

Review.

FOLK-LORE OF SCOTTISH LOCHS AND SPRINGS, by James M. Mackinlay (Glasgow : Hodge & Co.)—In ancient days wells had their worshippers ; now, happily, they have their chroniclers, and all who wish to know the mysteries of holy wells, healing wells, wishing wells, sacred streams, water cures, and many other items of curious lore, cannot do better than read this fascinating book. Mr. Mackinlay has done for Scotland (although he sometimes wanders South of the Tweed) what Mr. R. C. Hope has accomplished for England in his *Holy Wells, their Legends and Traditions*, and most ably has he accomplished his task. He tells of the annual sacrifice to the sea-god "Shony," performed by a man wading in the sea at night and casting a cup of ale, saying "Shony, I give you this cup of ale, hoping that you'll be so kind as to send us plenty of sea-ware for enriching our ground the ensuing year." He tells us of mermaids, and of those who had seen them, and of the terrible disasters which befell those who dared to kill them, even though the mermaids had assumed the forms of seals. We read of the clothing of sick folk hung around the holy wells ; of the surprising immersion of sick children before sunrise in cold wells, which must certainly have ended rather than mended their earthly woes ; of the strange manners and customs of water-spirits ; and of countless other curious beliefs which cluster around the lochs and wells of "bonnie Scotland." We read of flint arrow-heads being transformed into elf-bolts ; and, strange to say, cows were cured of their effects by drinking water in which an elf-bolt had been placed, on the principle of taking a hair from the dog that bit you. There is a very interesting chapter on Pilgrimages to Wells. In the busy haunts of men, well-worship has long since died out ; but it lingers still in quiet places, amid Highland mountains and western glades, and Mr. Mackinlay has collected a vast store of information upon this extremely interesting subject.