

"*Blue devils*," to drink till "all is *blue*," "to be partial to *blue* ruin," "to look *blue*," "to cry *blue* murder," are all familiar phrases of ancient origin and modern prevalence. "Du vin *bleu*," and "*petit bleu*," are used by the French to signify thin, sour, unwholesome wine, terms which owe their origin to a similar association of ideas.

In some of those with melancholy meanings, there is an evident connection between *blue* as a colour, and the idea of grief, disappointment. Thus the French have the expression, "*En voir de bleues*," to meet with great disappointment, annoyance, sufferings, a variant of "*En voir de grises*." "*En bailler tout bleu*," to be gaping with astonishment at some news or act which arouses one's indignation, from the livid hue of the face.

Charles G. Leland makes the following remarks:—

"*Blue*, English popular slang, but somewhat extended in the United States. When this word is used to denote extremes, as 'to drink till all is *blue*,' 'a dyed in the wool *blue* Presbyterian,' 'true-*blue*' in political opinions or honesty, it would appear that its origin is possibly maritime. *Blue* water was till a recent period always described as off or out of soundings, so that, like the sky, it suggests no end. It is remarkable that in both German and Dutch the same idea of extremity is connected

with *blue*. An utterly bad, pitiful result in the latter is '*Een blauwe uytvlugt*.' In the last extremity of dead drunkenness, or in the swoons of a man in the *delirium tremens*, a *blue* sky or atmosphere seems to gather round the victim, in which a luminous point appears, which 'seems to come directly at him,' as the writer has heard it described. To look *blue* is probably derived, like *blue-noses*, from cold, or from approaching death, which latter would sufficiently account for the relation of *blue* to despair, despondency, and misery."

"Now, shendlemens, I sings you a song of mine own vot I translate from de Sherman of Schiller":—

Dere is an oldt saying, und I pelieve id is true,

Dot ven a man dies his fingers toorn *plus*,

His fingers toorn *plus* by de light of de moon,

Und vy shouldn't efery man enjoy his own room?

*Gorus*.—Room, poys, room, by de light of de moon,

Und vy shouldn't efery man enjoy his own room?

—*Yale College Song*.

"*Blue devils* and red monkeys are said by the experienced to be the characteristic apparitions which haunt drunkards."

(Common), to talk *blue*, to talk immodestly, or libidiously. "A bit of *blue*," an obscene or libidinous anecdote. "A brown conversation" and "a brown study" is used in the contrary sense, and means seriously, gravely, and decently.

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