your cup, you will get money.

If a round patch of foam is floating in your cup of tea or coffee, you will receive a present.

Bubbles on a cup of tea or coffee is a sign of money.

If the bubbles on your cup of coffee form a ring in the center of the surface of the liquid, you will soon be kissed.

If you want to know whether or not absent ones will return, stir up the grounds in your cup of coffee. If the grounds rise, the absent ones will return.

It will bring bad luck to spill salt, unless some of it be gathered up and cast into the fire.
If you spill salt, you'll have bad luck.

As many grains of salt you spill
So many days of sorrow you'll fill.

If the salt is spilled, company will come for dinner.

Spilling salt brings bad luck unless some of it is thrown over one's shoulder.

If you spill salt, you will quarrel with a friend unless you throw some of the spilt salt over your left shoulder.

If salt is spilt on the floor, you will have trouble with neighbors. The trouble may be averted by burning some on the stove.

It is a sign of a fight to spill salt; but if you burn some of it, you'll be victor.

If you spill salt, you will get a whipping.

If you start anywhere and spill salt, you will have bad luck.

If you spill salt on the table between yourself and some other person, it indicates a quarrel will arise between you.

Spilling salt is the sign of as many tears as there were grains in the salt spilled.

Throwing away salt will bring bad luck.

Returning borrowed salt brings bad luck.

If you return borrowed salt, you will have trouble with the person from whom you borrowed it.

Never thank a person for borrowed salt, for it would bring bad luck to the one who loaned it.

If the salt becomes damp, it is a sign of rain.

When at table, do not let any one help you to salt, for he will thereby help you to trouble.

If you put too much salt in the cooking, it is a sign that you are in love.
If you eat a thimbleful of salt just before retiring, and jump into bed backward, you will dream of some one bringing you water, and that person will marry you.

When moving into a new house it will bring good luck to put in a bag of salt before moving in anything else.

Never leave a loaf of bread upside down, for it will be sure to cause ships to sink.

Burning bread brings a quarrel.

If you burn your bread, your husband will come in cross.

Eating burnt bread or cake will make one's hair curl.

If, when baking, the bread cracks open on top, you will hear of a death soon.

It is unlucky to leave a loaf of bread upside down on the table.

If you accidentally turn a loaf of bread upside down while cutting it, you will soon hear of a death.

A fight will be the result of turning your bread wrong side up on the table.

If you drop a piece of bread, some one will come who is hungrier than you are.

If a piece of buttered bread falls on its buttered side, rain will come.

If you drop a piece of bread with the buttered side down, you may expect a hungry visitor.

If a crumb of bread drops out of your mouth, you will die within a week.

Eating bread with the buttered side down brings wealth.

If you take bread at table when you already have some, some one is coming hungry.

If you take the last slice of bread from the plate, you will never be married.
When baking bread, if one loaf rises higher than another, something unusual is going to happen.

If you take food on your plate when you still have some of that kind, it is a sign some one is coming.

If you have butter on your plate and take butter, somebody is coming hungry.

If you take more of a certain article, when you have some left on your plate, you will some day lack for that thing.

If you eat pickles, it is a sign that you are in love.

If, when you are eating, something falls from your fork as you were about to eat it, it is a sign that it was not meant to be eaten.

GHOSTS AND SPIRITS

The demons that cause illness can be driven into the bodies of swine. Pork is, therefore, an unclean meat.

To drive a witch from a room, place a cross of salt in each corner of the room, utter a prayer to St. John, and the witch will become visible. It can then be driven out. If a broom is placed near the door, the witch will fly away on the broom.

Ghosts may be seen by looking through the eye of a needle, looking through a mule's ear, or by looking quickly over the left shoulder.

One may see ghosts if he eats grease or greasy food at night.

The seventh son of a seventh son can see and control ghosts.

If one asks questions, without taking a breath, of ghosts, the ghosts will be compelled to answer them.

Sprinkling salt over the floor will keep away ghosts.

New boards in a floor, a new floor, or new steps will keep away ghosts.
Ghosts may be kept away by pasting a newspaper over the keyhole. The ghosts must then count all of the letters in the newspaper before entering. A sieve hung on the doorknob will have the same effect, for then the ghosts must count the holes in the sieve.

Ghosts may be kept away by laying a broom across the doorway.

Ghosts may be kept away by wearing one's pockets wrong side out, by wearing matches in the hair, or by throwing hair from a black cat over the left shoulder.

If one throws hair from a black cat over the left shoulder, saying, "skit, skat, turn to a bat," the ghosts will turn into bats.

When a person wakes up tired, it is a sign that ghosts have been riding him during the night.

A house having a corpse buried under it will be haunted.

A house in which a murder has been committed will be haunted.

If a person has been murdered, his spirit and ghost will appear until the murderer is punished.

If a sailor sees a ghost in the rigging, it is a sign of bad luck.

If you meet an apparition of yourself while walking, it is a sign that you are going to die soon.

Spirits communicate with their friends.

The spirit of a person buried on a stormy day will rest.

Many persons have forebodings of coming happenings.

If a sick person thinks he is away from home, it is a sign of his death.

There are persons capable of inflicting injury by looking at one.

If the frame falls from a picture, death is near.
If you turn any one's picture to the wall, it will cause something evil to happen to him.

When a person dies, a white ball can be seen leaving the house.

A sure sign of death is when three distinct raps are heard in the house where one is sick.

You may foretell the future by means of a horoscope.

Your fortune can be told with a pack of cards.

Some people are able to predict your future.

If a gambler can obtain the second finger of a woman's hand, he will win at cards.

Diseases or infirmities may be charmed away.

The king's touch will cure scrofula.

If you choke while telling something, you are telling a lie.

It is a sign of bad luck to hear a door slam.

If, after you have begun a piece of work, you are seized with a feeling that you should not do it, you should yield to this presentiment, or you will have bad luck.

HOUSE, HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS

Three chairs accidentally placed in a row indicates a death soon.

If two chairs accidentally come back to back, a visitor will come.

A visitor will come if a chair is upset.

It brings bad luck to rock an empty rocking-chair.

If chairs are accidentally left standing in a circle, the first person entering the circle will die.

If, when playing cards, you get up and walk around your chair, you will have good luck.
Whirling a chair on one leg brings bad luck.

If a person puts his foot on the round of your chair, you will have bad luck.

If one sits on the table, he will not be married soon.

If a girl sits on the table, it is a sign that she wishes to get married.

If a clock stops before its wheels have run out, some one you know has recently died.

The clock will stop the night before a person dies.

If an old clock that has not been going for a long time commences to tick or strike, it is a sign of death.

If the clock strikes twelve while you are at table, you will hear of a death.

Candles burn with a blue light when spirits are about.

A lighted candle placed on a bed is a sign of death to the person who occupies that bed.

If three candles are burning in a row, it is a sign of death.

If there is a sparkling in the candle, you will receive a letter.

If a candle flashes back, after you have blown it out, it is a sign of bad luck.

If you hold a match until it has burnt entirely out, then make a wish, the wish will come true.

Light a match, hold it between the thumb and index finger until it goes out, and it will point in the direction of the home of your future husband or wife.

It is bad luck to light three cigarettes from the same match; if this should be done, however, the bad luck will be prevented if the match be broken in two and thrown over the left shoulder.
A person must come out of a room by the same door through which he entered; otherwise he will have bad luck.

To carry a hoe, rake, or spade through the house will bring bad luck.

Carrying an axe through the house brings bad luck.

If one takes farming implements into the house, he should take them out through the same door to prevent bad luck.

To walk under a ladder brings bad luck.

If you drop the dish rag, you will have company.

If you hang the dish rag across the back of a chair, someone will come soon.

If you drop a white tea towel, a light-complexioned person will come.

If you drop the stove rag, a dark-complexioned person is coming.

If you drop your dish rag and it falls spread out, your next caller will be a slouch.

If you drop a dish rag, it is a sign that someone is thinking of you.

Mirrors should be turned to the wall during storms.

If a knife is dropped when the dishes are being set on the table or are being cleaned after a meal, it is a sign that a male visitor is coming; if a fork is dropped, a female visitor is coming; if a spoon is dropped, a child is coming.

Hiding a dish rag cures warts and moles.

If a rocking chair rocks or a picture rattles when no one is near, something serious is going to happen.

No two Navajo rugs are of the same pattern as it is bad luck to keep a pattern.

If the tallow of a burning candle runs over so as to form ice-like ridges on it, a death will soon occur in the house.
If water is spilled in the house, a dumb visitor will soon arrive.

If the tea-kettle sings, rain is coming soon.

"The watched pot never boils."

When the water quickly boils away from the kettle, it is a sign of rain.

If you sweep your floor directly after visitors have left, it will bring them bad luck on their journey.

If you step over a broom, you will have bad luck.

When moving to another house, never take a broom with you, for it will bring bad luck.

If the broom falls across the doorway, company is coming.

If you take a broom with you when going on a camping trip, you will have bad luck.

If, when sweeping, a broom straw is left behind on the floor, it means that someone is coming.

If you sweep a house after sundown, you will have bad luck.

If you step over the dirt another person has swept up, you will have a quarrel.

Do not allow a person in sweeping to sweep the dust on you, for you will then marry an old person.

Dropping a spoon is a sign of a quarrel.

Dropping a spoon signifies that company is coming.

If you get two teaspoons in a cup, it is a sign that company is coming.

Two spoons accidentally placed at your plate means a marriage.

If, by mistake, two spoons are put into your cup, you will have two husbands.

Two spoons at one saucer means that someone is coming hungry.
If you accidentally take two spoons from the spoon-holder at the same time, you will get an invitation to a wedding soon.

He who lets his knife or fork fall while eating should eat no more, or his digestion will be bad.

If two knives or forks are found at one plate, there will be a marriage in the family soon.

If two knives or forks are accidentally placed at your plate, there will be a death in the family.

Crossed knives means a fight or a quarrel.

Two knives, two foes,
Two forks, two beaux.

If you drop a fork, the prongs will point toward the home of your lover.

If you drop a butcher-knife, you will quarrel with a woman.

ILLNESS, DISEASE, DEATH

A dead person's last thoughts are printed on his retina, but to read the words or to look at the picture is to consign him and yourself to eternal punishment. The person looking dies immediately after he has looked.

Red flannel around the neck will cure colds more quickly than flannel of other colors.

Babies should be weaned only when the signs of the zodiac are below the heart or they will develop heart trouble.

An iron ring or a copper bracelet keeps rheumatism away from the limb on which it is worn.

Piercing the ears relieves tooth-ache, ear-ache, or sore eyes.

To cure a pain in one place, induce a pain in another place.
Bleeding was formerly a cure-all for diseases.

Sassafras tea and sulphur were used to thin the blood in the spring for the sake of general health.

Alcoholic beverages were able to make one warm or cool, sleepy or awake, etc., according to the desires of the person drinking them.

The insane or the feebleminded have been touched by the hand of God, or they are possessed of demons that can be driven into pigs.

Night air is poisonous.

Baths are weakening.

If a person has warm hands, he has a cold heart, or vice versa.

A cowardly person has a white liver.

Prominent eyes are a sign of deafness.

Some precious stones will remove warts, but the stone becomes smaller for each wart that it helps to remove.

Conception resultant from sexual communication before menstruation results in a feminine baby; after menstruation, a boy baby.

If copulation takes place in an inverted position, the baby will be male.

A person with a social disease is cured of the disease if he has intercourse with a person who does not have a disease of this nature.

Epilepsy can be cured by the manipulation by another person of the sex organs of the epileptic person.

The skin of a black cat tied around the waist of a sick person will cure the illness.

To eat salt in food with an enemy brings death.

Willow trees have an attraction for suicides.
When a man dies, photographs of him fade.

If one member of a family dies, another of the same family will soon follow, or else two other persons of the neighborhood will die.

It is bad luck to let a funeral procession pass one.

Going between the carriages of a funeral procession will bring a death in one's family.

It is bad luck to pass in front of a funeral procession.

If the horses trot in a funeral procession, there will be another death in the family soon.

It is unlucky to have the hearse drawn by two white horses.

It brings bad luck to be the first one to enter the house after a corpse has been taken out.

Stepping over an open grave is a sign of death.

One who, at a graveyard service, steps backward over another grave will be the next one buried.

If you are the last one to look into a grave, there will soon be a death in your family.

It is lucky to have the funeral on a rainy day.

It is unlucky to ride behind a bob-tailed horse at a funeral.

If you play you are dead, you will die soon.

If a dead body does not get stiff, another in the family will die soon.

If you wash your hands in water in which eggs have been boiled, it will cause warts to appear on your hands.

If you count your warts every day, they will disappear.

If you secretly split a bean and rub each half in the blood of a wart, and bury the bean, when it rots the warts will disappear.
If you secretly rub a bean on a wart and then plant the bean, when it grows the wart will disappear.

If you rub a wart with a potato and then bury the potato secretly, the wart will disappear.

If you rub a wart with an onion and then plant the onion, the wart will disappear when the onion grows.

If you rub warts with the half of a peeled apple and then give the apple to a pig, the warts will disappear.

If you rub the warts that are on your hands, while looking at the full moon, the warts will disappear.

If you cut into a wart and, with the same knife, cut into a tree, when the tree has healed your wart will disappear.

Killing a cat and burying it in a black stocking will remove warts.

If you dip some straws in blood from your warts, then throw the straws into the street, the one who picks up the straws will get the warts.

If you place three chalk marks on the back of a grate, when the marks burn off your warts will disappear.

If you bury a rooster's comb, your warts will disappear.

If you steal a piece of steak and secretly bury it where three roads cross, your warts will disappear.

If a piece of meat is rubbed on a wart, then buried, the wart will disappear as soon as the meat decays.

If you rub a piece of dish-rag over a wart, then bury the rag, the wart will disappear when the rag decays.

If you tie nine knots in a piece of string and then tie the string over a wart, the wart will disappear.

Tie as many knots in a string as you have warts. Throw the string over your right shoulder, and if you do not look back, your warts will disappear.
ITCHING

If the palm of your hand itches, you are going to get some money.

If the palm of your hand itches and you rub it on wood, you will have good luck.

If the palm of your right hand itches, it is a sign that you will soon shake hands with a stranger.

If your right hand itches, you will receive money; if your left, you will spend much.

Left hand itching, rub it on wood; Wish for money, 'tis sure to come good.

If your eye itches, you will see a stranger.

If your right eye itches, you are going to laugh; if your left, you are going to cry.

If your right eyelid quivers, you are going to laugh.

If your nose itches, it is a sign that you will be kissed, cursed, or vexed.

If your nose itches, some person wants to see you.

If your nose itches in the morning, you will have news that day.

An itching of the lips is a sign that some person is speaking disrespectfully of you.

If your right ear sings, some person is speaking truth of you; if the left, a lie. Bite the top button of your shirt, and the liar will get a blister on his tongue.

If your left ear itches, you will cry.

If your left ear rings, you will hear of a death.

If you suddenly have a roaring in your head, some calamity is going to happen.

If your right ear burns, some one is speaking well of you.
If your left ear burns, some one is speaking ill of you.

If your foot itches, you will walk on strange land.

If your elbow or knee itches, there will soon be a change in the household; either a visitor will arrive, or some member of the family will leave.

JOURNEYS AND WALKING

It is very unlucky to turn back after one has started on a journey. If, however, it is necessary to turn back, misfortune can be prevented by making the sign of the cross in the dust and then spitting in the cross. (There are many common variations of this superstition).

Turning around and looking back, after telling a person "good-bye," brings bad luck.

Watching a person, after he has left you, until he is out of sight, brings bad luck.

It brings bad luck to return for anything forgotten.

If two persons going hand in hand meet an obstacle which divides them, the one on the left will go to hell and the one on the right will go to heaven.

If two friends walk on opposite sides of a post, they will quarrel.

Allowing a third party to pass between one and a companion insures a quarrel.

If two persons walk on opposite sides of a post, it is a sign of bad luck unless they say "bread and butter."

If you pass between two conversing people, you will have bad luck.

It causes bad luck for two couples to shake hands across each other.

If two persons shake hands and say "good-bye" across a fence, they will never again meet.
If, when a boy and a girl are walking on a sidewalk together, the girl is on the outside, it means that she is for sale.

Walking four abreast brings bad luck.

If, when passing an open gate, you close it, you will have bad luck.

Passing on a stairway brings bad luck to both parties.

Stepping on the lines in a cement sidewalk will bring bad luck.

Stepping on the cracks in a wooden sidewalk will bring bad luck.

Step on a crack,
You'll break your mother's back.

MARRIAGE

Never marry when the sign is in the crayfish; if you do, you will go backward.

It is unlucky to postpone a wedding.

It is unlucky to be married on one's birthday.

Marriages in May are unlucky.

If it rains on your wedding day, you will have bad luck.

If the sun shines on a bride during the ceremony, she will have a happy married life.

In marriage, if the bride

Change the name, and not the letter,
Changes for worse, and not for better.

To overtake a bridal party is bad luck.

It is unlucky to be married in black.

It is unlucky for a bride to look in a mirror after she has dressed for the ceremony.
If a bride puts on all of her wedding clothes before her wedding day, she will have bad luck.

If you wear orange blossoms before you are a bride, you will never be married.

The one who catches the bride's bouquet, when it is thrown, will be married within a year.

It brings good luck to be married in

Something old, something new,
Something borrowed, something blue.

A bride should wear a piece of silver money in her shoe to bring good luck.

She who first takes a pin out of the bride's veil will be the next one to marry.

If a coffin is carried within sight of a bridal train, the bride and groom must go home, or they will have bad luck all through their lives.

If you eat bacon at the first breakfast after marriage (or after entering a new house), it will bring you bad luck.

If a person stumbles upstairs, that person will marry soon.

If you sit on a kitchen table, you will be married soon.

MOON, FIRE, STARS, AND OTHER NATURAL PHENOMENA

Red sky at night, sailors delight;
Red sky in morning, sailors take warning.

Dreaming of fire is a sign of news coming soon.

A falling star is a sign of death.

You cannot be struck by lightning if you are in a featherbed.

If it rains before seven o'clock in the morning, it will clear up before eleven o'clock in the morning; if the rain does not begin before seven, it is likely to rain all day. The same is true of evening.
If the falling rain forms bubbles on the surface of the water, the rain will continue for three days.

There is a golden dish where a rainbow touches the earth.

The rainbow is a sign of good luck.

Rainbow at night is a sailor's delight;
Rainbow at morning, sailors take warning.

When a rainbow is seen after a storm, the storm is over.

If you brand a cow in the growing moon, the brand will grow much larger; brand in the full moon, and the scar will remain the same size.

If the new moon is so placed in the sky that the two points are up, it is a sign of a dry month, for it will hold all of the rain.

If the points of the new moon point down, there will be rain soon.

If the new moon lies on its back, it is a sign that there will be rain that month. (This is thought true because the Indian has a place then to hang his powder horn while he is at home. When the Indian cannot hang his powder horn on the horn of the moon, he goes hunting).

A change of weather always accompanies a change of the moon.

If it rains during one change of the moon, all the rain during the year will occur at the same change of the moon.

If you look at the new moon over your right shoulder and make a wish, repeating the following lines, the wish will come true

New moon, new moon, pray tell me who my husband is to be, the color of his hair,
The clothes that he shall wear, and the day that he shall wed me.

A ring around the moon is a sign of rain.

If there are rings around the moon, rain will come in as many days as there are rings.
Meat killed in the beginning of a new moon will swell when cooked.

Pork will not be good unless killed in the full of the moon.

Meat killed in the dark of the moon shrinks when cooked.

Fish hung in the moonlight will soon spoil.

If a person sleeps with his face in the moonlight, his features will become distorted.

The moon shining on a person's face when asleep will cause insanity.

If you make a wish upon seeing the new moon, the wish will come true.

If you make a wish upon seeing the new moon and spit upon the ground while still looking at the moon, the wish will come true.

If you are in a company and see the new moon, if you make a wish it will come true.

If you see the new moon over your left shoulder and make a wish, the wish will come true.

Seeing the new moon over one's left shoulder brings good luck for the rest of the month.

If you have money in your hand, it is a sign of good luck to see the moon over your left shoulder.

If you see the new moon over your right shoulder, you will have good luck.

It brings bad luck to sneeze while looking at the new moon.

If your hands are empty when you first see the new moon, you will lose something you prize highly.

Looking at the moon through trees brings bad luck.

Looking at the moon through glass brings bad luck.

It brings bad luck to see the moon reflected in a mirror.
If trees are trimmed during the full of the moon, the trees will grow better and yield better.

If one sees the now moon while holding something in one's hands, that one will be burdened all week.

If you are out of money, you must not allow the moon to shine into your empty purse, or the purse will remain empty.

Potatoes planted in the dark of the moon will yield a good crop.

Potatoes planted in the dark of the moon will all go to tops.

Potatoes planted in the light of the moon will yield a good crop.

Potatoes planted during a growing moon yield well.

Vegetables or fruit that produce above ground should be planted during the increase of the moon.

Root crops and vegetables that produce in the earth should be planted during the decrease of the moon.

If you roof your house during the decrease of the moon, the shingles will never warp or turn up.

Rail fences built during the dark of the moon will soon decay at the bottom.

If you cover the grass with a board during the dark of the moon, the grass will turn white; covered during the full moon, the grass will remain green.

Hair grows better if washed during the new moon.

Hair grows better if cut during the new moon.

Hair grows better if cut on the first Friday after the new moon.

Trim or singe the hair in the dark of the moon, or the hair will split.

If the hair be cut in the dark of the moon, it will be coarse and slow of growth.
Light hair will turn darker if cut in the dark of the moon.

Trees grubbed in the light of the moon will sprout again.

The lightning will strike whatever you work at on Ascension Day.

It brings bad luck to burn a tree which has been struck by lightning.

One should never touch a tree that has been struck by lightning, for it is possessed of devils and will cause bad luck.

If you pick your teeth with a splinter taken from a tree that has been struck by lightning, you will never have the toothache.

A falling star signifies the death of some great man.

If you wish on the evening star, your wish will come true.

If you wish on the first star you see in the evening and then turn away and count five other stars before seeing the first one again, your wish will come true.

Your wish will come true if you repeat the following lines three times to the first star you see in the evening:

Starlight, star bright,
First star I've seen tonight;
I wish I may, I wish I might
Have the wish I make tonight.

If for three successive nights one watches a star and makes the same wish each night, the wish will come true.

If you make a wish when you see a falling star, the wish will come true.

If you can count ten while you are watching a falling star, you will get some money before the week is over.

A falling star is a sign of bad luck.
If a star follows the moon, it is a sign of bad luck.
If the fire crackles, it is a sign of news coming.
If the fire sizzles, there will be a storm.
If a fire puffs, it is a sign that neighbors are quarreling.
When sparkles of fire burn on the outside of a kettle, it is a sign of rain.
If you let the fire die out while you are cooking with it, your husband will be a lazy man.
If a girl makes the fire burn well, she will have a good husband.
If you carry fire from one room to another, there will be a quarrel in the family.
When the smoke goes straight up from the fire, it is a sign that rain will come soon.
A chunk of fire falling on the hearth is a sign that a guest is coming.

NUMBERS

Indivisible numbers - 3, 5, 7, 11, 17, etc., are lucky. 3 and 7 have been held to be lucky throughout history.
21 and 42 are lucky numbers.
Seeing a group of four birds brings good luck.
Lighting three cigarettes from one match brings death.
If the match, however, be broken in two, and the pieces thrown over the left shoulder, the death will be prevented.
If a dove coos three days in succession, there will be rain on the next day.
Three is a lucky number. After failing twice in any task, you will succeed the third time you try.
If you dream the same dream three times in succession, the dream will come true.
If you get one disappointment, you will get three.

If a dog howls three times the same day, it is a sign of death.

If you say "money" three times while you watch a falling star, you will become rich.

One should never go back the third time for any forgotten object, or bad luck will follow.

If you make three wishes on the fourteenth of the month, one of them will come true before the month is out.

If, while having bad luck at cards, you stand up and turn around three times, your luck will change.

If one boasts of anything and does not rap on wood three times, he will have bad luck.

If one is a bridesmaid three times, that one will never be a bride.

It is a sign of bad luck to burn three candles in a row.

If three persons enter a room where three lights are burning, they will never meet again.

If you lose two gifts from a friend, you will be certain to lose a third from the same friend.

It is a sign of good luck to be counted in any way with the number seven.

If, in getting up from a chair, the chair falls over, you will not get married for seven years.

It will bring you good luck if you walk over seven rails on the railroad track without stepping between two ties or stepping off the rails.

Seven swallows of water taken in one breath will cure hiccough.

If you break a dish, you will break seven more in a short while.

Thirteen is an exceptionally unlucky number.
It is unlucky to begin anything on the thirteenth of the month.

It is unlucky to be at a party where there are thirteen persons.

If thirteen persons sit at a table, one of them will die soon.

If the number to your room, office, or car-berth is thirteen, you will have bad luck.

If an engineer starts out with thirteen cars for three successive days, an accident will happen.

If a hen is set on thirteen eggs, the eggs will not all hatch.

Thirteen is an unlucky number to all persons not born on the 13th of the month.

If two lamps are burning side by side at the same time, company is coming.

If you find a button, you will have good luck for as many days as there are holes in the button.

Wishing the same thing on nine stars for nine successive nights will bring your wish true.

In shelling peas, if you find a pod containing nine peas, hang it over the door. The first man that walks through the door will marry you.

If you count ten stars for ten nights, on the tenth night you will see the face of your future husband.

If you see ten white horses, you will see a red-headed person.

If, after counting one hundred white horses, one makes a wish, the wish will come true.

If you count ninety-nine white horses and one white mule, the first man you meet will marry you.

If you count the carriages in a funeral procession, you will have bad luck.
If you will name an apple and apply the following count to its seeds, you will get a true answer: (1) I love; (2) I love; (3) I love, I say; (4) I love with all my heart; (5) I cast away; (6) He loves; (7) She loves; (8) They both love; (9) He comes; (10) He tarries; (11) He courts; (12) He marries; (13) They quarrel; (14) They part; (15) They die of a broken heart.

Count off the buttons on your dress according to the following rhyme, and you will get a true description of your future husband: (1) Rich man; (2) Poor man; (3) Beggar man; (4) Thief; (5) Doctor; (6) Lawyer; (7) Merchant; (8) Chief.

Riding in a vehicle numbered thirteen brings bad luck.

If you will pull the petals from a daisy, repeating as you do "He loves me," "He loves me not," the last petal will reveal the truth.

If you will count off the petals of a dandelion, and guess about your wedding gown thus: silk, satin, calico, rags; or the house thus: brick house, stone house, log house, frame house, the last petal will reveal your wedding gown or your home after marriage.

The number of seeds in the orange you are eating will reveal the present age of the one you are to marry.

If you crack the joints of your fingers, the number of times they crack will reveal the number of your lovers.

If you "count off" the flowers or newly formed fruit of a plant, it will cause them to fall off.

MISCELLANEOUS PERSONAL SIGNS AND CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Swallowing a hair causes worms.

Spitting on a baseball bat brings good luck.

Writing chain letters brings good luck.

If one sees a bright object and kicks it three times, the devil will be kicked out of it.
If the last rehearsal for a play is poor, the play will be good.

One should fear a cemetery after dark.

It brings bad luck to lend money to another player in a game of poker.

Flipping a coin is a good way of deciding future actions.

It brings bad luck to meet a cross-eyed woman.

If you give a person a pocketbook, you should put a penny in it.

A short fifth finger is a sign of unhappiness in love.

Some persons can foretell injuries of others.

Awakening a person suddenly brings bad luck.

A high forehead is a sign of great mentality.

Wide set eyes are an indication of intelligence.

A short, square thumb is a sign of murderous inclinations.

A receding chin shows lack of character.

A prominent chin is a sign of stubbornness, strong personality, or success.

Genius is akin to insanity. A genius is nervous, irritable, eccentric, and unsocial.

Eccentric individuals are physical weaklings and die early.

A pretty girl or a handsome man is always untrustworthy or has a vicious temper.

Bald-headed men are cleverer intellectually than men with abundant hair.

A low forehead is a sign of docility in a woman and a sign of dullness or bestiality in a man.

Square-jawed and thick-necked men are bravest.
Brown eyes are weaker than other eyes; black eyes are the strongest.

A hooked nose is a sign of patrician blood.

Men who carry pocketbooks are more penurious than those who do not.

If your fourth finger is nearly as long as your third, it is a sign that you are aggressive.

If your fingers can bend back at the last joint, you are stubborn.

If the arms are very hairy, wealth is waiting for the person.

"Mole on the neck, Money by the peck."

If you touch the hunch of a deformed person, you will have good luck.

Keeping near a bald-headed man during a storm will prevent lightning from striking you.

The color of the eyes has much to do with one's character.

Persons with green eyes should not be trusted.

Black eyes are an indication of hot temper.

Blue eyes signify dutifulness.

Never look a cross-eyed person in the face.

It is an ill-omen to meet a cross-eyed girl followed by a yellow dog.

If you see a cross-eyed person on the street and do not take off your hat and spit in it, you will have bad luck.

If you are calling at a strange place and stub your right toe, you will be welcome; if your left, you will not be welcome.

When you enter a house, first put your left foot within the door, or bad luck will follow.
If you put your right foot out of bed first, you will be good-natured all day; left foot first, cross all day.

A sty can be cured by rubbing it with a wedding ring.

If you have a sty, look through a keyhole and it will be cured.

If you have a sty on your eye, spit on a stone and bury it and lose the place, the sty will disappear.

A sty will disappear if the one afflicted goes to a cross-road and says: "Sty, sty, leave my eye: Catch the next one passing by."

A birth-mark may be removed by holding it on a corpse until the birth-mark is the same temperature.

To rid one's self of a mole, touch the face of a corpse.

When running, if your side aches, the pain will stop if you spit under a rock.

If a blister comes on your tongue, it is a sign that you have recently told a lie.

The number of white marks you have on your fingernails indicates the number of sweethearts you have.

Say on your fingers, beginning with the thumb, "Friends, foes, lovers, beaux, presents to come." You have as many of each as there are white spots on the nail of that finger.

If there is a white spot under your thumb-nail and you wish for something, the wish will come true when the spot leaves.

If you have cold hands, you have a warm heart.

If a woman's second toe is longer than the great toe, she will rule her husband.

If you scratch yourself, you are going on a journey.

If you have a long scratch on your hand, you will have a long ride.
A scratch on the fingers is a sign of disappointment; the nearer the thumb, the sooner to occur.

If your face burns, some one is talking about you.
If one's feet hurt, it is going to rain.
If your corns hurt, it is a sure sign of rain.
If you have aches in your bones, it is a sign of rain.

A sudden feeling of depression means that someone is walking over your grave.

If your elbow cracks, you are going to get a letter.
It is bad luck to have a cross-eyed negro come into your presence.

If a gambler always strokes a cross-eyed cat before playing, he will have good luck.

If your eyebrows grow together in front, it is a sign that you are cross.

If you have a blue vein across the bridge of your nose, between the eyes, you will not live to an old age.

If your palm is hollow, you will be rich.

The person whose fingers do not fit closely together is a spendthrift.

It is lucky to have moles.

If the initials of a person's name form a word, that person will become wealthy.

It is bad luck to jump through a window.

If you climb in at a window, you will have bad luck.

Make a rhyme without design,
You'll see your lover before nine.

If you make a rhyme unconsciously, and make a wish before saying anything more, your wish will come true.

Rap on wood, after boasting, or you will have bad luck.
If four persons cross hands in shaking hands or taking leave, one will marry before the year is out.

It is unlucky for two hands to cross at the table.

If you sit on a table, you will not be married that year.

Sitting on a table shows that one is either in love or wants to be married.

If you lie on a table, you will die before the year is up.

It is bad luck to stumble and fall down.

If you stub your toe and do not retrace your steps, you will have bad luck.

If a bride stumbles on a doorsill, her married life will be unhappy.

If you fall upstairs, you will have good luck.

If you fall upstairs, you will have bad luck.

To fall upstairs is a sign you will be married that year.

If you fall upstairs, you will not be married for seven years.

You must spit on "luck money" to bring its true worth.

It will bring good luck to find a penny.

Carrying a coin in your pocket will bring you more money.

A piece of money given by one who has good luck will bring good luck to the one receiving it.

If you keep the first piece of money you get bearing the date of the new year, it will insure you good luck.

When moving into a new house it is very good luck to take the Bible in first and take it through all the rooms.

If you will open the Bible at random, a certain verse will be found on the page which will be a special command or warning to you.

A good beginning makes a bad ending.
A bad beginning makes a good ending.

The first impressions of a person are those you will always have of that person.

If you hang a wish-bone over the door, it will bring you good luck.

A wish made while breaking a wish-bone will come true.

It is unlucky to sneeze before breakfast.

Sneeze three times, one more, one less, Here before an hour, I guess.

If you sneeze, some one is crossing your grave.

If you sneeze before you eat, You'll see a stranger before you sleep.

If a person tells you anything and you shortly afterwards sneeze, what he told you will prove true.

If you sneeze on Saturday, you will have a joyful Sunday.

PINS, SHARP POINTED INSTRUMENTS

It is a sign of bad luck to find a crooked pin.

It will bring good luck to pick up a pin.

If you see a pin and let it lie, You'll want a pin before you die.

See a pin, let it lie, Come to sorrow bye and bye.

If you see a pin and let it lay, You'll need that pin another day.

See a pin and pick it up, All the day you'll have good luck.

To find a pin with the point toward you is a sign of good luck.

If you see a pin with point toward you, and do not pick it up, you will have bad luck.
If you find a pin with its point toward you, it means an enemy; if the head is toward you, you will lose a friend.

If a pin sticks out straight from your clothing, somebody wants to see you.

Never give a pin to a friend, for it will break the friendship.

Never use black pins in a baby's dress, for they will cause sorrow.

When a hairpin drops out of your hair, your lover is thinking about you.

Finding a hairpin brings a new friend or good luck.

Finding a rusty hairpin means an invitation.

Find a hairpin;
Points a foe,
Ends a beau,
Sides a buggy ride.

Every hairpin a girl finds represents a lover.

If a hairpin slips out of your hair, somebody is thinking of you.

A man must on no account give his betrothed a knife, or a pair of scissors, for it will cause trouble between them.

If a sharp pointed instrument be dropped accidentally and it sticks in the floor, some one is coming whom you wish to see, but you will be out.

If a needle sticks in the floor, you will get a letter.

If a hairpin is hung on a rusty nail, good luck will follow.

PLANTS AND TREES

Irish potatoes should be planted on St. Patrick's Day.

Potatoes should be planted in the dark of the moon.
Oats should be planted in the light of the moon.

A plantain leaf soaked in vinegar and placed over the stomach will cure tuberculosis of the stomach.

Swallowing a cooked, uncured, green olive, seed and all, cures tuberculosis of the stomach.

A leaf of liverwort will cure jaundice if placed on the chest.

A bag of asoefidita worn around the neck keeps away all diseases.

Slices of onion, bound on the forehead, cure headache.

Chestnuts are lucky charms.

Potatoes carried in one's pocket will keep away illness.

Apples keep away warts.

A tooth-pick run through the stem of a plant whose flowers are single will cause flowers above the tooth-pick to be double.

If a wish is made, upon finding two nuts in a shell, the wish will come true.

It brings bad luck to count potatoes.

A five-leaved clover brings bad luck.

Asters should be planted at high noon.

Sweetpeas should be planted on Good Friday.

A weeping willow bow placed over a sick person will effect a cure.

Dry, thick husks on corn is a sign of a long, hard winter.

If the lilies bloom during the month of February, the year will be prosperous.

Finding a four-leaved clover brings good luck.

If you swallow a four-leaved clover, good luck will follow.
Four-leaved clovers worn in the shoes bring good luck.

If you find a four-leaved clover and then make a wish, the wish will come true.

If you find a four-leaved clover and then put it in your shoe, the first man you meet you will marry.

To find a clover with five or seven leaves is to find bad luck.

If you hold a buttercup under your chin, and if the yellow is reflected, you are fond of butter.

Ivy is an unlucky plant.

A passion-vine in the yard brings bad luck.

If a piece of love-vine is thrown over one's shoulder, and it grows, that one is in love.

Wandering-Jew kept in the house brings bad luck.

If you hold your breath when picking nettles, the nettles will not sting you.

To recover a lost object, take a dandelion puff-ball and blow on it, then follow the direction of the seeds and you will find the lost object.

If you plant flowers when you are feeling ill, the flowers will not grow.

If an apple tree blooms out of season, there will be a death in the family soon.

If the beet plants all run to seed, there will be a death in the family soon.

If you plant an evergreen tree in your dooryard, one of your family will die when the tree's shadow is large enough to cover a grave.

An abundant crop of acorns signifies a hard winter.

It will cause death to eat an apple that has been left on the tree over a year.

Carrying a peach tree switch, while horseback riding, will bring bad luck.
If a forked willow branch turns in the hand, it is a sign of water in the ground at that place.

If you peel an apple without breaking the peeling and then drop the peeling on the table, the letter it forms will be the initial of your lover.

If you peel an orange and then throw the peeling over your right shoulder, the letter it forms will be the initial of your future husband or wife.

**SPEAKING, LAUGHING, SINGING**

If two persons accidentally speak the same thing at the same time, some soul will be redeemed from purgatory.

If, when two persons say the same word at the same time, they each make a wish before speaking again, the wishes will come true.

If, when two persons say the same thing at the same time, they cross their little fingers and say "pins and needles," before saying anything else, then wish, the wishes will come true.

When two persons say the same thing at the same time, they should join their little fingers before speaking again. This done, they should each make a wish, one saying "salt," the other saying "pepper," then both should say "thumbs," and at the same time touch thumbs. The wishes will then come true.

If the sun shines while the bride is on her way to church, it indicates that she has been laughing.

If you laugh before breakfast, you will cry before night.

Laughing after going to bed will bring sorrow.

If you sing while you brew, the beer will turn out well.

If you sing before breakfast, you will cry before night.

If you sing at table, you will have bad luck.

If you sing while making your toilet, your mother will die.
It is unlucky to sing in the street.

If you sing before you eat,
You will cry before you sleep.

If you sing while you eat,
You will cry while you sleep.

MIRRORS

If a person sees his image in a mirror just after a death, he will die.

To break a mirror means a death in the family within the next seven years.

Breaking a mirror brings seven years of bad luck.

It is bad luck to break a mirror; but if a five-dollar piece is found afterward, the spell of bad luck will be broken.

It brings bad luck for one person to look into a mirror over the shoulder of another person.

It means immediate bad luck for two persons to look into a mirror at the same time.

If two persons, standing side by side, look into a mirror together, they will quarrel soon.

If a baby looks into a mirror before it is a year old, it will die within a year.

If children are permitted to look into mirrors before their ears are pierced, they will die.

Looking into a broken mirror brings bad luck.

Looking into a mirror after dark brings bad luck.

If one crosses a bridge and looks down at his own reflection in the water, his first child will die young.

If a casket is reflected in a mirror, there will be another death soon.

Holding a mirror over a well on May Day reveals a surprise.
APPENDIX A

This list of psychological questions, misconceptions, and superstitions was used by Nixon (53) in his questionnaire studies.  

1. The number of a man's senses is five.

2. A child comes into the world with an instinctive knowledge of good and evil. This is his conscience and it is born with him.

3. Certain lines in a person's hand foretell his future.

4. If you will stare at a person's back, you can make him turn around. This is a form of telepathy.

5. It is really unlucky to have anything to do with the number thirteen.

6. A man's character can be read by noting the size and location of special developments of his head.

7. People with greenish eyes are not as trustworthy as people with black or blue eyes.

8. An expectant mother by fixing her mind on a subject can influence the character of her unborn child.

9. Women are inferior to men in intelligence.

10. People born under the influence of certain planets show the influence in their characters.

11. Intelligence can be increased by training.

12. Long slender hands show an artistic temperament.

13. Beginning an undertaking on Friday is almost certain to bring bad luck.

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1 This list, and the following ones, are included as of some historical interest and as offering suggestions for the preparation of similar questionnaires.
14. If a man had but faith enough he could heal a broken limb instantly.

15. Many eminent men have been feebleminded as children.

16. Some animals are as intelligent as the average human being.

17. No defect of the mind or body can ever hold us back if we have enough will power.

18. Adults sometimes become feebleminded by overstudy.

19. All men are created equal in capacity for achievement.

20. The marriage of cousins is practically certain to result in children of inferior intelligence.

21. Especially intelligent children are likely to be weak and retarded physically.

22. The study of mathematics is valuable because it gives one a logical mind.

23. A square jaw is a sign of will power.

24. You can estimate an individual's intelligence pretty closely by looking at his face.

25. A high forehead indicates intellectual superiority.

26. Fear is unnatural. It is a bad habit.

27. Women are by nature better and purer than men.

28. A person who does not look you in the eye is apt to be dishonest.

29. Man is superior because his conduct is very largely guided by reason.

30. Any physical or mental disease can be contracted by thinking about it.
APPENDIX B

This list of common superstitions was used as a superstition test by Dresslar (17).

1. If you drop the dish-rag, you will have company.
2. Thirteen is an unlucky number.
3. If you break a looking-glass, you will have bad luck.
4. Evil will come to you if you start on a journey on Friday.
5. If you give to a friend as a present a knife or any edged instrument, it will cut your friendship.
6. To open an umbrella in the house brings bad luck.
7. If you see the new moon over your right shoulder, it is good luck.
8. Never begin a piece of work on Friday, for you will have bad luck if you do.
9. If a rooster crows before the front door, you will have company.
10. See a pin and pick it up, All the day you'll have good luck.
11. See a pin and let it lay, You'll have bad luck all the day.
12. If thirteen sit together at table, one of the number will die before the year ends.
13. If a task be begun on a Friday, it will never be successfully done.
14. To find a pin with the point toward you is good luck.
15. If two friends walk on the opposite sides of a post, they will quarrel.
16. If you find a horse-shoe, you will have good luck.

17. If you see the new moon over your left shoulder for the first time, you will have bad luck.

18. To dream of a death means a wedding.

19. If your nose itches, you will have a visitor.

20. To find a four-leaved clover will bring good luck.

21. If your left ear burns, someone is speaking ill of you.

22. To drop a fork is a sign a man is coming.

23. If your right ear burns, someone is speaking well of you.

24. If you sing before breakfast, you will cry before night.

25. If you hang a horse-shoe over your door, you will have good luck.

26. It is bad luck for a black cat to cross the path in front of you.

27. If you make a wish upon seeing the first star in the evening, it will come true.

28. If you make a wish while looking at a load of hay, it will come true provided you do not look at the hay again.

29. If a dog howls, it is a sign of death in the family.

30. It is bad luck to sit at the table when thirteen are present.

31. Friday is an unlucky day.

32. If you kill a cat, you'll have bad luck.

33. If a person comes in your home through the front door and leaves through the back door, it will bring you more company.

34. It will bring good luck to pick up a pin.
35. If you open an umbrella in the house, it brings death to some one in the family.

36. If you dream of snakes, you have an enemy.

37. If the palm of your left hand itches, it is a sign of money.

38. If you see the new moon over your left shoulder, good luck will follow.

39. If you drop a knife, a woman is coming.

40. If you start on a journey and then turn back for something which was forgotten, it is sure to bring you bad luck.

41. If your right ear burns, some one is talking good of you; and if your left ear burns, some one is talking ill of you.

42. If you break a mirror, you will have bad luck.

43. If you cut your hair in the new moon, it will grow better.

44. If any kind of a garden tool, such as a hoe or spade, be carried in the house, it signifies death in the family.

45. If you drop a fork, it means a woman is coming to see you.

46. To drop a knife means you will have a man caller.

47. If a bird flies in at your window, there will be a death in the family.

48. When you see the first star at night, look steadily at it while saying the following rhyme:

   Starlight, star bright,
   First star I've seen tonight;
   I wish I may, I wish I might
   Have the wish I wish tonight.

   Then make your wish, and it will come true.

49. If you drop a knife, a fork, or spoon, you may look for company.
50. If you pass under a ladder leaning against a window, you will have bad luck.

51. It will bring bad luck to turn back after having started on a journey.

52. Dream of the dead, you will hear from the living.

53. If you change a garment which has been put on wrong side out, it will bring you bad luck.

54. Dream of a wedding, sign of a funeral.

55. It is the sign of a quarrel to spill salt.
The following table shows student belief in superstition as determined by Dresslar’s test (17). Column 1 (Item) contains the superstitions as numbered in the foregoing list of superstitions; column 2 (T) shows the number of students answering the questionnaire; column 3 (FB) shows the number of students expressing full belief in the items; column 4 (PB) shows the number expressing partial belief; column 5 (NB) shows the number expressing no belief in the items.

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APPENDIX C

This list of unfounded beliefs and superstitions was used as a test by Maller and Lundeen (49).

1. If you kill a snake, its tail will not die until the sun goes down.

2. If squirrels gather an unusually large supply of nuts, it indicates a severe winter is coming.

3. A person who does not look you in the eye while talking with you is very likely to be dishonest.

4. A person who has red hair usually has a violent temper.

5. If cousins of good parentage marry, their children are likely to be weakly or feeble-minded.

6. Beavers know by their instinct whether the coming winter will be mild or severe.

7. Our winters now are milder than they were 40 or 50 years ago.

8. If a person has a square jaw, it indicates that he has a strong will.

9. If you stare at a person's back, you can make him turn around and look at you.

10. When people who have rheumatism feel increased pain in the joints, there will soon be rain.

11. Seven is a lucky number.

12. Thirteen is an unlucky number.

13. If you find a four-leaved clover, it will bring you good luck.

14. When boasting or bragging of your good luck, you should knock on wood to keep your good luck from changing.
15. If you find a horseshoe, you will have good luck.

16. If a baby is good looking, it will grow up to be ugly; if ugly, it will become good looking when grown up.

17. Friday the thirteenth is a very unlucky day.

18. When a child smiles in his sleep, angels are talking with him.

19. If you make a wish while seeing a falling star, your wish will be fulfilled.

20. If you dream of one thing, the opposite will come true.

21. If a dog howls, it is a sign of a death in the family.

22. If you break a mirror you will have seven years of bad luck.

23. If you drop a knife, fork, or spoon, you may expect company.

24. If you drop a dish rag, you will have company.

25. If thirteen individuals are seated at a table, one of the number will die within a year.

26. It is bad luck to light three cigarettes with one match.

27. If two people make wishes while breaking a wish-bone, the one who gets the larger piece will see the fulfillment of his wish.

28. Certain lines and markings in a person's hand foretell his future.

29. If two friends walk on opposite sides of a post, they will quarrel.

30. If your nose itches, you will have company.

31. You should throw rice and old shoes at the bride and groom in order that they may have good luck.
32. You should cut your hair during the new moon so that it may grow better.

33. You will have bad luck if you kill a cat.

34. If you carry a rabbit's foot, it will bring you good luck.

35. If you start on a trip and turn back for something forgotten, it will bring you bad luck.

36. If you change a garment that has been put on wrong side out, it will bring bad luck.

37. If you see the new moon over your right shoulder, it will bring you good luck.

38. If you give your friend a knife or any instrument for cutting, it will cut your friendship with him.

39. If you open an umbrella in the house, it will bring you bad luck.

40. You will have good luck if you find a pin with the point lying toward you.

41. Always get out of bed "on the right side."

42. It is bad luck when walking with another person to let any object come between; you may avert the evil by saying "bread and butter."

43. If you cross your fingers you can lie and it won't count.

44. The girl who catches the bride's bouquet at a wedding is next to be married.

45. If you walk under a ladder, it will bring you bad luck.

46. If two people accidentally say the same thing at the same time and then link their fingers together and make a wish, it will come true.

47. If you were born under a lucky star you will be influential and prosperous in life.
48. If your right ear itches or burns, someone is saying something good about you.

49. On a child's birthday he should receive one blow on his back for each year he has lived that he may have good luck in the future.

50. If you make a wish upon seeing the first star of the evening, the wish will come true.
APPENDIX D

The following superstition test was published in connection with a popular article upon this subject (4). It shows the popular interest and the recurrence of the public to this type of thing.

Instructions: "HOW SUPERSTITIOUS ARE YOU? Score yourself 5 for every question answered "Yes" and 0 for every "No." If the total is above 100, you may consider yourself very superstitious: if between 50 and 100, you are normally superstitious, and if below 50, you may pride yourself on being less superstitious than the average person."

Do you believe that if a bride wears out her bridal shoes within a year misfortune will come to her?

Do you believe that if a mother is badly frightened her unborn child will have a "birthmark"?

Do you believe that if wild animals develop unusually heavy coats of fur, the following winter will be a severe one?

Do you believe that a small mouth indicates stinginess and a large mouth means generosity?

Do you believe that if persons engaged to be married are photographed together their marriage will never occur?

Do you believe that bad luck results if, after marriage, a bride forgets and signs her maiden name?

Do you carry lucky pieces or charms?

Do you avoid walking under a ladder?

Are you afraid to start an important piece of work on Friday?

Do you believe that if two persons happen to say the same thing at the same time, then hook their
little fingers together and each silently makes a wish, the wishes will come true?

Do you knock on wood when telling of your personal successes?

Do you believe that if you keep an old horseshoe in the house it helps to bring prosperity to the household?

Are you afraid to open an umbrella indoors?

If you find, upon leaving the house, that you have forgotten something and return for it, do you sit down before starting out again?

Do you believe that if two persons make a wish while breaking a "wishbone," the one getting the larger piece of bone will obtain his wish?

Do you consider it lucky to find a four-leaved clover?

Do you believe that thirteen is an unlucky number?

Do you say "Bread and butter" when a post or some other object comes between you and another person when walking together?

Do you believe that if thirteen people are seated at a table, one of them will be seriously ill or die during the following year?

If you spill salt do you throw a little of it over your left shoulder?

Do you believe that if you see a new moon over the left shoulder it brings good luck; if over the right shoulder, bad luck?

Do you believe that if you give a friend a knife it means the end of your friendship?

Do you believe that the girl who catches the bride's bouquet at a wedding is likely to be the bride of the next wedding?

Do you cross your fingers when telling an untruth?

Do you believe that breaking a mirror foretells seven years' bad luck?
APPENDIX E

This list of misbeliefs was used by Caldwell and Lundeen (7) in connection with a course in general science at the high school level. The column at the left shows the pupils' gain in per cent of favorable responses following a course in general science.

3.5 Any disease can be produced by thinking too much about it.

5.2 A disease is produced as a direct punishment for some particular wrong-doing.

11.3 Red hair is a sign of a violent temper.

11.8 Among pupils of equal age, the most intelligent are on the average physically smaller than those of less intelligence.

16.6 Brains and beauty are rarely found in one person.

16.1 An accurate estimate of an individual's intelligence may be made upon the basis of his facial appearance.

23.8 A high forehead indicates superior intelligence.

32.7 Long slender hands indicate an artistic nature.

45.4 The ability to look directly at another person while talking with him is a reliable method of judging a person's honesty.

27.4 A reliable estimation of a person's character may be secured from the features of his face.

13.0 Brunettes are more trustworthy than blondes.

25.3 A heavy square jaw is an indication of unusual will-power.
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