



THE FARMER'S CURST WIFE

There was an old farmer in Sussex^o did dwell,

(Chorus of whistlers)

There was an old farmer in Sussex did dwell,

And he had a bad wife, as many knew well.

(Chorus of whistlers)

Then Satan came to the old man at the plow:

"One of your family I must have now. 5

"It is not your eldest son that I crave,
But it is your old wife, and she I will have."

"O, welcome, good Satan, with all my heart!

I hope you and she will never more part."

Now Satan has got the old wife on his back,

And he lugged her along like a pedlar's pack. 10

He trudged away till they came to his hall-gate;

Says he, "Here take in an old Sussex chap's mate."

O then she did kick the young imps about;

Says one to the other, "Let's try turn her out." 15

She spied thirteen imps all dancing in chains,

She up with her pattens^o and beat out their brains.

She knocked the old Satan against the wall:

"Let's turn her out, or she'll murder us all."

Now he's bundled her up on his back amain,^o 20

And to her old husband he took her again.

"I have been a tormentor the whole of my life,

But I ne'er was tormented so as with your wife."

1. *Sussex*: a county in southern England.

17. *pattens*: wooden shoes with raised soles to keep feet from becoming wet or muddy.

20. *amain*: at full speed or in great haste.