and singer. In the latter branch of his art he became famous for his genuine drollery in the songs of *The Beautiful Boy* and the *Three Part Medley*. He afterwards appeared at the English Opera House (Lyceum) as Mungo in *The Padlock*, and, I believe, became one of the company, but am not certain. His brother was the husband of Mrs. Sloman, a tragic actress, who appeared at Drury Lane in 1820 as Belvidera and in other high-class characters. 

GEORGE ELLIS. 

St. John's Wood.

"POSY"—*SINGLE FLOWER* (5th S. xii. 168, 289, 329, 350).—From the able treatment this subject has received in the pages of "N. & Q." two points may be considered settled. The posy was generally composed of more than one flower, and the word is a variation of poesy. From these premises a conclusion may be urged, and it is briefly this. An offering of flowers was originally made, to which a meaning was attached by the donor to be interpreted by the donee. Sometimes it was accompanied by a motto that made such meaning plain; sometimes it was, as Mr. Pitrow writes, the "concrete emblem of the sentiment" intended to be conveyed. With or without legend it was a posy. The old name survived after Time, who remained a posy, even as a ream of paper has survived the vies or thong which once bound it and gave it name.

W. WHISTON.

SONGS WANTED (5th S. xiii. 348).—"Ben Backstay" is one of Dibdin's songs, and is printed in the *Universal Songster*, ii. 276.

We have to thank several correspondents for enabling us to send MS. versions to B. W. S.

"INNOCENTS" TUNE (5th S. xii. 358).—Whether this be in its origin part of a song dating from 1254 I cannot say. The melody does not sound much like one of that remote period, but it is pretty well known in some parts of France, where (in combination with tone 5, second ending) it is commonly sung to the *Litany of Loreto*.

VALENTINE PELL (5th S. vi. 188, 312).—One of both names was of St. John's College, Cambridge, B.A. 1574-5, but took no higher degree.

JOHN E. B. MAYOR.

Cambridge.

ALFRED BROWN (5th S. xii. 68, 115, 166).—I have a copy of Brown's "Word with Punch", which is in size and appearance very much like *Punch* itself. It bears the date of Nov. 11, 1847, and is a very clever reply to the attacks of *Punch*, particularly taking off the peculiarities of Douglas Jerrold, Gilbert A'Beckett, and Mark Lemon, under the pseudonyms of Wrenghead, Sleekhead, and Thickhead, the publishers—Bradbury & Evans—being designated Bradball & Heavens, the latter, whose name was Mullete Evans, being styled Mull Heavens. There was only one number published, but it has a clever sketch or tailpiece, a roll of paper in shape of a vial, and a pill-box labelled, "This dose to be repeated should the patient require it."

EDWARD T. DUNN.

15, Queen's Terrace, Hammersmith.

"STRAW" (5th S. xii. 89, 115, 156, 256).—This verb I have heard used in the manner described, but did not know of its being so written. It was by a person in the country, who had never been resident anywhere but in her native village—"I strangle warm much." She also used another verb as active which we are accustomed to deem passive—"I 'stonish at it." 

I think it was when she wished to be emphatic.

M. P. Cumberland.

DIPROSE'S "HISTORY OF ST. CLEMENT DANES" (5th S. xii. 106, 133).—I have in my possession the first volume and the circular referred to by J. N. I subscribed for a copy of the second volume, but never received it or a reply to my letter asking why it had not been delivered.

EVERARD HOME COLEMAN.

71, Brecknock Road.

The second volume of Mr. Diprose's account of St. Clement Danes was published in 1876.

L. L. H.

"NINE POINTS OF THE LAW" (5th S. xii. 447; xii. 33).—Part of a well-known expression—"Possession is nine points of the law." This probably was first applied to actions of ejectment, in which the plaintiff must recover on the strength of his own title, the defendant's possession being presumed to be legal until the contrary is shown.

BAR-POINT.

Philadelphia.

"LABURNUM" (5th S. xii. 69, 137).—"Laburnum is said to have been derived from love box, or bow-wood, the wood having been formerly esteemed as good for bows, being hard and elastic."—*Notes on Natural History*, by J. C., p. 173.

JOHN CHURCHILL SIKES.

Godolphin Road, Shepherd's Bush, W.

May not this word be the Latin *alburnum*? Colgrave gives, "Auburn, a kind of tree supposed in Latin *Alburnus*, (it beareth long yellow blossoms which no Bee will touch)." Bailey, in his *Etym. Dictionary*, ed. 1731, also has "Laburnum, a kind of shrub of which bees will not taste." The Latin term may be derived from the colour of the wood, as in the following quotation from Holland's *Pliny*, bk. xvi. ch. xviii. (in Richardson): "The cypress, walnut, chestnut-trees, and the laburnum cannot in any wise abide waters. This last-named is a tree proper unto the Alps, not commonly known.

Downloaded from https://academic.oup.com/nq/article-abstract/s5-XII/306/378/4453721 by guest on 06 March 2019