

THE
GOLDEN BOUGH

A STUDY
IN MAGIC AND RELIGION

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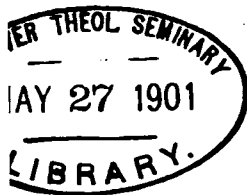
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The Golden Bough.

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MY FRIEND

WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH

IN

GRATITUDE AND ADMIRATION

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

FOR some time I have been preparing a general work on primitive superstition and religion. Among the problems which had attracted my attention was the hitherto unexplained rule of the Arician priesthood; and last spring it happened that in the course of my reading I came across some facts which, combined with others I had noted before, suggested an explanation of the rule in question. As the explanation, if correct, promised to throw light on some obscure features of primitive religion, I resolved to develop it fully, and, detaching it from my general work, to issue it as a separate study. This book is the result.

Now that the theory, which necessarily presented itself to me at first in outline, has been worked out in detail, I cannot but feel that in some places I may have pushed it too far. If this should prove to have been the case, I will readily acknowledge and retract my error as soon as it is brought home to me. Meantime my essay may serve its purpose as a first attempt to solve a difficult problem, and to bring a variety of scattered facts into some sort of order and system.

A justification is perhaps needed of the length at which I have dwelt upon the popular festivals observed by European peasants in spring, at midsummer, and at harvest. It can hardly be too often repeated, since it is not yet generally recognised, that in spite of their fragmentary character the

popular superstitions and customs of the peasantry are by far the fullest and most trustworthy evidence we possess as to the primitive religion of the Aryans. Indeed the primitive Aryan, in all that regards his mental fibre and texture, is not extinct. He is amongst us to this day. The great intellectual and moral forces which have revolutionised the educated world have scarcely affected the peasant. In his inmost beliefs he is what his forefathers were in the days when forest trees still grew and squirrels played on the ground where Rome and London now stand.

Hence every inquiry into the primitive religion of the Aryans should either start from the superstitious beliefs and observances of the peasantry, or should at least be constantly checked and controlled by reference to them. Compared with the evidence afforded by living tradition, the testimony of ancient books on the subject of early religion is worth very little. For literature accelerates the advance of thought at a rate which leaves the slow progress of opinion by word of mouth at an immeasurable distance behind. Two or three generations of literature may do more to change thought than two or three thousand years of traditional life. But the mass of the people who do not read books remain unaffected by the mental revolution wrought by literature; and so it has come about that in Europe at the present day the superstitious beliefs and practices which have been handed down by word of mouth are generally of a far more archaic type than the religion depicted in the most ancient literature of the Aryan race.

It is on these grounds that, in discussing the meaning and origin of an ancient Italian priesthood, I have devoted so much attention to the popular customs and superstitions of modern Europe. In this part of my subject I have made great use of the works of the late W. Mannhardt, without which, indeed, my book could scarcely have been written. Fully recognising the truth of the principles which I have

imperfectly stated, Mannhardt set himself systematically to collect, compare, and explain the living superstitions of the peasantry. Of this wide field the special department which he marked out for himself was the religion of the woodman and the farmer, in other words, the superstitious beliefs and rites connected with trees and cultivated plants. By oral inquiry, and by printed questions scattered broadcast over Europe, as well as by ransacking the literature of folk-lore, he collected a mass of evidence, part of which he published in a series of admirable works. But his health, always feeble, broke down before he could complete the comprehensive and really vast scheme which he had planned, and at his too early death much of his precious materials remained unpublished. His manuscripts are now deposited in the University Library at Berlin, and in the interest of the study to which he devoted his life it is greatly to be desired that they should be examined, and that such portions of them as he has not utilised in his books should be given to the world.

Of his published works the most important are, first, two tracts, *Roggenwolf und Roggenhund*, Danzig, 1865 (second edition, Danzig, 1866), and *Die Korndämonen*, Berlin, 1868. These little works were put forward by him tentatively, in the hope of exciting interest in his inquiries and thereby securing the help of others in pursuing them. But except from a few learned societies, they met with very little attention. Undeterred by the cold reception accorded to his efforts he worked steadily on, and in 1875 published his chief work, *Der Baumkultus der Germanen und ihrer Nachbarstämme*. This was followed in 1877 by *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*. His *Mythologische Forschungen*, a posthumous work, appeared in 1884.¹

¹ For the sake of brevity I have sometimes, in the notes, referred to Mannhardt's works respectively as *Roggenwolf* (the references are to the pages of the first edition), *Korndämonen*, *B.K.*, *A.W.F.*, and *M.F.*

Much as I owe to Mannhardt, I owe still more to my friend Professor W. Robertson Smith. My interest in the early history of society was first excited by the works of Dr. E. B. Tylor, which opened up a mental vista undreamed of by me before. But it is a long step from a lively interest in a subject to a systematic study of it; and that I took this step is due to the influence of my friend W. Robertson Smith. The debt which I owe to the vast stores of his knowledge, the abundance and fertility of his ideas, and his unwearied kindness, can scarcely be overestimated. Those who know his writings may form some, though a very inadequate, conception of the extent to which I have been influenced by him. The views of sacrifice set forth in his article "Sacrifice" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and further developed in his recent work, *The Religion of the Semites*, mark a new departure in the historical study of religion, and ample traces of them will be found in this book. Indeed the central idea of my essay—the conception of the slain god—is derived directly, I believe, from my friend. But it is due to him to add that he is in no way responsible for the general explanation which I have offered of the custom of slaying the god. He has read the greater part of the proofs in circumstances which enhanced the kindness, and has made many valuable suggestions which I have usually adopted; but except where he is cited by name, or where the views expressed coincide with those of his published works, he is not to be regarded as necessarily assenting to any of the theories propounded in this book.

The works of Professor G. A. Wilken of Leyden have been of great service in directing me to the best original authorities on the Dutch East Indies, a very important field to the ethnologist. To the courtesy of the Rev. Walter Gregor, M.A., of Pitsligo, I am indebted for some interesting communications which will be found acknowledged in their proper places. Mr. Francis Darwin has kindly allowed me



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE kind reception accorded by critics and the public to the first edition of *The Golden Bough* has encouraged me to spare no pains to render the new one more worthy of their approbation. While the original book remains almost entire, it has been greatly expanded by the insertion of much fresh illustrative matter, drawn chiefly from further reading, but in part also from previous collections which I had made, and still hope to use, for another work. Friends and correspondents, some of them personally unknown to me, have kindly aided me in various ways, especially by indicating facts or sources which I had overlooked and by correcting mistakes into which I had fallen. I thank them all for their help, of which I have often availed myself. Their contributions will be found acknowledged in their proper places. But I owe a special acknowledgment to my friends the Rev. Lorimer Fison and the Rev. John Roscoe, who have sent me valuable notes on the Fijian and Waganda customs respectively. Most of Mr. Fison's notes, I believe, are incorporated in my book. Of Mr. Roscoe's only a small selection has been given; the whole series, embracing a general account of the customs and beliefs of the Waganda, will be published, I hope, in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*. Further, I ought to add that Miss Mary E. B. Howitt has kindly allowed me to make some extracts

from a work by her on Australian *fólklore* [and legends which I was privileged to read in manuscript.

I have seen no reason to withdraw the explanation of the priesthood of Aricia which forms the central theme of my book. On the contrary the probability of that explanation appears to me to be greatly strengthened by some important evidence which has come to light since my theory was put forward. Readers of the first edition may remember that I explained the priest of Aricia—the King of the Wood—as an embodiment of a tree-spirit, and inferred from a variety of considerations that at an earlier period one of these priests had probably been slain every year in his character of an incarnate deity. But for an undoubted parallel to such a custom of killing a human god annually I had to go as far as ancient Mexico. Now from the *Martyrdom of St. Dasius*, unearthed and published a few years ago by Professor Franz Cumont of Ghent (*Analecta Bollandiana*, xvi. 1897), it is practically certain that in ancient Italy itself a human representative of Saturn—the old god of the seed—was put to death every year at his festival of the Saturnalia, and that though in Rome itself the custom had probably fallen into disuse before the classical era, it still lingered on in remote places down at least to the fourth century after Christ. I cannot but regard this discovery as a confirmation, as welcome as it was unlooked for, of the theory of the Arician priesthood which I had been led independently to propound.

Further, the general interpretation which, following W. Mannhardt, I had given of the ceremonies observed by our European peasantry in spring, at midsummer, and at harvest, has also been corroborated by fresh and striking analogies. If we are right, these ceremonies were originally magical rites designed to cause plants to grow, cattle to thrive, rain to fall, and the sun to shine. Now the remarkable researches of Professor Baldwin Spencer and Mr. F. J. Gillen among the

native tribes of Central Australia have proved that these savages regularly perform magical ceremonies for the express purpose of bringing down rain and multiplying the plants and animals on which they subsist, and further that these ceremonies are most commonly observed at the approach of the rainy season, which in Central Australia answers to our spring. Here then, at the other side of the world, we find an exact counterpart of those spring and midsummer rites which our rude forefathers in Europe probably performed with a full consciousness of their meaning, and which many of their descendants still keep up, though the original intention of the rites has been to a great extent, but by no means altogether, forgotten. The harvest customs of our European peasantry have naturally no close analogy among the practices of the Australian aborigines, since these savages do not till the ground. But what we should look for in vain among the Australians we find to hand among the Malays. For recent inquiries, notably those of Mr. J. L. van der Toorn in Sumatra and of Mr. W. W. Skeat in the Malay Peninsula, have supplied us with close parallels to the harvest customs of Europe, as these latter were interpreted by the genius of Mannhardt. Occupying a lower plane of culture than ourselves, the Malays have retained a keen sense of the significance of rites which in Europe have sunk to the level of more or less meaningless survivals.

Thus on the whole I cannot but think that the course of subsequent investigation has tended to confirm the general principles followed and the particular conclusions reached in this book. At the same time I am as sensible as ever of the hypothetical nature of much that is advanced in it. It has been my wish and intention to draw as sharply as possible the line of demarcation between my facts and the hypotheses by which I have attempted to colligate them. Hypotheses are necessary but often temporary bridges built to connect isolated facts. If my light bridges should sooner or later

break down or be superseded by more solid structures, I hope that my book may still have its utility and its interest as a repertory of facts.

But while my views, tentative and provisional as they probably are, thus remain much what they were, there is one subject on which they have undergone a certain amount of change, unless indeed it might be more exact to say that I seem to see clearly now what before was hazy. I mean the relation of magic to religion. When I first wrote this book I failed, perhaps inexcusably, to define even to myself my notion of religion, and hence was disposed to class magic loosely under it as one of its lower forms. I have now sought to remedy this defect by framing as clear a definition of religion as the difficult nature of the subject and my apprehension of it allowed. Hence I have come to agree with Sir A. C. Lyall and Mr. F. B. Jevons in recognising a fundamental distinction and even opposition of principle between magic and religion. More than that, I believe that in the evolution of thought, magic, as representing a lower intellectual stratum, has probably everywhere preceded religion. I do not claim any originality for this latter view. It has been already plainly suggested, if not definitely formulated, by Professor H. Oldenberg in his able book *Die Religion des Veda*, and for aught I know it may have been explicitly stated by many others before and since him. I have not collected the opinions of the learned on the subject, but have striven to form my own directly from the facts. And the facts which bespeak the priority of magic over religion are many and weighty. Some of them the reader will find stated in the following pages; but the full force of the evidence can only be appreciated by those who have made a long and patient study of primitive superstition. I venture to think that those who submit to this drudgery will come more and more to the opinion I have indicated. That all my readers should agree either with my definition

of religion or with the inferences I have drawn from it is not to be expected. But I would ask those who dissent from my conclusions to make sure that they mean the same thing by religion that I do ; for otherwise the difference between us may be more apparent than real.

As the scope and purpose of my book have been seriously misconceived by some courteous critics, I desire to repeat in more explicit language, what I vainly thought I had made quite clear in my original preface, that this is not a general treatise on primitive superstition, but merely the investigation of one particular and narrowly limited problem, to wit, the rule of the Arician priesthood, and that accordingly only such general principles are explained and illustrated in the course of it as seemed to me to throw light on that special problem. If I have said little or nothing of other principles of equal or even greater importance, it is assuredly not because I undervalue them in comparison with those which I have expounded at some length, but simply because it appeared to me that they did not directly bear on the question I had set myself to answer. No one can well be more sensible than I am of the immense variety and complexity of the forces which have gone towards the building up of religion ; no one can recognise more frankly the futility and inherent absurdity of any attempt to explain the whole vast organism as the product of any one simple factor. If I have hitherto touched, as I am quite aware, only the fringe of a great subject—fingered only a few of the countless threads that compose the mighty web,—it is merely because neither my time nor my knowledge has hitherto allowed me to do more. Should I live to complete the works for which I have collected and am collecting materials, I dare to think that they will clear me of any suspicion of treating the early history of religion from a single narrow point of view. But the future is necessarily uncertain, and at the best many

years must elapse before I can execute in full the plan which I have traced out for myself. Meanwhile I am unwilling by keeping silence to leave some of my readers under the impression that my outlook on so large a subject does not reach beyond the bounds of the present inquiry. This is my reason for noticing the misconceptions to which I have referred. I take leave to add that some part of my larger plan would probably have been completed before now, were it not that out of the ten years which have passed since this book was first published nearly eight have been spent by me in work of a different kind.

There is a misunderstanding of another sort which I feel constrained to set right. But I do so with great reluctance, because it compels me to express a measure of dissent from the revered friend and master to whom I am under the deepest obligations, and who has passed beyond the reach of controversy. In an elaborate and learned essay on sacrifice (*L'Année Sociologique*, Deuxième Année, 1897-1898), Messrs. H. Hubert and M. Mauss have represented my theory of the slain god as intended to supplement and complete Robertson Smith's theory of the derivation of animal sacrifice in general from a totem sacrament. On this I have to say that the two theories are quite independent of each other. I never assented to my friend's theory, and so far as I can remember he never gave me a hint that he assented to mine. My reason for suspending my judgment in regard to his theory was a simple one. At the time when the theory was propounded, and for many years afterwards, I knew of no single indubitable case of a totem sacrament, that is, of a custom of killing and eating the totem animal as a solemn rite. It is true that in my *Totemism*, and again in the present work, I noted a few cases (four in all) of solemnly killing a sacred animal which, following Robertson Smith, I regarded as probably a totem. But none even of these four cases included the

eating of the sacred animal by the worshippers, which was an essential part of my friend's theory, and in regard to all of them it was not positively known that the slain animal was a totem. Hence as time went on and still no certain case of a totem sacrament was reported, I became more and more doubtful of the existence of such a practice at all, and my doubts had almost hardened into incredulity when the long-looked-for rite was discovered by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen in full force among the aborigines of Central Australia, whom I for one must consider to be the most primitive totem tribes as yet known to us. This discovery I welcomed as a very striking proof of the sagacity of my brilliant friend, whose rapid genius had outstripped our slower methods and anticipated what it was reserved for subsequent research positively to ascertain. Thus from being little more than an ingenious hypothesis the totem sacrament has become, at least in my opinion, a well-authenticated fact. But from the practice of the rite by a single set of tribes it is still a long step to the universal practice of it by all totem tribes, and from that again it is a still longer stride to the deduction therefrom of animal sacrifice in general. These two steps I am not yet prepared to take. No one will welcome further evidence of the wide prevalence of a totem sacrament more warmly than I shall, but until it is forthcoming I shall continue to agree with Professor E. B. Tylor that it is unsafe to make the custom the base of far-reaching speculations.

To conclude this subject, I will add that the doctrine of the universality of totemism, which Messrs. Hubert and Mauss have implicitly attributed to me, is one which I have never enunciated or assumed, and that, so far as my knowledge and opinion go, the worship of trees and cereals, which occupies so large a space in these volumes, is neither identical with nor derived from a system of totemism. It is possible that further inquiry may lead me to regard as

probable the universality of totemism and the derivation from it of sacrifice and of the whole worship both of plants and animals. I hold myself ready to follow the evidence wherever it may lead ; but in the present state of our knowledge I consider that to accept these conclusions would be, not to follow the evidence, but very seriously to outrun it. In thinking so I am happy to be at one with Messrs. Hubert and Mauss.

When I am on this theme I may as well say that I am by no means prepared to stand by everything in my little apprentice work, *Totemism*. That book was a rough piece of pioneering in a field that, till then, had been but little explored, and some inferences in it were almost certainly too hasty. In particular there was a tendency, perhaps not unnatural in the circumstances, to treat as totems, or as connected with totemism, things which probably were neither the one nor the other. If ever I republish the volume, as I hope one day to do, I shall have to retrench it in some directions as well as to enlarge it in others.

Such as it is, with all its limitations, which I have tried to indicate clearly, and with all its defects, which I leave to the critics to discover, I offer my book in its new form as a contribution to that still youthful science which seeks to trace the growth of human thought and institutions in those dark ages which lie beyond the range of history. The progress of that science must needs be slow and painful, for the evidence, though clear and abundant on some sides, is lamentably obscure and scanty on others, so that the cautious inquirer is every now and then brought up sharp on the edge of some yawning chasm across which he may be quite unable to find a way. All he can do in such a case is to mark the pitfall plainly on his chart and to hope that others in time may be able to fill it up or bridge it over. Yet the very difficulty and novelty of the investigation, coupled with the extent of the intellectual prospect which suddenly opens up

before us whenever the mist rises and unfolds the far horizon, constitute no small part of its charm. The position of the anthropologist of to-day resembles in some sort the position of classical scholars at the revival of learning. To these men the rediscovery of ancient literature came like a revelation, disclosing to their wondering eyes a splendid vision of the antique world, such as the cloistered student of the Middle Ages never dreamed of under the gloomy shadow of the minster and within the sound of its solemn bells. To us moderns a still wider vista is vouchsafed, a greater panorama is unrolled by the study which aims at bringing home to us the faith and the practice, the hopes and the ideals, not of two highly gifted races only, but of all mankind, and thus at enabling us to follow the long march, the slow and toilsome ascent, of humanity from savagery to civilisation. And as the scholar of the Renaissance found not merely fresh food for thought but a new field of labour in the dusty and faded manuscripts of Greece and Rome, so in the mass of materials that is steadily pouring in from many sides—from buried cities of remotest antiquity as well as from the rudest savages of the desert and the jungle—we of to-day must recognise a new province of knowledge which will task the energies of generations of students to master. The study is still in its rudiments, and what we do now will have to be done over again and done better, with fuller knowledge and deeper insight, by those who come after us. To recur to a metaphor which I have already made use of, we of this age are only pioneers hewing lanes and clearings in the forest where others will hereafter sow and reap.

But the comparative study of the beliefs and institutions of mankind is fitted to be much more than a means of satisfying an enlightened curiosity and of furnishing materials for the researches of the learned. Well handled, it may become a powerful instrument to expedite progress if it lays bare certain weak spots in the foundations on which modern

society is built—if it shows that much which we are wont to regard as solid rests on the sands of superstition rather than on the rock of nature. It is indeed a melancholy and in some respects thankless task to strike at the foundations of beliefs in which, as in a strong tower, the hopes and aspirations of humanity through long ages have sought a refuge from the storm and stress of life. Yet sooner or later it is inevitable that the battery of the comparative method should breach these venerable walls, mantled over with the ivy and mosses and wild flowers of a thousand tender and sacred associations. At present we are only dragging the guns into position: they have hardly yet begun to speak. The task of building up into fairer and more enduring forms the old structures so rudely shattered is reserved for other hands, perhaps for other and happier ages. We cannot foresee, we can hardly even guess, the new forms into which thought and society will run in the future. Yet this uncertainty ought not to induce us, from any consideration of expediency or regard for antiquity, to spare the ancient moulds, however beautiful, when these are proved to be out-worn. Whatever comes of it, wherever it leads us, we must follow truth alone. It is our only guiding star: *hoc signo vinces*.

To a passage in my book it has been objected by a distinguished scholar that the church-bells of Rome cannot be heard, even in the stillest weather, on the shores of the Lake of Nemi. In acknowledging my blunder and leaving it uncorrected, may I plead in extenuation of my obduracy the example of an illustrious writer? In *Old Mortality* we read how a hunted Covenanter, fleeing before Claverhouse's dragoons, hears the sullen boom of the kettledrums of the pursuing cavalry borne to him on the night wind. When Scott was taken to task for this description, because the drums are not beaten by cavalry at night, he replied in effect that he liked to hear the drums sounding here, and

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that he would let them sound on so long as his book might last. In the same spirit I make bold to say that by the Lake of Nemi I love to hear, if it be only in imagination, the distant chiming of the bells of Rome, and I would fain believe that their airy music may ring in the ears of my readers after it has ceased to vibrate in my own.

J. G. FRAZER.

CAMBRIDGE,
18th September 1900.

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NOTE A

COMMON WORDS	451-464
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CORRIGENDUM

page 134, line 24, *for* "Afoors" *read* "Alfoors."

CHAPTER I

THE KING OF THE WOOD

"The still glassy lake that sleeps
Beneath Aricia's trees—
Those trees in whose dim shadow
The ghastly priest doth reign,
The priest who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain."

MACAULAY.

§ 1. *The Arician Grove*

WHO does not know Turner's picture of the Golden Bough? The scene, suffused with the golden glow of imagination in which the divine mind of Turner steeped and transfigured even the fairest natural landscape, is a dream-like vision of the little woodland lake of Nemi, "Diana's Mirror," as it was called by the ancients. No one who has seen that calm water, lapped in a green hollow of the Alban Hills, can ever forget it. The two characteristic Italian villages which slumber on its banks, and the equally Italian palace whose terraced gardens descend steeply to the lake, hardly break the stillness, and even the solitariness, of the scene. Dian herself might still linger by this lonely shore, still haunt these woodlands wild.

In antiquity this sylvan landscape was the scene of a strange and recurring tragedy. On the northern shore of the lake, right under the precipitous cliffs on which the modern village of Nemi is perched, stood the sacred grove

nt, a grim figure might be seen to grow. In his
ried a drawn sword, and he kept peering warily
as if every instant he expected to be set upon by

He was a priest and a murderer ; and the man
he looked was sooner or later to murder him and
priesthood in his stead. Such was the rule of the

A candidate for the priesthood could only
office by slaying the priest, and having slain him,
office till he was himself slain by a stronger or a

st which he held by this precarious tenure carried
title of king ; but surely no crowned head ever
er, or was visited by more evil dreams, than his.
year out, in summer and winter, in fair weather
, he had to keep his lonely watch, and whenever
d a troubled slumber it was at the peril of his life.
elaxation of his vigilance, the smallest abatement
gth of limb or skill of fence, put him in jeopardy ;

was excavated in 1885
Sir John Savile Lumley,
le, who was then English
Rome. For a general
the site and excavations
num, 10th October 1885.
the discoveries see *Bulle-
tino di Corrispondenza*
1885, pp. 149 *sqq.*, 225
Illustrated Cata.

piers of bridges to break floating ice.
The great antiquity of the sanctuary is
attested by the nature of some of the
objects found on the spot, such as a
sacrificial ladle of bronze bearing the
name of Diana in very ancient Greek
letters, and specimens of the oldest
kind of Italian money, being merely
shapeless bits of bronze which were
valued by weight.

gray hairs might seal his death-warrant. To gentle and pious pilgrims at the shrine the sight of him may well have appeared to darken the fair landscape, as when a cloud suddenly blots the sun on a bright day. The dreamy blue of Italian skies, the dappled shade of summer woods, and the sparkle of waves in the sun can have accorded but ill with that stern and sinister figure. Rather we picture to ourselves the scene as it may have been witnessed by a belated wayfarer on one of those wild autumn nights when the dead leaves are falling thick, and the winds seem to sing the dirge of the dying year. It is a sombre picture, set to melancholy music—the background of forest showing black and jagged against a lowering and stormy sky, the sighing of the wind in the branches, the rustle of the withered leaves under foot, the lapping of the cold water on the shore, and in the foreground, pacing to and fro, now in twilight and now in gloom, a dark figure with a glitter as of steel at the shoulder whenever the pale moon, riding clear of the cloud-rack, peers down at him through the matted boughs.

The strange rule of this priesthood has no parallel in classical antiquity, and cannot be explained from it. To find an explanation we must go farther afield. No one will probably deny that such a custom savours of a barbarous age, and, surviving into imperial times, stands out in striking isolation from the polished Italian society of the day, like a primeval rock rising from a smooth-shaven lawn. It is the very rudeness and barbarity of the custom which allow us a hope of explaining it. For recent researches into the early history of man have revealed the essential similarity with which, under many superficial differences, the human mind has elaborated its first crude philosophy of life. Accordingly, if we can show that a barbarous custom, like that of the priesthood of Nemi, has existed elsewhere; if we can detect the motives which led to its institution; if we can prove that these motives have operated widely, perhaps universally, in human society, producing in varied circumstances a variety of institutions specifically different but generically alike; if we can show, lastly, that these very motives, with some of their derivative institutions, were actually at work in classical antiquity; then we may fairly infer that at a remote age the

.. by setting forth the new facts and legends which
2 down to us on the subject. According to on
vorship of Diana at Nemi was instituted by Oreste.
killing Thoas, King of the Tauric Chersonese (th
ed with his sister to Italy, bringing with him th
he Tauric Diana. The bloody ritual which legen
o that goddess is familiar to classical readers ; i
it every stranger who landed on the shore wa
on her altar. But transported to Italy, the ritu
milder form. Within the sanctuary at Nemi grew
ee of which no branch might be broken. Only a
ave was allowed to break off, if he could, one of

Success in the attempt entitled him to fight the
gle combat, and if he slew him he reigned in his
the title of King of the Wood (*Rex Nemorensis*).
verred that the fateful branch was that Golden
h, at the Sibyl's bidding, Aeneas plucked before
the perilous journey to the world of the dead.
f the slave represented, it was said, the flight of
s combat with the priest was a reminiscence of
sacrifices once offered to the Tauric Diana. This
cession by the sword was observed down to
es ; for amongst his other freaks Caligula, think-
: priest of Nemi had held office too long, hired
vart ruffian to slay him ; and a Greek traveller,
Italy in the age of the Antonines.

can still be made out. First, from the votive offerings found in modern times on the site, it appears that she was especially worshipped by women desirous of children or of an easy delivery.¹ Second, fire seems to have played a foremost part in her ritual. For during her annual festival, celebrated at the hottest time of the year, her grove shone with a multitude of torches, whose ruddy glare was reflected by the waters of the lake; and throughout the length and breadth of Italy the day was kept with holy rites at every domestic hearth.² Moreover, women whose prayers had been heard by the goddess brought lighted torches to the grove in fulfilment of their vows.³ Lastly, the title of Vesta borne by the Arician Diana⁴ points almost certainly to the maintenance of a perpetual holy fire in her sanctuary.

At her annual festival all young people went through a purificatory ceremony in her honour; dogs were crowned; and the feast consisted of a young kid, wine, and cakes, served up piping hot on platters of leaves.⁵

But Diana did not reign alone in her grove at Nemi. Two lesser divinities shared her forest sanctuary. One was Egeria, the nymph of the clear water which, bubbling from the basaltic rocks, used to fall in graceful cascades into the lake at the place called Le Mole.⁶ According to one story

"*Jamque dies aderat, profugis cum
regibus aptum*

Fumat Aricinum Triviae nemus;"

Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 271: "*Regna tenent
fortesque manu, pedibusque fugaces;*"
id., *Ars am.* i. 259 sq.—

"*Ecce suburbanæ templum nemorale
Dianæ,*

*Partaque per gladios regna nocente
manu.*"

A marble bas-relief, representing the combat between a priest and a candidate for the office, was found at the foot of the hill of Aricia (*Illustrated Catalogue of Classical Antiquities from the Site of the Temple of Diana, Nemi, Italy*, p. 11).

¹ *Bullettino dell' Istituto*, 1885, p. 153 sq.; *Athenaeum*, 10th October 1885; Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³ i. 317. Of these votive offerings some represent women with children in their arms; one represents a delivery, etc.

² Statius, *Sylv.* iii. 1. 52 sqq. From Martial, xii. 67, it has been inferred that the Arician festival fell on the 13th of August. The inference, however, does not seem conclusive. Statius's expression is:—

"*Tempus erat, caeli cum ardentissimus
axis*

*Incumbit terris, ictusque Hyperione
multo*

*Acer anhelantes incendit Sirius
agros.*"

³ Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 269; Propertius, iii. 24 (30). 9 sq. ed. Paley.

⁴ *Inscript. Lat.* ed. Orelli, No. 1455.

⁵ Statius, *l.c.*; Gratius Faliscus, 483 sqq.

⁶ *Athenaeum*, 10th October 1885. The water was diverted some years ago to supply Albano. For Egeria, compare Strabo, v. 3. 12; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 273 sqq.: *id.*, *Met.* xv. 487 sqq.

These was the youthful Greek hero Hippolytus,
 been killed by his horses on the sea-shore of the
 Alf. Him, to please Diana, the leech Aesculapius
 life again by his simples. But Jupiter, indignant
 tal man should return from the gates of death,
 in the meddling leech himself to Hades; and
 the love she bore Hippolytus, carried him away
 and hid him from the angry god in the dells of
 re he reigned a forest king under the name of
 Horses were excluded from the grove and
 because horses had killed Hippolytus.² Some
 at Virbius was the sun. It was unlawful to touch

His worship was cared for by a special priest,
 . Virbialis.⁴

hen, are the facts and theories bequeathed to us
 y on the subject of the priesthood of Nemi. From
 o slight and scanty it is impossible to extract a
 the problem. It remains to try whether the
 wider field may not yield us the clue we seek.
 ons to be answered are two: first, why had the
 ay his predecessor? and second, why, before he
 ad he to pluck the Golden Bough? The rest of
 ill be an attempt to answer these questions.

145, ed. Müller; Schol. Aesculapius was said to have brought
 56, quoted by Jahn on the dead Hippolytus to life. For the

§ 2. *Magic and Religion*

The first point on which we fasten is the priest's title. Why was he called the King of the Wood? why was his office spoken of as a Kingdom?¹

The union of a royal title with priestly duties was common in ancient Italy and Greece. At Rome and in other Italian cities there was a priest called the Sacrificial King or King of the Sacred Rites, and his wife bore the title of Queen of the Sacred Rites.² In republican Athens the second magistrate of the state was called the King, and his wife the Queen; the functions of both were religious.³ Many other Greek democracies had titular kings, whose duties, so far as they are known, seem to have been priestly.⁴ At Rome the tradition was that the Sacrificial King had been appointed after the expulsion of the kings in order to offer the sacrifices which had been previously offered by the kings.⁵ In Greece a similar view appears to have prevailed as to the origin of the priestly kings.⁶ In itself the view is not improbable, and it is borne out by the example of Sparta, almost the only purely Greek state which retained the kingly form of government in historical times. For in Sparta all state sacrifices were offered by the kings as descendants of the god.⁷ This combination of priestly functions with royal authority is familiar to every one. Asia Minor, for example, was the seat of various great religious capitals peopled by thousands of "sacred slaves," and ruled by pontiffs who wielded at once temporal and spiritual authority, like the

¹ See above, p. 4, note 1.

² Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii. 2 321 sqq.

³ Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, 57; Plato, *Politicus*, p. 290 sp.; G. Gilbert, *Handbuch der griechischen Staatsalterthümer*, i. 241 sq.

⁴ Aristotle, *Pol.* iii. 14, p. 1285; Gilbert, *op. cit.* ii. 323 sq.

⁵ Livy, ii. 2. 1; Dionysius Halic. *Antiq. Rom.* iv. 74. 4.

⁶ Demosthenes, *contra Neaer.* § 74, p. 1370; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 63.

⁷ Xenophon, *Repub. Lac.* 15, cp. *id.*, 13; Aristotle, *Pol.* iii. 14. 3. Argos was governed, at least nominally, by a king as late as the time of the great Persian war (Herodotus vii. 149); and at Orchomenus, in the secluded highlands of Northern Arcadia, the kingly form of government persisted till towards the end of the fifth century B.C. (Plutarch, *Parallelæ*, 32). As to the kings of Thessaly in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., see F. Hiller von Gaertringen in *Aus der Anomia* (Berlin, 1890), pp. 1-16.

while his attendants slaughtered the animal.⁴ In
 archaic states which still maintain their independ-
 ence the Gallas of Eastern Africa, the king sacrifices
 and maintains the immolation of human
 and the dim light of tradition reveals a similar
 temporal and spiritual power, of royal and priestly
 the kings of that delightful region of Central
 whose ancient capital, now buried under the rank
 the tropical forest, is marked by the stately and
 ruins of Palenque.⁶ But it is needless to
 examples of what is the rule rather than the
 in the early history of the kingship.

When we have said that the ancient kings were
 priests also, we are far from having exhausted
 the aspect of their office. In those days the
 that hedges a king was no empty form of speech,
 expression of a sober belief. Kings were revered,
 not merely as priests, that is, as intercessors
 man and god, but as themselves gods, able to
 on their subjects and worshippers those blessings
 commonly supposed to be beyond the reach of
 were sought, if at all, only by prayer and sacrifice
 superhuman and invisible beings. Thus kings

3. 37, 5. 3; cp. xi. 4. ⁵ Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie*
 6. *Ann. Hist. Nat. Mex.* 1842, p. 10.

are often expected to give rain and sunshine in due season, to make the crops grow, and so on. Strange as this expectation appears to us, it is quite of a piece with early modes of thought. A savage hardly conceives the distinction commonly drawn by more advanced peoples between the natural and the supernatural. To him the world is to a great extent worked by supernatural agents, that is, by personal beings acting on impulses and motives like his own, liable like him to be moved by appeals to their pity, their hopes, and their fears. In a world so conceived he sees no limit to his power of influencing the course of nature to his own advantage. Prayers, promises, or threats may secure him fine weather and an abundant crop from the gods; and if a god should happen, as he sometimes believes, to become incarnate in his own person, then he need appeal to no higher being; he, the savage, possesses in himself all the powers necessary to further his own well-being and that of his fellow-men.

This is one way in which the idea of a man-god is reached. But there is another. Side by side with the view of the world as pervaded by spiritual forces, primitive man has another conception in which we may detect a germ of the modern notion of natural law or the view of nature as a series of events occurring in an invariable order without the intervention of personal agency. The germ of which I speak is involved in that sympathetic magic, as it may be called, which plays a large part in most systems of superstition.

Manifold as are the applications of this crude philosophy—for a philosophy it is as well as an art—the fundamental principles on which it is based would seem to be reducible to two; first, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and second, that things which have once been in contact, but have ceased to be so, continue to act on each other as if the contact still persisted. From the first of these principles the savage infers that he can produce any desired effect merely by imitating it; from the second he concludes that he can influence at pleasure and at any distance any person of whom, or any thing of which, he possesses a particle. Magic of the latter sort, resting as it does on the belief in a certain secret sympathy which unites

... it seems desirable to retain the
athetic magic as a general designation to include
es of the art. In practice the two are often
or, to speak more exactly, while imitative magic
tised by itself, sympathetic magic in the strict
enerally be found to involve an application of
principle. This will be more readily under-
the examples with which I will now illustrate
s of the subject, beginning with the imitative.
the most familiar application of the principle
duces like is the attempt which has been made
oples in many ages to injure or destroy an
juring or destroying an image of him, in the
st as the image suffers, so does the man, and
perishes he must die. A few instances out of
e given to prove at once the wide diffusion
e over the world and its remarkable persistence
ges. For thousands of years ago it was known
rs of ancient India, Babylon, and Egypt as well
nd Rome,² and at this day it is still resorted to
nd malignant savages in Australia, Africa, and
hus, for example, when an Ojebway Indian
rk evil on any one, he makes a little wooden
nemy and runs a needle into its head or heart,
an arrow into it, believing that wherever the
or the arrow strikes the image his foe will

person outright, he burns or buries the puppet, uttering certain magic words as he does so.¹

A Malay charm of the same sort is as follows. Take parings of nails, hair, eyebrows, spittle, and so forth of your intended victim, enough to represent every part of his person, and then make them up into his likeness with wax from a deserted bees' comb. Scorch the figure slowly by holding it over a lamp every night for seven nights, and say:

"It is not wax that I am scorching,
It is the liver, heart, and spleen of So-and-so that I scorch."

After the seventh time burn the figure, and your victim will die. Another form of the Malay charm, which resembles the Ojebway practice still more closely, is to make a corpse of wax from an empty bees' comb and of the length of a footstep: then pierce the eye of the image, and your enemy is blind; pierce the stomach, and he is sick; pierce the head, and his head aches; pierce the breast, and his breast will suffer. If you would kill him outright, transfix the image from the head downwards; enshroud it as you would a corpse; pray over it as if you were praying over the dead; then bury it in the middle of a path where your victim will be sure to step over it. In order that his blood may not be on your head, you should say:

"It is not I who am burying him,
It is Gabriel who is burying him."

Thus the guilt of the murder will be laid on the shoulders of the archangel Gabriel, who is a great deal better able to bear it than you are.² In eastern Java an enemy may be killed by means of a likeness of him drawn on a piece of paper, which is then incensed or buried in the ground.³

¹ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, p. 146; J. G. Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, ii. 80. Similar practices are reported among the Illinois, the Mandans, and the Hidatsas of North America (Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 88; Maximilian, Prinz zu Wied, *Reise in das Innere Nord-America*, ii. 188; Washington Matthews, *Ethnography and Philology of the Hidatsa Indians*, p. 50), and the Aymaras of Bolivia and

Peru (D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*, ii. (1870), p. 236).

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic* (London, 1900), pp. 570-572.

³ J. Kreemer, "Regenmaken, Oedjoeng, Tooverij onder de Javanen," *Mededeelingen van zegg' het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxx. (1886), p. 117 sq.

hangs the image on a tree that stands quite
uttering a spell, he then drives an instrument
nail of the puppet into the tree, till the sap of
es through the hole thus made. The instrument
s the wound bears the same name (*tinggam*) as
ich is to be raised on the body of the victim,
ing sap is believed to be his or her life-spirit.
ards the person against whom the charm is
ins to suffer from an ulcer, which grows worse
ll he dies, unless a friend can procure a piece of
the tree to which the image is attached.¹ The
Mabuiag or Jervis Island, in Torres Straits, kept
it of effigies in stock ready to be operated on at
ent of a customer. Some of the figures were of
were employed when short work was to be
nan or woman. Others were wooden; these
appy victim a little more rope, only, however,
his prolonged sufferings by a painful death.
operation in the latter case was to put poison,
a magical implement, into a wooden image, to
ame of the intended victim had been given.
person aimed at would feel chilly, then waste
, unless the same wizard who had wrought the
consent to undo it.² When some of the
Victoria desired to destroy an enemy, they
nally retire to a lonely spot and draw

So dreaded was this incantation that men and women, who learned that it had been directed against them, have been known to pine away and die of fright.¹ When the wife of a Central Australian native has eloped from him and he cannot recover her, the disconsolate husband repairs with some sympathising friends to a secluded spot, where a man skilled in magic draws on the ground a rough figure supposed to represent the woman lying on her back. Beside the figure is laid a piece of green bark, which stands for her spirit or soul, and at it the men throw miniature spears which have been made for the purpose and charmed by singing over them. This barken effigy of the woman's spirit, with the little spears sticking in it, is then thrown as far as possible in the direction which she is supposed to have taken. During the whole of the operation the men chant in a low voice, the burden of their song being an invitation to the magic influence to go out and enter her body and dry up all her fat. Sooner or later—often a good deal later—her fat does dry up, she dies, and her spirit is seen in the sky in the form of a shooting star.²

In Burma a rejected lover sometimes resorts to a sorcerer and engages him to make a small image of the scornful fair one, containing a piece of her clothes, or of something which she has been in the habit of wearing. Certain charms or medicines also enter into the composition of the doll, which is then hung up or thrown into the water. As a consequence the girl is supposed to go mad.³ In this last example, as in the first of the Malay charms noticed above, imitative magic is combined with sympathetic in the strict sense of the word, since the likeness of the victim contains something which has been in contact with her person. A Matabele who wishes to avenge himself on an enemy makes a clay figure of him and pierces it with a needle; next time the man thus represented happens to engage in a fight he will be speared, just as his effigy was stabbed.⁴ The ancient books of the Hindoos testify to the use of similar enchant-

¹ E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, iii. 547.

² Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1899), p. 549 sq.

³ C. J. F. S. Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 232.

⁴ L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 153.

ered certain spells to give efficacy to the rite, or chopped up the image, anointed it with melted , or some such thing, and finally burned it in t.² In the so-called "sanguinary chapter" of *uran* there occurs the following passage: "On *1 Meha-Navami*, or when the month is in the on *Scanda*, or *Bisháci*, let a figure be made, ley-meal or earth, representing the person with crificer is at variance, and the head of the figure f; after the usual texts have been used, the xt is to be used in invoking an axe on the ffuse, effuse blood; be terrific, be terrific; seize, he love of *Ambica*, the head of this enemy.'"³ ndia the practices described in these old books ried on with mere variations of detail. The npounds the fatal image of earth taken from hy places, and mixed up with clippings of hair, ils, bits of leather, and so on. Upon the breast e he writes the name of his enemy; then he rough and through with an awl, or maims it in hoping thus to maim or kill the object of his Among the Mohammedans of Northern India g is as follows. A doll is made of earth taken : or from a place where bodies are cremated, tences of the Coran are read backwards over

next strikes into various parts of the body of the image, which is afterwards shrouded like a corpse, carried to a graveyard, and buried in the name of the enemy whom it is intended to injure. The man, it is believed, will die without fail after the ceremony.¹ A slightly different form of the charm is observed by the Bâm-Margi, a very degraded sect of Hindoos in the North-West Provinces. To kill an enemy they make an image of flour or earth, and stick razors into the breast, navel, and throat, while pegs are thrust into the eyes, hands, and feet. As if this were not enough, they next construct an image of Bhairava or Durga holding a three-pronged fork in his hand; this they place so close to the effigy of the person to whom mischief is meant that the fork penetrates its breast.²

Nowhere, perhaps, were the magic arts more carefully cultivated, nowhere did they enjoy greater esteem or exercise a deeper influence on the national life than in the land of the Pharaohs. Little wonder, therefore, that the practice of enchantment by means of images was familiar to the wizards of Egypt. A drop of a man's blood, some clippings of his hair or parings of his nails, a rag of the garment which he had worn, sufficed to give a sorcerer complete power over him. These relics of his person the magician kneaded into a lump of wax, which he moulded into the likeness and dressed after the fashion of his intended victim, who was then at the mercy of his tormentor. If the image was exposed to the fire, the person whom it represented straightway fell into a burning fever; if it were stabbed with a knife, he felt the pain of the wound.³ Thus, for instance, a certain superintendent of the king's cattle was once prosecuted in an Egyptian court of law for having made figures of men and women in wax, thereby causing paralysis of their limbs and other grievous bodily harm. He had somehow obtained a book of magic which contained the spells and directions how to act in reciting them. Armed with this powerful instrument the rogue had shut himself up

¹ W. Crooke, *An Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Allahabad, 1894), p. 362.

² *Id.*, *The Tribes and Castes of the*

North-Western Provinces and Oudh (Calcutta, 1896), i. 137.

³ G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines* (Paris, 1895), p. 213 sq.

god, the strong one, break their charm." 2

in Babylon and in Egypt this ancient tool of so baneful in the hands of the mischievous and as also pressed into the service of religion and orious account for the confusion and overthrow

In a Babylonian incantation we meet with a evil spirits whose effigies were burnt by the the hope that as their images melted in the fiends themselves might melt away and dis-very night when the sun-god Ra sank down in the glowing west he was assailed by hosts under the leadership of the arch-fiend Apepi. ng he fought them, and sometimes by day the larkness sent up clouds even into the blue y to obscure his light and weaken his power. un-god in this daily struggle, a ceremony was ed in his temple at Thebes. A figure of his epresented as a crocodile with a hideous face or ith many coils, was made of wax, and on it name was written in green ink. Wrapt in a , on which another likeness of Apepi had been en ink, the figure was then tied up with black on, hacked with a stone knife, and cast on the ere the priest trod on it with his left foot again

and again, and then burned it in a fire made of a certain plant or grass. When Apepi himself had thus been effectually disposed of, waxen effigies of each of his principal demons, and of their fathers, mothers, and children, were made and burnt in the same way. The service, accompanied by the recitation of certain prescribed spells, was repeated not merely morning, noon, and night, but whenever a storm was raging, or heavy rain had set in, or black clouds were stealing across the sky to hide the sun's bright disc. The fiends of darkness, clouds, and rain felt the injuries inflicted on their images as if they had been done to themselves; they passed away, at least for a time, and the beneficent sun-god shone out triumphant once more.¹

From the azure sky, the stately fanes, and the solemn ritual of ancient Egypt we have to travel far in space and time to the misty mountains and the humble cottages of the Scottish Highlands of to-day; but at our journey's end we shall find our ignorant countrymen seeking to attain the same end by the same means and, unhappily, with the same malignity as the Egyptian of old. To kill a person whom he hates, a modern Highlander will still make a rude clay image of him, called a *corp chre* or *corp chreachd* ("clay body"), stick it full of pins, nails, and broken bits of glass, and then place it in a running stream with its head to the current. As every pin is thrust into the figure, an incantation is uttered, and the person represented feels a pain in the corresponding part of his body. If the intention is to make him die a lingering death, the operator is careful to stick no pins into the region of the heart, whereas he thrusts them into that region deliberately if he desires to rid himself of his enemy at once. And as the clay puppet crumbles away in the running water, so the victim's body is believed to waste away and turn to clay. In Islay the spell spoken over the *corp chre*, when it is ready to receive the pins, is as follows: "From behind you are like a ram with an old fleece." And as the pins are being thrust in, a long incantation is pronounced, beginning "As you waste away, may she waste

¹ E. A. Wallis Budge, "On the Hieratic Papyrus of Nesi-Amsu, a scribe in the temple of Amen-Rā at Thebes,

about B.C. 305," *Archæologia*, second series, ii. (1890), pp. 393-601; *id.*, *Egyptian Magic*, p. 77 sqq.

away ; as this wounds you, may it wound her." Sometimes, we are told, the effigy is set before a blazing fire on a door which has been taken off its hinges ; there it is toasted and turned to make the human victim writhe in agony. The *corp chre* is reported to have been employed of late years in the counties of Inverness, Ross, and Sutherland. A specimen from Inverness-shire may be seen in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford.¹ A similar form of witchcraft, known as "burying the sheaf," seems still to linger in Ireland among the dwellers in the Bog of Ardee. The person who works the charm goes first to a chapel and says certain prayers with his back to the altar ; then he takes a sheaf of wheat, which he fashions into the likeness of a human body, sticking pins in the joints of the stems and, according to one account, shaping a heart of plaited straw. This sheaf he buries in the devil's name near the house of his enemy, who will, it is supposed, gradually pine away as the sheath decays, dying when it finally decomposes. If the enchanter desires his foe to perish speedily, he buries the sheaf in wet ground, where it will soon moulder away ; but if on the other hand his wish is that his victim should linger in pain, he chooses a dry spot, where decomposition will be slow.² However, in Scotland, as in Babylon and Egypt, the destruction of an image has also been employed for the discomfiture of fiends. When Shetland fishermen wish to disenchant their boat, they row it out to sea before sunrise, and as the day is dawning they burn a waxen figure in the boat, while the skipper exclaims, "Go hence, Satan."³

¹ See an article by R. M. O. K. entitled "A Horrible Rite in the Highlands," in the *Weekly Scotsman*, Saturday, 24th August 1889 ; Professor J. Rhys in *Folklore*, iii. (1892), p. 385 ; R. C. Maclagan, "Notes on Folklore Objects collected in Argyle-shire," *Folklore*, vi. (1895), pp. 144-148 ; J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), p. 3 sq. Many older examples of the practice of this form of enchantment in Scotland are collected by J. G. Dalyell in his *Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1834), p. 328 sqq.

² Bryan J. Jones, in *Folklore*, vi.

(1895), p. 302. For evidence of the custom in the Isle of Man see J. Train, *Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man*, ii. 168 ; in England, see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 10 sqq. ; in Germany, see Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 913 sq. As to the custom in general, see E. B. Tylor, *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*,⁵ p. 106 sqq. ; R. Andree, "Sympathie-Zauber," *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Neue Folge, p. 8 sqq.

³ Ch. Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland*, iii. 220.

If imitative magic, working by means of images, has commonly been practised for the spiteful purpose of putting obnoxious people out of the world, it has also, though far more rarely, been employed with the benevolent intention of helping others into it. In other words, it has been used to facilitate childbirth and to procure offspring for barren women. Among the Battas of Sumatra a barren woman, who would become a mother, will make a wooden image of a child and hold it in her lap, believing that this will lead to the fulfilment of her wish.¹ In the Babar Archipelago, when a woman desires to have a child, she invites a man who is himself the father of a large family to pray on her behalf to Upulero, the spirit of the sun. A doll is made of red cotton, which the woman clasps in her arms as if she would suckle it. Then the father of many children takes a fowl and holds it by the legs to the woman's head, saying, "O Upulero, make use of the fowl; let fall, let descend a child, I beseech you, I entreat you, let a child fall and descend into my hands and on my lap." Then he asks the woman, "Has the child come?" and she answers, "Yes, it is sucking already." After that the man holds the fowl on the husband's head, and mumbles some form of words. Lastly, the bird is killed and laid, together with some betel, on the domestic place of sacrifice. When the ceremony is over, word goes about in the village that the woman has been brought to bed, and her friends come and congratulate her.² Here the pretence that a child has been born is a purely magical rite designed to secure, by means of imitation or mimicry, that a child really shall be born; but an attempt is made to add to the efficacy of the rite by means of prayer and sacrifice. To put it otherwise, magic is here blent with and reinforced by religion. In Saibai, one of the islands in Torres Straits, a similar custom of purely magical character is observed, without any religious alloy. Here, when a woman is pregnant, all the other women assemble. The husband's sister makes an image of a male child and places it before the pregnant woman; after-

¹ J. B. Neumann, "Het Pane-en Bila-Stroomgebied op het eiland Sumatra," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, deel iii. (1886), Afdeeling,

meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 3, p. 515.

² J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluit- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Celebes en Papua* (The Hague, 1886), p. 343.

wards the image is nursed until the birth of the child in order to ensure that the baby shall be a boy. To secure male offspring a woman will also press to her abdomen a fruit resembling the male organ of generation, which she then passes to another woman who has borne none but boys. This, it is clear, is imitative magic in a slightly different form.¹ In the seventh month of a woman's pregnancy common people in Java observe a ceremony which is plainly designed to facilitate the real birth by mimicking it. Husband and wife repair to a well or to the bank of a neighbouring river. The upper part of the woman's body is bare, but young banana leaves are fastened under her arms, a small opening, or rather fold, being left in the leaves in front. Through this opening or fold in the leaves on his wife's body the husband lets fall from above a weaver's shuttle. An old woman receives the shuttle as it falls, takes it up in her arms and dandles it as if it were a baby, saying, "Oh, what a dear little child! Oh, what a beautiful little child!" Then the husband lets an egg slip through the fold, and when it lies on the ground as an emblem of the afterbirth, he takes his sword and cuts through the banana leaf at the place of the fold, obviously as if he were severing the navel-string.² Persons of high rank in Java observe the ceremony after a fashion in which the real meaning of the rite is somewhat obscured. The pregnant woman is clothed in a long robe, which her husband, kneeling before her, severs with a stroke of his sword from bottom to top. Then he throws his sword on the ground and runs away as fast as he can.³ Among some of the Dyaks of Borneo, when a woman is in hard labour, a wizard is called in, who essays to facilitate the delivery in a rational manner by

¹ Dr. MacFarlane, quoted by A. C. Haddon, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 389 sq.

² C. Poensen, "Iets over de kleding der Javanen," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendingengenootschap*, xx. (1876), p. 274 sq.; C. M. Pleyte, "Ilechtigheden en gebruiken uit den cyclus van het familieleven der volken van den Indischen Archipel," *Bijdragen tot de*

Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië, xli. (1892), p. 578. A slightly different account of the ceremony is given by J. Kreemer ("Hoe de Javaan zijne zieken verzorgt," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendingengenootschap*, xxxvi. (1892), p. 116).

³ S. A. Buddingh, "Gebruiken bij Javaansche Grooten," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, 1840, deel ii. pp. 239-243.

manipulating the body of the sufferer. Meantime another wizard outside the room exerts himself to attain the same end by means which we should regard as wholly irrational. He, in fact, pretends to be the expectant mother; a large stone attached to his stomach by a cloth wrapt round his body represents the child in the womb, and, following the directions shouted to him by his colleague on the real scene of operations, he moves this make-believe baby about on his body in exact imitation of the movements of the real baby till the infant is born.¹

The same principle of make-believe, so dear to children, has led other peoples to employ a simulation of birth as a form of adoption, and even as a mode of restoring a supposed dead person to life. If you pretend to give birth to a boy, or even to a great bearded man who has not a drop of your blood in his veins, then, in the eyes of primitive law and philosophy, that boy or man is really your son to all intents and purposes. Thus Diodorus tells us that when Zeus persuaded his jealous wife Hera to adopt Hercules, the goddess got into bed, and clasping the burly hero to her bosom, pushed him through her robes and let him fall to the ground in imitation of a real birth; and the historian adds that in his own day the same mode of adopting children was practised by the barbarians.² At the present time it is said to be still in use in Bulgaria and among the Bosnian Turks. A woman will take a boy whom she intends to adopt and push or pull him through her clothes; ever afterwards he is regarded as her very son, and inherits the whole property of his adoptive parents.³ Among the Berawans of Sarawak, when a woman desires to adopt a grown-up man or woman, a great many people assemble and have a feast. The adopting mother, seated in

¹ F. W. Leggat, quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo* (London, 1896), i. 98 sq.

² Diodorus Siculus, iv. 39.

³ Stanislaus Ciszewski, *Künstliche Verwandschaft bei den Sudslaven* (Leipsic, 1897), p. 103 sqq. In the Middle Ages a similar form of adoption appears to have prevailed, with the

curious variation that the adopting parent who simulated the act of birth was the father, not the mother. See Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, pp. 160, 464 sq.; J. J. Bachofen, *Das Mutterrecht*, p. 254 sq. F. Liebrecht, however, quotes a mediaeval case in which the ceremony was performed by the adopting mother (*Zur Volkskunde*, p. 432).

public on a raised and covered seat, allows the adopted person to crawl from behind between her legs. As soon as he appears in front he is stroked with the sweet-scented blossoms of the areca palm, and tied to the woman. Then the adopting mother and the adopted son or daughter, thus bound together, waddle to the end of the house and back again in front of all the spectators. The tie established between the two by this graphic imitation of childbirth is very strict; an offence committed against an adopted child is reckoned more heinous than one committed against a real child.¹ In ancient Greece any man who had been supposed erroneously to be dead, and for whom in his absence funeral rites had been performed, was treated as dead to society till he had gone through the form of being born again. He was passed through a woman's lap, then washed, dressed in swaddling-clothes, and put out to nurse. Not until this ceremony had been punctually performed might he mix freely with living folk.² In ancient India, under similar circumstances, the supposed dead man had to pass the first night after his return in a tub filled with a mixture of fat and water; there he sat with doubled-up fists and without uttering a syllable, like a child in the womb, while over him were performed all the sacraments that were wont to be celebrated over a pregnant woman. Next morning he got out of the tub and went through once more all the other sacraments he had formerly partaken of from his youth up; in particular, he married a wife or espoused his old one over again with due solemnity.³

Another beneficent use of imitative magic is to heal the sick. For this purpose a Dyak medicine-man will lie down and pretend to be dead. He is accordingly treated like a corpse, is bound up in mats, taken out of the house, and deposited on the ground. After about an hour the other medicine-men loose the pretended dead man and bring him to life; and as he recovers, the sick person is supposed to

¹ For this information I have to thank Dr. C. Hose, Resident Magistrate, of the Baram district, Sarawak.

² Plutarch, *Quæstiones Romanæ*,⁵ Hesiychius, s.v. *Δευτερότοκος*.

³ W. Caland, *Die altindischen*

Töden- und Bestattungsgebräuche (Amsterdam, 1896), p. 89. Among the Hindoos of Kumaon the same custom is reported to be still observed. See Major Reade in *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 74, § 452.

recover too.¹ A cure for a tumour, based on the principle of imitative magic, is prescribed by Marcellus of Bordeaux, court physician to Theodosius the First, in his curious work on medicine. It is as follows. Take a root of vervain, cut it across, and hang one end of it round the patient's neck, and the other in the smoke of the fire. As the vervain dries up in the smoke, so the tumour will also dry up and disappear. If the patient should afterwards prove ungrateful to his physician, the man of skill can avenge himself very easily by throwing the vervain into water; for as the root absorbs the moisture once more, the tumour will return.² The same sapient writer recommends you, if you are troubled with pimples, to watch for a falling star, and then instantly, while the star is still shooting from the sky, to wipe the pimples with a cloth or anything that comes to hand. Just as the star falls from the sky, so the pimples will fall from your body; only you must be very careful not to wipe them with your bare hand, or the pimples will be transferred to it.³

Further, imitative magic plays a great part in the measures taken by the rude hunter or fisherman to secure an abundant supply of food. On the principle that like produces like, many things are done by him and his friends in deliberate imitation of the result which he seeks to attain; and, on the other hand, many things are scrupulously avoided because they bear some more or less fanciful resemblance to others which would really be disastrous. The Indians of British Columbia live largely upon the fish which abound in their seas and rivers. If the fish do not come in due season, and the Indians are hungry, a Nootka wizard will make an image of a swimming fish and put it into the water in the direction from which the fish generally appear. This ceremony, accompanied by a prayer to the fish to come, will cause them to arrive at once.⁴ Much more elaborate are the ceremonies performed by the natives of Central Australia for multiplying the witchetty grubs on which they

¹ Archdeacon J. Perham, quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 280.

² Marcellus, *De Medicamentis*, xv. 82.

³ Marcellus, *op. cit.* xxxiv. 100.

⁴ Franz Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, 45 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

partially subsist. One of these ceremonies consists of a pantomime representing the fully-developed insect in the act of emerging from the chrysalis. A long narrow structure of branches is set up to imitate the chrysalis case of the grub. In this structure a number of men, who have the grub for their totem, sit and sing of the creature in its various stages. Then they shuffle out of it in a squatting posture, and as they do so they sing of the insect emerging from the chrysalis. This is supposed to multiply the numbers of the grubs.¹ In the island of Nias, when a wild pig has fallen into the pit prepared for it, the animal is taken out and its back is rubbed with nine fallen leaves, in the belief that this will make nine more wild pigs fall into the pit, just as the nine leaves fell from the tree.² In the East Indian islands of Saparoea, Haroekoe, and Noessa Laut, when a fisherman is about to set a trap for fish in the sea, he looks out for a tree, of which the fruit has been much pecked at by birds. From such a tree he cuts a stout branch and makes of it the principal post in his fish-trap; for he believes that just as the tree lured many birds to its fruit, so the branch cut from that tree will lure many fish to the trap.³ When a Cambodian hunter has set his nets and taken nothing, he strips himself naked, goes some way off, then strolls up to the net as if he did not see it, lets himself be caught in it, and cries, "Hillo! what's this? I'm afraid I'm caught." After that the net is sure to catch game.⁴ A pantomime of the same sort has been acted within living memory in our Scottish Highlands. The Rev. James Macdonald, now of Reay in Caithness, tells us that in his boyhood when he was fishing with companions about Loch Aline and they had had no bites for a long time, they used to make a pretence of throwing one of their fellows overboard and hauling him out of the water, as if he were a fish; after that the trout or silloch would begin to

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 176.

² J. W. Thomas, "De jacht op het eiland Nias," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvi. 277.

³ Van Schmid, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, benevens de vooroordeelen en

bijgeloovigheden der bevolking van de eilanden Saparoea, Haroekoe, Noessa Laut," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. p. 601 sq.

⁴ E. Aymonier, "Notes sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," *Cochinchine Française: Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 16, p. 157.

nibble, according as the boat was on fresh or salt water.¹ Before a Carrier Indian goes out to snare martens, he sleeps by himself for about ten nights beside the fire with a little stick pressed down on his neck. This naturally causes the fall-stick of his trap to drop down on the neck of the marten.² When an Aleut had struck a whale with a charmed spear, he would not throw again, but returned at once to his home, separated himself from his people in a hut specially constructed for the purpose, where he stayed for three days without food or drink, and without seeing or touching a woman. During this time of seclusion he snorted occasionally in imitation of the wounded and dying whale, in order to prevent the whale which he had struck from leaving the coast. On the fourth day he emerged from his seclusion and bathed in the sea, shrieking in a hoarse voice and beating the water with his hands. Then, taking with him a companion, he repaired to that part of the shore where he expected to find the whale stranded. If the beast was dead, he cut out the place where the death-wound had been inflicted. If it was not dead, he returned to his home and continued washing himself till the whale died.³ On the principles of imitative magic the hunter who mimics a dying whale clearly helps the beast to die in good earnest. Among the Galelareese, who inhabit a district in the northern part of Halmahera, a large island to the west of New Guinea, it is a maxim that when you are loading your gun to go out shooting, you should always put the bullet in your mouth before you insert it in the gun; for by so doing you practically eat the game that is to be hit by the bullet, which therefore cannot possibly miss the mark.⁴ A Malay who has baited a trap for crocodiles, and is awaiting results, is careful in eating his curry always to begin by swallowing

¹ James Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), p. 5.

² A. G. Morice, "Notes, archaeological, industrial, and sociological, on the Western Dénés," *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93), p. 108; *id.*, *Au pays de l'Ours Noir: chez les sauvages de la Colombie Britannique* (Paris and Lyons, 1897), p. 71.

³ I. Petroff, *Report on the population,*

industries, and resources of Alaska, p. 154 sq.

⁴ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, verhalen en overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 502. As to the district of Galela in Halmahera, see F. S. A. de Clercq, *Bijdragen tot de Kennis der Residentie Ternate* (Leyden, 1890), p. 112 sq.

three lumps of rice successively ; for this helps the bait to slide more easily down the crocodile's throat. He is equally scrupulous not to take any bones out of his curry ; for, if he did, it seems clear that the sharp-pointed stick on which the bait is skewered would similarly work itself loose, and the crocodile would get off with the bait. Hence in these circumstances it is prudent for the hunter, before he begins his meal, to get somebody else to take the bones out of his curry, otherwise he may at any moment have to choose between swallowing a bone and losing the crocodile.¹

This last rule is an instance of the things which the hunter abstains from doing lest, on the principle that like produces like, they should spoil his luck. Similarly, to take a few more instances, it is a rule with the Galelareese that when you have caught fish and strung them on a line, you may not cut the line through, or next time you go a-fishing your fishing-line will be sure to break.² In the East Indian islands of Saparoca, Haroekoe, and Noessa Laut, any one who comes to the house of a hunter must walk straight in ; he may not loiter at the door, for were he to do so, the game would in like manner stop in front of the hunter's snares and then turn back, instead of being caught in the trap.³ For a similar reason it is a rule with the Alfoors of Central Celebes that no one may stand or loiter on the ladder of a house where there is a pregnant woman ; any such delay would retard the birth of the child.⁴ Malays engaged in the search for camphor eat their food dry and take care not to pound their salt fine. The reason is that the camphor occurs in the form of small grains deposited in the cracks of the trunk of the camphor tree. Accordingly it seems plain to the Malay that if, while seeking for camphor, he were to eat his salt finely ground, the camphor would be found also in fine grains ; whereas by

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 300.

² M. J. van Baarda, in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 507.

³ Van Schmil, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, benevens de vooroordeelen en bijgeloovigheden der bevolking van de

eilanden Saparoen, Haroekoe, Noessa Laut," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. p. 604.

⁴ A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendingsgenootschap*, xl. (1896), p. 262 sq.

eating his salt coarse he ensures that the grains of the camphor will also be large.¹ In Laos, a rhinoceros hunter will not wash himself for fear that as a consequence the wounds inflicted on the rhinoceros might not be mortal, and that the animal might disappear in one of the caves full of water in the mountains.² Again, a Blackfoot Indian who has set a trap for eagles, and is watching it, would not eat rosebuds on any account; for he argues that if he did so, and an eagle alighted near the trap, the rosebuds in his own stomach would make the bird itch, with the result that instead of swallowing the bait the eagle would merely sit and scratch himself. Following this line of reasoning the eagle hunter also refrains from using an awl when he is looking after his snares; for surely if he were to scratch with an awl, the eagles would scratch him. The same disastrous consequence would follow if his wives and children at home used an awl while he is out after eagles, and accordingly they are forbidden to handle the tool in his absence for fear of putting him in bodily danger.³ For it is to be observed that the belief in a mysterious bond of sympathy which knits together absent friends and relations, especially at critical times of life, is not a thing of yesterday; it has been cherished from time immemorial by the savage, who carries out the principle to its legitimate consequences by framing for himself and his friends a code of rules which are to be strictly observed by them for their mutual safety and welfare in seasons of danger, anxiety, and distress. In particular, these rules regulate the conduct of persons left at home while a party of their friends is out fishing or hunting or on the war-path. Though we may not be able in every case to explain the curious observances thence arising, all of them clearly assume that people can act by means of sympathetic magic on friends at a distance, and in many of them the action takes the form of doing or avoiding things on account of their supposed resemblance to other things which would really benefit or injure the absent ones. Examples will illustrate this.

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 213.

² E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), p. 269.

³ G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales* (London, 1893), pp. 237, 238.

In Laos when an elephant-hunter is starting for the chase, he warns his wife not to cut her hair or oil her body in his absence; for if she cut her hair the elephant would burst the toils, if she oiled herself it would slip through them.¹ When a Dyak village has turned out to hunt wild pigs in the jungle, the people who stay at home may not touch oil or water with their hands during the absence of their friends; for if they did so, the hunters would all be "butter-fingered" and the prey would slip through their hands.² In setting out to look for the rare and precious eagle-wood on the mountains, Tcham peasants enjoin their wives, whom they leave at home, not to scold or quarrel in their absence, for such domestic brawls would lead to their husbands being rent in pieces by bears and tigers.³ A Hottentot woman whose husband is out hunting must do one of two things all the time he is away. Either she must light a fire and keep it burning till he comes back; or if she does not choose to do that, she must go to the water and continue to splash it about on the ground. When she is tired with throwing the water about, her place may be taken by her servant, but the exercise must in any case be kept up without cessation. To cease splashing the water or to let the fire out would be equally fatal to the husband's prospect of a successful bag.⁴ At the other end of the world the Lapps similarly object to extinguish a brand in water while any members of the family are out fishing, since to do so would spoil their luck.⁵ Among the Koniags of Alaska a traveller once observed a young woman lying wrapt in a bearskin in the corner of a hut. On asking whether she were ill, he learned that her husband was out whale-fishing, and that until his return she had to lie fasting in order to ensure a good catch.⁶ Among the Esquimaux of Alaska similar notions prevail. The women during the whaling season remain in comparative idleness, as it is con-

¹ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos*, p. 25-27.

² Chalmers, quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 430.

³ E. Aymonier, "Les Tchames et leurs religions," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, xxiv. (1891), p. 278.

⁴ Th. Hahn, *Tsunii - Goam* (London, 1881), p. 77.

⁵ Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarckiae* (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 500.

⁶ Holmberg, "Ueber die Völker des russischen Amerika," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae*, iv. (1856), p. 392.

sidered not good for them to sew while the men are out in the boats. If during this period any garments should need to be repaired, the women must take them far back out of sight of the sea and mend them there in little tents in which just one person can sit. And while the crews are at sea no work should be done at home which would necessitate pounding or hewing or any kind of noise; and in the huts of men who are away in the boats no work of any kind whatever should be carried on.¹ When Bushmen are out hunting, any bad shots they may make are set down to such causes as that the children at home are playing on the men's beds or the like, and the wives who allow such things to happen are blamed for their husbands' indifferent marksmanship.² Elephant-hunters in East Africa believe that, if their wives prove unfaithful in their absence, this gives the elephant power over his pursuer, who will accordingly be killed or severely wounded. Hence if a hunter hears of his wife's misconduct, he abandons the chase and returns home.³ An Aleutian hunter of sea-otters thinks that he cannot kill a single animal if during his absence from home his wife should be unfaithful or his sister unchaste.⁴ Many of the indigenous tribes of Sarawak are firmly persuaded that were the wives to commit adultery while their husbands are searching for camphor in the jungle, the camphor obtained by the men would evaporate.⁵ While men of the Toaripi or Motumotu tribe of Eastern New Guinea are away hunting, fishing, fighting, or on any long journey, the people who remain at home must observe strict chastity, and may not let the fire go out. Those of them who stay in the men's club-houses must further abstain from eating certain foods and from touching anything that belongs to others. A breach of these rules might, it is believed, entail the failure of the expedition.⁶ Among some of the

¹ *Arctic Papers for the Expedition of 1875* (published by the Royal Geographical Society), p. 261 sq.; *Report of the International Polar Expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska* (Washington, 1885), p. 39.

² W. H. I. Bleek, *A Brief Account of Bushman Folklore*, p. 19.

³ P. Reichard, *Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Leipzig, 1892), p. 427.

⁴ I. Petroff, *Report on the population, industries, and resources of Alaska*, p. 155.

⁵ For this information I am indebted to Dr. C. Hose, Resident Magistrate of the Baram district, Sarawak.

⁶ J. Chalmers, "Toaripi," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898), p. 327.

tribes of North-Western New Guinea, when the men are gone on a long journey, as to Ceram or Tidore, the women left at home sing to the moon. The singing takes place in the afternoons, beginning two or three days before the new moon, and lasting for the same time after it. If the silver sickle of the moon is seen in the sky, they raise a loud cry of joy. Asked why they do so, they answer, "Now we see the moon, and so do our husbands, and now we know that they are well; if we did not sing, they would be sick or some other misfortune would befall them."¹ In the Kei Islands, to the south-west of New Guinea, as soon as a vessel that is about to sail for a distant port has been launched, the part of the beach on which it lay is covered as speedily as possible with palm branches, and becomes sacred. No one may thenceforth cross that spot till the ship comes home. To cross it sooner would cause the vessel to perish.²

Where beliefs like these prevail as to the sympathetic connection between friends at a distance, we need not wonder that above everything else war, with its stern yet stirring appeal to some of the deepest and tenderest of human emotions, should quicken in the anxious relations left behind a desire to turn the sympathetic bond to the utmost account for the benefit of the dear ones who may at any moment be fighting and dying far away. Hence, to secure an end so natural and laudable, friends at home are apt to resort to devices which will strike us as pathetic or ludicrous, according as we consider their object or the means adopted to effect it. Thus in some districts of Borneo, when a Dyak is out head-hunting, his wife or, if he is unmarried, his sister must wear a sword day and night in order that he may always be thinking of his weapons; and she may not sleep during the day nor go to bed before two in the morning, lest her husband or brother should thereby be surprised in his sleep by an enemy.³ In other parts of Borneo, when the

¹ J. L. van Hasselt, "Eenige Aanteekeningen aangaande de Bewoners der N. Westkust van Nieuw Guinea, meer bepaaldelijk den Stam der Noefoerezen," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkskunde*, xxxii. (1889), p. 263.

² C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische

Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 831.

³ J. C. E. Tromp, "De Rambai en Sebroeang Dajaks," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkskunde*, xxv. 118.

men are away on a warlike expedition, their mats are spread in their houses just as if they were at home, and the fires are kept up till late in the evening and lighted again before dawn, in order that the men may not be cold. Further, the roofing of the house is opened before daylight to prevent the distant husbands, brothers, and sons from sleeping too late, and so being surprised by the enemy.¹ While a Malay of the Peninsula is away at the wars, his pillows and sleeping-mat at home must be kept rolled up. If any one else were to use them, the absent warrior's courage would fail and disaster would befall him. His wife and children may not have their hair cut in his absence, nor may he himself have his hair shorn.² In the island of Timor, while war is being waged, the high priest never quits the temple; his food is brought to him or cooked inside; day and night he must keep the fire burning, for if he were to let it die out, disaster would befall the warriors and would continue so long as the hearth was cold. Moreover, he must drink only hot water during the time the army is absent; for every draught of cold water would damp the spirits of the people, so that they could not vanquish the enemy.³

An old historian of Madagascar informs us that "while the men are at the wars, and until their return, the women and girls cease not day and night to dance, and neither lie down nor take food in their own houses. And although they are very voluptuously inclined, they would not for anything in the world have an intrigue with another man while their husband is at the war, believing firmly that if that happened, their husband would be either killed or wounded. They believe that by dancing they impart strength, courage, and good fortune to their husbands; accordingly during such times they give themselves no rest, and this custom they observe very religiously."⁴ Similarly a traveller of the seventeenth century writes that in Madagascar "when the man is in battle

¹ H. Ling Roth, "Low's Natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxii. (1893), p. 56.

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 524.

³ H. O. Forbes, "On some Tribes of the Island of Timor," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii.

(1884), p. 414.

⁴ De Flacourt, *Histoire de la Grande Isle Madagascar* (Paris, 1658), p. 97 sq. A statement of the same sort is made by the Abbé Rochon, *Voyage to Madagascar and the East Indies*, translated from the French (London, 1792), p. 46 sq.

or under march, the wife continually dances and sings, and will not sleep or eat in her own house, nor admit of the use of any other man, unless she be desirous to be rid of her own; for they entertain this opinion among them, that if they suffer themselves to be overcome in an *intestin war* at home, their husbands must suffer for it, being engaged in a *foreign expedition*; but, on the contrary, if they behave themselves chastely, and dance lustily, that then their husbands, by some certain sympathetical operation, will be able to vanquish all their combatants."¹ We have seen that among the elephant-hunters of East Africa the infidelity of the wife at home is believed to have a similarly disastrous effect on her absent husband. In the Babar Archipelago, also, when the men are at the wars the women at home are bound to chastity, and they must fast besides.² Under similar circumstances in the islands of Leti, Moa, and Lakor the women and children are forbidden to remain inside of the houses and to twine thread or weave.³

When Galelareese men are going away to war, they are accompanied down to the boats by the women. But after the leave-taking is over the women, in returning to their houses, must be careful not to stumble nor fall, and in the house they may neither be angry nor lift up weapons against each other; otherwise the men will fall and be killed in battle.⁴ Similarly, we saw that in Laos domestic brawls at home are supposed to cause the searcher for eagle-wood to fall a prey to wild beasts on the mountains. Further, Galelareese women may not lay down the chopping knives in the house while their husbands are at the wars; the knives must always be hung up on hooks.⁵ The reason for the rule is not given; we may conjecture that it is a fear lest, if the chopping knives were laid down by the women at home, the men would be apt to lay down their weapons in the battle or at other inopportune moments.

¹ John Struys, *Voyages and Travels* (London, 1684), p. 22. Struys may have copied from De Flacourt.

² J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Sebeas en Papua*, p. 341.

³ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 377.

⁴ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, verhalen en overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 507.

⁵ M. J. van Baarda, *l.c.*

In the Kei Islands, when the warriors have departed, the women return indoors and bring out certain baskets containing fruits and stones. These fruits and stones they anoint and place on a board, murmuring as they do so, "O lord sun, moon, let the bullets rebound from our husbands, brothers, betrothed, and other relations, just as raindrops rebound from these objects which are smeared with oil." As soon as the first shot is heard, the baskets are put aside, and the women, seizing their fans, rush out of the houses. Then, waving their fans in the direction of the enemy, they run through the village, while they sing, "O golden fans! let our bullets hit, and those of the enemy miss."¹ In this custom the ceremony of anointing stones in order that the bullets may recoil from the men like raindrops from the stones is a piece of pure sympathetic or imitative magic; but the prayer to the sun, that he will be pleased to give effect to the charm, is a religious and perhaps later addition. The waving of the fans seems to be a charm to direct the bullets towards or away from their mark, according as they are discharged from the guns of friends or foes.

Among the Tshi-speaking peoples of the Gold Coast the wives of men who are away with the army paint themselves white, and adorn their persons with beads and charms. On the day when a battle is expected to take place, they run about armed with guns, or sticks carved to look like guns, and taking green paw-paws (fruits shaped somewhat like a melon), they hack them with knives, as if they were chopping off the heads of the foe.² The pantomime is no doubt merely an imitative charm, to enable the men to do to the enemy as the women do to the paw-paws. In the West African town of Framin, while the Ashantee war was raging some years ago, Mr. Fitzgerald Marriott saw a dance performed by women whose husbands had gone as carriers to the war. They were painted white and wore nothing but a short petticoat. At their head was a shrivelled old sorceress in a very short white petticoat, her black hair arranged in a sort of long projecting

¹ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x.

(1893), p. 805.

² A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 226.

horn, and her black face, breasts, arms, and legs profusely adorned with white circles and crescents. All carried long white brushes made of buffalo or horse tails, and as they danced they sang, "Our husbands have gone to Ashantee-land; may they sweep their enemies off the face of the earth!"¹ When the men of the Yuki tribe of Indians in California were away fighting, the women at home did not sleep; they danced without stopping in a circle, chanting and waving leafy wands. For they said that if they danced all the time, their husbands would not grow tired.² In the Kafir district of the Hindu Kush, while the men are out raiding, the women abandon their work in the fields and assemble in the villages to dance day and night. The dances are kept up most of each day and the whole of each night. Sir George Robertson, who reports the custom, more than once watched the dancers dancing at midnight and in the early morning, and could see by the fitful glow of the wood-fire how haggard and tired they looked, yet how gravely and earnestly they persisted in what they regarded as a serious duty.³ The dances of these Kafirs are said to be performed in honour of certain of the national gods, but when we consider the custom in connection with the others which have just been passed in review, we may reasonably surmise that it is or was originally in its essence a sympathetic charm intended to keep the absent warriors wakeful, lest they should be surprised in their sleep by the enemy. When a band of Carib Indians of the Orinoco had gone on the war-path, their friends left in the village used to calculate as nearly as they could the exact moment when the absent warriors would be advancing to attack the enemy. Then they took two lads, laid them down on a bench, and inflicted a most severe scourging on their bare backs. This the youths submitted to without a murmur, supported in their sufferings by the firm conviction, in which they had been bred from childhood, that on the constancy and fortitude

¹ H. P. Fitzgerald Marriott, *The Secret Tribal Societies of West Africa*, p. 17 (reprinted from *Ars quatuor Coronatorum*, the transactions of a Masonic lodge of London). The lamented Miss Mary H. Kingsley was so kind as to

lend me a copy of this work.

² S. Powers, *Tribes of California* (Washington, 1877), p. 129 sq.

³ Sir George Scott Robertson, *The Kafirs of the Hindu Kush* (London, 1896), pp. 335, 621-626.

with which they bore the cruel ordeal depended the valour and success of their comrades in the battle.¹

Among the many beneficent uses to which a mistaken ingenuity has applied the principle of imitative magic, is that of causing trees and plants to bear fruit in due season. In Thuringen the man who sows flax carries the seed in a long bag which reaches from his shoulders to his knees, and he walks with long strides, so that the bag sways to and fro on his back. It is believed that this will cause the flax to wave in the wind.² In the interior of Sumatra rice is sown by women who, in sowing, let their hair hang loose down their back, in order that the rice may grow luxuriantly and have long stalks.³ Similarly, in ancient Mexico a festival was held in honour of the goddess of maize, or "the long-haired mother," as she was called. It began at the time "when the plant had attained its full growth, and fibres shooting forth from the top of the green ear indicated that the grain was fully formed. During this festival the women wore their long hair unbound, shaking and tossing it in the dances which were the chief feature in the ceremonial, in order that the tassel of the maize might grow in like profusion, that the grain might be correspondingly large and flat, and that the people might have abundance."⁴ It is a Malay maxim to plant maize when your stomach is full, and to see to it that your dibble is thick; for this will swell the ear of the maize.⁵ More elaborate still are the measures taken by an Esthonian peasant woman to make her cabbages thrive. On the day when they are sown she bakes great pancakes, in order that the cabbages may have great broad leaves; and she wears a dazzling white hood in the belief that this will cause the cabbages to have fine white heads. Moreover, as soon as the cabbages are transplanted, a small

¹ Antonio Caulin, *Historia Corographica natural y evangelica de la Nueva Andalucia de Cumana, Guayana y Vertientes del Rio Orinoco* (1779), p. 97.

² Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 218, § 36.

³ A. L. van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra* (Leyden, 1882), p. 323; J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minang-

kalauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 64.

⁴ E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. (Oxford, 1892), p. 421. Compare Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, i. 518 sq.

⁵ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 217.

round stone is wrapt up tightly in a white linen rag and set at the end of the cabbage bed, because in this way the cabbage heads will grow very white and firm.¹ For much the same reason a Bavarian sower in sowing wheat will sometimes wear a golden ring, in order that the corn may have a fine yellow colour.² In the Vosges mountains the sower of hemp pulls his nether garments up as far as he can, because he imagines that the hemp he is sowing will attain the precise height to which he has succeeded in hitching up his breeches;³ and in the same region another way of ensuring a good crop of hemp is to dance on the roof of the house on Twelfth Day.⁴ In Swabia and among the Transylvanian Saxons it is a common custom for a man who has sown hemp to leap high on the field, in the belief that this will make the hemp grow tall.⁵ Similarly in many other parts of Germany and Austria the peasant imagines that he makes the flax grow tall by dancing or leaping high, or by jumping backwards from a table; the higher the leap the higher will the flax be that year. The special season for thus promoting the growth of flax is Shrove Tuesday, but in some places it is Candlemas or Walpurgis Night (the eve of May Day). The scene of the performance is the flax field or the farmhouse or the village tavern.⁶ In some parts of eastern Prussia the girls dance

¹ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 133. Compare F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehsten*, p. 447.

² Panzer, *Beitrags zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 207, § 362; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 297, iii. 343.

³ L. F. Sauvé, *Le Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges* (Paris, 1889), p. 142.

⁴ Sauvé, *op. cit.*, p. 17 sq.

⁵ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 499; A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt, 1880), p. 11.

⁶ Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 445, § 354; Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 95, § 664; A. Peter, *Volksmärchen aus österreich-*

isch Schlesien, ii. 266; Von Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 49; E. Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen*, p. 148; O. Knoop, *Volkssagen, Erzählungen, Aberglauben, Gebräuche und Märchen aus dem östlichen Hinterpommern*, p. 176; A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 191, § 13; J. F. L. Woeste, *Volksüberlieferungen in der Grafschaft Mark*, p. 56, § 24; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 298, iv. 2. pp. 379, 382; A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens*, p. 11 sq.; W. von Schulenberg, *Wendische Volksagen und Gebräuche aus dem Spreewald*, p. 252; J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch, Aberglauben, Sagen und andre alte Überlieferungen im Voigtlande*, p. 368 sq.; *Die gestrigelte Rothenphilosophie*

one by one in a large hoop at midnight on Shrove Tuesday. The hoop is adorned with leaves, flowers, and ribbons, and attached to it are a small bell and some flax. Strictly speaking, the hoop should be wrapt in white linen handkerchiefs, but the place of these is often taken by many-coloured bits of cloth, wool, and so forth. While dancing within the hoop each girl has to wave her arms vigorously and cry "Flax grow!" or words to that effect. When she has done, she leaps out of the hoop, or is lifted out of it by her partner.¹ In Anhalt, when the sower had sown the flax, he leaped up and flung the seed-bag high in the air, saying, "Grow and turn green! You have nothing else to do." He hoped that the flax would grow as high as he flung the seed-bag in the air. At Quellendorff, in Anhalt, the first bushel of seed-corn had to be heaped up high in order that the corn-stalks should grow tall and bear plenty of grain.² Among the Ilocans of Luzon it is a rule that the man who sows bananas must have a small child on his shoulder, or the bananas will bear no fruit.³ Here the young child on the sower's shoulder clearly represents, and is expected to promote the growth of, the young bananas.

The notion that a person can influence a plant sympathetically by his act or condition comes out clearly in a remark made by a Malay woman. Being asked why she stripped the upper part of her body naked in reaping the rice, she explained that she did it to make the rice-husks thinner, as she was tired of pounding thick-husked rice.⁴ Clearly, she thought that the less clothing she wore the less

(Chemnitz, 1759), p. 103; M. Toepfen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 68; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 396, § 657; U. Jahn, *Die deutsche Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht*, p. 194 sq. According to one account, in leaping from the table you should hold in your hand a long bag containing flax seed (Woeste, *l.c.*). The dancing or leaping is often done specially by girls or women (Kuhn und Schwartz, Grohmann, Witzschel, Heinrich, *l.c.*). Sometimes the women dance in the sunlight (*Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie*, *l.c.*); but in Voigtland the leap from the

table should be made by the housewife naked and at midnight on Shrove Tuesday (Köhler, *l.c.*). On Walpurgis Night the leap is made over an alder branch stuck at the edge of the flax field (Sommer, *l.c.*).

¹ E. Lemke, *Volksstümliches in Ostpreussen*, pp. 8-12; M. Toepfen, *l.c.*

² O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 149 sq.

³ F. Blumentritt, "Sitten und Bräuche der Ilocanen," *Globus*, xlviii. No. 12, p. 202.

⁴ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 248.

husk there would be on the rice. Among the Minangkabauers of Sumatra when a rice barn has been built a feast is held, of which a woman far advanced in pregnancy must partake. Her condition will obviously help the rice to be fruitful and multiply.¹ For a similar reason in Syria when a fruit tree does not bear, the gardener gets a pregnant woman to fasten a stone to one of its branches; then the tree will be sure to bear fruit, but the woman will run a risk of miscarriage,² having transferred her fertility, or part of it, to the tree. The practice of loading with stones a tree which casts its fruit is mentioned by Maimonides,³ though the Rabbis apparently did not understand it. The proceeding was most probably an imitative charm designed to load the tree with fruit.⁴ In Swabia they say that if a fruit-tree does not bear, you should keep it loaded with a heavy stone all summer, and next year it will be sure to bear.⁵ The magic virtue of a pregnant woman to communicate fertility is known also to Bavarian and Austrian peasants, who think that if you give the first fruit of a tree to a woman with child to eat, the tree will bring forth abundantly next year.⁶ In Bohemia for a similar purpose the first apple of a

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 67.

² Eijū Abē, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss abergläubischer Gebräuche in Syrien," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, vii. (1884), p. 112, § 202.

³ Quoted by D. Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 469.

⁴ W. Mannhardt (*Baumkultus*, p. 419) promised in a later investigation to prove that it was an ancient custom at harvest or in spring to load or pelt trees and plants, as well as the representatives of the spirit of vegetation, with stones, in order thereby to express the weight of fruit which was expected. This promise, so far as I know, he did not live to fulfil. Compare, however, his *Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 324.

⁵ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 249

sq. The placing of the stone on the tree is described as a punishment, but this is probably a misunderstanding.

⁶ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 299; Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 315. On the other hand, in some parts of North-west New Guinea a woman with child may not plant, or the crop would be eaten up by pigs; and she may not climb a tree in the rice-field, or the crop would fail. See J. L. van Hasselt, "Enige Aanteekeningen aangaande de Bewoners der N. Westkust van Nieuw Guinea," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxii. (1889), p. 264. Similarly the Galelareese say that a pregnant woman must not sweep under a shaddock tree, or knock the fruit from the bough, else it will taste sour instead of sweet. See M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 457.

young tree is sometimes plucked and eaten by a woman who has borne many children, for then the tree will be sure to bear many apples.¹ When a tree bears no fruit, the Galelareese think it is a male; and their remedy is simple. They put a woman's petticoat on the tree, which, being thus converted into a female, will naturally prove prolific.² Arguing similarly from what may be called the infectiousness of qualities or accidents, the same people say that you ought not to shoot with a bow and arrows under a fruit tree, or the tree will cast its fruit even as the arrows fall to the ground;³ and that when you are eating water-melon you ought not to mix the pips which you spit out of your mouth with the pips which you have put aside to serve as seed; for if you do, though the pips you spat out may certainly spring up and blossom, yet the blossoms will keep falling off just as the pips fell from your mouth, and thus these pips will never bear fruit.⁴ Precisely the same train of thought leads the Bavarian peasant to believe that if he allows the graft of a fruit tree to fall on the ground, the tree that springs from that graft will let its fruit fall untimely.⁵ In Nias the day after a man has made preparations for planting rice he may not use fire, or the crop would be parched; he may not spread his mats on the ground, or the young plants would droop towards the earth.⁶

In these cases a person is supposed to influence vegetation sympathetically. He infects trees or plants with qualities or accidents, good or bad, resembling and derived from his own. But on the principle of sympathetic magic the influence is mutual: the plant can infect the man just as much as the man can infect the plant. It is a Galelareese belief that if you eat a fruit which has fallen to the ground, you will yourself contract a disposition to stumble and fall; and that if you partake of something which has been forgotten (such as a sweet potato left in the pot or a banana in the fire), you will become forgetful.⁷ The Galelareese are also of opinion that if

¹ Grohman, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 143, § 1053.

² M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 489.

³ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 488.

⁴ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 496 *sq.*

⁵ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 299.

⁶ E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 590.

⁷ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* pp. 466, 468.

a woman were to consume two bananas growing from a single head she would give birth to twins.¹ In Vedic times a curious application of this principle supplied a charm by which a banished prince might be restored to his kingdom. He had to eat food cooked on a fire which was fed with wood which had grown out of the stump of a tree which had been cut down. The recuperative power manifested by such a tree would in due course be communicated through the fire to the food, and so to the prince, who ate the food which was cooked on the fire which was fed with the wood which grew out of the tree.² Among the Lkúŋen Indians of Vancouver Island an infallible means of making your hair grow long is to rub it with fish oil and the pulverised fruit of a particular kind of poplar (*Populus trichocarpa*). As the fruit grows a long way up the tree, it cannot fail to make your hair grow long too.³ Near Charlotte Waters, in Central Australia, there is a tree which sprang up to mark the spot where a blind man died. It is called the Blind Tree by the natives, who think that if it were cut down all the people of the neighbourhood would become blind. A man who wishes to deprive his enemy of sight need only go to the tree by himself and rub it, muttering his wish and exhorting the magic virtue to go forth and do its baleful work.⁴

In this last example the contagious quality, though it emanates directly from a tree, is derived originally from a man—namely, the blind man—who was buried at the place where the tree grew. Similarly, the Central Australians believe that a certain group of stones at Undiara are the petrified boils of an old man who long ago plucked them from his body and left them there; hence any man who wishes to infect his enemy with boils will go to these stones and throw miniature spears at them, taking care that the points of the spears strike the stones. Then the spears are picked up, and thrown one by one in the direction of the person whom it is intended to injure. The spears carry with them the magic virtue from the stones, and the result is an

¹ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 467.

² H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 505.

³ Fr. Hoas, in *Sixth Report on the*

North-Western Tribes of Canada, p. 25 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 552.

eruption of painful boils on the body of the victim. Sometimes a whole group of people can be afflicted in this way by a skilful magician.¹ Again, certain qualities are attributed to the dead as such, and it is supposed that these qualities can be communicated by contagion to the living. Thus among the Galelareese, when a young man goes a-wooing at night, he takes a little earth from a grave and strews it on the roof of his sweetheart's house just above the place where her parents sleep. This, he fancies, will prevent them from waking while he converses with his beloved, since the earth from the grave will make them sleep as sound as the dead.² Similarly, a South Slavonian burglar sometimes begins operations by throwing a dead man's bone over the house, saying, "As this bone may waken, so may these people waken"; after that not a soul in the house can keep his or her eyes open.³ Again, Servian and Bulgarian women who chafe at the restraints of domestic life will take the copper coins from the eyes of a corpse, wash them in wine or water, and give the liquid to their husbands to drink. After swallowing it, the husband will be as blind to his wife's peccadilloes as the dead man was on whose eyes the coins were laid.⁴ When a Blackfoot Indian went out eagle-hunting, he used to take a skull with him, because he believed that the skull would make him invisible, like the dead person to whom it had belonged, and so the eagles would not be able to see and attack him.⁵

Again, animals are often conceived to possess qualities or properties which might be useful to man, and imitative magic seeks to transfer or communicate these properties to human beings in various ways. Thus some Bechuanas wear a ferret as a charm, because, being very tenacious of life, it will make

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 550.

² M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 462.

³ F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 146.

⁴ F. S. Krauss, *op. cit.* p. 140. The custom of placing coins on the eyes of a corpse to prevent them from opening

is not uncommon. Its observance in England is attested by the experienced Mrs. Gamp:—"When Gamp was summonsed to his long home, and I see him a-lying in Guy's Hospital with a penny piece on each eye, and his wooden leg under his left arm, I thought I should have fainted away. But I bore up" (*Martin Chuzzlewit*, ch. xix.).

⁵ G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 238.

them difficult to kill.¹ Others wear a certain insect, mutilated, but living, for a similar purpose.² Yet other Bechuana warriors wear the hair of a hornless ox among their own hair, and the skin of a frog on their mantle, because a frog is slippery, and the ox, having no horns, is hard to catch; so the man who is provided with these charms believes that he will be as hard to hold as the ox and the frog.³ Again, it seems plain that a South African warrior who twists tufts of rats' hair among his own curly black locks will have just as many chances of avoiding the enemy's spear as the nimble rat has of avoiding things thrown at it; hence in these regions rats' hair is in great demand when war is expected.⁴ In Morocco a fowl or a pigeon may sometimes be seen with a little red bundle tied to its foot; the bundle contains a charm, and it is believed that as the charm is kept in constant motion by the bird, a corresponding restlessness is kept up in the mind of him or her against whom the charm is directed.⁵ One of the ancient books of India prescribes that when a sacrifice is offered for victory, the earth out of which the altar is to be made should be taken from a place where a boar has been wallowing, since the strength of the boar will be in that earth.⁶ When you are playing the one-stringed lute, and your fingers are stiff, the thing to do is to catch some long-legged field spiders and roast them, and then rub your fingers with the ashes; that will make your fingers as lithe and nimble as the spiders' legs—at least so think the Galelareese.⁷ The Lkūngen Indians of Vancouver's Island believe that the ashes of wasps rubbed on the faces of warriors going to battle will render the men as pugnacious as wasps, and that a decoction of wasps' nests or of flies administered internally to barren women will make them prolific like

¹ J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey*, ii. 206; Barnabas Shaw, *Memorials of South Africa*, p. 66.

² Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 271 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 272.

⁴ Rev. James Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, Religions, and Superstitions of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891),

p. 132.

⁵ A. Leared, *Morocco and the Moors* (London, 1876), p. 272.

⁶ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 505.

⁷ M. J. van Bearda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 484.

the insects.¹ When a South Slavonian has a mind to pilfer and steal at market, he has nothing to do but to burn a blind cat, and then throw a pinch of its ashes over the person with whom he is higgling; after that he can take what he likes from the booth, and the owner will not be a bit the wiser, having become as blind as the deceased cat with whose ashes he has been sprinkled. The thief may even ask boldly, "Did I pay for it?" and the deluded huckster will reply, "Why, certainly."² Equally simple and effectual is the expedient adopted by natives of Central Australia who desire to cultivate their beards. They prick the chin all over with a pointed bone, and then stroke it carefully with a magic stick or stone, which represents a kind of rat that has very long whiskers. The virtue of these whiskers naturally passes into the representative stick or stone, and thence by an easy transition to the chin, which, consequently, is soon adorned with a rich growth of beard.³ When a party of these same natives has returned from killing a foe, and they fear to be attacked by the ghost of the dead man in their sleep, every one of them takes care to wear the tip of a rabbit-kangaroo in his hair. Why? Because the rabbit-kangaroo being a nocturnal animal, does not sleep of nights; and therefore a man who wears a tip of its tail in his hair will clearly be wakeful during the hours of darkness.⁴

On the principle of sympathetic magic, inanimate things, as well as plants and animals, may diffuse blessing or bane around them, according to their own intrinsic nature and the skill of the wizard to tap or dam, as the case may be, the stream of weal or woe. Thus, for example, the Galelareese think that when your teeth are being filed you should keep spitting on a pebble, for this establishes a sympathetic connection between you and the pebble, by virtue of which your teeth will henceforth be as hard and durable as a stone. On the other hand, you ought not to comb a child before it has teethed, for if you do, its teeth

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 25 (separate reprint from *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

² F. S. Krauss, *Volks glaube und*

religiöser Brauch der Südslaven, p. 147.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 545 sq.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 494 sq.

will afterwards be separated from each other like the teeth of a comb.¹ Nor should children look at a sieve, otherwise they will suffer from a skin disease, and will have as many sores on their bodies as there are holes in the sieve.² Again, if you are imprudent enough to eat while somebody is sharpening a knife, your throat will be cut that same evening, or next morning at latest.³ The disastrous influence thus attributed, under certain circumstances, to a knife in the East Indies, finds its counterpart in a curious old Greek story. A certain king had no child, and he asked a wise man how he could get one. The wise man himself did not know, but he thought that the birds of the air might, and he undertook to inquire of them. For you must know that the sage understood the language of birds, having learned it through some serpents whose life he had saved, and who, out of gratitude, had cleansed his ears as he slept. So he sacrificed two bulls, and cut them up, and prayed the fowls to come and feast on the flesh; only the vulture he did not invite. When the birds came, the wise man asked them what the king must do to get a son; but none of them knew. At last up came the vulture, and he knew all about it. He said that once when the king was a child his royal father was gelding rams in the field, and laid down the bloody knife beside his little son; nay, he threatened the boy with it. The child was afraid and ran away, and the father stuck the knife in a tree. Meanwhile, the bark of the tree had grown round the knife and hidden it. The vulture said that if they found the knife, scraped the rust off it, and gave the rust, mixed with wine, to the king to drink for ten days, he would beget a son. They did so, and it fell out exactly as the vulture had said.⁴ In this story a knife which had gelded rams is supposed to have deprived a boy of his virility merely by being brought near his person.

¹ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galee-areezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 483.

² M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 534.

³ M. J. van Baarda, *op. cit.* p. 468.

⁴ The king was Iphiclus; the wise man was Melampus. See Apollodorus, i. 9. 12; Eustathius on Homer, *Od.*

xi. 292; Schol. on Theocritus, iii. 43. The way in which the king's impotence was caused by the knife is clearly indicated by the scholiast on Theocritus: *συνέβη ἐρευνεῖν αὐτὴν* [scil. *τῆς μάχαιρας*] τοῖς μορίοις τοῦ παιδός. In this scholium we must correct *ἐκρέμωσσι* . . . *δέρπου* into *ἐκρέμωσσι* . . . *ῥα*. Eustathius (*l.c.*) quotes the scholium in this latter form. The animals were rams, according to Apollodorus.

Through simple proximity it infected him, so to say, with the same disability which it had already inflicted on the rams ; and the loss he thus sustained was afterwards repaired by administering to him in a potion the rust which, having been left on the blade by the blood of the animals, might be supposed to be still imbued with their generative faculty.

The Melanesians believe that certain sacred stones are endowed with miraculous powers which correspond in their nature to the shape of the stone. Thus a piece of water-worn coral on the beach often bears a surprising likeness to a bread-fruit. Hence a man who finds such a coral will lay it at the root of one of his bread-fruit trees in the expectation that it will make the tree bear well. If the result answers his expectation, he will then, for a proper remuneration, take stones of less marked character from other men and let them lie near his, in order to imbue them with the magic virtue which resides in it. Similarly, a stone with little discs upon it is good to bring in money ; and if a man found a large stone with a number of small ones under it, like a sow among her litter, he was sure that to offer money upon it would bring him pigs. In these and similar cases the Melanesians ascribe the marvellous power, not to the stone itself, but to its indwelling spirit ; and sometimes, as we have just seen, a man endeavours to propitiate the spirit by laying down offerings on the stone.¹ But the conception of spirits that must be propitiated lies outside the sphere of magic, and within that of religion. Where such a conception is found, as here, in conjunction with purely magical ideas and practices, the latter may generally be assumed to be the original stock on which the religious conception has been at some later time engrafted. For there are strong grounds for thinking that, in the evolution of thought, magic has preceded religion. But to this point we shall return presently.

Dwellers by the sea cannot fail to be impressed by the sight of its ceaseless ebb and flow, and are apt, on the principles of that rude philosophy of sympathy and resemblance, which here engages our attention, to trace a subtle relation, a secret harmony, between its tides and the life of man.

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians* (Oxford, 1891), pp. 181-185.

animals, and of plants. In the flowing tide they see not merely a symbol, but a cause of exuberance, of prosperity, and of life, while in the ebbing tide they discern a real agent as well as a melancholy emblem of failure, of weakness, and of death. The Breton peasant fancies that clover sown when the tide is coming in will grow well, but that if the plant be sown at low water or when the tide is going out, it will never reach maturity, and that the cows which feed on it will burst.¹ His wife believes that the best butter is made when the tide has just turned and is beginning to flow, that milk which foams in the churn will go on foaming till the hour of high water is past, and that water drawn from the well or milk extracted from the cow while the tide is rising will boil up in the pot or saucepan and overflow into the fire.² The Galelareese say that if you wish to make oil, you should do it when the tide is high, for then you will get plenty of oil.³ According to some of the ancients, the skins of seals, even after they had been parted from their bodies, remained in secret sympathy with the sea, and were observed to ruffle when the tide was on the ebb.⁴ Another ancient belief, attributed to Aristotle, was that no creature can die except at ebb tide. The belief, if we can trust Pliny, was confirmed by experience, so far as regards human beings, on the coast of France.⁵ Philostratus also assures us that at Cadiz dying people never yielded up the ghost while the water was high.⁶ A like fancy still lingers in some parts of Europe. On the Cantabrian coast of Spain they think that persons who die of chronic or acute disease expire at the moment when the tide begins to recede.⁷ In Portugal, all along the coast of Wales, and on some parts of the coast of Brittany, a belief is said to prevail that people are born when the tide comes in, and die when it goes out.⁸ Dickens attests the existence of the same superstition in England. "People

¹ P. Sébillot, *Légendes, croyances et superstitions de la mer*, i. 136.

² P. Sébillot, *op. cit.* i. 135.

³ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkskunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 499.

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ix. 42.

⁵ *Ibid.* ii. 220.

⁶ Philostratus, *Vit. Apollon.* v. 2.

⁷ P. Sébillot, *Légendes, croyances et superstitions de la mer*, i. 132.

⁸ P. Sébillot, *op. cit.* i. 129-132; M. E. James in *Folklore*, ix. (1898), p. 189.

can't die, along the coast," said Mr. Peggotty, "except when the tide's pretty nigh out. They can't be born, unless it's pretty nigh in—not properly born till flood."¹ The belief that most deaths happen at ebb tide is said to be held along the east coast of England from Northumberland to Kent.² Shakespeare must have been familiar with it, for he makes Falstaff die "even just between twelve and one, e'en at the turning o' the tide."³ We meet it again on the Pacific coast of North America among the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands. Whenever a good Haida is about to die he sees a canoe manned by some of his dead friends, who come with the tide to bid him welcome to the spirit land. "Come with us now," they say, "for the tide is about to ebb and we must depart."⁴ At the other extremity of America the same fancy has been noted among the Indians of Southern Chili. A Chilote Indian in the last stage of consumption, after preparing to die like a good Catholic, was heard to ask how the tide was running. When his sister told him that it was still coming in, he smiled and said that he had still a little while to live. It was his firm conviction that with the ebbing tide his soul would pass to the ocean of eternity.⁵

To ensure a long life the Chinese have recourse to certain complicated charms, which concentrate in themselves the magical essence emanating, on the principle of similarity or imitation, from times and seasons, from persons and from things. The vehicles employed to transmit these happy influences are no other than grave-clothes. These are provided by many Chinese in their lifetime, and most people have them cut out and sewn by an unmarried girl or a very young woman, wisely calculating that, since such a person is likely to live a great many years to come, a part of her capacity to live long must surely pass into the clothes, and thus stave off for many years the time when they shall be put to their proper use. Further, the garments are made by preference

¹ Dickens, *David Copperfield*, chap. xxx.

² W. Henderson, *Folklore of the Northern Counties of England*, p. 58.

³ *Henry IV.* Act ii. Scene 3.

⁴ Rev. C. Harrison, "Religion and

Family among the Haidas," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 17 sq.

⁵ C. Martin, "Ueber die Eingeborenen von Chiloe," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, ix. (1877), p. 179.

in a year which has an intercalary month ; for to the Chinese mind it seems plain that grave-clothes made in a year which is unusually long will possess the capacity of prolonging life in an unusually high degree. Amongst the clothes there is one robe in particular on which special pains have been lavished to imbue it with this priceless quality. It is a long silken gown of the deepest blue colour, with the word "longevity" embroidered all over it in thread of gold. To present an aged parent with one of these costly and splendid mantles, known as "longevity garments," is esteemed by the Chinese an act of filial piety and a delicate mark of attention. As the garment purports to prolong the life of its owner, he often wears it, especially on festive occasions, in order to allow the influence of longevity, created by the many golden letters with which it is bespangled, to work their full effect upon his person. On his birthday, above all, he hardly ever fails to don it, for in China common sense bids a man lay in a large stock of vital energy on his birthday, to be expended in the form of health and vigour during the rest of the year. Attired in the gorgeous pall, and absorbing its blessed influence at every pore, the happy owner receives complacently the congratulations of friends and relations, who warmly express their admiration of these magnificent ceremonies, and of the filial piety which prompted the children to bestow so beautiful and useful a present on the author of their being.¹

Another application of the maxim that like produces like is seen in the Chinese belief that the fortunes of a town are deeply affected by its shape, and that they must vary according to the character of the thing which that shape most nearly resembles. Thus it is related that long ago the town of Tsuen-cheu-fu, the outlines of which are like those of a carp, frequently fell a prey to the depredations of the neighbouring city of Yung-chun, which is shaped like a fishing-net, until the inhabitants of the former town con-

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, i. pp. 60-63. Among the hairpins provided for a woman's burial is almost always one which is adorned with small silver figures of a stag, a tortoise, a peach, and a crane. These being emblems of longevity, it is

supposed that the pin which is decorated with them will absorb some of their life-giving power and communicate it to the woman in whose hair it is ultimately to be fastened. See De Groot, *op. cit.* i. pp. 55-57.

ceived the plan of erecting two tall pagodas in their midst. These pagodas, which still tower above the city of Tsuencheu-fu, have ever since exercised the happiest influence over its destiny by intercepting the imaginary net before it could descend and entangle in its meshes the imaginary carp.¹ Some thirty years ago the wise men of Shanghai were much exercised to discover the cause of a local rebellion. On careful inquiry they ascertained that the rebellion was due to the shape of a large new temple which had most unfortunately been built in the shape of a tortoise—an animal of the very worst character. The difficulty was serious, the danger was pressing; for to pull down the temple would have been impious, and to let it stand as it was would be to court a succession of similar or worse disasters. However, the genius of the local professors of geomancy, rising to the occasion, triumphantly surmounted the difficulty and obviated the danger. By filling up two wells, which represented the eyes of the tortoise, they at once blinded that disreputable animal and rendered him incapable of doing further mischief.²

Thus far we have been considering that branch of sympathetic magic which may be called mimetic or imitative. Its leading principle, as we have seen, is that like produces like, or, in other words, that an effect resembles its cause. On the other hand, sympathetic magic in the strict sense of the word proceeds upon the assumption that things which have once been conjoined must remain ever afterwards, even when quite dissevered from each other, in such a sympathetic relation that whatever is done to the one must similarly affect the other.³ The most familiar example is the magic sympathy which is supposed to exist between a man and any severed portion of his person, as his hair or nails; so that whoever gets possession of human hair or nails may work his will, at any distance, upon the person from whom they were cut. This superstition is world-wide; instances of it in regard to hair and nails will be noticed later on.⁴

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *op. cit.* iii. 977.

² J. J. M. de Groot, *op. cit.* iii. p. 1043 *sq.*

³ The principles of sympathetic magic, in the strict sense, are lucidly

stated and copiously illustrated by Mr. E. S. Hartland in the second volume of his *Legend of Perseus*.

⁴ See chap. ii. § 3, "Royal and Priestly Taboos."

relation continued to exist between the lad and
er the latter had been extracted from his gums.
g some of the tribes about the river Darling, in
Wales, the extracted tooth was placed under the
e near a river or water-hole ; if the bark grew over
if the tooth fell into the water, all was well ; but if
sed and the ants ran over it, the natives believed
y would suffer from a disease of the mouth.²
ain Victorian tribes the tree in which the teeth
n concealed was ever afterwards in some sense

It was made known only to certain persons of
d the youth himself was never allowed to learn
eth had been deposited. If he died, the foot of
stripped of its bark, and the tree itself was killed
a fire about it, " so that it might remain stricken
a monument of the deceased." ³ This latter
is to a belief that even after being severed from
teeth remained so intimately united with it by
pathy, that when it perished they too must be
Among the Murring and other tribes of New
s the extracted tooth was at first taken care of
man, and then passed from one headman to
l it had gone all round the community, when it
o the lad's father, and finally to the lad himself.
: it was thus conveyed from hand to hand. it

of the tooth in great danger.¹ Mr. A. W. Howitt once acted as custodian of the teeth which had been extracted from some novices at a ceremony of initiation, and the old men earnestly besought him not to carry them in a bag in which they knew that he had some quartz crystals. They declared that if he did so the magic of the crystals would pass into the teeth, and so injure the boys.² Nearly a year after Mr. Howitt's return from the ceremony he was visited by one of the principal men of the Murring tribe, who had travelled about three hundred miles from his home to fetch back the teeth. This man explained that he had been sent for them because one of the boys had fallen into ill health, and it was believed that the teeth had received some injury which had affected him. He was assured that the teeth had been kept in a box apart from any substances, like quartz crystals, which could influence them; and he returned home bearing the teeth with him carefully wrapt up and concealed.³ Among the Dieri tribe of South Australia the teeth knocked out at initiation were bound up in emu feathers, and kept by the boy's father or his next of kin until the mouth had healed, and even for long afterwards. Then the father, accompanied by a few old men, performed a ceremony for the purpose of taking all the supposed life out of the teeth. He made a low rumbling noise without uttering any words, blew two or three times with his mouth, and jerked the teeth through his hand to some little distance. After that he buried them about eighteen inches under ground. The jerking movement was meant to show that he thereby took all the life out of the teeth. Had he failed to do so, the boy would, in the opinion of the natives, have been liable to an ulcerated and wry mouth, impediment in speech, and ultimately a distorted face.⁴ This ceremony is interesting as a rare instance of an attempt to break the sympathetic link between a man and a severed part of himself by rendering the part insensitive.

In many parts of the world it is customary to put extracted teeth in some place where they will be found by a

¹ A. W. Howitt, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 456 sq.

² *Ibid.* xvi. (1887), p. 55.

³ *Ibid.* xx. (1891), p. 81.

⁴ *Ibid.* xx. (1891), p. 80 sq.

Or you should go behind the stove and throw backwards over your head, saying, " Mouse, give tooth ; I will give you my bone tooth." After her teeth will remain good. German children ; mouse, come out and bring me out a new " Mouse, I give you a little bone ; give me a or " Mouse, there is an old tooth for you ; make e." In Bavaria they say that if this ceremony the child's second teeth will be as white as the .¹ Amongst the South Slavonians, too, the child throw his tooth into a dark corner and say, se, there is a bone tooth ; give me an iron tooth Far away from Germany, at Raratonga, in the a child's tooth was extracted, the following to be recited :—

“ Big rat ! little rat !
Here is my old tooth.
Pray give me a new one.”

th was thrown on the thatch of the house, because
eir nests in the decayed thatch. The reason
invoking the rats on these occasions was that
re the strongest known to the natives.³ In the
d Gorong archipelagoes, between New Guinea
when a child loses his first tooth, he must throw

yours instead.”¹ In Amboyna the custom is the same, and the form of words is, “Take this tooth, thrown on the roof, as the mouse’s share, and give me a better one instead.”² In the Kei Islands, to the south-west of New Guinea, when a child begins to get his second teeth, he is lifted up to the top of the roof in order that he may there deposit, as an offering to the rats, the tooth which has fallen out. At the same time some one cries aloud, “O rats, here you have his tooth; give him a golden one instead.”³ Among the Ilocans of Luzon, in the Philippines, when children’s teeth are loose, they are pulled out with a string and put in a place where rats will be likely to find and drag them away.⁴ In ancient Mexico, when a child was getting a new tooth, the father or mother used to put the old one in a mouse’s hole, believing that if this precaution were not taken the new tooth would not issue from the gums.⁵ A different and more barbarous application of the same principle is the Swabian superstition that when a child is teething you should bite off the head of a living mouse, and hang the head round the child’s neck by a string, taking care, however, to make no knot in the string; then the child will teethe easily.⁶ In Bohemia the treatment prescribed is similar, though there they recommend you to use a red thread and to string three heads of mice on it instead of one.⁷

Other parts which are commonly believed to remain in a sympathetic union with the body, after the physical connection has been severed, are the navel-string, the afterbirth, and the placenta. Thus, for example, in Mandeling, a district on the west coast of Sumatra, the afterbirth is washed and buried under the house or put in an earthenware pot, which is carefully shut up and thrown into the river. This is done to avert the supposed unfavourable influence of the

¹ J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluit en kroes-harige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 176.

² Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 75.

³ C. M. Pleyte, “Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden,” *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 822.

⁴ F. Blumentritt, “Sitten und

Bräuche der Ilocanen,” *Globus*, xlviii. No. 12, p. 200.

⁵ Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, p. 316 sq.

⁶ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 510, § 415.

⁷ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 111, § 822.

ing the evil spirits ; otherwise these mischievous
it get hold of the placenta, and thereby make the

In the islands of Saparoea, Haroeke, and
at the midwife buries the afterbirth and strews
it. Sometimes, however, in these islands
only buried in the sea. Being placed in a pot

covered up with a piece of white cotton, it is
sea in a boat. A hole is knocked in the pot to
sink in the water. The man who is charged with
heaving the pot and its contents overboard must
go straight ahead ; if he were to glance to the
t the child whose afterbirth is in the pot would
squint. And the man who rows or steers the
make her keep a straight course ; otherwise the
grow up a gad-about.⁴ Among some tribes of
Australia it is thought that a man swims well or ill,
as his mother at his birth threw the navel-
water or not.⁵ In Rhenish Bavaria the navel-
pot for a while wrapt up in a piece of old linen,
t or pricked to pieces according as the child is a boy

De onderafdeeling Klein
oe en Pahantan en hare
uitzondering van de
gen tot de Taal- Land- en
in Nederlandisch Indië,
504.

⁴ Van Schmid, "Aanteekeninge
nopens de zeden, gewoonten en
gebruiken, benevens de vooroordeelen
en bijgeloovigheden der bevolking van
de eilanden Saparoea, Haroeke,
Noessa Laut," *Tijdschrift voor Nêr-*

or girl, in order that he or she may grow up to be a skilful workman or a good sempstress.¹ In ancient Mexico they used to give a boy's navel-string to soldiers, to be buried by them on a field of battle, in order that the boy might thus acquire a passion for war. But the navel-string of a girl was buried beside the domestic hearth, because this was believed to inspire her with a love of home and a taste for cooking and baking.² Among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia the afterbirth of girls is buried at high-water mark, in the belief that this will render them expert at digging for clam. The afterbirth of boys is sometimes exposed at places where ravens will eat it, because the boys will thus acquire the raven's prophetic vision. The same Indians are persuaded that the navel-string may be the means of imparting a variety of accomplishments to its original owner. Thus, if it is fastened to a dancing mask, which is then worn by a skilful dancer, the child will dance well. If it is attached to a knife, which is then used by a cunning carver, the child will carve well. Again, if the parents wish their son to sing beautifully, they tie his navel-string to the baton of a singing master. Then the boy calls on the singing master every morning while the artist is eating his breakfast. The votary of the Muses thereupon takes his baton and moves it twice down the right side and twice down the left side of the boy's body, after which he gives the lad some of his breakfast. That is an infallible way of making the boy a beautiful singer.³ These examples bring out very clearly the belief that the afterbirth and navel-string remain through life, or at least for some considerable time, in sympathetic connection with the child, and that whatever is done to them produces a corresponding effect for good or ill on him or her. Thus the magic practised on them is sympathetic in the strict sense, for it rests on the principle that what is done to a thing affects simultaneously a person with whom the thing was formerly in contact. But in several of the instances the magic is

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2, p. 346.

² Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, p. 310, compare pp. 240, 439, 440.

³ Fr. Boas, in *Eleventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 5 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1896*).

to time to present the precious bundle to the

ous application of the doctrine of sympathy is the commonly believed to exist between a wounded man and the agent of the wound, so that whatever is subsequently done to the agent must correspondingly affect the patient for good or evil. Thus Pliny tells us that if you have wounded a man and are sorry for it, you have only to touch the hand that gave the wound, and the pain of the wound will be instantly alleviated.² In Melanesia, if a man gets possession of the arrow which wounded him, he keeps it in a damp place or in cool leaves, for inflammation will be trifling and will soon subside. The enemy who shot the arrow is hard at work to cure the wound by all means in his power. For this purpose he and his friends drink hot and burning juices and burn the wound with burning leaves, for this will clearly inflame and aggravate the wound. Further, they keep the bow near the wound, for the reason which it has inflicted hot; and for this reason they put the arrow-head, if it has been taken out, into the fire. Moreover, they are careful to keep the bow string taut and to twang it occasionally, for this helps the wounded man to suffer from tension of the muscles and spasms of tetanus.³ Similarly when a Kwakiutl man in British Columbia had bitten a piece out of an

body.¹ Among the Lkufgen Indians of the same region it is a rule that an arrow, or any other weapon that has wounded a man, must be hidden by his friends, who have to be careful not to bring it near the fire till the wound is healed. If a knife or an arrow which is still covered with a man's blood were thrown into the fire, the wounded man would grow very ill.² "It is constantly received and avouched," says Bacon, "that the anointing of the weapon that maketh the wound will heal the wound itself. In this experiment, upon the relation of men of credit (though myself, as yet, am not fully inclined to believe it), you shall note the points following: first, the ointment wherewith this is done is made of divers ingredients, whereof the strangest and hardest to come by are the moss upon the skull of a dead man unburied, and the fats of a boar and a bear killed in the act of generation." The precious ointment compounded out of these and other ingredients was applied, as the philosopher explains, not to the wound but to the weapon, and that even though the injured man was at a great distance and knew nothing about it. The experiment, he tells us, had been tried of wiping the ointment off the weapon without the knowledge of the person hurt, with the result that he was presently in a great rage of pain until the weapon was anointed again. Moreover, "it is affirmed that if you cannot get the weapon, yet if you put an instrument of iron or wood resembling the weapon into the wound, whereby it bleedeth, the anointing of that instrument will serve and work the effect."³ Remedies of the sort which Bacon deemed worthy of his attention are still in vogue in Suffolk. If a man cuts himself with a bill-hook or a scythe he always takes care to keep the weapon bright, and oils it to prevent the wound from festering. If he runs a thorn or, as he calls it, a bush into

¹ Fr. Boas, "The social organization and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 440.

² Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 25 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

³ Francis Bacon, *Natural History*,

cent. x. § 998. Compare Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 305, quoting Werenfels. In Dryden's play *The Tempest* (Act v. Scene 1) Ariel directs Prospero to anoint the sword which wounded Hippolito and to wrap it up close from the air. See Dryden's *Works*, ed. Scott, vol. iii. p. 191 (first edition).

woman, whose sister had burnt her face with
rved that "the face would never heal till the
put out of the way ; and even if it did heal,
e to break out again every time the iron was
ilarly in the Harz mountains they say that
rself, you ought to smear the knife or the
t and put the instrument away in a dry place
f the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy
: knife dries, the wound heals.² Other people,
rmany say that you should stick the knife in
ce in the ground, and that your hurt will heal
usts.³ Others again, in Bavaria, recommend
he axe or whatever it is with blood and put
ves.⁴

of reasoning which thus commends itself to
ierman rustics, in common with the savages
nd America, is carried a step further by the
Central Australia, who conceive that under
stances the near relations of a wounded man
hemselves, restrict their diet, and regulate
ir in other ways in order to ensure his
as when a lad has been circumcised and the
et healed, his mother may not eat opossum,
ind of lizard, or carpet snake, or any kind of
se she would retard the healing of the boy's

wound. Every day she greases her digging-sticks and never lets them out of her sight; at night she sleeps with them close to her head. No one is allowed to touch them. Every day also she rubs her body all over with grease, as in some way this is believed to help her son's recovery.¹ Another refinement of the same principle is due to the ingenuity of the German peasant. It is said that when one of his beasts breaks its leg, a Hessian farmer will bind up the broken leg of a chair or table with bandages and splints in due form. For nine days thereafter the bandaged chair-leg or table-leg may not be touched or moved. Then the animal that was lame will be whole again.² In this last case it is clear that we have passed wholly out of the region of sympathetic magic in the strict sense and into the region of imitative magic; the chair-leg, which is treated instead of the beast's leg, in no sense belongs to the animal, and the application of bandages to it is a mere simulation of the treatment which a more rational surgery would bestow on the real patient.

The sympathetic connection supposed to exist between a man and the weapon which has wounded him is probably founded on the notion that the blood on the weapon continues to feel with the blood in his body. Strained and unnatural as this idea may seem to us, it is perhaps less so than the belief that magic sympathy is maintained between a person and his clothes, so that whatever is done to the clothes will be felt by the man himself, even though he may be far away at the time. In the Wotjobaluk tribe of Victoria a wizard would sometimes get hold of a man's opossum rug and tie it up with some small spindle-shaped pieces of casuarina wood, on which he had made certain marks, such as likenesses of his victim and of a poisonous snake. This bundle he would then roast slowly in the fire, and as he did so the man who had owned the opossum rug would fall sick. If the patient suspected what was happening, he would send to the wizard and beg him to let him have the rug back. If the wizard consented, "he would

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 250. *und Gebräuche im Lichte der heidnischen Vorzeit* (Marburg, 1888), p.

² W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten* 87.

cut, wings, and leaves into a long sausage-
, and burned it slowly in the fire. As the
consumed, the victim fell ill, and when it was
es, he died.² In this last form of enchantment,
magical sympathy may be supposed to exist
between the man and the cloth as between
the sweat which issued from his body. But
of the same sort it seems that the garment
ough to give the sorcerer a hold upon his
witch in Theocritus, while she melted a
of her faithless lover in order that he might
e of her, did not forget to throw into the
of his cloak which he had dropped in her
russia they say that if you cannot catch a
best thing you can do is to get hold of a
he may have shed in his flight; for if you
, the thief will fall sick. This belief is firmly
popular mind. Some sixty or seventy years
ighbourhood of Berend, a man was detected
honey, and fled leaving his coat behind him.
d that the enraged owner of the honey was
st coat, he was so alarmed that he took to
ed.⁴

mples may suffice to illustrate the general
sympathetic magic both in the wider and

the narrower sense of the term. In a few of the cases cited we have seen that the operation of spirits is assumed, and that an attempt is made to win their favour by prayer and sacrifice. But these cases are exceptional; they exhibit magic tinged and alloyed with religion. Wherever sympathetic magic occurs in its pure unadulterated form, it assumes that in nature one event follows another necessarily and invariably without the intervention of any spiritual or personal agency. Thus its fundamental conception is identical with that of modern science; underlying the whole system is a faith, implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature. The magician does not doubt that the same causes will always produce the same effects, that the performance of the proper ceremony, accompanied by the appropriate spell, will inevitably be attended by the desired results, unless, indeed, his incantations should chance to be thwarted and foiled by the more potent charms of another sorcerer. He supplicates no higher power; he sues the favour of no fickle and wayward being; he abases himself before no awful deity. Yet his power, great as he believes it to be, is by no means arbitrary and unlimited. He can wield it only so long as he strictly conforms to the rules of his art, or to what may be called the laws of nature as conceived by him. To neglect these rules, to break these laws in the smallest particular is to incur failure, and may even expose the unskilful practitioner himself to the utmost peril. If he claims a sovereignty over nature, it is a constitutional sovereignty rigorously limited in its scope and exercised in exact conformity with ancient usage. Thus the analogy between the magical and the scientific conceptions of the world is close. In both of them the succession of events is perfectly regular and certain, being determined by immutable laws, the operation of which can be foreseen and calculated precisely; the elements of caprice, of chance, and of accident are banished from the course of nature. Both of them open up a seemingly boundless vista of possibilities to him who knows the causes of things and can touch the secret springs that set in motion the vast and intricate mechanism of the world. Hence the strong attraction which magic and science alike have exercised on the

means.

The flaw of magic lies not in its general assumption of events determined by law, but in its total ignorance of the nature of the particular laws which govern their succession. If we analyse the various cases of magic which have been passed in review in the foregoing pages, and which may be taken as fair samples of the class, we shall find them to be all mistaken applications of two great fundamental laws of thought, the association of ideas by similarity and the association by contiguity in space or time.¹ A mistaken application of similar ideas produces imitative or mimetic magic; a mistaken association of contiguous ideas produces magic in the narrower sense of the word. The laws of association are excellent in themselves, and utterly essential to the working of the human mind; legitimately applied they yield science; illegitimately applied they yield magic, the bastard sister of science. It is a truism, almost a tautology, to say that all magic is necessarily false and barren; for were it ever to become true and fruitful, it would no longer be magic but science. From the earliest times man has been engaged in the discovery of general rules whereby to turn the order of the universe to his own advantage, and in the long process has scraped together a great hoard of such rules, some of them golden and some of them mere

which we have formed of the nature of religion itself; hence a writer may reasonably be expected to define his conception of religion before he proceeds to investigate its relation to magic. There is probably no subject in the world about which opinions differ so much as the nature of religion, and to frame a definition of it which would satisfy every one must obviously be impossible. All that a writer can do is, first, to say clearly what he means by religion, and afterwards to employ the word consistently in that sense throughout his work. By religion, then, I understand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life. In this sense it will readily be perceived that religion is opposed in principle both to magic and to science. For all conciliation implies that the being conciliated is a conscious or personal agent, that his conduct is in some measure uncertain, and that he can be prevailed upon to vary it in the desired direction by a judicious appeal to his interests, his appetites, or his emotions. Conciliation is never employed towards things which are regarded as inanimate, nor towards persons whose behaviour in the particular circumstances is known to be determined with absolute certainty. Thus in so far as religion assumes the world to be directed by conscious agents who may be turned from their purpose by persuasion, it stands in fundamental antagonism to magic as well as to science, both of which take for granted that the course of nature is determined, not by the passions or caprice of personal beings, but by the operation of immutable laws acting mechanically.¹ In magic, indeed, the assumption is only implicit, but in science it is explicit. It is true that magic often deals with spirits, which are personal agents of the kind assumed by religion; but whenever it does so in its proper form, it treats them exactly in the same fashion

¹ The opposition of principle between magic and religion is well brought out by Sir A. C. Lyall in his *Asiatic Studies*, First Series (London, 1899), i. 99 *sqq.* It is also insisted on by Mr. F. B. Jevons in his *Introduction to the History of Religion* (London, 1896). The distinction is clearly apprehended and sharply main-

tained by Professor H. Oldenberg in his notable book *Die Religion des Veda* (Berlin, 1894); see especially pp. 58 *sq.*, 311 *sqq.*, 476 *sqq.* When I wrote this book originally I failed to realise the extent of the opposition, because I had not formed a clear general conception of the nature of religion, and was disposed to class magic loosely under it.

pendency over the gods.

submissively to execute on earth below, or in heaven
ever commands their masters the magicians may
issue.² This radical conflict of principle between
religion sufficiently explains the relentless hostility
in history the priest has often pursued the magician.
The self-sufficiency of the magician, his arrogant
attitude towards the higher powers, and his unabashed
effort to exercise a sway like theirs could not but revolt the
priest, with his awful sense of the divine majesty,
his humble prostration in presence of it, such claims and
pretensions must have appeared an impious and
unbecoming usurpation of prerogatives that belong to God
and sometimes, we may suspect, lower motives con-
tributed to whet the edge of the priest's hostility. He pro-
vided the proper medium, the true intercessor between
man and god, and no doubt his interests as well as his feelings
were often injured by a rival practitioner, who preached
a smoother road to fortune than the rugged and
uncertain path of divine favour.

This antagonism, familiar as it is to us, seems to
be its appearance comparatively late in the history
of religion. At an earlier stage the functions of priest and
magician were often combined or, to speak perhaps more
correctly, were not yet differentiated from each other. To
procure success man wooed the good-will of gods or

hoped would of themselves bring about the desired result without the help of god or devil. In short, he performed religious and magical rites simultaneously ; he uttered prayers and incantations almost in the same breath, knowing or recking little of the theoretical inconsistency of his behaviour, so long as by hook or crook he contrived to get what he wanted. Instances of this fusion or confusion of magic with religion have already met us in the practices of Melanesians and of some East Indian islanders.¹ So far as the Melanesians are concerned, the general confusion cannot be better described than in the words of Dr. R. H. Codrington :—" That invisible power which is believed by the natives to cause all such effects as transcend their conception of the regular course of nature, and to reside in spiritual beings, whether in the spiritual part of living men or in the ghosts of the dead, being imparted by them to their names and to various things that belong to them, such as stones, snakes, and indeed objects of all sorts, is that generally known as *mana*. Without some understanding of this it is impossible to understand the religious beliefs and practices of the Melanesians ; and this again is the active force in all they do and believe to be done in magic, white or black. By means of this men are able to control or direct the forces of nature, to make rain or sunshine, wind or calm, to cause sickness or remove it, to know what is far off in time and space, to bring good luck and prosperity, or to blast and curse." " By whatever name it is called, it is the belief in this supernatural power, and in the efficacy of the various means by which spirits and ghosts can be induced to exercise it for the benefit of men, that is the foundation of the rites and practices which can be called religious ; and it is from the same belief that everything which may be called Magic and Witchcraft draws its origin. Wizards, doctors, weather-mongers, prophets, diviners, dreamers, all alike, everywhere in the islands, work by this power. There are many of these who may be said to exercise their art as a profession ; they get their property and influence in this way. Every considerable village or settlement is sure to have some one who can control the weather and the waves, some one who knows how to treat sickness,

¹ See above, pp. 19, 33, 45.

ny purposes besides.

There is also no order of magicians or medicine-men; every man of consideration knows how to deal with a ghost or spirit, and has some secret of occult

The confusion of magic and religion has survived in those societies that have risen to higher levels of culture. In ancient India and ancient Egypt; it is by no means absent among European peasantry at the present day. In regard to ancient India we are told by an eminent Indologist that "the sacrificial ritual at the heart of which we have detailed information is a series of practices that breathe the spirit of the most primitive magic."² Again, the same writer observes that "the very sacrifices for which the metrical hymns composed are described in the other Vedic texts begin and end with magical practices to be carried out by the sacrificial priests." In the Rigveda it is told us that the rites celebrated on special occasions such as marriage, initiation, and the anointment of a king are complete models of magic of every kind, and that the forms of magic employed bear the stamp of great antiquity."³ Speaking of the importance of magic in the East, and especially in Egypt, Professor Maspero says: "we ought not to attach to the word magic the same meaning which it almost inevitably calls up in the

from a god had no chance of succeeding except by laying hands on the deity, and this arrest could only be effected by means of a certain number of rites, sacrifices, prayers, and chants, which the god himself had revealed, and which obliged him to do what was demanded of him."¹ According to another distinguished Egyptologist "the belief that there are words and actions by which man can influence all the powers of nature and all living things, from animals up to gods, was inextricably interwoven with everything the Egyptians did and everything they left undone. Above all, the whole system of burial and of the worship of the dead is completely dominated by it. The wooden puppets which relieved the dead man from toil, the figures of the maid-servants who baked bread for him, the sacrificial formulas by the recitation of which food was procured for him, what are these and all the similar practices but magic? And as men cannot help themselves without magic, so neither can the gods; the gods also wear amulets to protect themselves, and use magic spells to constrain each other."² But though we can perceive the union of discrepant elements in the faith and practice of the ancient Egyptians, it would be rash to assume that the people themselves did so. "Egyptian religion," says Professor Wiedemann, "was not one and homogeneous; it was compounded of the most heterogeneous elements, which seemed to the Egyptian to be all equally justified. He did not care whether a doctrine or a myth belonged to what, in modern scholastic phraseology, we should call faith or superstition; it was indifferent to him whether we should rank it as religion or magic, as worship or sorcery. All such classifications were foreign to the Egyptian. To him no one doctrine seemed more or less justified than another. Nay, he went so far as to allow the most flagrant contradictions to stand peaceably side by side."³

Among the ignorant classes of modern Europe the same confusion of ideas, the same mixture of religion and magic, crops up in various forms. Thus we are told that in France

¹ G. Maspero, *Études de mythologie et d'archéologie égyptienne* (Paris, 1893), i. 106.

isches Leben im Altertum, p. 471.

² A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägypt-*

³ A. Wiedemann, "Ein altägyptischer Welt schöpfungsmythus," *Am Urquell*, N.F., ii. (1898), p. 95 sq.

he he also is subject to him, and the names of
ion are extinguished at his word." ¹ For example,
sants used to be, perhaps are still, persuaded that
could celebrate, with certain special rites, a "Mass
of the Holy Spirit," of which the efficacy was so miraculous
met with any opposition from the divine will ;
reed to grant whatever was asked of Him in this
ver rash and importunate might be the petition.
impiety or irreverence attached to the rite in the
ose who, in some of the great extremities of life,
this singular means to take the kingdom of
storm. The secular priests generally refused
"Mass of the Holy Spirit"; but the monks,
he Capuchin friars, had the reputation of yielding
ruple to the entreaties of the anxious and dis-
In the constraint thus supposed by Catholic
o be laid by the priest upon the deity we seem
exact counterpart of the power which, as we saw,
Egyptians ascribed to their magicians.⁸ Again,
ther example, in many villages of Provence the
still reputed to possess the faculty of averting
is not every priest who enjoys this reputation ;
he villages when a change of pastors takes place,
oners are eager to learn whether the new incum-
ie power (*pouder*), as they call it. At the first
they put him to the proof by inviting

the reputation of the curate in this respect stood higher than that of his rector, the relations between the two have been so strained in consequence, that the bishop has had to translate the rector to another benefice.¹ Again, Gascon peasants believe that to revenge themselves on their enemies bad men will sometimes induce a priest to say a mass called the Mass of Saint Sécaire. Very few priests know this mass, and three-fourths of those who do know it would not say it for love or money. None but wicked priests dare to perform the gruesome ceremony, and you may be quite sure that they will have a very heavy account to render for it at the last day. No curate or bishop, not even the archbishop of Auch, can pardon them; that right belongs to the pope of Rome alone. The Mass of Saint Sécaire may be said only in a ruined or deserted church, where owls mope and hoot, where bats flit in the gloaming, where gypsies lodge of nights, and where toads squat under the desecrated altar. Thither the bad priest comes by night with his light o' love, and at the first stroke of eleven he begins to mumble the mass backwards, and ends just as the clocks are knelling the midnight hour. His leman acts as clerk. The host he blesses is black and has three points; he consecrates no wine, but instead he drinks the water of a well into which the body of an unbaptized infant has been flung. He makes the sign of the cross, but it is on the ground and with his left foot. And many other things he does which no good Christian could look upon without being struck blind and deaf and dumb for the rest of his life. But the man for whom the mass is said withers away little by little, and nobody can say what is the matter with him; even the doctors can make nothing of it. They do not know that he is slowly dying of the Mass of Saint Sécaire.²

Yet though magic is thus found to fuse and amalgamate with religion in many ages and in many lands, there are some grounds for thinking that this fusion is not primitive.

¹ L. J. B. Bérenger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances* (Paris, 1896), i. 455 sq., iii. 217 sq., 222 sqq. Compare *id.*, *Reminiscences populaires de la Provence* (Paris, 1885), p. 288 sqq.; D. Monnier, *Traditions popu-*

laires comparées (Paris, 1854), p. 31 sqq.

² J. F. Bladé, *Quatorze Superstitions Populaires de la Gascogne* (Agen, 1883), p. 16 sq.

and that religion assumes the operation of personal agents, superior to man, behind the visible nature. Obviously the conception of personal agents is more complex than a simple recognition of the contiguity of ideas; and a theory which at the course of nature is determined by conscious agents is more abstruse and recondite, and requires for its support a far higher degree of intelligence and reflection than the view that things succeed each other simply by their contiguity or resemblance. The very beasts have the ideas of things that are like each other or that are found together in their experience; and they only survive for a day if they ceased to do so. But it is not to the animals a belief that the phenomena are worked by a multitude of invisible animals or by a formous and prodigiously strong animal behind the visible. It is probably no injustice to the brutes to assume that the honour of devising a theory of this latter sort must be reserved for human reason. Thus, if magic be deduced only from elementary processes of reasoning, and be, error into which the mind falls almost spontaneously, it is not to be supposed that the theory rests on conceptions which the merely animal mind can hardly be supposed to have yet attained to,

magic is confirmed inductively by what we know of the lowest existing race of mankind. To the student who investigates the development of vegetable and animal life on our globe, Australia serves as a sort of museum of the past, a region in which strange species of plants and animals, representing types that have long been extinct elsewhere, may still be seen living and thriving, as if on purpose to satisfy the curiosity of these later ages as to the fauna and flora of the antique world. This singularity Australia owes to the comparative smallness of its area, the waterless and desert character of a large part of its surface, and its remote situation, severed by wide oceans from the other and greater continents. For these causes, by concurring to restrict the number of competitors in the struggle for existence, have mitigated the fierceness of the struggle itself; and thus many a quaint old-fashioned creature, many an antediluvian oddity, which would long ago have been rudely elbowed and hustled out of existence in more progressive countries, has been suffered to jog quietly along in this preserve of Nature's own, this peaceful garden, where the hand on the dial of time seems to move more slowly than in the noisy bustling world outside. And the same causes which have favoured the survival of antiquated types of plants and animals in Australia, have conserved the aboriginal race at a lower level of mental and social development than is now occupied by any other set of human beings spread over an equal area elsewhere. Without metals, without houses, without agriculture, the Australian savages represent the stage of material culture which was reached by our remote ancestors in the Stone Age; and the rudimentary state of the arts of life among them reflects faithfully the stunted condition of their minds. Now in regard to the question of the respective priority of magic or religion in the evolution of thought, it is very important to observe that among these rude savages, while magic is universally practised, religion in the sense of a propitiation or conciliation of the higher powers seems to be nearly unknown. Roughly speaking, all men in Australia are magicians, but not one is a priest; everybody fancies he can influence his fellows or the course of nature by sympathetic magic, but nobody dreams of pro-

uth-eastern parts of
 the conditions of life
 nate, water, and vege-
 favourable than else-
 beginnings of religion
 hape of a slight regard
 of departed friends.
 orian tribes are said to
 es near the bodies of
 ler to warm the ghost,
 : custom of providing
 ided by the intelligent
 as 'white fellow's
 Dawson, *Australian*
 sq.). Some tribes in
 n region are further
 ve in a supreme spirit,
 led sometimes as a
 more frequently as a
 g (A. W. Howitt in
anthropological Institute,
 191). Brewin, the
 of the Kurnai, was at
 by two intelligent
 rible with Jesus Christ,
 reflection they thought
 devil (L. Fison and A.
Amilaroi and Kurnai,
 hether viewed as gods
 s not seem that these
 worshipped. See A.
Journal of the Anthro-
 z, xiii. (1884), p. 459.
 ving that in the same
 has exhibit the same

parched and barren regions of Central
 Australia, where magic attains its
 highest importance, religion seems to
 be entirely wanting. See Spencer and
 Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central*
Australia. The traces of a higher
 faith in Australia, where they occur, are
 probably sometimes due to European
 influence. "I am strongly of opinion,"
 says one who knew the aborigines well,
 "that those who have written to show
 that the Blacks had some knowledge of
 God, practised prayer, and believed in
 places of reward and punishment be-
 yond the grave, have been imposed
 upon, and that until they had learnt
 something of Christianity from mis-
 sionaries and others, the Blacks had no
 beliefs or practices of the sort. Having
 heard the missionaries, however, they
 were not slow to invent what I may
 call kindred statements with aboriginal
 accessories, with a view to please and
 surprise the whites" (E. M. Curr, *The*
Australian Race, i. 45). Sometimes
 too the reported belief of the natives
 in a Great or Good Spirit may rest
 merely on a misunderstanding. Mr.
 Lorimer Fison informs me (in a letter
 dated 3rd June 1899) that a German
 missionary, Mr. Siebert, resident in the
 Dieri tribe of Central Australia, has
 ascertained that their Mura, Mura,
 which Mr. Gason explained to be the
 Good Spirit (*Native Tribes of South*

whites have called them 'doctors,' and they correspond to the medicine-men and rain-makers of other barbarous nations. The power of the doctor is only circumscribed by the range of his fancy. He communes with spirits, takes aerial flights at pleasure, kills or cures, is invulnerable and invisible at will, and controls the elements."¹

But if in the most primitive state of human society now open to observation on the globe we find magic thus conspicuously present and religion conspicuously absent, may we not reasonably conjecture that the civilised races of the world have also at some period of their history passed through a similar intellectual phase, that they attempted to force the great powers of nature to do their pleasure before they thought of courting their favour by offerings and prayer—in short that, just as on the material side of human culture there has everywhere been an Age of Stone, so on the intellectual side there has everywhere been an Age of Magic?² There are reasons for answering this question in the affirmative. When we survey the existing races of mankind from Greenland to Tierra del Fuego, or from Scotland to Singapore, we observe that they are distinguished one from the other by a great variety of religions, and that these distinctions are not, so to speak, merely coterminous with the broad distinctions of race, but descend into the minuter subdivisions of states and commonwealths, nay, that they honeycomb the town, the village, and even the family, so that the surface of society all over the world is cracked and seamed, wormed and sapped with rents and fissures and yawning crevasses opened up by the disintegrating influence of religious dissension. Yet when we have penetrated through these differences, which affect mainly the intelligent and thoughtful part of the community, we shall find under-

¹ J. Mathew, *Eaglehawk and Crow*, p. 142. Similarly among the Fuegians, another of the lowest races of mankind, almost every old man is a magician, who is supposed to have the power of life and death, and to be able to control the weather. But the members of the French scientific expedition to Cape Horn could detect nothing worthy the name of religion among these savages. See *Mission Scientifique du*

Cape Horn, vii. "Anthropologie, Ethnographie," par P. Hyades et J. Deniker (Paris, 1891), pp. 253-257.

² The suggestion has been made by Prof. H. Oldenberg (*Die Religion des Veda*, p. 59), who seems, however, to regard a belief in spirits as part of the raw material of magic. If the view which I have put forward tentatively is correct, faith in magic is probably older than a belief in spirits.

lying them all a solid stratum of intellectual agreement among the dull, the weak, the ignorant, and the superstitious, who constitute, unfortunately, the vast majority of mankind. One of the great achievements of the century which is now nearing its end is to have run shafts down into this low mental stratum in many parts of the world, and thus to have discovered its substantial identity everywhere. It is beneath our feet—and not very far beneath them—here in Europe at the present day, and it crops up on the surface in the heart of the Australian wilderness and wherever the advent of a higher civilisation has not crushed it under ground. This universal faith, this truly Catholic creed, is a belief in the efficacy of magic. While religious systems differ not only in different countries, but in the same country in different ages, the system of sympathetic magic remains everywhere and at all times substantially alike in its principles and practice. Among the ignorant and superstitious classes of modern Europe it is very much what it was thousands of years ago in Egypt and India, and what it now is among the lowest savages surviving in the remotest corners of the world. If the test of truth lay in a show of hands or a counting of heads, the system of magic might appeal, with far more reason than the Catholic Church, to the proud motto, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,*" as the sure and certain credential of its own infallibility.

It is not our business here to consider what bearing the permanent existence of such a solid layer of savagery beneath the surface of society, and unaffected by the superficial changes of religion and culture, has upon the future of humanity. The dispassionate observer, whose studies have led him to plumb its depths, can hardly regard it otherwise than as a standing menace to civilisation. We seem to move on a thin crust which may at any moment be rent by the subterranean forces slumbering below. From time to time a hollow murmur underground or a sudden spirt of flame into the air tells of what is going on beneath our feet. Now and then the polite world is startled by a paragraph in a newspaper which tells how in Scotland an image has been found stuck full of pins for the purpose of killing an obnoxious laird or minister, how a woman has been slowly

roasted to death as a witch in Ireland, or how a girl has been murdered and chopped up in Russia to make those candles of human tallow by whose light thieves hope to pursue their midnight trade unseen.¹ But whether the influences that make for further progress, or those that threaten to undo what has already been accomplished, will ultimately prevail; whether the kinetic energy of the minority or the dead weight of the majority of mankind will prove the stronger force to carry us up to higher heights or to sink us into lower depths, are questions rather for the sage, the moralist, and the statesman, whose eagle vision scans the future, than for the humble student of the present and the past. Here we are only concerned to ask how far the uniformity, the universality, and the permanence of a belief in magic, compared with the endless variety and the shifting character of religious creeds, raises a presumption that the former represents a ruder and earlier phase of the human mind, through which all the races of mankind have passed or are passing on their way to religion and science.

If an Age of Religion has thus everywhere, as I venture to surmise, been preceded by an Age of Magic, it is natural that we should inquire what causes have led mankind, or rather a portion of them, to abandon magic as a principle of faith and practice and to betake themselves to religion instead. When we reflect upon the multitude, the variety, and the complexity of the facts to be explained, and the scantiness of our information regarding them, we shall be ready to acknowledge that a full and satisfactory solution of so profound a problem is hardly to be hoped for, and that the most we can do in the present state of our knowledge is to hazard a more or less plausible conjecture. With all due diffidence, then, I would suggest that a tardy recognition of the inherent falsehood and barrenness of magic set the more thoughtful part of mankind to cast about for a truer theory of nature and a more fruitful method of turning her resources to account. The shrewder intelligences must in time have come to perceive that magical

¹ See above, p. 17 sq.; "The Witch-burning at Cloumel," *Folklore*, vi. (1895), pp. 373-384; F. S. Krauss,

Völkerglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven, p. 144 sqq.

to they had believed to be completely within

It was a confession of human ignorance and Man saw that he had taken for causes what es, and that all his efforts to work by means of ury causes had been vain. His painful toil had his curious ingenuity had been squandered to

He had been pulling at strings to which attached ; he had been marching, as he thought, s goal, while in reality he had only been tread- row circle. Not that the effects which he had ird to produce did not continue to manifest They were still produced, but not by him. ll fell on the thirsty ground ; the sun still uily, and the moon her nightly journey across silent procession of the seasons still moved in dow, in cloud and sunshine across the earth : . born to labour and sorrow, and still, after a ere, were gathered to their fathers in the long r. All things indeed went on as before, yet ferent to him from whose eyes the old scales or he could no longer cherish the pleasing it was he who guided the earth and the r courses, and that they would cease to per- t revolutions were he to take his feeble hand . In the death of his enemies and his friends

happy confidence in himself and his powers rudely shaken, our primitive philosopher must have been sadly perplexed and agitated till he came to rest, as in a quiet haven after a tempestuous voyage, in a new system of faith and practice, which seemed to offer a solution of his harassing doubts and a substitute, however precarious, for that sovereignty over nature which he had reluctantly abdicated. If the great world went on its way without the help of him or his fellows, it must surely be because there were other beings, like himself, but far stronger, who, unseen themselves, directed its course and brought about all the varied series of events which he had hitherto believed to be dependent on his own magic. It was they, as he now believed, and not he himself, who made the stormy wind to blow, the lightning to flash, and the thunder to roll ; who had laid the foundations of the solid earth and set bounds to the restless sea that it might not pass ; who caused all the glorious lights of heaven to shine ; who gave the fowls of the air their meat and the wild beasts of the desert their prey ; who bade the fruitful land to bring forth in abundance, the high hills to be clothed with forests, the bubbling springs to rise under the rocks in the valleys, and green pastures to grow by still waters ; who breathed into man's nostrils and made him live, or turned him to destruction by famine and pestilence and war. To these mighty beings, whose handiwork he traced in all the gorgeous and varied pageantry of nature, man now addressed himself, humbly confessing his dependence on their invisible power, and beseeching them of their mercy to furnish him with all good things, to defend him from the perils and dangers by which our mortal life is compassed about on every hand, and finally to bring his immortal spirit, freed from the burden of the body, to some happier world beyond the reach of pain and sorrow, where he might rest with them and with the spirits of good men in joy and felicity for ever.

In this, or some such way as this, the deeper minds may be conceived to have made the great transition from magic to religion. But even in them the change can hardly ever have been sudden ; probably it proceeded very slowly, and required long ages for its more or less perfect accomplish-

yield at will ; and as province after province of
fell from his grasp, till what had once seemed a
threatened to shrink into a prison, man must have
and more profoundly impressed with a sense of
helplessness and the might of the invisible beings by
believed himself to be surrounded. Thus religion,
as a slight and partial acknowledgment of powers
in man, tends with the growth of knowledge to
a confession of man's entire and absolute depend-
ence on the divine ; his old free bearing is exchanged for an
lowest prostration before the mysterious powers
seen. But this deepening sense of religion, this
total submission to the divine will in all things, affects
higher intelligences who have breadth of view
to comprehend the vastness of the universe and the
condition of man. Small minds cannot grasp great ideas ; to
without comprehension, their purblind vision, nothing
so great and important but themselves. Such
never rise into religion at all. They are, indeed,
their betters into an outward conformity with its
and a verbal profession of its tenets ; but at heart
hold to their old magical superstitions, which may be
condemned and forbidden, but cannot be eradicated by
as long as they have their roots deep down in the
network and constitution of the great majority of

Why cling to beliefs which were so flatly contradicted by experience? How dare to repeat experiments that had failed so often? The answer seems to be that the fallacy was far from easy to detect, the failure by no means obvious, since in many, perhaps in most cases, the desired event did actually follow, at a longer or shorter interval, the performance of the rite which was designed to bring it about; and a mind of more than common acuteness was needed to perceive that, even in these cases, the rite was not necessarily the cause of the event. A ceremony intended to make the wind blow or the rain fall, or to work the death of an enemy, will always be followed, sooner or later, by the occurrence it is meant to bring to pass; and primitive man may be excused for regarding the occurrence as a direct result of the ceremony, and the best possible proof of its efficacy. Similarly, rites observed in the morning to help the sun to rise, and in spring to wake the dreaming earth from her winter sleep, will invariably appear to be crowned with success, at least within the temperate zones; for in these regions the sun lights his golden fire in the east every morning, and year by year the vernal earth decks herself afresh with a rich mantle of green. Hence the practical savage, with his conservative instincts, might well turn a deaf ear to the subtleties of the theoretical doubter, the philosophic radical, who presumed to hint that sunrise and spring might not, after all, be direct consequences of the punctual performance of certain daily or yearly devotions, and that the sun might perhaps continue to rise and trees to blossom though the devotions were occasionally intermitted, or even discontinued altogether. These sceptical doubts would naturally be repelled by the other with scorn and indignation as airy reveries subversive of the faith, and manifestly contradicted by experience. "Can anything be plainer," he might say, "than that I light my twopenny candle on earth and that the sun then kindles his great fire in heaven? I should be glad to know whether, when I have put on my green robe in spring, the trees do not afterwards do the same? These are facts patent to everybody, and on them I take my stand. I am a plain practical man, not one of your theorists and splitters of hairs and choppers of logic. Theories and speculation and all that may be very well in

and it as sound, and esteem the speaker who used it
—not brilliant or showy, perhaps, but thoroughly
and hard-headed. If such reasonings could pass
among ourselves, need we wonder that they long
election by the savage?

patient reader may remember—and the impatient
who has quite forgotten is respectfully reminded—
were led to plunge into the labyrinth of magic, in
have wandered for so many pages, by a considera-
two different types of man-god. This is the clue
guided our devious steps through the maze, and
as out at last on higher ground, whence, resting a
the way, we can look back over the path we have
aversed and forward to the longer and steeper road
till to climb.

result of the foregoing discussion, the two types of
ods may conveniently be distinguished as the reli-
the magical man-god respectively. In the former,
of an order different from and superior to man is
to become incarnate, for a longer or a shorter time,
man body, manifesting his superhuman power and
e by miracles wrought and prophecies uttered
he medium of the fleshly tabernacle in which he has
o take up his abode. This may also appropriately
the inspired or incarnate type of man-god. In it

derives his divinity from a deity who has stooped to hide his heavenly radiance behind a dull mask of earthly mould, a man-god of the latter type draws his extraordinary power from a certain physical sympathy with nature. He is not merely the receptacle of a divine spirit. His whole being, body and soul, is so delicately attuned to the harmony of the world that a touch of his hand or a turn of his head may send a thrill vibrating through the universal framework of things; and conversely his divine organism is acutely sensitive to such slight changes of environment as would leave ordinary mortals wholly unaffected. But the line between these two types of man-god, however sharply we may draw it in theory, is seldom to be traced with precision in practice, and in what follows I shall not insist on it.

To readers long familiarised with the conception of natural law, the belief of primitive man that he can rule the elements must be so foreign that it may be well to illustrate it by examples. When we have seen that in early society men who make no pretence at all of being gods, do nevertheless commonly believe themselves to be invested with powers which to us would seem supernatural, we shall have the less difficulty in comprehending the extraordinary range of powers ascribed to persons who are actually regarded as divine.

Of all natural phenomena there are, perhaps, none which civilised man feels himself more powerless to influence than the rain, the sun, and the wind; yet all these are commonly supposed by savages to be in some degree under their control.

In all countries where the deposit of moisture is uncertain and irregular, and where consequently vegetation and animals are liable to suffer either from prolonged droughts or excessive rains, man has attempted to regulate the heavenly water-supply to suit his own convenience. Such attempts are by no means confined, as the cultivated reader might imagine, to the naked inhabitants of those sultry lands like Central Australia and some parts of Eastern and Southern Africa, where often for months together the pitiless sun beats down out of a blue and cloudless sky on the parched and gaping earth. They are, or used to be, common enough among outwardly civilised folk in the moister climate of

no was called the rain-maker, which he sprinkled water from a vessel on all Halmahera, or Gilolo, a large island to the westward, a wizard makes rain by dipping a branch of a kind of tree in water and then scattering the water from the dripping bough over the ground.² In New Guinea, a wizard dedicates the bark of a certain tree to the rain and lay it in water.³ In New Britain the rain-makers use some leaves of a red and green striped creeper and a leaf, moistens the bundle with water, and buries it in the ground; then he imitates with his mouth the sound of rain.⁴ Amongst the Omaha Indians of North America, when the corn is withering for want of rain, the members of the sacred Buffalo Society fill a large vessel with water and dance four times round it. One of them drinks the water and spirts it into the air, making a fine imitation of a mist or drizzling rain. Then he empties the vessel, spilling the water on the ground; where the dancers fall down and drink up the water, getting it over their faces. Lastly, they spirt the water into the air, making a fine mist. This saves the corn.⁵ In the Natchez of North America used to club together to purchase favourable weather for their crops from the wizards. If rain was needed, the wizards fasted and held pipes full of water in their mouths. The pipes

were perforated like the nozzle of a watering-can, and through the holes the rain-maker blew the water towards that part of the sky where the clouds hung heaviest. But if fine weather was wanted, he mounted the roof of his hut, and with extended arms, blowing with all his might, he beckoned to the clouds to pass by.¹ Among the Shushwap Indians of British Columbia twins are credited with the power of making good or bad weather at pleasure. To produce rain, they take a small basket filled with water, which they spill into the air; to bring clear weather they shake a small, flat piece of wood which is attached to a stick by a string.² Among the Swazies and Hlubies of South-Eastern Africa the rain-doctor draws water from a river with various mystic ceremonies, and carries it into a cultivated field. Here he throws it in jets from his vessel high into the air, and the falling spray is believed to draw down the clouds and to make rain by sympathy.³ To squirt water from the mouth is a West African mode of making rain.⁴ Among the Wahuma, on the Albert Nyanza Lake, the rain-maker pours water into a vessel in which he has first placed a dark stone as large as the hand. Pounded plants and the blood of a black goat are added to the water, and with a bunch of magic herbs the sorcerer sprinkles the mixture towards the sky.⁵ In this charm special efficacy is no doubt attributed to the dark stone and the black goat, their colour being chosen from its resemblance to that of the rain-clouds, as we shall see presently. During the summer months frequent droughts occur among the Japanese alps. To procure rain a party of hunters armed with guns climb to the top of Mount Jonendake, one of the most imposing peaks in the range. By kindling a bonfire, discharging their guns, and rolling great masses of rocks down the cliffs, they represent the wished-for storm; and rain is supposed always to follow within a few days.⁶ Amongst the Wotjobaluk tribe of

¹ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, nouvelle édition, vii. 29 sq.

² Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 92 (separate reprint from *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

³ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth* (London, 1893), p. 10.

⁴ Lalat, *Relation historique de l'Ethiopie occidentale*, ii. 180.

⁵ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 588.

⁶ W. Weston, in *The Geographical Journal*, vii. (1896), p. 143; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*,

and with the burning brand.² When the rivers
water scarce in Victoria, the wizard used to
hair in the stream, accompanying the act with
stimulation. But if he wished to make rain, he
human hair in the fire. Hair was never burnt
for fear of causing a great fall of rain.³ The
Makrisi describes a method of stopping rain
to have been resorted to by a tribe of nomads
in Hadramaut. They cut a branch from a
in the desert, set it on fire, and then sprinkled
rand with water. After that the vehemence of
d,⁴ just as the water vanished when it fell on the
l.

rid climate of Queensland the ceremonies neces-
ing showers from the cloudless heaven are
ewhat elaborate. A prominent part in them
a "rain-stick." This is a thin piece of wood
inches long, to which three "rain-stones" and
the beard have been fastened. The "rain-
pieces of white quartz-crystal. Three or four
ay be used in the ceremony. About noon the
to take part in it repair to a lonely pool, into
them dives and fixes a hollow log vertically in
hen they all go into the water, and, forming a

rough circle round the man in the middle, who holds the rain-stick aloft, they begin stamping with their feet as well as they can, and splashing the water with their hands from all sides on the rain-stick. The stamping, which is accompanied by singing, is sometimes a matter of difficulty, since the water may be four feet deep or more. The singing over, the man in the middle dives out of sight and attaches the rain-stick to the hollow log under water. Then coming to the surface, he quickly climbs on to the bank and spits out on dry land the water which he imbibed in diving. Should more than one of these rain-sticks have been prepared, the ceremony is repeated with each in turn. While the men are returning to camp they scratch the tops of their heads and the inside of their shins from time to time with twigs; if they were to scratch themselves with their fingers alone, they believe that the whole effect of the ceremony would be spoiled. On reaching the camp they paint their faces, arms, and chest with broad bands of gypsum. During the rest of the day the process of scratching, accompanied by the song, is repeated at intervals, and thus the performance comes to a close. No woman may set eyes on the rain-stick or witness the ceremony of its submergence; but the wife of the chief rain-maker is privileged to take part in the subsequent rite of scratching herself with a twig. When the rain does come, the rain-stick is taken out of the water; it has done its work.¹ At Roxburgh, in Queensland, the ceremony is somewhat different. A white quartz-crystal which is to serve as the rain-stone is obtained in the mountains and crushed to powder. Next a tree is chosen of which the stem runs up straight for a long way without any branches. Against its trunk saplings from fifteen to twenty feet long are then propped in a circle, so as to form a sort of shed like a bell-tent, and in front of the shed an artificial pond is made in the ground. The men, who have collected within the shed, now come forth and, dancing and singing round the pond, mimic the cries and antics of various aquatic birds and animals, such as ducks and frogs. Meanwhile the women are stationed some twenty yards or so away. When the men

¹ W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines* (Brisbane and London, 1897), p. 167.

have done pretending to be ducks, frogs, and so forth, they march round the women in single file, throwing the pulverised quartz-crystals over them. On their side the women hold up shields, pieces of bark, and so on over their heads, making believe that they are sheltering themselves from a heavy shower of rain.¹ Both these ceremonies are cases of mimetic magic; the splashing of the water over the rain-stick is as clearly an imitation of a shower as the throwing of the powdered quartz-crystal over the women.

The Dieri of Central Australia enact a somewhat similar pantomime for the same purpose. In a dry season their lot is a hard one. No fresh herbs or roots are to be had, and as the parched earth yields no grass, the emus, reptiles, and other creatures which generally furnish the natives with food grow so lean and wizened as to be hardly worth eating. At such a time of severe drought the Dieri, loudly lamenting the impoverished state of the country and their own half-starved condition, call upon the spirits of their remote ancestors, which they call *Mura Mura*, to grant them power to make a heavy rainfall. For they believe that the clouds are bodies in which rain is generated by their own ceremonies or those of neighbouring tribes, through the influence of the *Mura Mura*. The way in which they set about drawing rain from the clouds is this. A hole is dug about twelve feet long and eight or ten broad, and over this hole a conical hut of logs and branches is made. Two men, supposed to have received a special inspiration from the *Mura Mura*, are bled by an old and influential man with a sharp flint; and the blood, drawn from their arms below the elbow, is made to flow on the other men of the tribe, who sit huddled together in the hut. At the same time the two bleeding men throw handfuls of down about, some of which adheres to the blood-stained bodies of their comrades, while the rest floats in the air. The blood is thought to represent the rain, and the down the clouds. During the ceremony two large stones are placed in the middle of the hut; they stand for gathering clouds and presage rain. Then the men who were bled carry away the two stones for about ten or fifteen miles, and place them as high as they can in the tallest tree. Meanwhile the other

¹ W. E. Roth, *op. cit.* p. 168.

men gather gypsum, pound it fine, and throw it into a water-hole. This the Mura Mura see, and at once they cause clouds to appear in the sky. Lastly, the men, young and old, surround the hut, and, stooping down, charge at it with their heads, like so many rams. Thus they force their way through it and reappear on the other side, repeating the process till the hut is wrecked. In doing this they are forbidden to use their hands or arms ; but when the heavy logs alone remain, they are allowed to pull them out with their hands. "The piercing of the hut with their heads symbolises the piercing of the clouds ; the fall of the hut, the fall of the rain."¹ Obviously, too, the act of placing high up in trees the two stones, which stand for clouds, is a way of making the real clouds to mount up in the sky. The Dieri also imagine that the foreskins taken from lads at circumcision have a great power of producing rain. Hence the Great Council of the tribe always keeps a small stock of foreskins ready for use. They are carefully concealed, being wrapt up in feathers with the fat of the wild dog and of the carpet snake. A woman may not see such a parcel opened on any account. When the ceremony is over, the foreskin is buried, its virtue being exhausted. After the rains have fallen, some of the tribe always undergo a surgical operation, which consists in cutting the skin of their chest and arms with a sharp flint. The wound is then tapped with a flat stick to increase the flow of blood, and red ochre is rubbed into it. Raised scars are thus produced. The reason alleged by the natives for this practice is that they are pleased with the rain, and that there is a connection between the rain and the scars. Apparently the operation is not very painful, for the patient laughs and jokes while it is going on. Indeed, little children have been seen to crowd round the operator and patiently take their turn ; then after being operated on, they ran away, expanding their little chests and singing for the rain to beat upon them. However, they were not so well pleased next day, when they felt

¹ S. Gason, "The Dieyerie Tribe," *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 276 sqq. ; A. W. Howitt, "The Dieri and other Kindred Tribes of Central Australia," *Journal of the Anthro-*

logical Institute, xx. (1891), p. 91 sq. These writers speak of the Mura Mura as a single spirit ; Mr. Gason calls him the Good Spirit. But see above, p. 72, note.

their wounds stiff and sore.¹ In Java, when rain is wanted, two men will sometimes thrash each other with supple rods till the blood flows down their backs ; the streaming blood represents the rain, and no doubt is supposed to make it fall on the ground.²

Among the Arunta tribe of Central Australia a celebrated rain-maker resides at the present day in what is called by the natives the Rain Country (*Kartwia quatcha*), a district about fifty miles to the east of Alice Springs. He is the head of a group of people who have the water for their totem, and when he is about to engage in a ceremony for the making of rain he summons other men of the water totem from neighbouring groups to come and help him. When all are assembled, they march into camp, painted with red and yellow ochre and pipeclay, and wearing bunches of eagle-hawk feathers on the crown and sides of the head. At a signal from the rain-maker they all sit down in a line and, folding their arms across their breasts, chant certain words for a time. Then at another signal from the master of the ceremonies they jump up and march in single file to a spot some miles off, where they camp for the night. At break of day they scatter in all directions to look for game, which is then cooked and eaten ; but on no account may any water be drunk, or the ceremony would fail. When they have eaten, they adorn themselves again in a different style from before, broad bands of white bird's down being glued by means of human blood to their stomach, legs, arms, and forehead. Meanwhile a special hut of boughs has been made by some older men not far from the main camp. Its floor is strewn with a thick layer of gum leaves to make it soft, for a good deal of time has to be spent lying down here. Close to the entrance of the hut a shallow trench, some thirty yards long, is excavated in the ground. At sunset the performers, arrayed in all the finery of white down, march to the hut. On reaching it the young men go in first and lie face downwards at the inner end, where they have to stay till the ceremony is over ; none of them is

¹ A. W. Howitt, *op. cit.* p. 92 sq.

² J. Kreemer, "Regenmaken, Oed-joeng, Tooverij onder de Javanen,"

Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap, xxx. (1886), p. 113.

allowed to quit it on any pretext. Meanwhile, outside the hut the older men are busy decorating the rain-maker. Hair girdles, covered with white down, are placed all over his head, while his cheeks and forehead are painted with pipeclay; and two broad bands of white down pass across the face, one over the eyebrows and the other over the nose. The front of his body is adorned with a broad band of pipeclay fringed with white down, and rings of white down encircle his arms. Thus decorated, with patches of bird's down adhering by means of human blood to his hair and the whole of his body, the disguised man is said to present a spectacle which, once seen, can never be forgotten. He now takes up a position close to the opening of the hut. Then the old men sing a song, and when it is finished, the rain-maker comes out of the hut and stalks slowly twice up and down the shallow trench, quivering his body and legs in a most extraordinary way, every nerve and fibre seeming to be agitated. While he is thus engaged the young men, who had been lying flat on their faces, get up and join the old men in chanting a song with which the movements of the rain-maker seem to accord. But as soon as he re-enters the hut, the young men at once prostrate themselves again; for they must always be lying down when he is in the hut. The performance is repeated at intervals during the night, and the singing goes on with little intermission until, just when the day is breaking, the rain-maker executes a final quiver, which lasts longer than any of the others, and seems to exhaust his remaining strength completely. Then he declares the ceremony to be over, and at once the young men jump to their feet and rush out of the hut, screaming in imitation of the spur-winged plover. The cry is heard by the men and women who have been left at the main camp, and they take it up with weird effect.¹

Although we cannot, perhaps, divine the meaning of all the details of this curious ceremony, the analogy of the Queensland and the Dieri ceremonies, described above, suggests that we have here a rude attempt to represent the

¹ F. J. Gillen, in *Report of the Work of the Horn Scientific Expedition to Central Australia*, part iv., Anthropology (London and Melbourne, 1896), pp. 177-179; Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 189-193.

gathering of rain-clouds and the other accompaniments of a rising storm. The hut of branches, like the structure of logs among Dieri, and perhaps the conical shed in Queensland, may possibly stand for the vault of heaven, from which the rain-clouds, represented by the chief actor in his quaint costume of white down, come forth to move in ever-shifting shapes across the sky, just as he struts quivering up and down the trench. The other performers, also adorned with bird's down, who burst from the tent with the cries of plovers, probably imitate birds that are supposed to harbingers or accompany rain.¹ This interpretation is confirmed by other ceremonies in which the performers definitely assimilate themselves to the celestial or atmospheric phenomena which they seek to produce. Thus in Mabuiag, a small island in Torres Straits, when a wizard desired to make rain, he took some bush or plant and painted himself black and white, "All along same as clouds, black behind, white he go first." He further put on a large woman's petticoat to signify raining clouds. On the other hand, when he wished to stop the rain, he put red paint on the crown of his head, "possibly to represent the shining sun," and he inserted a small ball of red paint in another part of his person. By and by he expelled this ball, "Like breaking a cloud so that sun he may shine." He then took some bushes and leaves of the pandanus, mixed them together, and placed the compound in the sea. Afterwards he removed them from the water, dried them, and burnt them so that the smoke went up, thereby typifying, as Professor Haddon was informed, the evaporation and dispersal of the clouds.² Again, it is said that if a Malay woman puts upon her head an inverted earthenware pan, and then, setting it upon the ground, fills it with water and washes the cat in it till the animal is nearly drowned, heavy rain will certainly follow. In this performance the inverted pan is intended, as Mr. Skeat was told, to symbolise the vault of heaven.³ Further, among

¹ It is curious to find in Australia the same association between the plover and rain which has procured for the bird its name in English, French (*pluvier*, from the Latin *pluvia*), and German (*Regenpfeifer*). Ornithologists seem not to agree as to the reason for this

association in the popular mind.

² A. C. Haddon, "The Ethnography of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 401.

³ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 108.

the Nootkas of British Columbia twins are believed to have the power of making good or bad weather. They make rain by painting their faces black and then washing them,¹ which may perhaps be taken to represent the rain dripping from the dark clouds. Conversely, among the Angoni of Central Africa there is a woman who stops rain by tying a strip of white calico round her black head,² probably in imitation of the sky clearing after a heavy storm. Oddly enough, the Baronga, on the shores of Delagoa in South-Eastern Africa, ascribe to twins the same power of influencing the weather which is attributed to them by the Nootkas far away on the Pacific coast of North America. They bestow the name of *Tilo*—that is, the sky—on a woman who has given birth to twins, and the infants themselves are called the children of the sky. Now when the storms which generally burst in the months of September and October have been looked for in vain, when a drought with its prospect of famine is threatening, and all nature, scorched and burnt up by a sun that has shone for six months from a cloudless sky, is panting for the beneficent showers of the South-African spring, the women perform ceremonies to bring down the longed-for rain on the parched earth. Stripping themselves of all their garments, they assume in their stead girdles and head-dresses of grass, or short petticoats made of the leaves of a particular sort of creeper. Thus attired, uttering peculiar cries and singing ribald songs, they go about from well to well, cleansing them of the mud and impurities which have accumulated in them. The wells, it may be said, are merely holes in the sand where a little turbid unwholesome water stagnates. Further, the women must repair to the house of one of their gossips who has given birth to twins, and must drench her with water, which they carry in little pitchers. Having done so they go on their way, shrieking out their loose songs and dancing immodest dances. No man may see these leaf-clad women going their rounds. If they meet a man, they maul him and thrust him aside. When they have cleansed the wells, they must go and pour

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 46 (separate extract from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

² *British Central Africa Gazette*, No. 86 (vol. v. No. 6), 30th April 1898, p. 3.

water on the graves of their ancestors in the sacred grove. It often happens, too, that at the bidding of the wizard they go and pour water on the graves of twins. For they think that the grave of a twin ought always to be moist, for which reason twins are regularly buried near a lake. If all their efforts to procure rain prove abortive, they will remember that such and such a twin was buried in a dry place on the side of a hill. "No wonder," says the wizard in such a case, "that the sky is fiery. Take up his body and dig him a grave on the shore of the lake." His orders are at once obeyed, for this is supposed to be the only means of bringing down the rain. The Swiss missionary who reports this strange superstition has also suggested what appears to be its true explanation. He points out that as the mother of twins is called by the Baronga "the sky," they probably think that to pour water on her is equivalent to pouring water on the sky itself; and if water be poured on the sky, it will of course drip through it, as through the nozzle of a gigantic watering-pot, and fall on the earth beneath. A slight extension of the same train of reasoning explains why the desired result is believed to be expedited by drenching the graves of twins, who are the Children of the Sky.¹

These facts strongly support an interpretation which Professor Oldenberg has given of the rules to be observed by a Brahman who would learn a particular hymn of the ancient Indian collection known as the Samaveda. The hymn, which bears the name of the *Ṣakvarī* song, was believed to embody the might of Indra's weapon, the thunderbolt; and hence, on account of the dreadful and dangerous potency with which it was thus charged, the bold student who essayed to master it had to be isolated from his fellow-men, and to retire from the village into the forest. Here for a space of time, which might vary, according to different doctors of the law, from one to twelve years, he had to observe certain rules of life, among which were the following. Thrice a day he had to touch water; he must wear black

¹ H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-rounga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), pp. 412, 416 *sqq.* The reason for calling twins "Children of the Sky" is obscure. Are they supposed in some mysterious way to stand for the sun and moon?

garments and eat black food ; when it rained, he might not seek the shelter of a roof, but had to sit down under the dripping sky and say to it, "Water is the Śakvari song"; when the lightning flashed he said, "That is like the Śakvari song"; when the thunder pealed, he said, "The Great One is making a great noise." He might never cross a running stream without touching water ; he might never set foot on a ship unless his life were in danger, and even then he must be sure to touch water when he went on board ; "for in water," so ran the saying, "lies the virtue of the Śakvari song." When at last he was allowed to learn the song itself, he had to dip his hands in a vessel of water in which plants of all sorts had been placed. If a man walked in the way of all these precepts, the rain-god Parjanya, it was said, would send rain at the wish of that man. It is clear, as Professor Oldenberg well points out, that "all these rules are intended to bring the Brahman into union with water, to make him, as it were, an ally of the water powers, and to guard him against their hostility. The black garments and the black food have the same significance ; no one will doubt that they refer to the rain-clouds when he remembers that a black victim is sacrificed to procure rain ; 'it is black, for such is the nature of rain.' In respect of another rain-charm it is said plainly, 'He puts on a black garment edged with black, for such is the nature of rain.' We may therefore assume that here in the circle of ideas and ordinances of the Vedic schools there have been preserved magical practices of the most remote antiquity, which were intended to prepare the rain-maker for his office and dedicate him to it."¹

It is interesting to observe that where an opposite result is desired, primitive logic enjoins the weather-doctor to observe precisely opposite rules of conduct. In the tropical island of Java, where the rich vegetation attests the abundance of the rainfall, ceremonies for the making of rain are unknown, but ceremonies for the prevention of it are not uncommon. When a man is about to give a great feast in the rainy season and has invited many people, he goes to a weather-doctor and asks him to "prop up the clouds that may be lowering." If the doctor consents to exert his

¹ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 420 sq.

room, and before a small oil lamp he murmurs, the feast takes place, the following prayer for Grandfather and Grandmother Sroekoel" (the to be taken at random ; others are sometimes to your country. Akkemat is your country. r water-cask, close it properly, that not a drop

While he utters this prayer the sorcerer looks ing incense the while.¹

r will observe how exactly the Javanese obser- are intended to prevent rain, form the antithesis observances, which aim at producing it. The s commanded to touch water thrice a day well as on various special occasions ; the d must not touch it at all. The Indian lives st, and even when it rains he must not take avanese sits snugly in his own house on a new signifies his sympathy with water by receiving ; person and speaking of it respectfully ; the lamp, burns incense, and bids the water-powers ot suffer a drop to fall. Yet the principle on ct is the same ; each of them, by a sort of believe, identifies himself with the phenomenon es to produce. It is the old fallacy that the s its cause : if you would make wet weather, wet ; if you would make drought, you must

with the same intention by the Baronga of Delagoa Bay. Among the Greeks of Thessaly and Macedonia, when a drought has lasted a long time, it is customary to send a procession of children round to all the wells and springs of the neighbourhood. At the head of the procession walks a girl adorned with flowers, whom her companions drench with water at every halting-place, while they sing an invocation, of which the following is part :—

“ Perperia, all fresh bedewed,
Freshen all the neighbourhood ;
By the woods, on the highway,
As thou goest, to God now pray :
O my God, upon the plain,
Send thou us a still, small rain ;
That the fields may fruitful be,
And vines in blossom we may see ;
That the grain be full and sound,
And wealthy grow the folks around.”¹

In time of drought the Servians strip a girl to her skin and clothe her from head to foot in grass, herbs, and flowers, even her face being hidden behind a veil of living green. Thus disguised she is called the Dodola, and goes through the village with a troop of girls. They stop before every house ; the Dodola keeps turning herself round and dancing, while the other girls form a ring about her singing one of the Dodola songs, and the housewife pours a pail of water over her. One of the songs they sing runs thus :—

“ We go through the village ;
The clouds go in the sky ;
We go faster,
Faster go the clouds ;
They have overtaken us,
And wetted the corn and the vine.”

A similar custom is observed in Greece, Bulgaria, and Roumania.² In such customs the leaf-clad girl appears to personify vegetation, and the drenching of her with water is certainly an imitation of rain. The words of the last song,

¹ Lucy M. J. Garnett, *The Women of Turkey and their Folklore: The Christian Women*, p. 123 sq.

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 329 sqq.; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴

i. 493 sq.; W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Romanen Siebenburgens*, p. 17; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 13; *Folklore*, i. (1890), p. 520.

n and Western Russia. Sometimes the priest in his robes has been thrown down on the ground and drenched with water by his parishioners. Sometimes it is the women who, without stripping off their clothes, bathe in crowds on the day of St. John the Baptist, and they dip in the water a figure made of branches and herbs, which is supposed to represent the saint.² In Krasnodar, a province of Southern Russia, when rain is much wanted, the women seize a passing stranger and throw him into the river, or souse him from head to foot.³ Later on we shall see that a passing stranger is often taken for a personification of some natural power. In Minahasa, a province of North Celebes, the priest bathes as a rain-bringer. In Kumaon, a district of North-West India, when it rains, they sink a Brahman up to his lips in a tank or tub, where he repeats the name of a god of rain for a day or more. When this rite is duly performed, rain is sure to come. For the same purpose village girls in the Punjab pour a solution of cow-dung in water upon an old man who happens to pass; or they will make her sit under the roof-spout of a house and get a wetting when it rains.⁴ In the Solok district of Sumatra, when a

above, p. 89. This perpetual or whirling movement is referred to the actors in other European dances of a superstitious character.

W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 331, note 2.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 331.

drought has lasted a long time, a number of half-naked women take a half-witted man to a river; and there besprinkle him with water as a means of compelling the rain to fall.¹ In some parts of Bengal, when drought threatens the country, troops of children of all ages go from house to house and roll and tumble in puddles which have been prepared for the purpose by pouring water into the courtyards. This is supposed to bring down rain. Again, in Dubrajpur, a village in the Birbhum district of Bengal, when rain has been looked for in vain, people will throw dirt or filth on the houses of their neighbours, who abuse them for doing so. Or they drench the lame, the halt, the blind, and other infirm persons, and are reviled for their pains by the victims. This vituperation is believed to bring about the desired result by drawing down showers on the parched earth.² Similarly, in the Shahpur district of Bengal it is said to be customary in time of drought to spill a pot of filth on the threshold of a notorious old shrew, in order that the fluent stream of foul language in which she vents her feelings may accelerate the lingering rain.³ In these latter customs the means adopted for bringing about the desired result appears to be not so much imitative magic as the beneficent virtue which, curiously enough, is often attributed to curses and maledictions.⁴

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 93.

² Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On Some Ceremonies for producing Rain," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iii. (1893), pp. 25, 27; *id.*, in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, v. p. 136, § 373.

³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 102, § 791.

⁴ When a Greek sower sowed cummin he had to curse and swear all the time, otherwise the crop would not turn out well (Theophrastus, *Histor. Plant.* viii. 3; Plutarch, *Quæst. Conviv.* vii. 2. 2). Esthonian fishermen believe that they never have such good luck as when some one is

angry with them and curses them. Hence before a fisherman goes out to fish, he will play a rough practical joke on a comrade in order to be abused and execrated by him. The more the latter storms and curses, the better the other is pleased; every curse brings at least three fish into his net. See Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehesten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 90 sq. In India "much virtue is ascribed to abuse in this district of Behar. It is supposed to bring good luck in some cases. On occasion of marriages, people who accompany the marriage procession to the bride's house are often vilely abused by the women folk of the bride's family, in the belief that it will lead on to the good fortune of the newly-married couple. In the same way on the occasion of the *Jumadwitiya*

Women are sometimes supposed to be able to make rain by ploughing, or pretending to plough. Thus in the Caucasian province of Georgia, when a drought has lasted long, marriageable girls are yoked in couples with an ox-yoke on their shoulders, a priest holds the reins, and thus harnessed they wade through rivers, puddles, and marshes, praying, screaming, weeping, and laughing.¹ In a district of Transylvania, when the ground is parched with drought, some girls strip themselves naked, and, led by an older woman, who is also naked, they steal a harrow and carry it across the field to a brook, where they set it afloat. Next they sit on the harrow and keep a tiny flame burning on each corner of it for an hour. Then they leave the harrow in the water and go home.² A similar rain-charm is resorted to in some parts of India; naked women drag a plough across a field by night, while the men keep carefully out of the way, for their presence would break the spell.³ As performed at Chunar in Bengal on the twenty-fourth of July 1891 the ceremony was this. Between nine and ten in the evening a barber's wife went from door to door and invited the women to engage in ploughing. They all assembled in a field from which men were excluded. Three women of a husbandman's family then stripped themselves naked; two of them were yoked like oxen to the plough, while the third held the handle. They next began to imitate the operation

Day in Behar, . . . brothers are abused by sisters to their heart's content, and this is done under the impression that it will prolong the lives of the brothers and bring good luck to them" (Sarat Chandra Mitra in *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, ii. 598 sq.). In the same district of India if any one is rendered sinful by looking at the "moon of ill omen" (on the fourth day of the waxing moon in the month Bhādra, corresponding to August-September) he is absolved from all sin if he contrives to get reviled by somebody. In order to procure absolution in this odd fashion he throws brickbats into a neighbour's house, and the result seldom fails to fulfil his hopes. For a similar reason in Bengal the sin-laden man will seek to

ease his conscience and rid himself of his burden by robbing a neighbour's orchard or cutting down his plants. In these cases, however, he sometimes gets more than he bargained for, since the person whose premises he invades with these virtuous intentions does not always stop short at bad language. See Sarat Chandra Mitra, *loc. cit.*; *id.*, in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, N.S., xxix. (1897), p. 482.

¹ J. Reinegg, *Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, ii. 114.

² Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 553; Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 40.

³ *Punjab Notes and Queries*, iii. pp. 41, 115, §§ 173, 513.

of ploughing. The one who held the plough cried out, "O mother earth! bring parched grain, water, and chaff. Our stomachs are breaking to pieces from hunger and thirst." Then the landlord and accountant approached them and laid down some grain, water, and chaff in the field. After that the women dressed and returned home. "By the grace of God," adds the gentleman who reports the ceremony, "the weather changed almost immediately, and we had a good shower."¹ Sometimes as they draw the plough the women sing a hymn to Vishnu, in which they seek to enlist his sympathy by enumerating the ills which the people are suffering from the want of rain. In some cases they discharge volleys of abuse at the village officials, and even at the landlord, whom they compel to drag the plough.² These ceremonies are all the more remarkable because in ordinary circumstances Hindoo women never engage in agricultural operations like ploughing and harrowing. Yet in drought it seems to be women of the highest or Brahman caste who are chosen to perform what at other times would be regarded as a menial and degrading task. Occasionally, when hesitation is felt at subjecting Brahman ladies to this indignity, they are allowed to get off by merely touching the plough early in the morning, before people are astir; the real work is afterwards done by the ploughmen.³

Sometimes the rain-charm operates through the dead. Thus in New Caledonia the rain-makers blackened them-

¹ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 210, § 1161.

² Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On the Har Parauri, or the Behari Women's Ceremony for producing Rain," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, N.S., xxix. (1897), pp. 471-484; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iv. No. 7 (1898), pp. 384-388.

³ Sarat Chandra Mitra, "On some Ceremonies for producing Rain," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iii. 25. On these Indian rain-charms compare W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 41 *sqq.*

Mr. E. S. Hartland suggests that such customs furnish the key to the legend of Lady Godiva (*Folklore*, i. (1890), p. 223 *sqq.*). Some of the features of the ceremonies, though not the ploughing, reappear in a rain-charm practised by the Rajbansis of Bengal. The women make two images of Iludum Dec out of mud or cow-dung, and carry them away into the fields by night. There they strip themselves naked, and dance round the images singing obscene songs. See II. II. Risley, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal: Ethnographic Glossary* (Calcutta, 1891-92), i. 498. We have seen (p. 91) that lewd songs form part of an African rain-charm.

selves all over, dug up a dead body, took the bones to a cave, jointed them, and hung the skeleton over some taro leaves. Water was poured over the skeleton to run down on the leaves. They believed that the soul of the deceased took up the water, converted it into rain, and showered it down again.¹ In Russia, if common report may be believed, it is not long since the peasants of any district that chanced to be afflicted with drought used to dig up the corpse of some one who had drunk himself to death and sink it in the nearest swamp or lake, fully persuaded that this would ensure the fall of the needed rain. About twenty years ago the prospect of a bad harvest, caused by a prolonged drought, induced the inhabitants of a village in the Tarashchansk district to dig up the body of a Raskolnik, or Dissenter, who had died in the preceding December. Some of the party beat the corpse, or what was left of it, about the head, exclaiming, "Give us rain!" while others poured water on it through a sieve.² Here the pouring of water through a sieve seems plainly an imitation of a shower, and reminds us of the manner in which Strepsiades in Aristophanes imagined that rain was made by Zeus.³ We have seen that the Baronga of Delagoa Bay drench the tombs of their ancestors, especially the tombs of twins, as a rain-charm.⁴ Among some of the Indian tribes in the region of the Orinoco it was customary for the relations of a deceased person to disinter his bones a year after burial, burn them, and scatter the ashes to the winds, because they believed that the ashes were changed into rain, which the dead man sent in return for his obsequies.⁵ The Chinese are convinced that when human bodies remain unburied, the souls of their late owners feel the discomfort of rain, just as living men would do if they were exposed without shelter to the inclemency of the weather. These wretched souls, therefore, do all in their power to prevent the rain from falling, and often their efforts are only too successful. Then drought ensues, the most dreaded of all calamities in China, because bad harvests, dearth, and

¹ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 345 sq.

² W. R. S. Ralston, *The Songs of the Russian People*, p. 425 sq.

³ Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 373.

⁴ Above, p. 91 sq.

⁵ A. Caulin, *Historia Geo-graphica natural y evangelica de la Nueva Andalu-cia, Provincias de Cunaña, Guayana y Vertientes del Rio Orinoco*, p. 92.

famine follow in its train. Hence it has been a common practice of the Chinese authorities in time of drought to inter the dry bones of the unburied dead for the purpose of putting an end to the scourge and conjuring down the rain.¹

Animals, again, often play an important part in these weather-charms. An ancient Indian mode of making rain was to throw an otter into the water.² When some of the Blackfoot Indians were at war in summer and wished to bring on a tempest, they would take a kit-fox skin and rub it with dirt and water, which never failed to be followed by a storm of rain.³ Often in order to give effect to the charm the animal must be black. Thus an ancient Indian way of bringing on rain was to set a black horse with his face to the west and rub him with a black cloth till he neighed.⁴ To procure rain the Peruvian Indians used to set a black sheep in a field, poured *chica* over it, and gave the animal nothing to eat until rain fell.⁵ Once when a drought lasting five months had burnt up their pastures and withered the corn, the Caffres of Natal had recourse to a famous witch, who promised to procure rain without delay. A black sheep having been produced, an incision was made in the animal near the shoulder and the gall taken out. Part of this the witch rubbed over her own person, part she drank, part was mixed with medicine. Some of the medicine was then rubbed on her body; the rest of it, attached to a stick, was fixed in the fence of a calves' pen. The woman next harangued the clouds. When the sheep was to be cooked, a new fire was procured by the friction of fire-sticks; in ordinary circumstances a brand would have been taken from one of the huts.⁶ Among the Wambugwe, a Bantu people of Eastern Africa, when the sorcerer desires to make rain he takes a black sheep and a black calf in bright sunshine, and has them placed upon the roof of the large common hut in

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religions and Zaubers* (Strasburg, 1897), p. 120. *System of China*, iii. 918 sqq.

² H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 507.

³ G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 262.

⁴ A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Opfer*

⁵ Acosta, *History of the Indies*, bk. v. ch. xxviii. (vol. ii. p. 376, Hakluyt Society).

⁶ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country* (London, 1857), p. 212 sqq.

which the people live together. Then he slits open the stomachs of the animals and scatters their contents in all directions. After that he pours water and medicine into a vessel; if the charm has succeeded, the water boils up and rain follows. On the other hand, if the sorcerer wishes to prevent rain from falling, he withdraws into the interior of the hut, and there heats a rock-crystal in a calabash.¹ In a district of Sumatra, in order to procure rain, all the women of the village, scantily clad, go to the river, wade into it, and splash each other with the water. A black cat is thrown into the stream and made to swim about for a while, then allowed to escape to the bank, pursued by the splashing of the women.² The Garos of Assam offer a black goat on the top of a very high mountain in time of drought.³ Among the Matabele the rain-charm employed by sorcerers was made from the blood and gall of a black ox.⁴ In all these cases the colour of the animal is part of the charm; being black, it will darken the sky with rain-clouds. So the Bechuanas burn the stomach of an ox at evening, because they say, "The black smoke will gather the clouds and cause the rain to come."⁵ The Timorese sacrifice a black pig to the Earth-goddess for rain, a white or red one to the Sun-god for sunshine.⁶ Among the high mountains of Japan there is a district in which, if rain has not fallen for a long time, a party of villagers goes in procession to the bed of a mountain torrent, headed by a priest, who leads a black dog. At the chosen spot they tether the beast to a stone, and make it a target for their bullets and arrows. When its life-blood bespatters the rocks, the peasants throw down their weapons and lift up their voices in supplication to the

¹ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 188.

² A. L. van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra*, p. 320 sq.; J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagnsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 93.

³ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 88.

⁴ L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 154.

⁵ *Folklore Journal*, edited by the Working Committee of the South African Folklore Society, i. (1879), p. 34.

⁶ J. S. G. Gramberg, "Eene maand in de binnenlanden van Timor," *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxxvi. p. 209; H. Zondervan, "Timor en de Timoreezen," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, v. (1888), Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, p. 402 sq.

dragon divinity of the stream, exhorting him to send down forthwith a shower to cleanse the spot from its defilement. Custom has prescribed that on these occasions the colour of the victim shall be black, as an emblem of the wished-for rain-clouds. But if fine weather is wanted, the victim must be white, without a spot.¹

The intimate association of frogs and toads with water has earned for these creatures a widespread reputation as custodians of rain; and hence they often play a part in charms designed to draw needed showers from the sky. Some of the Indians of the Orinoco held the toad to be the god or lord of the waters, and for that reason feared to kill the creature, even when they were ordered to do so. They have been known to keep frogs under a pot and to beat them with rods when there was a drought.² It is said that the Aymara Indians of Peru and Bolivia often make little images of frogs and other aquatic animals and place them on the tops of the hills as a means of bringing down rain.³ In some parts of South-Eastern Australia, where the rainfall is apt to be excessive, the natives feared to injure Tidelek, the frog, or Bluk, the bull-frog, because they were said to be full of water instead of intestines, and great rains would follow if one of them were killed. The frog family was often referred to as Bunjil Willung or Mr. Rain. A tradition ran that once upon a time long ago the frog drank up all the water in the lakes and rivers, and then sat in the dry

¹ W. Weston, *Mountaineering and Exploration in the Japanese Alps* (London, 1896), p. 162 sq.; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvi. (1897), p. 30; *id.*, in *The Geographical Journal*, vii. (1896), p. 143 sq.

² A. Caulin, *Historia Corographica natural y evangelica de la Nueva Andalucía, Provincias de Cumaná, Guayana y Vertientes del Río Orinoco*, p. 96; *Colombia, being a geographical, etc., account of the country*, i. 642 sq.; A. Basian, *Die Culturländer des alten Amerika*, ii. 216.

³ D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*,

ii. 237, note. On the supposed relation of the frog or toad to water in America, see further E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 420 sq., 425 sqq. He observes that "throughout the New World, from Florida to Chile, the worship of the frog or toad, as the offspring of water and the symbol of the water-spirit, accompanied the cultivation of maize" (p. 425). A species of water toad is called by the Araucanians of Chili *genco*, "which signifies lord of the water, as they believe that it watches over the preservation and contributes to the salubrity of the waters" (J. I. Molina, *Geographical, Natural, and Civil History of Chili*, London, 1809, i. 179).

ok their way. He just said, "Drink, drink!" and
 o contemplate the sky with an air of deep abstrac-
 crows performed in their best style, and the sea-
 d on his tail, but all to no purpose. At last the
 and his relations, hung round with lake grass and
 ed, reared themselves on their tails and pranced
 ire. This was too much for the frog. He opened
 and laughed till the water ran out and the lakes
 s were full once more.¹ We have seen that some
 eensland aborigines imitate the movements and
 ogs as part of a rain-charm.² The Thompson
 ians of British Columbia and some people in
 iuk that to kill a frog brings on rain.³ In
 a district of North-Western India, one way of
 n rain when it is needed is to hang a frog with its
 on a tall bamboo or on a tree for a day or two.
 n is that the god of rain, seeing the creature in
 ill take pity on it and send the rain.⁴ Beliefs like
 ht easily develop into a worship of frogs regarded
 fying the powers of water and rain. In the Rig
 e is a hymn about frogs which appears to be sub-
 a rain-charm.⁵ The Newars, the aboriginal inhabit-
 tepaul, worship the frog as a creature associated
 demi-god Nagas in the production and control of

B. Howitt, *Folklore and* A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und*
 80.

rain and the water-supply, on which the welfare of the crops depends. A sacred character is attributed to the little animal, and every care is taken not to molest or injure it. The worship of the frog is performed on the seventh day of the month Kartik (October), usually at a pool which is known to be frequented by frogs, although it is not essential to the efficacy of the rite that a frog should be actually seen at the time. After carefully washing his face and hands, the priest takes five brazen bowls and places in them five separate offerings, namely, rice, flowers, milk and vermilion, ghee and incense, and water. Lighting the pile of ghee and incense, the priest says, "Hail, Paremésvara Bhûminâtha! I pray you receive these offerings and send us timely rain, and bless our crops!"¹

Among some tribes of South Africa, when too much rain falls, the wizard, accompanied by a large crowd, repairs to the house of a family where there has been no death for a very long time, and there he burns the skin of a coney. As it burns he shouts, "The rabbit is burning," and the cry is taken up by the whole crowd, who continue shouting till they are exhausted.² This no doubt is supposed to stop the rain. Equally effective is a method adopted by gypsies in Austria. When the rain has continued to pour steadily for a long time, to the great discomfort of these homeless vagrants, the men of the band assemble at a river and divide themselves into two parties. Some of them cut branches with which to make a raft, while the others collect hazel leaves and cover the raft with them. A witch thereupon lays a dried serpent, wrapt in white rags, on the raft, which is then carried by several men to the river. Women are not allowed to be present at this part of the ceremony. While the procession moves towards the river, the witch marches behind the raft singing a song, of which the burden is a statement that gypsies do not like water, and have no urgent need of serpents' milk, coupled with the expression of a hope that the serpent may see his way to swallow the water, that he may run to his

¹ A. L. Waddell, "Frog-Worship among the Newars," *The Indian Antiquary*, xxii. (1893), pp. 292-294. The title Bhûminâtha, "Lord or Protector of the Soil," is specially reserved for the frog. The title Paremésvara is

given to all the Newar divinities.

² J. Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, Superstitions, and Religions of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 295.

When the rains are excessive, the people draw a figure of a Muni or Rishi Agastya on a loin-cloth and put it in the rain, or they paint his figure on the outside of a house and let the rain wash it off. This Muni or Rishi is a great personage in the native folklore, and his reputation of being able to stop the rain. It is said that he will exercise his power as soon as he is asked to feel in effigy the misery of wet weather.² On the other hand, when rain is wanted at Chhatarpur, in the United Provinces Presidency, they paint two figures with their heads down on a wall that faces east; one figure represents Indra, the other Megha Raja, the god of rain. They think that in this uncomfortable season these powerful beings will soon be glad to send down needed showers.³ In a Japanese village, when a divinity had long been deaf to the peasants' prayers for rain, they at last threw down his image and, in a loud and long, hurled it head foremost into a rice-field. "There," they said, "you may stay for a while, to see how *you* will feel after a few days lying in this broiling sun that is burning the poor cracking fields."⁴ In the like circumstances the Feloupes of Senegambia cast down their idols and drag them about the fields, cursing them till they are worn out. The Chinese make a huge dragon of paper or

cession ; but if no rain follows, the mock dragon is execrated and torn in pieces.¹ In Okunomura, a Japanese village not far from Tokio, when rain is wanted, an artificial dragon is made out of straw, reeds, bamboos, and magnolia leaves. Preceded by a Shinto priest, attended by men carrying paper flags, and followed by others beating a big drum, the dragon is carried in procession from the Buddhist temple and finally thrown into a waterfall.² About the year 1710 the island of Tsong-ming, which belongs to the province of Nanking, was afflicted with a drought. The viceroy of the province, after the usual attempts to soften the heart of the local deity by burning incense-sticks had been made in vain, sent word to the idol that if rain did not fall by such and such a day, he would have him turned out of the city and his temple razed to the ground. The threat had no effect on the obdurate divinity ; the day of grace came and went, and yet not a drop of rain fell. Then the indignant viceroy forbade the people to make any more offerings at the shrine of this unfeeling deity, and commanded that the temple should be shut up and seals placed on the doors. This soon produced the desired effect. Cut off from his base of supplies, the idol had no choice but to surrender at discretion. Rain fell in a few days, and thus the god was reinstated in the affections of the faithful.³ When the rice-crop is endangered by long drought, the governor of Battambang, a province of Siam, goes in great state to a certain pagoda and prays to Buddha for rain. Then, accompanied by his suite and followed by an enormous crowd, he adjourns to a plain behind the pagoda. Here a dummy figure has been made up, dressed in bright colours, and placed in the middle of the plain. A wild music begins to play ; maddened by the din of drums and cymbals and crackers, and goaded on by their drivers, the elephants charge down on the dummy and trample it to pieces. After this, Buddha will soon give rain.⁴ When the spirits withhold rain or sunshine, the Comanches whip a slave ; if

¹ Huc, *L'empire chinois*, i. 241.

² R. Lange, "Bitten um Regen in Japan," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893), p. 334 sq.

³ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, xviii.

210.

⁴ Brien, "Aperçu sur la province de Battambang," *Cochinchine Française: Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 25, p. 6 sq.

Tabaristan there was said to be a cave in the
of Tak which had only to be defiled by filth or
he rain to begin to fall, and to continue falling till
was cleansed.⁴ Gervasius mentions a spring, into
stone or a stick were thrown, rain would at once
it and drench the thrower.⁵ There was a fountain
r such that if it were touched or even looked at by
being, it would at once flood the whole province
⁶ When rain was long of coming in the Canary
ie priestesses used to beat the sea with rods to
a water-spirit for his niggardliness.⁷ Sometimes an
made to the pity of the gods. When their corn is
nt up by the sun, the Zulus look out for a "heaven
it, and throw it into a pool. Then the heaven melts
erness for the death of the bird ; "it wails for it by
ailing a funeral wail."⁸ In times of drought the
of Teneriffe led their sheep to sacred ground, and
separated the lambs from their dams, that their
bleating might touch the heart of the god.⁹ A
ethod of stopping rain is to pour hot oil in the left
dog. The animal howls with pain, his howls are
Indra, and out of pity for the beast's sufferings the

Native Races of the Pacific

⁵ Gervasius von Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, ed. F. Liebrecht, p. 41 sq.

Tribes of the Hindoo

⁶ Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topography*

god stops the rain.¹ A peculiar mode of making rain was adopted by some of the heathen Arabs. They tied two sorts of bushes to the tails and hind legs of their cattle, and, setting fire to the bushes, drove the cattle to the top of a mountain, praying for rain.² This may be, as Wellhausen suggests, an imitation of lightning on the horizon;³ but it may also be a way of threatening the sky, as some West African rain-makers put a pot of inflammable materials on the fire and blow up the flames, threatening that if heaven does not soon give rain they will send up a blaze which will set the sky on fire.⁴

Stones are often supposed to possess the property of bringing on rain, provided they be dipped in water or sprinkled with it, or treated in some other appropriate manner. In a Samoan village a certain stone was carefully housed as the representative of the rain-making god, and in time of drought his priests carried the stone in procession and dipped it in a stream.⁵ Among the Ta-ta-thi tribe of New South Wales, the rain-maker breaks off a piece of quartz-crystal and spits it towards the sky; the rest of the crystal he wraps in emu feathers, soaks both crystal and feathers in water, and carefully hides them.⁶ In the Keramin tribe of New South Wales the wizard retires to the bed of a creek, drops water on a round flat stone, then covers up and conceals it.⁷ When the Wakondjo, a tribe of Central Africa, desire rain, they send to the Wawamba, who dwell at the foot of snowy mountains, and are the happy possessors of a "rain-stone." In consideration of a proper payment, the Wawamba wash the precious stone, anoint it with oil, and put it in a pot full of water. After that the rain cannot fail to come.⁸ In some parts of Mongolia, when the people desire rain, they fasten a bezoar stone to a willow twig, and place it in pure water,

¹ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 135, § 285.

² Rasmussen, *Addimenta ad historiam Arabum ante Islamismum*, p. 67 sq.

³ J. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentumes*, p. 157 (first edition).

⁴ Labat, *Relation historique de l'Ethiopie occidentale*, ii. 180.

⁵ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 145.

⁶ A. L. P. Cameron, "Notes on

some Tribes of New South Wales," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiv. (1885), p. 362. For other uses of quartz-crystal in ceremonies for the making of rain, see above, pp. 84, 85.

⁷ A. L. P. Cameron, *loc. cit.* Compare E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, ii. 377.

⁸ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 654.

beds of the streams are waterless in the plains :
ascend for some miles the profound cañons that
dip into the heart of the wild and rugged moun-
tain to a current trickling over the sand.
Two or three more will bring you to a stream of wa-
ter flowing over boulders and screened from the
steep walls of rock that tower on either hand a
mist into the air, their parched sides matted with
the forms of the prickly cactus, and their summits
pines, whose black shapes, stirred by breezes
felt in the hot and airless depths of the ravine,
forming fringes to the narrow strip of blue sky far
above. In such a land we need not wonder that the
natives seek to procure rain by magic. They take
a certain spring and throw it on a particular point
of rock ; the welcome clouds then soon gather, and
it rains.³ But customs of this sort are not confined to
Africa and Asia or the torrid deserts of Australia
or the World. They have been practised in the cool
or the grey skies of Europe. There is a fountain
in Devon, of romantic fame, in those "wild woods
side," where, if legend be true, the wizard Merlin
in his magic slumber in the hawthorn shade.
The Breton peasants used to resort when they
were thirsty. They caught some of the water in a tankard

and threw it on a slab near the spring.¹ On Snowdon there is a lonely tarn called Dulyn, or the Black Lake, lying "in a dismal dingle surrounded by high and dangerous rocks." A row of stepping-stones runs out into the lake, and if any one steps on the stones and throws water so as to wet the farthest stone, which is called the Red Altar, "it is but a chance that you do not get rain before night, even when it is hot weather."² In these cases it appears probable that, as in Samoa, the stone is regarded as more or less divine. This appears from the custom sometimes observed of dipping the cross in the Fountain of Barenton to procure rain, for this is plainly a Christian substitute for the old pagan way of throwing water on the stone.³ At various places in France it is, or used till lately to be, the practice to dip the image of a saint in water as a means of procuring rain. Thus, beside the old priory of Commagny, a mile or two to the south-west of Moulins-Engilbert, there is a spring of St. Gervais, whither the inhabitants go in procession to obtain rain or fine weather according to the needs of the crops. In times of great drought they throw into the basin of the fountain an ancient stone image of the saint that stands in a sort of niche from which the fountain flows.⁴ At Collobrières and Carpentras, both in Provence, a similar practice was observed with the images of St. Pons and St. Gens respectively.⁵ In several villages of Navarre prayers for rain used to be offered to St. Peter, and by way of enforcing them the villagers carried the image of the saint in procession to the river, where they thrice invited him to reconsider his resolution and to grant their prayers; then, if he was still obstinate, they plunged him in the water, despite the remonstrances of the clergy, who pleaded with as much truth as piety that a simple caution or

¹ J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 184; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 494; L. J. B. Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, iii. 190 sq. Compare A. de Nore, *Contumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, p. 216; San Marte, *Die Arthur Sage*, pp. 105 sq., 153 sqq.

² J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 185 sq.

³ J. Rhys, *op. cit.* p. 187. The same thing is done at the fountain of Sainte

Anne, near Gevezé, in Brittany. See P. Sébillot, *Traditions et superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, i. 72.

⁴ G. Herve, "Quelques superstitions de Morvan," *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, 4me série, iii. (1892), p. 530.

⁵ Béranger-Féraud and de Mortillet, in *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, 4me série, ii. (1891), pp. 306, 310 sq.; Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, i. 427.

of drought.³ In all such cases the practice is at bottom a sympathetic charm, however it may be under the appearance of a punishment or a threat. application of water to a miraculous stone is not the of securing its good offices in the making of rain. and of Uist, one of the outer Hebrides, there is a stone opposite to St. Mary's church, which the natives call the Water-cross. When they needed rain, they cover the stone up; and when enough rain had fallen, they laid the stone down on the ground.⁴ In Aurora, one of the New Hebrides the rain-maker puts a tuft of leaves of a certain plant on top of a stone; over it he lays some branches of a tree which he pounds and crushes, and to these he adds a substance which is believed to possess the property of drawing waters from the sky. All this he accompanies with a prayer, and finally covers the whole mass up. In time the sun, and steam, charged with magical virtue, goes up through the clouds and rain. The wizard must be careful, not to pound the pepper too hard, as otherwise the wind might blow too strong.⁵ Sometimes the stone derives its magical virtue from its likeness to a real or imaginary animal. Thus, at Kota Gadang in Sumatra, there is a stone which, with the help of a powerful imagination, may perhaps be made to bear a faint and distant resemblance to a cat. Therefore, it possesses the property of eliciting

real black cat plays a part in ceremonies for the production of rain. Hence the stone is sometimes smeared with the blood of fowls, rubbed, and incensed, while a charm is uttered over it.¹ At Eneti, in Washington Territory, there is an irregular basaltic rock on which a face, said to be that of the thunder-bird, has been hammered. The Indians of the neighbourhood long believed that to shake the rock would cause rain by exciting the wrath of the thunder-bird.²

Like other peoples, the Greeks and Romans sought to obtain rain by magic, when prayers and processions³ had proved ineffectual. For example, in Arcadia, when the corn and trees were parched with drought, the priest of Zeus dipped an oak branch into a certain spring on Mount Lycaeus. Thus troubled, the water sent up a misty cloud, from which rain soon fell upon the land.⁴ A similar mode of making rain is still practised, as we have seen, in Halma-hera near New Guinea.⁵ The people of Crannon in Thessaly had a bronze chariot which they kept in a temple. When they desired a shower they shook the chariot and the shower fell.⁶ Probably the rattling of the chariot was meant to imitate thunder; we have already seen that mock thunder and lightning form part of a rain-charm in Russia and Japan.⁷ The legendary Salmoneus of Thessaly made mock

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 86. As to the cat in rain-making ceremonies, see above, p. 102.

² Myron Eels, "The Twana, Chemakum, and Klallam Indians of Washington Territory," *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1887*, p. 674.

³ As to such prayers, see Pausanias, ii. 25. 10; Marcus Antoninus, v. 7; Petronius, 44; Tertullian, *Apolog.* 40, cp. 22 and 23; P. Cauer, *Delectus Inscriptionum Graecarum*,² No. 162; H. Collitz and F. Bechtel, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, No. 3718; Ch. Michel, *Recueil d'Inscriptions Grecques*, No. 1004; O. Luders, *Die dionysischen Künstler* (Berlin, 1873), p. 26 sq.

⁴ Pausanias, viii. 38. 4.

⁵ See above, p. 82.

⁶ Antigonus, *Histor. Mirab.* 15 (*Scriptores rerum mirabilium Graeci*, ed. A. Westermann, p. 64 sq.). Antigonus mentions that the badge of the city was a representation of the chariot with a couple of ravens perched on it. This badge appears on existing coins of Crannon, with the addition of a pitcher resting on the chariot (B. V. Head, *Historia Numorum*, p. 249). Hence Professor A. Furtwängler has conjectured, with great probability, that a pitcher full of water was placed on the real chariot when rain was wanted, and that the spilling of the water, as the chariot shook, was intended to imitate a shower of rain. See A. Furtwängler, *Meisterwerke der griechischen Plastik*, pp. 257-263.

⁷ Above, pp. 82, 83.

to bring down rain immediately. There were wizards who made rain or discovered springs of not certain which. They were thought to bring the water out of their bellies.³ The legendary in Rhodes are described as magicians who could ir shape and bring clouds, rain, and snow.⁴ The sacrificed boiled, not roast meat to the Seasons, tem to avert drought and dry heat and to send th and timely rain.⁵ This is an interesting of the admixture of religion with sorcery, of th magic. The Athenians dimly conceived that ray the water in the pot would be transmitted ie boiled meat to the deities, and then sent down them in the form of rain.⁶ In a similar spirit t Greeks made it a rule always to pour honey, wine, on the altars of the sun-god, pointing out, show of reason, how expedient it was that a

rus, i. 9. 7; Virgil, *Aen.*
Servius on Virgil, *l.c.*
s.v. *aquacticum* and
idem, pp. 2, 128, ed.
as Marcellus, *s.v. trullum*,
Quicherat; Servius on
iii. 175; Fulgentius,
n. antiq." *s.v. mania's*
ogr. Lat. ed. Staveren, p.
us been suggested that the
its name and its virtue

tion of the desired rain" (*Roman
Festivals of the Period of the Republic*,
London, 1899, p. 233).

³ Nonius Marcellus, *s.v. aquilex*, p.
69, ed. Quicherat. In favour of taking
aquilex as rain-maker is the use of
aquacticum in the sense of rain-making.
Compare K. O. Müller, *Die Etrusker*,
ed. W. Deecke, ii. 318 *sq.*

⁴ Diodorus Siculus, v. 55.

⁵ Philochorus, cited by Athenaeus,

god on whom so much depended should keep strictly sober.¹

This last instance introduces us to a second class of natural phenomena which primitive man commonly supposes to be in some degree under his control and dependent on his exertions. He fancies he can make the sun to shine, and can hasten or stay its going down. At an eclipse the Ojebways used to think that the sun was being extinguished. So they shot fire-tipped arrows in the air, hoping thus to rekindle his expiring light.² Conversely during an eclipse of the moon some Indian tribes of the Orinoco used to bury lighted brands in the ground; because, said they, if the moon were to be extinguished, all fire on earth would be extinguished with her, except such as was hidden from her sight.³ During an eclipse of the sun the Kamtchatkans used to bring out fire from their huts and pray the great luminary to shine as before.⁴ But the prayer addressed to the sun shows that this ceremony was religious rather than magical. Purely magical, on the other hand, was the ceremony observed on similar occasions by the Chillchotin Indians of North-Western America. Men and women tucked up their robes, as they do in travelling, and then leaning on staves, as if they were heavy laden, they continued to walk in a circle till the eclipse was over.⁵ Apparently they thought thus to support the failing steps of the sun in the sky. After the autumnal equinox, in like manner, the ancient Egyptians held a festival called "the nativity of the sun's walking-stick," because, as the luminary declined daily in the sky, and his light and heat diminished, he was supposed to need a staff on which to lean.⁶ In New Caledonia when a wizard desires to make sunshine, he takes some plants and corals to the burial-ground, and makes them into a bundle,

¹ Phylarchus, cited by Athenaeus, xv. p. 694 E. If the conjectural reading *rois 'Eμεσσηνούς* in place of *rois 'Ελληνας* be the true one, the rule was not observed by the Greeks, but by the people of Emesa in Syria, where there was a famous worship of the sun.

² Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, p. 84.

³ Gumilla, *Histoire de l'Orénoque*

(Avignon, 1758), iii. 243 sq.

⁴ S. Krascheninnikow, *Beschreibung des Landes Kamtschatka* (Lemgo, 1766), p. 217.

⁵ A. G. Morice, "The Western Dénés, their manners and customs," *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute, Toronto*, Third Series, vii. (1888-89), p. 154.

⁶ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 52.

ltar. As the smoke curls up, he rubs the stone
y coral, invokes his ancestors and says: "Sun!
at you may be burning hot, and eat up all the
: sky." The same ceremony is repeated at sun-
the sun rises behind clouds—a rare event in
sky of Southern Africa—the Sun clan of the
ay that he is grieving their heart. All work
and all the food of the previous day is given to
ld women. They may eat it and may share it
ildren they are nursing, but no one else may.
ie people go down to the river and wash them-
er. Each man throws into the river a stone
his domestic hearth, and replaces it with one
n the bed of the river. On their return to the
hief kindles a fire in his hut, and all his subjects
et a light from it. A general dance follows.²
es it seems that the lighting of the flame on
posed to rekindle the solar fire. Such a belief
ally to people who, like the Sun clan of the
leem themselves the veritable kinsmen of the
banks Islanders make sunshine by means of a
They take a very round stone, called a *vat loa*
wind red braid about it, and stick it with owls'

laid on the ground with white rods radiating from it to imitate sunbeams.¹ Sometimes the mode of making sunshine is the converse of that of making rain. Thus we have seen that a white or red pig is sacrificed for sunshine, while a black one is sacrificed for rain.² Some of the New Caledonians drench a skeleton to make rain, but burn it to make sunshine.³

In a pass of the Peruvian Andes stand two ruined towers on opposite hills. Iron hooks are clamped into their walls for the purpose of stretching a net from one tower to the other. The net is intended to catch the sun.⁴ On a small hill in Fiji grew a patch of reeds, and travellers who feared to be belated used to tie the tops of a handful of reeds together to prevent the sun from going down.⁵ As to this my friend the Rev. Lorimer Fison writes to me: "I have often seen the reeds tied together to keep the sun from going down. The place is on a hill in Lakomba, one of the eastern islands of the Fijian group. It is on the side—not on the top—of the hill. The reeds grow on the right side of the path. I asked an old man the meaning of the practice, and he said, 'We used to think the sun would see us, and know we wanted him not to go down till we got past on our way home again.'"⁶ But perhaps the original intention was to entangle the sun in the reeds, just as the Peruvians try to catch him in the net. Stories of men who have caught the sun in a noose are widely spread.⁷ In New Guinea, when a Motu man is hunting or travelling late in the afternoon and fears to be overtaken by darkness, he will sometimes take a piece of twine, loop it, and look through the loop at the sun. Then he pulls the loop into a knot and says, "Wait until we get home, and we will give you the fat of a pig." After that he passes the string to the man behind him, and then it is thrown away. In a similar case a

¹ R. H. Codrington, in *Journ. Anthropol. Instit.* x. (1881), p. 278; *id.*, *The Melanesians* (Oxford, 1891), p. 184.

² Above, p. 102.

³ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 346. See above, p. 100.

⁴ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iv. 174. The name of the place is Andahuayllas.

⁵ Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 250.

⁶ Mr. Fison's letter is dated August 26, 1898.

⁷ Schoolcraft, *The American Indians*, p. 97 *sq.*; Gill, *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, p. 61 *sq.*; Turner, *Samoa*, p. 200 *sq.*

his home is reached or the dinner cooked, coupled with the offer of a slice of fat bacon as an inducement to him with the request, is thoroughly religious. Jerome travelling among the heathen Lithuanians early in the sixteenth century, found a tribe who worshipped the sun and generated a large iron hammer. The priests told him once the sun had been invisible for several months, the powerful king had shut it up in a strong tower; the signs of the zodiac had broken open the tower with the hammer and released the sun. Therefore they worshipped the hammer.² When an Australian blackfellow wishes to stay the sun from going down till he gets home, he drives a sod in the fork of a tree, exactly facing the sun.³ For the same purpose an Indian of Yucatan, when he goes westward, places a stone in a tree or pulls out his eyelashes and blows them towards the sun.⁴ Australian natives, in travelling, will put a stone in a tree or place some grass on the path with a stick, believing that this will cause their friends to come and wait till their arrival.⁵ In these, as in many other examples, the purpose apparently is to retard the sun. Why should the act of putting a stone or a sod in a tree be supposed to effect this? A partial explanation is given by another Australian custom. In their journeys

different heights from the ground in order to indicate the height of the sun in the sky at the moment when they passed the particular tree. Those who follow are thus made aware of the time of day when their friends in advance passed the spot.¹ Possibly the natives, thus accustomed to mark the sun's progress, may have slipped into the confusion of imagining that to mark the sun's progress was to arrest it at the point marked. On the other hand, to make it go down faster, the Australians throw sand into the air and blow with their mouths towards the sun,² perhaps to waft the lingering orb westward and bury it under the sands into which it appears to sink at night.

Once more, the savage thinks he can make the wind to blow or to be still. When the day is hot and a Yakut has a long way to go, he takes a stone which he has chanced to find in an animal or fish, winds a horse-hair several times round it, and ties it to a stick. He then waves the stick about, uttering a spell. Soon a cool breeze begins to blow.³ The Wind clan of the Omahas flap their blankets to start a breeze which will drive away the mosquitoes.⁴ When a Haida Indian wishes to obtain a fair wind, he fasts, shoots a raven, singes it in the fire, and then going to the edge of the sea sweeps it over the surface of the water four times in the direction in which he wishes the wind to blow. He then throws the raven behind him, but afterwards picks it up and sets it in a sitting posture at the foot of a spruce-tree, facing towards the required wind. Propping its beak open with a stick, he requests a fair wind for a certain number of days; then going away he lies covered up in his mantle till another Indian asks him for how many days he has desired the wind, which question he answers.⁵ When a sorcerer in New Britain wishes to make a wind blow in a certain direction, he throws burnt lime in the air, chanting

¹ E. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia* (London, 1845), ii. 365.

² Curr, *The Australian Race*, iii. 145.

³ Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*, ii. 510.

⁴ J. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *Third Annual Report of the*

Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, 1884), p. 241; *id.*, "A Study of Siouan Cults," *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1894), p. 410.

⁵ G. M. Dawson, "On the Haida Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands," *Geological Survey of Canada, Report of progress for 1878-1879*, p. 122 v.

force and must itself fall.² Fuegian wizards throw against the wind to make it drop.³ On the other hand a Persian peasant desires a strong wind to blow his corn, he rubs a kind of bastard saffron and blows it up into the air ; after that the breeze soon begins to blow.

Some of the Indians of Canada believed that the winds were caused by a fish like a lizard. When one of them had been caught, the Indians advised the Jesuit missionaries to put it back into the river as fast as possible in order to calm the wind, which was contrary.⁵ When the Kei wish to obtain a favourable wind for their friends at a dance in a ring, both men and women, swaying their bodies and fro, while the men hold handkerchiefs in their hands. In Melanesia there are everywhere weather-doctors who control the powers of the air and are willing to bring wind or calm in return for a proper remuneration. For instance, on Santa Cruz the wizard makes wind by waving the branches of a tree and chanting the appropriate charm.⁷ In another Melanesian island a missionary observed a large shell on the earth, in which an oblong stone, covered with leaves, was set up, while the whole was surrounded by sticks strengthened by a creeper which was twined round the uprights. On asking a native what these

things meant, he learned that the wind was here fenced or bound round, lest it blow hard; the imprisoned wind would not be able to blow again until the fence that kept it in should have rotted away.¹ A method of making wind which is practised in New Guinea is to strike a "wind-stone" lightly with a stick; to strike it hard would bring on a hurricane.² So in Scotland witches used to raise the wind by dipping a rag in water and beating it thrice on a stone, saying:

"I knok this rag upone this stane
To raise the wind in the divellis name,
It sall not lye till I please againe."³

At Victoria, the capital of Vancouver's Island, there are a number of large stones not far from what is called the Battery. Each of them represents a certain wind. When an Indian wants any particular wind, he goes and moves the corresponding stone a little; were he to move it too much, the wind would blow very hard.⁴ On the altar of Fladda's chapel, in the island of Fladdahuan (one of the Hebrides), lay a round bluish stone which was always moist. Windbound fishermen walked sunwise round the chapel and then poured water on the stone, whereupon a favourable breeze was sure to spring up.⁵ In Gigha, an island off the western coast of Argyleshire, there is a well named Tobarrath Bhuathaig or "The lucky well of Beathag," which used to be famous for its power of raising the wind. It lies at the foot of a hill facing north-east near an isthmus called Tarbat. Six feet above where the water gushes out, there is a heap of stones which forms a cover to the sacred spring. When a person wished for a fair wind, either to leave the island or to bring home his absent friends, this part was opened with great solemnity, the stones were carefully removed, and the well cleaned with a wooden dish or a

¹ J. Palmer, quoted by R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 201, note.

² W. Monckton, "Some Recollections of New Guinea Customs," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, v. (1896), p. 186.

³ J. G. Dalyell, *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 248.

⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 26 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

⁵ Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 627; Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, p. 166 sq.

have various odd ways of raising a wind. They ringer finger, or hang up a serpent, or strike an axe-edge in the direction from which they wish the wind to blow, while at the same time they whistle. The gentle wind will not let an innocent being suffer without coming and breathing softly to him the pain.²

At Pagan, an island between New Guinea and Australia, men whose business was to make wind for such a purpose. When engaged in his professional duties the man painted himself black behind and red on his face. The red in front typified the red cloud of morning, the black represented the dark blue sky of night. Thus the man took some bushes, and, when the tide was low, stuck them in at the edge of the reef so that the flowing water would sway backwards and forwards. But if only a breeze was needed, he fastened them nearer to the shore. When the wind he again painted himself red and black in imitation of the clear blue sky, and then he dried the bushes from the reef and burnt them. As it curled up was believed to stop the wind: "So up and him clear up on top."³ Amongst the tribes of Gippsland in Victoria there used to be a tribe of storms who went by the name of Bunjil, the Great West Wind." This wind makes the tall

by liberal offerings of weapons and rugs, whenever the tree-tops bent before a gale. Having received their gifts, Bunjil Kraura would bind his head with swathes of stringy bark and lull the storm to rest with a song which consisted of the words "Wear—string—Westwind," repeated again and again.¹ Apparently the wizard identified himself with the wind, and fancied that he could bind it by tying string round his own head. The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia believe that twins are nothing but salmon transformed, and hence they prevent twins from going near a river or the sea, lest they should be changed back into salmon and glide away, with a shimmer of silvery scales, through the clear water. In their childhood twins can summon any wind by merely moving their hands; and when the Indians pray to the wind to be still they say, "Calm down, breath of the twins!"² In Greenland a woman in childbed and for some time after delivery is supposed to possess the power of laying a storm. She has only to go out of doors, fill her mouth with air, and coming back into the house blow it out again.³ In antiquity there was a family at Corinth which enjoyed the reputation of being able to still the raging wind; but we do not know in what manner its members exercised a useful function, which probably earned for them a more solid recompense than mere repute among the seafaring population of the isthmus.⁴ Finnish wizards used to sell wind to storm-stayed mariners. The wind was enclosed in three knots; if they undid the first knot, a moderate wind sprang up; if the second, it blew half a gale; if the third, a hurricane.⁵ Indeed the Esthonians, whose country is divided from Finland only by an arm of the sea, still believe in the magical powers of their northern neighbours. The bitter winds that blow in spring from the north and north-east, bringing ague and

¹ Mary E. B. Howitt, *Folklore and Legends of some Victorian Tribes* (in manuscript).

² Fr. Boas, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 51 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*).

³ Egede, *Description of Greenland*, second edition (London, 1818), p. 196, note.

⁴ Hesychius and Suidas, s.v. ἀνεμοκοῖται: Eustathius, on Homer, *Od.* x. 22, p. 1645. Compare J. Töpffer, *Attische Genealogie*, p. 112, who conjectures that the Eulaniemi or Heudaniemi at Athens may also have claimed the power of lulling the winds.

⁵ Olaus Magnus, *Gentium Septentr. Hist.* iii. 15.

‘Wind of the Cross! rushing and mighty!
Heavy the blow of thy wings sweeping past!
Wild wailing wind of misfortune and sorrow,
Wizards of Finland ride by on the blast.”¹

aid, too, that sailors, beating up against the wind
f of Finland, sometimes see a strange sail heave
tern and overhaul them hand over hand. On she
r a cloud of canvas—all her studding-sails out—
e teeth of the wind, forging her way through the
illows, dashing back the spray in sheets from her
very sail swollen to bursting, every rope strained
g. Then the sailors know that she hails from

t of tying up the wind in three knots, so that the
are loosed the stronger will blow the wind, has
uted to wizards in Lapland and to witches in
of Lewis and the Isle of Man.³ Shetland seamen
nds from old women who claim to rule the storms.
aid to be ancient crones in Lerwick now who live
ind.⁴ In the early part of the nineteenth century
Scott visited one of these witches at Stromness
eys. He says: “We clomb, by steep and dirty

merchantman, between jest and earnest, gives the old woman sixpence, and she boils her kettle to procure a favourable gale. She was a miserable figure ; upwards of ninety, she told us, and dried up like a mummy. A sort of clay-coloured cloak, folded over her head, corresponded in colour to her corpse-like complexion. Fine light-blue eyes, and nose and chin that almost met, and a ghastly expression of cunning, gave her quite the effect of Hecate."¹ A Norwegian witch has boasted of sinking a ship by opening a bag in which she had shut up a wind.² Ulysses received the winds in a leathern bag from Aeolus, King of the Winds.³ The Motumotu in New Guinea think that storms are sent by an Oiabu sorcerer ; for each wind he has a bamboo which he opens at pleasure.⁴

Often the stormy wind is regarded as an evil being who may be intimidated, driven away, or killed. When the darkening of the sky indicates the approach of a tornado, a South African magician will repair to a height whither he collects as many people as can be hastily summoned to his assistance. Directed by him, they shout and bellow in imitation of the gust as it swirls roaring about the huts and among the trees of the forest. Then at a signal they mimic the crash of the thunder, after which there is a dead silence for a few seconds ; then follows a screech more piercing and prolonged than any that preceded, dying away in a tremulous wail. The magician fills his mouth with a foul liquid which he squirts in defiant jets against the approaching storm as a kind of menace or challenge to the spirit of the wind ; and the shouting and wailing of his assistants are meant to frighten the spirit away. The performance lasts until the tornado either bursts or passes away in another direction. If it bursts, the reason is that the magician who sent the storm was more powerful than he who endeavoured to avert

¹ J. G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, iii. 203 (first edition).

² C. Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae, etc., commentatio*, p. 454.

³ Homer, *Odyssey*, x. 19 *sqq.* It is said that Perdoytus, the Lithuanian Aeolus, keeps the winds enclosed in a

leathern bag ; when they escape from it he pursues them, beats them, and shuts them up again. See E. Veckenstedt, *Die Mythen, Sagen und Legenden der Zamaiten* (Litauer), i. 153. The statements of this writer, however, are to be received with caution.

⁴ J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 177.

en stepped up to the fire and in a coaxing voice
demon of the wind to come under the fire and
elf. When he was supposed to have arrived, a
ter, to which each man present had contributed,
on the flames by an old man, and immediately
arrows sped towards the spot where the fire had
y thought that the demon would not stay where
n so badly treated. To complete the effect, guns
arged in various directions, and the captain of a
essel was invited to fire on the wind with cannon.³
nty-first of February 1883 a similar ceremony was
by the Esquimaux of Point Barrow, Alaska, with
n of killing the spirit of the wind. Women drove
from their houses with clubs and knives, with
made passes in the air ; and the men, gathering
e, shot him with their rifles and crushed him
ivy stone the moment that steam rose in a cloud
mouldering embers, on which a tub of water had
rown.⁴

a gust lifts the hay in the meadow, the Breton
ows a knife or a fork at it to prevent the devil from
the hay.⁵ Similarly in the Esthonian island of
the reapers are busy among the corn and the wind

the reapers slash at it with their sickles.¹ The custom of flinging a knife or a hat at a whirlwind is observed alike by German, Slavonian, and Esthonian rustics; they think that a witch or wizard is riding on the wind, and that the knife, if it hits the witch, will be reddened by her blood or will disappear altogether, sticking in the wound it has inflicted.² Sometimes Esthonian peasants run shrieking and shouting behind a whirlwind, hurling sticks and stones into the flying dust.³ When the wind blows down their huts, the Payaguas of South America snatch up firebrands and run against the wind, menacing it with the blazing brands, while others beat the air with their fists to frighten the storm.⁴ When the Guaycurus are threatened by a severe storm, the men go out armed, and the women and children scream their loudest to intimidate the demon.⁵ During a tempest the inhabitants of a Batta village in Sumatra have been seen to rush from their houses armed with sword and lance. The rajah placed himself at their head, and with shouts and yells they hewed and hacked at the invisible foe. An old woman was observed to be especially active in the defence of her house, slashing the air right and left with a long sabre.⁶ In Australia the huge columns of red sand that move rapidly across a desert

¹ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. 2, p. 54.

² Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 454, § 406; W. Mannhardt, *Die Götter der deutschen und nordischen Völker* (Berlin, 1860), p. 99; *id.*, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 85; Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 109; F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 117. In some parts of Austria and Germany, when a storm is raging, the people open a window and throw out a handful of meal, saying to the wind, "There, that's for you, stop!" See A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus oesterreichisch-Schlesien*, ii. 259; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ 529; Zingerle, *Sitten Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 118, § 1046. Similarly an old Irishwoman has been seen to fling handfuls of grass into a

cloud of dust blown along a road, and she explained her behaviour by saying that she wished to give something to the fairies who were playing in the dust (*Folklore*, iv. (1893), p. 352). But these are sacrifices to appease, not ceremonies to constrain the spirits of the air; thus they belong to the domain of religion rather than to that of magic. The ancient Greeks sacrificed to the winds. See P. Stengel, "Die Opfer der Hellenen an die Winde," *Hermes*, xvi. (1881), pp. 346-350; and my note on Pausanias, ii. 12. 1.

³ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 278.

⁴ Azara, *Voyage dans l'Amérique Méridionale*, ii. 137.

⁵ Charlevoix, *Histoire du Paraguay*, ii. 74.

⁶ W. A. Henry, "Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Bataklanden," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xvii. 23 sq.

evil spirit that is believed to be riding on the breeze. In the light of these examples a story told by Herodotus, which modern critics have treated as a fable, is perfectly true. He says, without however vouching for the truth of it, that once in the land of the Psylli, the modern Libya, the wind blowing from the Sahara had dried up all the rivers. So the people took counsel and marched out to make war on the south wind. But when they entered the desert, the simoom swept down on them and killed a man.⁸ The story may well have been told of a man who watched them disappearing, in battle array, with their cymbals beating, into the red cloud of whirling

§ 3. *Incarnate Gods*

instances, drawn from the beliefs and practices of peoples all over the world, may suffice to prove that whether European or otherwise, fails to recognise

myth, *Aborigines of Victoria*; compare *id.*, ii.

Howitt, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii., note.

vallis Harris, *The High-*

of the Karnal District, p. 154). The Pawnees believe them to be ghosts (G.

B. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero-Stories and Folk-tales*, p. 357).

Californian Indians think that they are happy souls ascending to the heavenly land (Stephen H. Henshaw, *Tribe of California*, p. 228).

those limitations to his power over nature which seem so obvious to us. In a society where every man is supposed to be endowed more or less with powers which we should call supernatural, it is plain that the distinction between gods and men is somewhat blurred, or rather has scarcely emerged. The conception of gods as supernatural beings entirely distinct from and superior to man, and wielding powers to which he possesses nothing comparable in degree and hardly even in kind, has been slowly evolved in the course of history. At first the supernatural agents are not regarded as greatly, if at all, superior to man; for they may be frightened and coerced by him into doing his will. At this stage of thought the world is viewed as a great democracy; all beings in it, whether natural or supernatural, are supposed to stand on a footing of tolerable equality. But with the growth of his knowledge man learns to realise more clearly the vastness of nature and his own littleness and feebleness in presence of it. The recognition of his own helplessness does not, however, carry with it a corresponding belief in the impotence of those supernatural beings with which his imagination peoples the universe. On the contrary it enhances his conception of their power. For the idea of the world as a system of impersonal forces acting in accordance with fixed and invariable laws has not yet fully dawned or darkened upon him. The germ of the idea he certainly has, and he acts upon it, not only in magic art, but in much of the business of daily life. But the idea remains undeveloped, and so far as he attempts to explain the world he lives in, he pictures it as the manifestation of conscious will and personal agency. If then he feels himself to be so frail and slight, how vast and powerful must he deem the beings who control the gigantic machinery of nature! Thus as his old sense of equality with the gods slowly vanishes, he resigns at the same time the hope of directing the course of nature by his own unaided resources, that is, by magic, and looks more and more to the gods as the sole repositories of those supernatural powers which he once claimed to share with them. With the advance of knowledge, therefore, prayer and sacrifice assume the leading place in religious ritual; and magic, which once ranked with them as a legitimate equal, is

and ignorance of the natural laws, and the recognition of elemental forces as personal agents is giving way to recognition of natural law; then magic, based as it is on the idea of a necessary and invariable of cause and effect, independent of personal will, falls from the obscurity and discredit into which it had fallen by investigating the causal sequences in nature, and prepares the way for science. Alchemy leads up to

the notion of a man-god, or of a human being endowed with divine or supernatural powers, belongs essentially to an early period of religious history in which gods and men were viewed as beings of much the same order, and before they were divided by the impassable gulf which, to later times, opens out between them. Strange, therefore, as it may seem to us the idea of a god incarnate in human form, was nothing very startling for early man, who sees in a king or a god-man only a higher degree of the same natural powers which he arrogates in perfect good faith to himself. Such incarnate gods are common in rude society. Incarnation may be temporary or permanent. In the former case, the incarnation—commonly known as inspiration or revelation—reveals itself in supernatural knowledge rather than in supernatural power. In other words, its usual mani-

conceiving the existence of natural law, primitive man cannot conceive a breach of it. A miracle is to him merely an unusually striking manifestation of a common power.

The belief in temporary incarnation or inspiration is world-wide. Certain persons are supposed to be possessed from time to time by a spirit or deity; while the possession lasts, their own personality lies in abeyance, the presence of the spirit is revealed by convulsive shiverings and shakings of the man's whole body, by wild gestures and excited looks, all of which are referred, not to the man himself, but to the spirit which has entered into him; and in this abnormal state all his utterances are accepted as the voice of the god or spirit dwelling in him and speaking through him. In Mangaia the priests in whom the gods took up their abode from time to time were called "god-boxes" or, for shortness, "gods." Before giving oracles as gods, they drank an intoxicating liquor, and in the frenzy thus produced their wild whirling words were received as the voice of the god.¹ In Fiji there is in every tribe a certain family who alone are liable to be thus temporarily inspired or possessed by a divine spirit. "Their qualification is hereditary, and any one of the ancestral gods may choose his vehicle from among them. I have seen this possession, and a horrible sight it is. In one case, after the fit was over, for some time the man's muscles and nerves twitched and quivered in an extraordinary way. He was naked except for his breech-clout, and on his naked breast little snakes seemed to be wriggling for a moment or two beneath his skin, disappearing and then suddenly reappearing in another part of his chest. When the *mbete* (which we may translate 'priest' for want of a better word) is seized by the possession, the god within him calls out his own name in a stridulous tone, 'It is I! Katouivere!' or some other name. At the next possession some other ancestor may declare himself."² In Bali there are certain persons called *pirmas*, who are predestined or fitted by nature to become the temporary abode of the invisible deities. When a god is to be consulted, the villagers go and compel some of these mediums to lend their services. Sometimes

¹ Gill, *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, p. 35.

² Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26, 1898.

When his consciousness returns all his words and
is regarded as proceeding not from himself but from
the deity. So long as the possession lasts he is a *deva*
that is, a god who has become man, and in that
state answers the questions put to him. During this
possession the body is believed to be immaterial and hence
invisible. A dance with swords and pikes follows the
dictum of the oracle; but these weapons could make no
impression on the ethereal body of the inspired medium.¹ In
the district of Central Celebes, sickness is often supposed
to be caused by an alien substance, such as a piece of
wood or stick, or even a chopping-knife, which has been
introduced unseen into the body of the sufferer by the
agency of an insidious foe. To discover and eject this
intruder is a task for a god, who for this purpose
appears to the body of a priestess, speaks through her
and she performs the necessary surgical operation with

An eye-witness of the ceremony has told how,
when the priestess sat beside the sick man, with her head
covered by a cloth, she began to quiver and shake and to
utter a strident tone, at which some one observed to
her, "Now her own spirit is leaving her body and a
new spirit is taking its place." On removing the cloth from her

by laying the cloth from her head on the patient's stomach and pinching it, she veiled her face once more, sobbed, quivered, and shook violently, at which the people said, "The human spirit is returning into her."¹ A Brahman householder who performs the regular half-monthly sacrifices is supposed thereby to become himself a deity for a time. In the words of the *Satapatha-Brâhmana*, "He who is consecrated draws nigh to the gods and becomes one of the deities."² "All formulas of the consecration are *audgrabhana* (elevatory), since he who is consecrated elevates himself (*ud-grabh*) from this world to the world of the gods. He elevates himself by means of these same formulas."³ "He who is consecrated indeed becomes both Vishnu and a sacrificer; for when he is consecrated, he is Vishnu, and when he sacrifices, he is the sacrificer."⁴ After he has completed the sacrifice he becomes man again, divesting himself of his sacred character with the words, "Now I am he who I really am," which are thus explained in the *Satapatha-Brâhmana*: "In entering upon the vow, he becomes, as it were, non-human; and as it would not be becoming for him to say, 'I enter from truth into untruth'; and as, in fact, he now again becomes man, let him therefore divest himself (of the vow) with the text: 'Now I am he who I really am.'"⁵

But examples of such temporary inspiration are so common in every part of the world and are now so familiar through books on ethnology that it is needless to multiply illustrations of the general principle.⁶ It may be well, however, to refer to two particular modes of producing temporary inspiration, because they are perhaps less known than some others, and because we shall have occasion to refer to them later on. One of these modes of producing inspiration is by sucking the fresh blood of a sacrificed victim. In the temple of Apollo Diradiotes at Argos, a lamb was sacrificed by night

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Mijne eerste ervaringen te Poso," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxxvi. (1892), pp. 399-403.

² *Satapatha-Brâhmana*, part ii. pp. 4, 38, 42, 44, translated by J. Eggeling (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxvi.).

³ *Op. cit.* p. 20.

⁴ *Op. cit.* p. 29.

⁵ *Satapatha-Brâhmana*, part i. p. 4, trans. by J. Eggeling (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xii.). On the deification of the sacrificer in the Brahman ritual see Hubert and Mauss, "Essai sur le sacrifice," *L'Année Sociologique*, ii. (1897-1898), p. 48 sqq.

⁶ See for examples E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,² ii. 131 sq.

ready step. Suddenly the amatus descends. There
making that glare, or those frantic leaps. He snorts,
he gyrates. The demon has now taken bodily
possession of him; and, though he retains the power of
seeing and of motion, both are under the demon's control,
his separate consciousness is in abeyance. The by-
standers signalize the event by raising a long shout, attended
by a peculiar vibratory noise, which is caused by the motion
of the tongue, or of the tongue alone. The
priest is now worshipped as a present deity, and every
one consults him respecting his disease, his wants, the
wishes of his absent relatives, the offerings to be made for
the accomplishment of his wishes, and, in short, respecting
everything for which superhuman knowledge is supposed to
be available." ³ At a festival of the Afoors of Minahassa, in
Celebes, after a pig has been killed, the priest rushes
at it, thrusts his head into the carcass, and drinks of
the blood. Then he is dragged away from it by force and set
in a chair, whereupon he begins to prophesy how the rice-
crop will turn out that year. A second time he runs at the
carcass and drinks of the blood; a second time he is forced
into a chair and continues his predictions. It is thought
that a spirit in him which possesses the power of

⁴ At Potosi, a great religious capital of the

Western Slavs, the priest tasted the blood of the sacrificed oxen and sheep in order the better to prophesy.¹ The true test of a Dainyal or diviner among some of the Hindoo Koosh tribes is to suck the blood from the neck of a decapitated goat.² The Sabaeans regarded blood as unclean, but nevertheless drank it because they believed it to be the food of demons, and thought that by imbibing it they entered into communion with the demons, who would thus visit them and lift the veil that hides the future from mortal vision.³ The other mode of producing temporary inspiration, to which I shall here refer, is by means of a branch or leaves of a sacred tree. Thus in the Hindoo Koosh a fire is kindled with twigs of the sacred cedar; and the Dainyal or sibyl, with a cloth over her head, inhales the thick pungent smoke till she is seized with convulsions and falls senseless to the ground. Soon she rises and raises a shrill chant, which is caught up and loudly repeated by her audience.⁴ So Apollo's prophetess ate the sacred laurel and was fumigated with it before she prophesied.⁵ The Bacchanals ate ivy, and their inspired fury was by some believed to be due to the exciting and intoxicating properties of the plant.⁶

It is worth observing that many peoples expect the victim as well as the priest or prophet to give signs of inspiration by convulsive movements of the body; and if the animal remains obstinately steady, they esteem it unfit for sacrifice. Thus when the Yakuts sacrifice to an evil spirit, the beast must bellow and roll about, which is con-

1825," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde*, xviii. 517 sq. Compare "De godsdienst en godsdienst-plegtigheden der Alfoeren in de Menhassa op het eiland Celebes," *Tijdschrift van Nederlandsch Indië*, 1849, dl. ii. p. 395; N. Graafland, *De Minahassa*, i. 122; Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de La Pérouse*, v. 443.

¹ F. J. Mone, *Geschichte des Heidenthums im nördlichen Europa*, i. 188.

² Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 96. For other instances of priests or representatives of the deity drinking the warm blood of the victim, compare Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal*,

ii. 296 sq.; *Asiatic Researches*, iv. 40, 41, 50, 52 (Svo ed.); Paul Soleillet, *L'Afrique Occidentale*, p. 123 sq. To snuff up the savour of the sacrifice was similarly supposed to produce inspiration (Tertullian, *Apologet.* 23).

³ Maimonides, quoted by D. Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 480 sq.

⁴ Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 97.

⁵ Lucian, *Bis accus.* 1; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 6; Plutarch, *De E apud Delphos*, 2; *id.*, *De Pythiae oraculis*, 6.

⁶ Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 112.

it is rejected." Among the Kanrs of the Hindoo priest or his substitute pours water into the ear on the spine of the intended victim, whether it be a goat. It is not enough that the animal should shake its head to get the water out of its ear; it shakes its whole body as a wet dog shakes himself. Does so, a kissing sound is made by all present, and the animal is forthwith slaughtered.⁴

A person temporarily inspired is believed to acquire, besides divine knowledge, but also, at least occasionally, power. In Cambodia, when an epidemic breaks out, the inhabitants of several villages unite and go with a band to touch their head to look for the man whom the local deity is supposed to have chosen for his temporary incarnation. If found, the man is conducted to the altar of the god, where the mystery of incarnation takes place. Then the man becomes an object of veneration to his fellows, who implore his protection to protect the village against the plague.⁵ A certain Apollo, which stood in a sacred cave at Hylae near

Das Türkenvolk, p. 158. *Provinzen des russischen Reiches*, i. 91 ;
De defect. oracul. 46, Vambery, *Das Türkenvolk*, p. 485 ;
 Erman, *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Kunde von Russland*, i. 377. When
 Olsohn, *Die Ssabier und die Rao of Kachh sacrifices a buffalo*,
 ii. 37 ; *Lettres édifiantes*

Magnesia, was thought to impart superhuman strength. Sacred men, inspired by it, leaped down precipices, tore up huge trees by the roots, and carried them on their backs along the narrowest defiles.¹ The feats performed by inspired dervishes belong to the same class.

Thus far we have seen that the savage, failing to discern the limits of his ability to control nature, ascribes to himself and to all men certain powers which we should now call supernatural. Further, we have seen that, over and above this general supernaturalism, some persons are supposed to be inspired for short periods by a divine spirit, and thus temporarily to enjoy the knowledge and power of the indwelling deity. From beliefs like these it is an easy step to the conviction that certain men are permanently possessed by a deity, or in some other undefined way are endowed with so high a degree of supernatural power as to be ranked as gods and to receive the homage of prayer and sacrifice. Sometimes these human gods are restricted to purely supernatural or spiritual functions. Sometimes they exercise supreme political power in addition. In the latter case they are kings as well as gods, and the government is a theocracy.

I shall give examples of both, but at the outset it is well to note that in the sorcerer or miracle-monger pure and simple we have, as it were, the chrysalis out of which the full-blown god or king may sooner or later emerge. "The real gods at Tana," says the Rev. Dr. Turner, "may be said to be the disease-makers. It is surprising how these men are dreaded, and how firm the belief that they have in their hands the power of life and death." The means employed by these sorcerers to effect their fell purpose is sympathetic magic; they pick up the refuse of a man's food, or other rubbish belonging to him, and burn it with certain formalities; and so the man falls ill and sends a present—an embryo sacrifice—to the sorcerer or embryo god, praying him to stop burning the rubbish, for he believes that when it is quite burnt he must surely die.² Here we have all the

¹ Pausanias, x. 32. 6. Coins of Magnesia exhibit on the reverse a man carrying an uprooted tree. See F. B. Baker, in *Numismatic Chronicle*, Third

Series, xii. (1892), p. 89 *sqq.* Mr. Baker suggests that the custom may be a relic of ancient tree-worship.

² G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 320 *sqq.*

elements of religion—a god, a worshipper, prayer and sacrifice—in process of evolution. And the same supernatural powers which tend to elevate a magician into a god, tend also to raise him to the rank of a chief or a king. In Melanesia “as a matter of fact the power of chiefs has hitherto rested upon the belief in their supernatural power derived from the spirits or ghosts with which they had intercourse. As this belief has failed in the Banks’ Islands, for example, some time ago, the position of a chief has tended to become obscure; and as this belief is now being generally undermined a new kind of chief must needs arise, unless a time of anarchy is to begin.”¹ According to a native Melanesian account, the origin of the authority of chiefs lies entirely in the belief that they have communication with mighty ghosts and possess that supernatural power whereby they are able to bring the influence of the ghosts to bear. If a chief imposed a fine, it was paid because the people universally dreaded his ghostly power, and firmly believed that he could inflict calamity and sickness upon such as resisted him. As soon as any considerable number of his people began to disbelieve in his influence with the ghosts, his power to levy fines was shaken.² Among the Toaripi or Motumotu tribe of New Guinea “chiefs have not necessarily supernatural powers, but a sorcerer is looked upon as a chief. A man here, Hiovaki, is a chief because he has power over the sea and gives calm or storm. Another, Pitiharo, is great because his power is for plantations, and is able to give an abundance of all kinds of food, and can bring rain or sunshine.”³ Among the Matabele of South Africa the witch-doctors are supposed to be on speaking terms with spirits, and their influence is described as tremendous; in the time of King Lo Bengula some years ago “their power was as great as, if not greater than, the king’s.”⁴ Among the Wambugwe, a Bantu people of Eastern Africa, the original form of government was a family republic, but the enormous power of the sorcerers, transmitted

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 46.

² Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 52. As to the *mana* or supernatural power of chiefs and others, see *ibid.* p. 118 *sqq.*

³ J. Chalmers, “Toaripi,” *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898), p. 334.

⁴ L. Deele, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 154.

by inheritance, soon raised them to the rank of petty lords or chiefs.¹ The chiefs of the Wataturu, another people of East Africa, are said to be nothing but sorcerers destitute of any direct political influence.² Every Alfoor village of Northern Ceram has usually six priests, of whom the most intelligent discharges the duties of high priest. This man is the most powerful person in the village; all the inhabitants, even the regent, are subject to him and must do his bidding. The common herd regard him as a higher being, a sort of demi-god. He aims at surrounding himself with an atmosphere of mystery, and for this purpose lives in great seclusion, generally in the council-house of the village, where he conceals himself from vulgar eyes behind a screen or partition.³

If in these cases we see callow divinities, sacred kings and spiritual lords in the nestling stage, in others we meet with them full-fledged. Thus in the Marquesas Islands there was a class of men who were deified in their lifetime. They were supposed to wield a supernatural power over the elements; they could give abundant harvests or smite the ground with barrenness; and they could inflict disease or death. Human sacrifices were offered to them to avert their wrath. There were not many of them, at the most one or two in each island. They lived in mystic seclusion. Their powers were sometimes, but not always, hereditary. A missionary has described one of these human gods from personal observation. The god was a very old man who lived in a large house within an enclosure. In the house was a kind of altar, and on the beams of the house and on the trees round it were hung human skeletons, head down. No one entered the enclosure except the persons dedicated to the service of the god; only on days when human victims were sacrificed might ordinary people penetrate into the precinct. This human god received more sacrifices than all the other gods; often he would sit on a sort of scaffold in front of his house and call for two or

¹ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 187.

² Baumann, *op. cit.* p. 173.

³ J. Boot, "Korte schets der noord-

kust van Ceram," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 1193 *sq.*

three human victims at a time. They were always brought, for the terror he inspired was extreme. He was invoked all over the island, and offerings were sent to him from every side.¹ Again, of the South Sea Islands in general we are told that each island had a man who represented or personified the divinity. Such men were called gods, and their substance was confounded with that of the deity. The man-god was sometimes the king himself; oftener he was a priest or subordinate chief.² Tanatoa, king of Raiatea, was deified by a certain ceremony performed at the chief temple. "As one of the divinities of his subjects, therefore, the king was worshipped, consulted as an oracle and had sacrifices and prayers offered to him."³ This was not an exceptional case. The kings of the island regularly enjoyed divine honours, being deified at the time of their accession.⁴ At his inauguration the king of Tahiti received a sacred girdle of red and yellow feathers, "which not only raised him to the highest earthly station, but identified him with their gods."⁵ His houses were called the clouds of heaven; the rainbow was the name of the canoe in which he voyaged; his voice was spoken of as thunder, and the glare of the torches in his dwelling as lightning; and when the people saw them in the evening, as they passed near his house, instead of saying the torches were burning in the palace, they would remark that the lightning was flashing in the clouds of heaven. When he moved from one district to another on the shoulders of his bearers, he was said to be flying.⁶ The gods of Samoa generally appeared in animal form, but sometimes they were permanently incarnate in men, who gave oracles, received offerings (occasionally of human flesh), healed the sick, answered prayers, and so on.⁷ In regard to the old religion of the Fijians, and especially of the inhabitants of Somosomo, it is said that "there appears to be no

¹ Vincendon-Dumoulin et Desgraz, *Iles Marquises*, pp. 226, 240 sq. Compare Mathias G * * *, *Lettres sur les Iles Marquises* (Paris, 1843), p. 44 sq.

² Moerenhout, *Voyages aux Iles du Grand Océan*, i. 479; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 94.

³ Tyerman and Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels in the South Sea*

Islands, China, India, etc., i. 524; compare *ibid.* p. 529 sq.

⁴ Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 529 sq.

⁵ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 108.

⁶ W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 113 sq.

⁷ Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 37, 48, 57, 58, 59, 73.

certain line of demarcation between departed spirits and gods, nor between gods and living men, for many of the priests and old chiefs are considered as sacred persons, and not a few of them will also claim to themselves the right of divinity. 'I am a god,' Tuikilakila would say; and he believed it too."¹ In the Pelew Islands it is thought that every god can take possession of a man and speak through him. The possession may be either temporary or permanent; in the latter case the chosen person is called a *korong*. The god is free in his choice, so the position of *korong* is not hereditary. After the death of a *korong* the god is for some time unrepresented, until he suddenly makes his appearance in a new Avatar. The person thus chosen gives signs of the divine presence by behaving in a strange way; he gapes, runs about, and performs a number of senseless acts. At first people laugh at him, but his sacred mission is in time recognised, and he is invited to assume his proper position in the state. Generally this position is a distinguished one and confers on him a powerful influence over the whole community. In some of the islands the god is political sovereign of the land; and hence his new incarnation, however humble his origin, is raised to the same high rank, and rules, as god and king, over all the other chiefs.²

The theory of the real divinity of a king is held strongly in the Malay region. Not only is the king's person considered sacred, but the sanctity of his body is supposed to communicate itself to his regalia and to slay those who break the royal taboos. Thus it is firmly believed that any one who seriously offends the royal person, who imitates or touches even for a moment the chief objects of the regalia, or who wrongfully makes use of the insignia or privileges of royalty will be *kěna daulat*, that is, struck dead by a sort of electric discharge of that divine power which the Malays suppose to reside in the king's person and to which they give the name of *daulat*

¹ Hazlewood in Erskine's *Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, p. 246 sq. Cp. Wilkes's *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, iii. 87; Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 219 sq.; R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 122. "A great chief [in Fiji] really believed

himself to be a god—i.e. a reincarnation of an ancestor who had grown into a god" (Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26, 1898).

² Kubary, "Die Religion der Pelauer," in Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde*, i. 30 sqq.

or sanctity.¹ The regalia of every petty Malay state are believed to be endowed with supernatural powers;² and we are told that "the extraordinary strength of the Malay belief in the supernatural powers of the regalia of their sovereigns can only be thoroughly realised after a study of their romances, in which their kings are credited with all the attributes of inferior gods, whose birth, as indeed every subsequent act of their after-life, is attended by the most amazing prodigies."³ Now it is highly significant that the Malay magician owns certain insignia which are said to be exactly analogous to the regalia of the divine king, and even bear the very same name.⁴ We may conjecture, therefore, that in the Malay region, and perhaps in other parts of the world, a king's regalia are nothing but the conjuring apparatus of his predecessor the magician. In the Boeginese districts of Celebes, when epidemics rage among men or cattle, or when the harvest threatens to fail, the regalia are brought out, smeared with buffalo's blood, and carried about. The oldest dynasties have the most regalia, and the holiest regalia consist of relics of the bodies of former princes, which are kept in golden caskets wrapt in silk. The people attach so much weight to the regalia that whoever is in possession of them is popularly held to be the reigning prince. In insurrections the first effort made by the rebels is to seize the regalia, for if they can only make themselves masters of these miraculous objects, the authority of the sovereign is gone.⁵ In Cambodia the regalia are regarded as a palladium on which the existence of the kingdom depends; they are committed to Brahmans for safe-keeping.⁶ Among the Battas of Central Sumatra there is a prince who bears the hereditary title of Singa Mangaradja and is worshipped as a deity. He reigns over Bakara, a

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 23 sq.

² T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca*, ii. 193.

³ Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 29.

⁴ Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 59.

⁵ G. J. Harrelbomée, "Een orna-

mentenfeest van Gantarang (Zuid-Celebes)," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xix. (1875), pp. 344-351; G. K. Niemann, "De Boegineezen en Makasaren," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxviii. (1889), p. 270 sq.

⁶ A. Bastian, *Völkerstämme am Brahmaputra*, p. xi.

village on the south-western shore of Lake Toba; but his worship is diffused among the tribes both near and far. All sorts of strange stories are told of him. It is said that he was seven years in his mother's womb, and thus came into the world a seven-years-old child; that he has a black hairy tongue the sight of which is fatal, so that in speaking he keeps his mouth as nearly shut as possible and gives all his orders in writing. Sometimes he remains seven months without eating, or sleeps for three months together. He can make the sun to shine or the rain to fall at his pleasure; hence the people pray to him for a good harvest, and worshippers hasten to Bakara from all sides with offerings in the hope of thereby securing his miraculous aid. Wherever he goes, the gongs are solemnly beaten and the public peace must not be broken. He is said to eat neither pork nor dog's flesh.¹ The Battas used to cherish a superstitious veneration for the Sultan of Minangkabau, and showed a blind submission to his relations and emissaries, real or pretended, when these persons appeared among them for the purpose of levying contributions. Even when insulted and put in fear of their lives they made no attempt at resistance; for they believed that their affairs would never prosper, that their rice would be blighted and their buffaloes die, and that they would remain under a sort of spell if they offended these sacred messengers.² In time of public calamity, as during war or pestilence, some of the Molucca Islanders used to celebrate a festival of heaven. If no good result followed, they bought a slave, took him at the next festival to the place of sacrifice, and set him on a raised place under a certain bamboo-tree. This tree represented heaven, and had been honoured as its image at previous festivals. The portion of the sacrifice which had previously been offered to heaven was now given to the slave, who ate and drank

¹ G. K. N[iemann], "Bijdrage tot de Kennis van den Godsdienst der Bataks," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, iii. Serie, iv. (1870), p. 289 sq.; B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. 537 sq.; G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme," *De Indische Gids*,

July 1884, p. 85; *id.*, *Handleiding voor de vergelijkende Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Leyden, 1893), pp. 369 sq., 612; von Brenner, *Besuch bei den Kannibalen Sumatras* (Würzburg, 1894), p. 340.

² Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, p. 376 sq.

it in the name and stead of heaven. Henceforth the slave was well treated, kept for the festivals of heaven, and employed to represent heaven and receive the offerings in its name.¹

A peculiarly bloodthirsty monarch of Burma, by name Badonsachen, whose very countenance reflected the inbred ferocity of his nature, and under whose reign more victims perished by the executioner than by the common enemy, conceived the notion that he was something more than mortal, and that this high distinction had been granted him as a reward for his numerous good works. Accordingly he laid aside the title of king and aimed at making himself a god. With this view, and in imitation of Buddha, who, before being advanced to the rank of a divinity, had quitted his royal palace and seraglio and retired from the world, Badonsachen withdrew from his palace to an immense pagoda, the largest in the empire, which he had been engaged in constructing for many years. Here he held conferences with the most learned monks, in which he sought to persuade them that the five thousand years assigned for the observance of the law of Buddha were now elapsed, and that he himself was the god who was destined to appear after that period, and to abolish the old law by substituting his own. But to his great mortification many of the monks undertook to demonstrate the contrary; and this disappointment, combined with his love of power and his impatience under the restraints of an ascetic life, quickly disabused him of his imaginary godhead, and drove him back to his palace and his harem.² There is a special language devoted to the sacred person and attributes of the king of Siam, and it must be used by all who speak to or of him. Even the natives have difficulty in mastering this peculiar vocabulary. The hairs of the monarch's head, the soles of his feet, the breath of his body, indeed every single detail of his person, both outward and inward, have particular names. When he eats or drinks, sleeps or walks, a special word indicates that these acts are being performed by the sovereign, and such words cannot

¹ F. Valentyn, *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indiën*, iii. 7 sq.

² Sangermano, *Description of the Burmese Empire* (reprinted at Rangoon, 1885), p. 63 sq.

possibly be applied to the acts of any other person whatever. There is no word in the Siamese language by which any creature of higher rank or greater dignity than a monarch can be described; and the missionaries, when they speak of God, are forced to use the native word for king.¹ In Tonquin every village chooses its guardian spirit, often in the form of an animal, as a dog, tiger, cat, or serpent. Sometimes a living person is selected as patron-divinity. Thus a beggar persuaded the people of a village that he was their guardian spirit; so they loaded him with honours and entertained him with their best.²

In India "every king is regarded as little short of a present god."³ The Hindoo law-book of Manu goes farther and says that "even an infant king must not be despised from an idea that he is a mere mortal; for he is a great deity in human form."⁴ The spiritual power of a Brahman priest is described as unbounded. "His anger is as terrible as that of the gods. His blessing makes rich, his curse withers. Nay, more, he is himself actually worshipped as a god. No marvel,

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe* (Westminster, 1898), p. 142 sq. Similarly, special sets of terms are or have been used with reference to persons of royal blood in Burma (Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 71 sq.; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 118 sq.), Cambodia (Lemire, *Cochinchine française et le royaume de Cambodge*, p. 447), Travancore (S. Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, p. 129), the Pelew Islands (K. Semper, *Die Palau-Inseln*, p. 309 sq.), Samoa (J. E. Newell, "Chief's language in Samoa," *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*, London, 1893, ii. 784-799), the Maldives (Fr. Pyard, *Voyage to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas, and Brazil*, i. 226), in some parts of Madagascar (J. Sibree, in *The Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, No. xi., Christmas 1887, p. 310 sq.; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 215 sq.), and among the Natchez Indians of North America (Du Pratz, *History of Louisiana*, p. 328). When we remember that special vocabularies of this sort have been

employed with regard to kings or chiefs who are known to have enjoyed a divine or semi-divine character, as in Tahiti (see above, p. 140), Fiji (Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 37), and Tonga (Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 79), we shall be inclined to surmise that the existence of such a practice anywhere is indicative of a tendency to deify royal personages, who are thus marked off from their fellows. This would not necessarily apply to a custom of using a special dialect or particular forms of speech in addressing social superiors generally, such as prevails in Java (Raffles, *History of Java*, i. 310, 366 sq., London, 1817), and Bali (Friederich, "Voorloopig Verslag van het eiland Bali," *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxii. 4; J. Jacobs, *Eenigen tijd onder de Batiërs*, p. 36).

² Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iv. 383.

³ Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 259.

⁴ *The Laws of Manu*, vii. 8, trans. by G. Bühler.

no prodigy in nature is believed to be beyond the limits of his power to accomplish. If the priest were to threaten to bring down the sun from the sky or arrest it in its daily course in the heavens, no villager would for a moment doubt his ability to do so."¹ There is said to be a sect in Orissa who worship the Queen of England as their chief divinity. And to this day in India all living persons remarkable for great strength or valour or for supposed miraculous powers run the risk of being worshipped as gods. Thus, a sect in the Punjab worshipped a deity whom they called Nikkal Sen. This Nikkal Sen was no other than the redoubted General Nicholson, and nothing that the general could do or say damped the ardour of his adorers. The more he punished them, the greater grew the religious awe with which they worshipped him.² At Benares at the present time a celebrated deity is incarnate in the person of a Hindoo gentleman who rejoices in the euphonious name of Swami Bhaskaranandaji Saraswati, and looks uncommonly like the late Cardinal Manning, only more ingenuous. His eyes beam with kindly human interest, and he takes what is described as an innocent pleasure in the divine honours paid him by his confiding worshippers.³ A Hindoo sect, which has many representatives in Bombay and Central India, holds that its spiritual chiefs or Maharajas, as they are called, are representatives or even actual incarnations on earth of the god Krishna. Hence in the temples where the Maharajas do homage to the idols, men and women do homage to the Maharajas, prostrating themselves at their feet, offering them incense, fruits, and flowers, and waving lights before them, as the Maharajas themselves do before the images of the gods. One mode of worshipping Krishna is by swinging his images in swings. Hence, in every district presided over by a Maharaja, the women are wont to worship not Krishna but the Maharaja by swinging him in pendulous seats. The leavings of his food,

¹ Monier Williams, *op. cit.* p. 457.

² Monier Williams, *op. cit.* p. 259 sq.

³ I have borrowed the description of this particular deity from the Rev. Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, who knows him personally (*Contemporary Review*, June 1899, p. 768). It is melancholy

to reflect that in our less liberal land the divine Swami would probably be consigned to the calm seclusion of a gaol or a madhouse. The difference between a god and a madman or a criminal is often merely a question of latitude and longitude.

the dust on which he treads, the water in which his dirty linen is washed, are all eagerly swallowed by his devotees, who worship his wooden shoes, and prostrate themselves before his seat and his painted portraits. And as Krishna looks down from heaven with most favour on such as minister to the wants of his successors and vicars on earth, a peculiar rite called Self-devotion has been instituted, whereby his faithful worshippers make over their bodies, their souls, and, what is perhaps still more important, their worldly substance to his adorable incarnations; and women are taught to believe that the highest bliss for themselves and their families is to be attained by yielding themselves to the embraces of those beings in whom the divine nature mysteriously coexists with the form and even the appetites of true humanity.¹

Amongst the Todas, a pastoral people of the Neilgherry Hills of Southern India, the dairy is a sanctuary, and the milkman who attends to it is a god. On being asked whether the Todas salute the sun, one of these divine milkmen replied, "Those poor fellows do so, but I," tapping his chest, "I, a god! why should I salute the sun?" Every one, even his own father, prostrates himself before the milkman, and no one would dare to refuse him anything. No human being, except another milkman, may touch him; and he gives oracles to all who consult him, speaking with the voice of a god.²

The ancient Egyptians, far from restricting their adoration to cats and dogs and such small deer, very liberally extended it to men. One of these human deities resided at the village of Anabis, and burnt sacrifices were offered to him on the altars; after which, says Porphyry, he would eat his dinner just as if he were an ordinary mortal.³ Down to

¹ Monier Williams, *op. cit.* p. 136 sq. These Indian deities and miracle-workers are sometimes found among the lowest of the people; one of them, for example, was a cotton-bleacher, another was the son of a carpenter (Monier Williams, *op. cit.* p. 268).

² Marshall, *Travels among the Todas*, pp. 136, 137; cp. pp. 141, 142; Metz, *Tribes of the Neilgherry Hills*, p. 19 sq.

³ Porphyry, *De Abstinence*, iv. 9; cp. Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 29. The titles of the nomarchs or provincial governors of Egypt seem to show that they were all originally worshipped as gods by their subjects (A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Aegypten*, p. 93; *id.*, "Menschenvergötterung im alten Aegypten," *Ann. Crueilli. N.F.*, i. (1897), p. 290 sq.).

a few years ago, when his spiritual reign on earth was brought to an abrupt end by the carnal weapons of English marines and bluejackets, the king of Benin was the chief object of worship in his dominions. "He occupies a higher post here than the Pope does in Catholic Europe; for he is not only God's vicegerent upon earth, but a god himself, whose subjects both obey and adore him as such, although I believe their adoration to arise rather from fear than love."¹ The king of Iddah told the English officers of the Niger Expedition, "God made me after his own image; I am all the same as God; and he appointed me a king."² The Mashona of Southern Africa informed their bishop that they had once had a god, but that the Matabele had driven him away. "This last was in reference to a curious custom in some villages of keeping a man they called their god. He seemed to be consulted by the people and had presents given to him. There was one at a village belonging to a chief Magondi, in the old days. We were asked not to fire off any guns near the village, or we should frighten him away."³ "In the Makalaka hills, to the west of Matabeleland, the natives all acknowledge there dwells a god whom they name Ngwali, much worshipped by the bushmen and Makalakas, and feared even by the Matabele: even Lo Bengula paid tribute and sent presents to him often. This individual has only been seen by a few of those who live close by, and who doubtless profit by the numberless offerings made to this strange being; but the god never dies; and the position is supposed to be hereditary in the one family who are the intermediaries for and connection between Ngwali and the outer world."⁴ Among the Hovas and other tribes of Mada-

¹ J. Adams, *Sketches taken during ten Voyages to Africa*, p. 29; *id.*, *Remarks on the Country extending from Cape Palmas to the River Congo* (London, 1823), p. 111. Compare, "My Wanderings in Africa," by an F.R.G.S. [R. F. Burton], *Fraser's Magazine*, lxvii. (April 1863), p. 414.

² Allen and Thomson, *Narrative of the Expedition to the River Niger in 1841*, i. 288. A slight mental confusion may perhaps be detected in this utterance of the dark-skinned deity. But such confusion, or rather obscurity,

is almost inseparable from any attempt to define with philosophic precision the profound mystery of incarnation.

³ G. W. H. Knight-Bruce, *Memories of Mashonaland* (London and New York, 1895), p. 43; *id.*, in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1890, p. 346 sq.

⁴ Ch. L. Norris Newman, *Matabeleland and how we got it* (London, 1895), p. 167 sq. These particulars were communicated to Captain Newman by Mr. W. E. Thomas, son of the first missionary to Matabeleland.

gascar there is said to be a deep sense of the divinity of kings ; and down to the acceptance of Christianity by the late queen, the Hova sovereigns were regularly termed "the visible God."¹ The chiefs of the Betsileo in Madagascar "are considered as far above the common people and are looked upon almost as if they were gods." "For the chiefs are supposed to have power as regards the words they utter, not, however, merely the power which a king possesses, but power like that of God ; a power which works of itself on account of its inherent virtue, and not power exerted through soldiers and strong servants."²

Christianity itself has not uniformly escaped the taint of these unhappy delusions ; indeed it has often been sullied by the extravagances of vain pretenders to a divinity equal to or even surpassing that of its great Founder. In the second century Montanus the Phrygian claimed to be the incarnate Trinity, uniting in his single person God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.³ Nor is this an isolated case, the exorbitant pretension of a single ill-balanced mind. From the earliest times down to the present day many sects have believed that Christ, nay God himself, is incarnate in every fully initiated Christian, and they have carried this belief to its logical conclusion by adoring each other. Tertullian records that this was done by his fellow-Christians at Carthage in the second century ; the disciples of St. Columba worshipped him as an embodiment of Christ ; and in the eighth century Elipandus of Toledo spoke of Christ as "a god among gods," meaning that all believers were gods just as truly as Jesus himself. The adoration of each other was customary among the Albigenses, and is noticed hundreds of times in the records of the Inquisition at Toulouse in the early part of the fourteenth century. It is still practised by the Paulicians of Armenia and the Bogomiles about Moscow. The Paulicians, indeed, presume to justify their faith, if not their

¹ Rev. J. Sibree, in *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, No. xi. (1887), p. 307 ; *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 218.

² *Antananarivo Annual and Mada-*

gascar Magazine, No. xi. (1887), p. 307 ; *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 225.

³ A. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, i. 321.

practice, by the authority of St. Paul, who said, "It is not I that speak, but Christ that dwelleth in me."¹ In the thirteenth century there arose a sect called the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, who held that by long and assiduous contemplation any man might be united to the deity in an ineffable manner and become one with the source and parent of all things, and that he who had thus ascended to God and been absorbed in his beatific essence, actually formed part of the Godhead, was the Son of God in the same sense and manner with Christ himself, and enjoyed thereby a glorious immunity from the trammels of all laws human and divine. Inwardly transported by this blissful persuasion, though outwardly presenting in their aspect and manners a shocking air of lunacy and distraction, the sectaries roamed from place to place, attired in the most fantastic apparel and begging their bread with wild shouts and clamour, spurning indignantly every kind of honest labour and industry as an obstacle to divine contemplation and to the ascent of the soul towards the Father of spirits. In all their excursions they were followed by women with whom they lived on terms of the closest familiarity. Those of them who conceived they had made the greatest proficiency in the higher spiritual life dispensed with the use of clothes altogether in their assemblies, looking upon decency and modesty as marks of inward corruption, characteristics of a soul that still grovelled under the dominion of the flesh and had not yet been elevated into communion with the divine spirit, its centre and source. Sometimes their progress towards this mystic communion was accelerated by the Inquisition, and they expired in the flames, not merely with unclouded serenity, but with the most triumphant feelings of cheerfulness and joy.² In the same century a Bohemian woman named Wilhelmina, whose head had been turned by brooding over some crazy predictions about a coming age of the Holy Ghost, persuaded herself and many people besides that the Holy Ghost had actually become incarnate in her person for the salvation of a great part of mankind. She

¹ F. C. Conybeare, "The History of Christmas," *American Journal of Theology*, January 1899. Mr. Conybeare

kindly lent me a proof of this article.

² Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History* (London, 1819), iii. 278 sqq.

died at Milan in the year 1281 in the most fragrant odour of sanctity, and her memory was held in the highest veneration by a numerous following and even honoured with religious worship both public and private.¹ About twenty years ago a new sect was founded at Patiala in the Punjab by a wretched creature named Hakim Singh, who lived in extreme poverty and filth, gave himself out to be a re-incarnation of Jesus Christ, and offered to baptize the missionaries who attempted to argue with him. He proposed shortly to destroy the British Government, and to convert and conquer the world. His gospel was accepted by four thousand believers in his immediate neighbourhood.² Cases like these verge on, if they do not cross, the wavering and uncertain line which divides the raptures of religion from insanity. How ill do such wild ravings and blasphemous pretensions contrast with the simple and sober claim of the carpenter of Nazareth to be the Creator and Governor of the universe!

Sometimes, at the death of the human incarnation, the divine spirit transmigrates into another man. In the kingdom of Kaffa, in Eastern Africa, the heathen part of the people worship a spirit called *Deoce*, to whom they offer prayer and sacrifice, and whom they invoke on all important occasions. This spirit is incarnate in the grand magician or pope, a person of great wealth and influence, ranking almost with the king, and wielding the spiritual, as the king wields the temporal power. It happened that, shortly before the arrival of a Christian missionary in the kingdom, this African pope died, and the priests, fearing lest the missionary might assume the position vacated by the deceased prelate, declared that the *Deoce* had passed into the king, who henceforth, uniting the spiritual with the temporal power, reigned as god and king.³ Before beginning to work at the salt-pans in a Laosian village, the workmen offer sacrifice to a local divinity. This divinity is incarnate in a woman and transmigrates at her death into another woman.⁴ In Bhutan the

¹ Mosheim, *op. cit.* iii. 288 *sq.*

² Ibbetson, *Outlines of Punjab Ethnography* (Calcutta, 1883), p. 123.

³ G. Massaja, *I miei trentacinque*

anni di missione nell' alta Etiopia (Rome and Milan, 1888), v. 53 *sq.*

⁴ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), p. 141 *sq.*

spiritual head of the government is a person called the Dhurma Raja, who is supposed to be a perpetual incarnation of the deity. At his death the new incarnate god shows himself in an infant by the refusal of his mother's milk and a preference for that of a cow.¹ The Buddhist Tartars believe in a great number of living Buddhas, who officiate as Grand Lamas at the head of the most important monasteries. When one of these Grand Lamas dies his disciples do not sorrow, for they know that he will soon reappear, being born in the form of an infant. Their only anxiety is to discover the place of his birth. If at this time they see a rainbow they take it as a sign sent them by the departed Lama to guide them to his cradle. Sometimes the divine infant himself reveals his identity. "I am the Grand Lama," he says, "the living Buddha of such and such a temple. Take me to my old monastery. I am its immortal head." In whatever way the birthplace of the Buddha is revealed, whether by the Buddha's own avowal or by the sign in the sky, tents are struck, and the joyful pilgrims, often headed by the king or one of the most illustrious of the royal family, set forth to find and bring home the infant god. Generally he is born in Tibet, the holy land, and to reach him the caravan has often to traverse the most frightful deserts. When at last they find the child they fall down and worship him. Before, however, he is acknowledged as the Grand Lama whom they seek he must satisfy them of his identity. He is asked the name of the monastery of which he claims to be the head, how far off it is, and how many monks live in it; he must also describe the habits of the deceased Grand Lama and the manner of his death. Then various articles, as prayer-books, tea-pots, and cups, are placed before him, and he has to point out those used by himself in his previous life. If he does so without a mistake his claims are admitted, and he is conducted in triumph to the monastery.²

¹ Robinson, *Descriptive Account of Assam* (London and Calcutta, 1841), p. 342 sq.; *Asiatic Researches*, xv. 146.

² Huc, *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans la Tartarie et le Thibet*, i. 279 sqq., ed. 12mo. For more details, see L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet* (Lon-

don, 1895), p. 245 sqq. Compare G. Timkowski, *Travels of the Russian Mission through Mongolia to China*, i. 23-25. In the Delta of the Niger the souls of little negro babies are identified by means of a similar test. An assortment of small articles that belonged

At the head of all the Lamas is the Dalai Lama of Lhasa, the Rome of Tibet. He is regarded as a living god, and at death his divine and immortal spirit is born again in a child. According to some accounts the mode of discovering the Dalai Lama is similar to the method, already described, of discovering an ordinary Grand Lama. Other accounts speak of an election by lot. Wherever he is born, the trees and plants put forth green leaves; at his bidding flowers bloom and springs of water rise; and his presence diffuses heavenly blessings. His palace stands on a commanding height; its gilded cupolas are seen sparkling in the sunlight for miles.¹ In 1661 or 1662 Fathers Grueber and d'Orville, on their return from Pekin to Europe, spent two months at Lhasa waiting for a caravan, and they report that the Grand Lama was worshipped as a true and living god, that he received the title of the Eternal and Heavenly Father, and that he was believed to have risen from the dead no less than seven times. He lived withdrawn from the business of the world in the recesses of his palace, where, seated aloft on a cushion and precious carpets, he received the homage of his adorers in a chamber screened from the garish eye of day, but glittering with gold and silver, and lit up by the blaze of a multitude of torches. His worshippers, with heads bowed to the earth, attested their veneration by kissing his feet, and even bribed the attendant Lamas with great sums to give them a little of the natural secretions of his divine person, which they either swallowed with their food or wore about their necks as an amulet that fortified them against the assaults of every ailment.²

Issuing from the sultry valleys upon the lofty tableland of the Colombian Andes, the Spanish conquerors were

to deceased members of the family is shown to the new baby, and the first thing he grabs at identifies him. "Why, he's uncle John," they say; "see! he knows his own pipe." Or, "That's cousin Emma; see! she knows her market calabash" (Miss M. H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 493).

¹ Huc, *op. cit.* ii. 279. 347 *sq.*; Meiners, *Geschichte der Religionen*, i. 335 *sq.*; Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reichs*, p. 415; A.

Erman, *Travels in Siberia*, ii. 303 *sqq.*; *Journal of the Roy. Geogr. Soc.* xxxviii. (1868), pp. 168, 169; *Proceedings of the Roy. Geogr. Soc. N.S.*, vii. (1885), p. 67. In the *Journal Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, *i.e.*, the Lama in question is called the Lama Gûrû; but the context shows that he is the great Lama of Lhasa.

² Thevenot, *Rélations des divers voyages*, iv. Partie (Paris, 1672). "Voyage à la Chine des PP. I. Grueber et d'Orville," pp. 1 *sq.*, 22.

astonished to find, in contrast to the savage hordes they had left in the sweltering jungles below, a people enjoying a fair degree of civilisation, practising agriculture, and living under a government which Humboldt has compared to the theocracies of Tibet and Japan. These were the Chibchas, Muyscas, or Mozcas, divided into two kingdoms, with capitals at Bogota and Tunja, but united apparently in spiritual allegiance to the high pontiff of Sogamozo or Iraca. By a long and ascetic novitiate, this ghostly ruler was reputed to have acquired such sanctity that the waters and the rain obeyed him, and the weather depended on his will.¹ Weather kings are common in Africa. Thus the Waganda of Central Africa believed in a god of Lake Nyanza, who sometimes took up his abode in a man or woman. The incarnate god was much feared by all the people, including the king and the chiefs. When the mystery of incarnation had taken place, the man, or rather the god, removed about a mile and a half from the margin of the lake, and there awaited the appearance of the new moon before he engaged in his sacred duties. From the moment that the crescent moon appeared faintly in the sky, the king and all his subjects were at the command of the divine man, or Lubare, as he was called, who reigned supreme not only in matters of faith and ritual, but also in questions of war and state policy. He was consulted as an oracle; by his word he could inflict or heal sickness, withhold rain, and cause famine. Large presents were made him when his advice was sought.² Often the king himself is supposed to control the weather. The king of Loango is honoured by his people "as though he were a god; and he is called Sambee and Pango, which mean god. They believe that he can let them have rain when he likes; and once a year, in December, which is the time they want rain, the people come to beg of him to grant it to them."

¹ Alex. von Humboldt, *Researches concerning the Institutions and Monuments of the Ancient Inhabitants of America*, ii. 106 sq.; Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, iv. 352 sq.; J. G. Müller, *Geschichte der Amerikanischen Urreligionen*, p. 430 sq.; Martius, *Zur Ethnographie Amerikas*, p. 455; Bastian, *Die Culturländer des*

alten Amerika, ii. 204 sq.

² R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the Waganda Tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, xiii. (1885-86), p. 762; C. T. Wilson and R. W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Sudan*, i. 206; J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 15 sq.

On this occasion the king, standing on his throne, shoots an arrow into the air, which is supposed to bring on rain.¹ Much the same is said of the king of Mombaza.² The Wanyoro of Central Africa have a great respect for the dispensers of rain, whom they load with a profusion of gifts. The great dispenser, he who has absolute and uncontrollable power over the rain, is the king; but he can divide his power with other persons, so that the benefit may be distributed over various parts of the kingdom.³ The king of Quiteva, in Eastern Africa, ranks with the deity; "indeed, the Caffres acknowledge no other gods than their monarch, and to him they address those prayers which other nations are wont to prefer to heaven." "Hence these unfortunate beings, under the persuasion that their king is a deity, exhaust their utmost means and ruin themselves in gifts to obtain with more facility what they need. Thus, prostrate at his feet, they implore of him, when the weather long continues dry, to intercede with heaven that they may have rain; and when too much rain has fallen, that they may have fair weather; thus, also, in case of winds, storms, and everything, they would either deprecate or implore."⁴ Amongst the Barotse, a tribe on the upper Zambesi, "there is an old but waning belief that a chief is a demigod, and in heavy thunderstorms the Barotse flock to the chief's yard for protection from the lightning. I have been greatly distressed at seeing them fall on their knees before the chief, entreating him to open the water-pots of heaven and send rain upon their gardens." "The king's servants declare themselves to be invincible, because they are the servants of God (meaning *the king*)."⁵ In Matabeleland the rainy season falls in November, December, January, and February. For several weeks before the rain sets in, the clouds gather in heavy banks, dark and

¹ "The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battel," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 330; Proyart, "History of Loango, Kakongo, and other Kingdoms in Africa," in Pinkerton, xvi. 577; Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 335.

² Ogilby, *Africa*, p. 615; Dapper, *op. cit.* p. 400.

³ G. Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria*

(London and New York, 1891), ii. 57, cp. i. 134.

⁴ Dos Santos, "History of Eastern Ethiopia," in Pinkerton, *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 682, 687 sq.

⁵ F. S. Arnot, *Garenganze; or, Seven Years' Pioneer Mission Work in Central Africa*, London, N.D. (preface dated March 1889), p. 78.

Jan Brooke, was endowed with a certain magical
rich, if properly applied, could render the rice-crops
. Hence when he visited a tribe, they used to
n the seed which they intended to sow next year,
utilised it by shaking over it the women's necklaces,
d been previously dipped in a special mixture.
r he entered a village, the women would wash and
feet, first with water, and then with the milk of a
coa-nut, and lastly with water again, and all this
ch had touched his person they preserved for the
f distributing it on their farms, believing that it
n abundant harvest. Tribes which were too far
m to visit used to send him a small piece of white
a little gold or silver, and when these things had
egnated by his generative virtue they buried them
ields, and confidently expected a heavy crop.
n a European remarked that the rice-crops of the
ribe were thin, the chief immediately replied that
not be otherwise, since Rajah Brooke had never
m, and he begged that Mr. Brooke might be in-
visit his tribe and remove the sterility of their
e chief of Mowat, New Guinea, is believed to have
of affecting the growth of crops for good or
causing the same to fail.

multiply, and the sea to yield fish.¹ "It was the belief among the ancient Irish that when their kings acted in conformity with the institutions of their ancestors, the seasons were favourable, and that the earth yielded its fruit in abundance; but when they violated these laws, that plague, famine, and inclemency of weather were the result."² Notions of the same sort seem to have lingered in remote districts of Scotland down to the eighteenth century; for when Dr. Johnson travelled in the Highlands it was still held that the return of the laird to Dunvegan, after any considerable absence, produced a plentiful capture of herring.³

In many places the king is punished if rain does not fall and the crops do not turn out well. Thus, in some parts of West Africa, when prayers and offerings presented to the king have failed to procure rain, his subjects bind him with ropes and take him by force to the grave of his forefathers, that he may obtain from them the needed rain.⁴ It appears that the Scythians also, when food was scarce, put their king in bonds.⁵ The Banjars in West Africa ascribe to their king the power of causing rain or fine weather. So long as the weather is fine they load him with presents of grain and cattle. But if long drought or rain threatens to spoil the crops, they insult and beat him till the weather changes.⁶ When the harvest fails or the surf on the coast is too heavy to allow of fishing, the people of Loango accuse their king of a "bad heart" and depose him.⁷ On the Grain Coast the high priest or fetish king, who bears the title of Bodio, is responsible for the health of the community, the fertility of the earth, and the abundance of fish in the sea and rivers; and if the country suffers in any of these

¹ Homer, *Odyssey*, xix. 109-114. The passage was pointed out to me by my friend W. Ridgeway.

² J. O'Donovan, *The Book of Rights* (Dublin, 1847), p. 8, note. Compare Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, i. 492.

³ S. Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands* (Baltimore, 1815), p. 115.

⁴ Labat, *Relation historique de l'Ethiopie occidentale*, ii. 172-176.

⁵ Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius,

Argon. ii. 1248: καὶ Ἡρόδωρος ξένους περὶ τῶν δεσμῶν τοῦ Προμηθέως ταῦτα. εἶναι γὰρ αὐτὸν Σκυθῶν βασιλέα φησί· καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον παρέχειν τοῖς ὑπηκόοις τὰ ἐπιτήδεια, διὰ τὸν καλούμενον Ἄετὸν ποταμὸν ἐπικλύζειν τὰ πεδία, δεθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν Σκυθῶν.

⁶ H. Hecquard, *Reise an der Küste und in das Innere von West Afrika*, p. 78.

⁷ Bastian, *Die Deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 354, ii. 230.

when the rain so greatly desired by the people
me, the Sultan was simply driven out (in Ututwa,
sa). The people, in fact, hold that rulers must
er over Nature and her phenomena."³ Similarly
e Antimores of Madagascar the chiefs are held
e for the operation of the laws of nature. Hence
d is smitten with a blight or devastated by
locusts, if the cows yield little milk, or fatal epi-
e among the people, the chief is not only deposed
d of his property and banished, because they say
a good chief such things ought not to happen.⁴
peoples have gone further and killed their
mes of drought and scarcity. Thus, among the
Central Africa, when the crops are withering in
nd all the efforts of the chief to bring down rain
d fruitless, the people commonly attack him by
him of all he possesses, and drive him away.
they kill him.⁵ Ancient Chinese writers inform
Corea the blame was laid on the king whenever
r too little rain fell and the crops did not ripen.
that he must be deposed, others that he must be
re is a tradition that once when the land of the
1 Thrace bore no fruit, the god Dionysus in-
he people that it was their fault.

putting their king Lycurgus to death. So they took him to Mount Pangaeum and there caused him to be torn in pieces by horses.¹ In the time of the Swedish king Domalde a mighty famine broke out, which lasted several years, and could be stayed by the blood neither of beasts nor of men. Therefore, in a great popular assembly held at Upsala, the chiefs decided that King Domalde himself was the cause of the scarcity and must be sacrificed for good seasons. So they slew him and smeared with his blood the altars of the gods. Again, we are told that the Swedes always attributed good or bad crops to their kings as the cause. Now, in the reign of King Olaf, there came dear times and famine, and the people thought that the fault was the king's, because he was sparing in his sacrifices. So, mustering an army, they marched against him, surrounded his dwelling, and burned him in it, "giving him to Odin as a sacrifice for good crops."² In 1814, a pestilence having broken out among the reindeer of the Chukch, the shamans declared that the beloved chief Koch must be sacrificed to the angry gods; so the chief's own son stabbed him with a dagger.³ On the coral island of Niuē, or Savage Island, in the South Pacific, there formerly reigned a line of kings. But as the kings were also high priests, and were supposed to make the food grow, the people became angry with them in times of scarcity and killed them; till at last, as one after another was killed, no one would be king, and the monarchy came to an end.⁴ As in these cases the divine kings, so in ancient Egypt the divine beasts, were responsible for the course of nature. When pestilence and other calamities had fallen on the land, in consequence of a long and severe drought, the priests took the sacred animals secretly by night, and threatened them, but if the evil did not abate they slew the beasts.⁵

From this survey of the religious position occupied by the king in rude societies we may infer that the claim to

¹ Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, iii. 5. 1.

² Snorro Starleson, *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway* (trans. by S. Laing), saga i. chs. 18, 47. Cp. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, p. 7; J. Scheffer, *Uppsala* (Upsala, 1666), p. 137.

³ C. Russwurm, "Aberglaube in Russland," in *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), p. 162; Liebrecht, *op. cit.* p. 15.

⁴ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 304 sq.

⁵ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 73.

property of the monarch or of any of the royal
nce, too, the Incas did not, like most people, look
s as an evil. They considered it a messenger sent
father the Sun to call his son to come and rest
n heaven. Therefore the usual words in which
nounced his approaching end were these: "My
s me to come and rest with him." They would
their father's will by offering sacrifice for recovery,
declared that he had called them to his rest.¹
can kings at their accession took an oath that
make the sun to shine, the clouds to give rain,
to flow, and the earth to bring forth fruits in
By Chinese custom the emperor is deemed
if the drought be at all severe, and many are the
natory edicts on this subject published in the
he venerable *Peking Gazette*. However, it is
high priest than as a god that the Chinese
ars the blame; for in extreme cases he seeks to
evil by personally offering prayers and sacrifices
The Parthian monarchs of the Arsacid house
selves brothers of the sun and moon and were
as deities. It was esteemed sacrilege to strike
ate member of the Arsacid family in a brawl.⁴

¹ Tacitus, *Annals*, i. 60.

The kings of Egypt were deified in their lifetime, sacrifices were offered to them, and their worship was celebrated in special temples and by special priests. Indeed the worship of the kings sometimes cast that of the gods into the shade. Thus in the reign of Merenra a high official declared that he had built many holy places in order that the spirits of the king, the ever-living Merenra, might be invoked "more than all the gods."¹ The king of Egypt seems to have shared with the sacred animals the blame of any failure of the crops.² He was addressed as "Lord of heaven, lord of earth, sun, life of the whole world, lord of time, measurer of the sun's course, Tum for men, lord of well-being, creator of the harvest, maker and fashioner of mortals, bestower of breath upon all men, giver of life to all the host of gods, pillar of heaven, threshold of the earth, weigher of the equipoise of both worlds, lord of rich gifts, increaser of the corn," and so forth.³ Yet, as we should expect, the exalted powers thus ascribed to the king differed in degree rather than in kind from those which every Egyptian claimed for himself. Professor Tiele observes that "as every good man at his death became Osiris, as every one in danger or need could by the use of magic sentences assume the form of a deity, it is quite comprehensible how the king, not only after death, but already during his life, was placed on a level with the deity."⁴

Thus it appears that the same union of sacred functions with a royal title which meets us in the King of the Wood at Nemi, the Sacrificial King at Rome, and the magistrate

¹ C. P. Tiele, *History of the Egyptian Religion*, p. 103 sq. On the worship of the kings see also E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, i. § 52; A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 91 sqq.; V. von Strauss und Carnen, *Die altägyptischen Götter und Göttersagen*, pp. 467, sqq.; A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter*, p. 92 sq.; *id.*, "Menschenvergötterung im alten Ägypten," *Am Urquell*, N.F. i. (1897), p. 289 sqq.; G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les Origines*, pp. 258-267. Diodorus Siculus observed (i. 90) that "the Egyptians seem to worship and honour

their kings as very gods."

² Ammianus Marcellinus, xxviii. 5-14; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 73.

³ V. von Strauss und Carnen, *op. cit.* p. 470.

⁴ C. P. Tiele, *History of the Egyptian Religion*, p. 105. The Babylonian and Assyrian kings seem also to have been regarded as gods; at least the oldest names of the kings on the monuments are preceded by a star, the mark for "god." But there is no trace in Babylon and Assyria of temples and priests for the worship of the kings. See C. P. Tiele, *Babylonisch-Assyrische Geschichte*, p. 492 sq.

ory, has actually existed in many places, we have any suspicion of improbability that might have to the tradition. Therefore we may now fairly not the King of the Wood have had an origin like that a probable tradition assigns to the Sacrificial Rome and the titular King of Athens? In other words, not his predecessors in office have been a line of kings, from a republican revolution stripped of their political functions, leaving them only their religious functions and the right to wear a crown? There are at least two reasons for answering this question in the negative. One reason is that the abode of the priest of Nemi; the other from the fact that the King of the Wood. If his predecessors had reigned in the ordinary sense, he would surely have been a king, like the fallen kings of Rome and Athens, in which the sceptre had passed from him. This place has never been Aricia, for there was none nearer. But we have seen, was three miles off from his forest by the lake shore. If he reigned, it was not in the greenwood. Again his title, King of the Wood, fully allows us to suppose that he had ever been a king in the common sense of the word. More likely he was a king of nature, and of a special side of nature, namely,

On a hill at Bomma (the mouth of the Congo) dwells Namvulu Vumu, King of the Rain and Storm.¹ Of some of the tribes on the Upper Nile we are told that they have no kings in the common sense; the only persons whom they acknowledge as such are the Kings of the Rain, *Mata Kodou*, who are credited with the power of giving rain at the proper time, that is in the rainy season. Before the rains begin to fall at the end of March the country is a parched and arid desert; and the cattle, which form the people's chief wealth, perish for lack of grass. So, when the end of March draws on, each householder betakes himself to the King of the Rain and offers him a cow that he may make the blessed waters of heaven to drip on the brown and withered pastures. If no shower falls, the people assemble and demand that the king shall give them rain; and if the sky still continues cloudless, they rip up his belly, in which he is believed to keep the storms. Amongst the Bari tribe one of these Rain Kings made rain by sprinkling water on the ground out of a handbell.²

Among tribes on the outskirts of Abyssinia a similar office exists and has been thus described by an observer. "The priesthood of the Alfai, as he is called by the Barea and Kunama, is a remarkable one; he is believed to be able to make rain. This office formerly existed among the Algeds and appears to be still common to the Nuba negroes. The Alfai of the Bareas, who is also consulted by the northern Kunama, lives near Tembadere on a mountain alone with his family. The people bring him tribute in the form of clothes and fruits, and cultivate for him a large field of his own. He is a kind of king, and his office passes by inheritance to his brother or sister's son. He is supposed to conjure down rain and to drive away the locusts. But if he disappoints the people's expectation and a great drought arises in the land, the Alfai is stoned to death, and his nearest relations are obliged to cast the first stone at him. When we passed through the country, the office of Alfai was still held by an old man; but I heard that rain-making had

¹ Bastian, *Die Deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, ii. 230.

² "Excursion de M. Brun-Rollet dans

la région supérieure du Nil," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Paris, 1852, pt. ii. p. 421 sqq.

at till lately communications were regularly maintained between them and the King of Cambodia, who year exchanged presents with them. The Cambodian re passed from tribe to tribe till they reached their on; for no Cambodian would essay the long and journey. The tribe amongst whom the Kings of l Water reside is the Chréais or Jaray, a race with n features but a sallow complexion, inhabiting the id mountains and high tablelands which separate ia from Annam. Their royal functions are of a nystic or spiritual order; they have no political ; they are simple peasants, living by the sweat of ow and the offerings of the faithful. According to ount they live in absolute solitude, never meeting er and never seeing a human face. They inhabit ely seven towers perched upon seven mountains, ry year they pass from one tower to another. ome furtively and cast within their reach what is for their subsistence. The kingship lasts seven e time necessary to inhabit all the towers succes- ut many die before their time is out. The offices litary in one or (according to others) two royal who enjoy high consideration, have revenues

represents the people as prostrating themselves before the mystic kings whenever they appear in public, it being thought that a terrible hurricane would burst over the country if this mark of homage were omitted. Probably, however, these are mere fables such as commonly shed a glamour of romance over the distant and unknown. A French officer, who had an interview with the redoubtable Fire King in February 1891, found him stretched on a bamboo couch, diligently smoking a long copper pipe, and surrounded by people who paid him no great deference. In spite of his mystic vocation the sorcerer had no charm or talisman about him, and was in no way distinguishable from his fellows except by his tall stature.

We are told that the Fire King, the more important of the two, whose supernatural powers have never been questioned, officiates at marriages, festivals, and sacrifices in honour of the Yan. On these occasions a special place is set apart for him; and the path by which he approaches is spread with white cotton cloths. A reason for confining the royal dignity to the same family is that this family is in possession of certain famous talismans which would lose their virtue or disappear if they passed out of the family. These talismans are three: the fruit of a creeper called *Cui*, gathered ages ago at the time of the last deluge, but still fresh and green; a rattan, also very old but bearing flowers that never fade; and lastly, a sword containing a Yan or spirit, who guards it constantly and works miracles with it. By means of the two former the Water King can raise a flood that would drown the whole earth. If the Fire King draws the magic sword a few inches from its sheath, the sun is hidden and men and beasts fall into a profound sleep; were he to draw it quite out of the scabbard, the world would come to an end. To this wondrous brand sacrifices of buffaloes, pigs, fowls, and ducks are offered for rain. It is kept swathed in cotton and silk; and amongst the annual presents sent by the King of Cambodia were rich stuffs to wrap the sacred sword.

In return the Kings of Fire and Water sent him a huge wax candle and two calabashes, one full of rice and the other of sesame. The candle bore the impress of the Fire

that the rice and sesame were the special gift of the Water King. The latter was doubtless king of rain as king of water, and the fruits of the earth were boons conferred by him on men. In times of calamity, as during drought, floods, and war, a little of this sacred rice and sesame is scattered on the ground "to appease the wrath of the departed spirits." Contrary to the common usage of the West, which is to bury the dead, the bodies of both these monarchs are burnt, but their nails and some of their teeth and bones are religiously preserved as amulets. It is while the corpse is being consumed on the pyre that the spirits of the deceased magician flee to the forest and hide themselves for fear of being elevated to the invidious dignity which he has just vacated. The people go and search for them, and the first whose lurking place they discover is the King of Fire or Water.¹

These, then, are examples of what I have called departments of nature. But it is a far cry to Italy from the jungles of Cambodia and the sources of the Nile. And Kings of Rain, Water, and Fire have been found, we still have to discover a King of the Wood to match the Egyptian priest who bore that title. Perhaps we shall find him nearer home.

could be more natural. For at the dawn of history Europe was covered with immense primeval forests, in which the scattered clearings must have appeared like islets in an ocean of green. Down to the first century before our era the Hercynian forest stretched eastward from the Rhine for a distance at once vast and unknown; Germans whom Caesar questioned had travelled for two months through it without reaching the end.¹ Four centuries later it was visited by the Emperor Julian, and the solitude, the gloom, the silence of the forest appear to have made a deep impression on his sensitive nature. He declared that he knew nothing like it in the Roman empire.² In our own country the wealds of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex are remnants of the great forest of Anderida, which once clothed the whole of the south-eastern portion of the island. Westward it seems to have stretched till it joined another forest that extended from Hampshire to Devon. In the reign of Henry II. the citizens of London still hunted the wild bull and the boar in the woods of Hampstead. Even under the later Plantagenets the royal forests were sixty-eight in number. In the forest of Arden it was said that down to modern times a squirrel might leap from tree to tree for nearly the whole length of Warwickshire.³ The excavation of ancient pile-villages in the valley of the Po has shown that long before the rise and probably the foundation of Rome the north of Italy was covered with dense woods of elms, chestnuts, and especially of oaks.⁴ Archaeology is here confirmed by history; for classical writers contain many references to Italian forests which have now disappeared.⁵ In Greece the woods of the present day are a mere fraction of those which clothed great tracts in antiquity, and which at a more remote epoch may have spanned the Greek peninsula from sea to sea.⁶

From an examination of the Teutonic words for "temple" Grimm has made it probable that amongst the Germans the

¹ Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* vi. 25.

² Julian, *Fragm.* 4, ed. Hertlein, p. 608 *sq.* On the vast woods of Germany, their coolness and shade, see also Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 5.

³ Elton, *Origins of English History*, pp. 3, 106 *sq.*, 224.

⁴ W. Helbig, *Die Italië in der Poebene*, p. 25 *sq.*

⁵ H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde* (Berlin, 1883), p. 431 *sq.*

⁶ Neumann und Putsch, *Physikalische Geographie von Griechenland*, p. 357 *sq.*

old German laws for such as dared to peel the bark of a living tree. The culprit's navel was to be cut out and attached to the part of the tree which he had peeled, and he was to be driven round and round the tree till all his guts were cut about its trunk.⁴ At Upsala, the old religious capital of Sweden, there was a sacred grove in which every man was regarded as divine.⁵ Among the Slavs the oak has always been the sacred tree of the great god Perun, the equivalent of Zeus among the Greeks.⁶ It is said that at Upsala there used to stand an image of Perun, in honour of which a fire of oak-wood burned day and night; if ever it died out for want of fuel, the attendants paid for its relighting with their lives.⁷ The Lithuanians were not converted to Christianity till towards the close of the sixteenth century, and amongst them at the date of their conversion the worship of trees was prominent.⁸ Amongst the Prussians (a Lithuanian people) the central feature of their religion was the reverence for the sacred oaks, of which there stood at Romove, tended by a hierarchy of priests, and kept up a perpetual fire of oak-wood in the holy grove.⁹

Deutsche Mythologie,⁴ i.

Vat. Hist. xvi. 249 sqq.; *Prussicus Dissert.* viii. 8

⁷ L. Leger, *op. cit.* p. 91, citing Guagnini's *Sarmatiae europae description*.

⁸ Mackenzie, *Mythology*, p. 200.

If the sacred fire chanced to go out, it was rekindled by the friction of oak-wood.¹ Traces of this reverence for the tree long lingered among the people. Thus in the seventeenth century, at a village near Ragnit, there was an oak which the villagers regarded as sacred, firmly believing that any person who harmed it would be punished by some misfortune, especially by some bodily ailment or injury.² It is said that about the middle of the nineteenth century offerings of food were still laid down under ancient oaks for the spirits,³ and that the viands for funeral banquets were cooked on a fire of oak-wood, or at least under an oak-tree.⁴ Proofs of the prevalence of tree-worship in ancient Greece and Italy are abundant.⁵ Nowhere, perhaps, in the ancient world was this antique form of religion better preserved than in the heart of the great metropolis itself. In the Forum, the busy centre of Roman life, the sacred fig-tree of Romulus was worshipped down to the days of the empire, and the withering of its trunk was enough to spread consternation through the city.⁶ Again, on the slope of the Palatine Hill grew a cornel-tree which was esteemed one of the most sacred objects in Rome. Whenever the tree appeared to a passer-by to be drooping, he set up a hue and cry which was echoed by the people in the street, and soon a crowd might be seen running from all sides with buckets of water, as if (says Plutarch) they were hastening to put out a fire.⁷

But it is necessary to examine in some detail the notions on which the worship of trees and plants is based. To the savage the world in general is animate, and trees and plants are no exception to the rule. He thinks that they have souls like his own, and he treats them accordingly.

Poloniae, Lituaniae, Prussiae, Livoniae, etc. (Elzevir, 1627), p. 321 sq.; Dusbürg, *Chronicon Prussiae*, ed. Hartknoch, p. 79; Hartknoch, *Alt- und Neues Preussen*, p. 116 sqq. At Heiligenbeil there was another very sacred oak. See Tettau and Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens*, p. 35 sqq.

¹ Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussiae* (Berlin, 1871), p. 19 sq.

² Praetorius, *op. cit.* p. 16.

³ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 31, cp. 33.

⁴ Schleicher, "Lituanica," *Sitzungsberichte der philos. histor. Classe der kaiser. Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Vienna), xi. (1854), p. 100.

⁵ See Bötticher, *Der Baumkultus der Hellenen*.

⁶ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 77; Tacitus, *Ann.* xiii. 58.

⁷ Plutarch, *Romulus*, 20.

...blowing, swollen by a freshet in spring, carries it of its banks and sweeps some tall tree into its current. It is said that the spirit of the tree cries while the tree is clinging to the land and until the tree falls into the water. Formerly the Indians considered it wrong to fell trees, and when large logs were needed they used only of trees which had fallen of themselves. Till recently one of the more credulous old men declared that the misfortunes of their people were caused by this disregard for the rights of the living cottonwood.¹ In the Zulus of Eastern Africa fancy that every tree, and every cocoa-nut tree, has its spirit; "the destruction of a cocoa-nut tree is regarded as equivalent to matricide, for that tree gives them life and nourishment, as a mother does her child."² In the Yasawu islands of Fiji they will never eat a cocoa-nut without first asking its spirit, "say I eat you, my chief?"³ The Dyaks ascribe souls to trees, and do not dare to cut down an old tree. In Java, when an old tree has been blown down, they smear it with blood, and deck it with flags "to soothe the soul of the tree."⁴ Siamese monks, believing in souls everywhere, and that to destroy anything is forcibly to dispossess a soul, will not break a tree, "as they will not break the arm of a man."

simply a common savage dogma incorporated in the system of an historical religion. To suppose with Benfey and others that the theories of animism and transmigration current among rude peoples of Asia are derived from Buddhism is to reverse the facts. Buddhism in this respect borrowed from savagery, not savagery from Buddhism.¹

Sometimes it is only particular sorts of trees that are supposed to be tenanted by spirits. At Grbalj in Dalmatia it is said that among great beeches, oaks, and other trees there are some that are endowed with shades or souls, and whoever fells one of them must die on the spot, or at least live an invalid for the rest of his days. If a woodman fears that a tree which he has felled is one of this sort, he must cut off the head of a live hen on the stump of the tree with the very same axe with which he cut down the tree. This will protect him from all harm, even if the tree be one of the animated kind.² The silk-cotton trees, which rear their enormous trunks to a stupendous height, far out-topping all the other trees of the forest, are regarded with reverence throughout West Africa, from the Senegal to the Niger, and are believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. Among the Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast the indwelling god of this giant of the forest goes by the name of Huntin. Trees in which he specially dwells—for it is not every silk-cotton tree that he thus honours—are surrounded by a girdle of palm-leaves; and sacrifices of fowls, and occasionally of human beings, are fastened to the trunk or laid against the foot of the tree. A tree distinguished by a girdle of palm-leaves may not be cut down or injured in any way; and even silk-cotton trees which are not supposed to be animated by Huntin may not be felled unless the woodman first offers a sacrifice of fowls and palm-oil to purge himself of the proposed sacrilege. To omit the sacrifice is an offence which may be punished with death.³ Everywhere in Egypt on the borders of the cultivated land,

¹ The Buddhist conception of trees as animated often comes out in the *Jatakas*. For examples see H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 259 sqq.

² F. S. Krauss, *Folksglaube und*

religiöser Brauch der Sudslaven, p. 33.

³ A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast* (London, 1890), p. 49 sqq. Compare *id.*, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 34 sqq.

homage. They gave them figs, raisins, cucumbers, apples, and water in earthenware pitchers, which charibolks filled afresh every day. Passers-by slaked their thirst with these pitchers in the sultry hours, and paid for the draught by a short prayer. The spirit that animates these beautiful trees generally lurked unseen, but sometimes he would show his head or even his whole body above the trunk, but only to retire into it again.¹ In some of the Louisiade Islands there are certain large trees under which the natives hold their feasts. These trees seem to be regarded as endowed with souls; for a portion of the feast is set aside for them, and the bones of pigs and of other beings are everywhere deeply imbedded in their trunks.² People in Congo place calabashes of palm-wine at the foot of certain trees for the trees to drink when they are thirsty.³ Among the Kangra mountains of the Punjab used to be annually sacrificed to an old cedar-tree, the families of the village taking it in turn to supply the

The tree was cut down about twenty years ago.⁴ If trees are animate, they are necessarily sensitive. When a tree is being felled "it gives a kind of shriekes or groanes, which may be heard a mile off, as if it were the genius of the tree lamenting. E. Wyld, Esq., hath heard it severall times."⁵ The Ojebways "very seldom cut down green or young trees, from the idea that it puts them to pain, and

some of their medicine-men profess to have heard the wailing of the trees under the axe."¹ Old peasants in some parts of Austria still believe that forest-trees are animate, and will not allow an incision to be made in the bark without special cause; they have heard from their fathers that the tree feels the cut not less than a wounded man his hurt. In felling a tree they beg its pardon.² So in Jarkino the woodman craves pardon of the tree he fells.³ Before the Ilocanens of Luzon cut down trees in the virgin forest or on the mountains, they recite some verses to the following effect: "Be not uneasy, my friend, though we fell what we have been ordered to fell." This they do in order not to draw down on themselves the hatred of the spirits who live in the trees, and who are apt to avenge themselves by visiting with grievous sickness such as injure them wantonly.⁴ Ancient Indian books prescribe that in preparing to fell a tree the woodman should lay a stalk of grass on the spot where the blow is to fall, with the words, "O grass, protect him," and that he should say to the axe, "Axe, harm him not." When the tree had fallen, he poured butter on the stump, saying, "Lord of the forest, grow with a hundred branches; may we grow with a thousand branches." Then he anointed the severed stem and wound a rope of grass round it.⁵ Again, when a tree or plant is cut it is sometimes thought to bleed. Some Indians dare not cut a certain plant, because there comes out a red juice which they take for the blood of the plant.⁶ In Samoa there was a grove of trees which no one dared hew down. Once some strangers tried to do so, but blood flowed from the tree, and the sacrilegious strangers fell ill and died.⁷ Down to 1859 there stood a sacred larch-tree at Nauders in the Tyrol which was thought to bleed whenever it was cut; moreover it was believed that the steel pierced the woodman's body

¹ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojeb-way Indians*, p. 104.

² A. Peter, *Völkstümliches aus österreichisch Schlesien*, ii. 30.

³ Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 154; compare *id.*, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 457 sq., iii. 251 sq., iv. 42 sq.

⁴ J. de los Reyes y Florentino, "Die religiösen Anschauungen der

Ilocanen (Luzon)," *Mittheilungen der k. k. Geograph. Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxxi. (1888), p. 556.

⁵ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 256 sq.

⁶ Loubere, *Du Royaume de Siam* (Amsterdam, 1691), i. 383.

⁷ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 63.

the spirits of vegetation are not always treated with
ce and respect. If fair words and kind treatment do
ve them, stronger measures are sometimes resorted
e durian-tree of the East Indies, whose smooth stem
oots up to a height of eighty or ninety feet without
out a branch, bears a fruit of the most delicious
and the most disgusting stench. The Malays culti-
tree for the sake of its fruit, and have been known
to a peculiar ceremony for the purpose of stimu-
s fertility. Near Jugra in Selangor there is a small
f durian-trees, and on a specially chosen day the
used to assemble in it. Thereupon one of the
cerers would take a hatchet and deliver several
blows on the trunk of the most barren of the
ring, "Will you now bear fruit or not? If you do
all fell you." To this the tree replied through the
f another man who had climbed a magnostin-tree
(the durian-tree being unclimbable), "Yes, I will
fruit; I beg you not to fell me."² Odd as this
horticulture may seem to us, it has its exact parallel
2. On Christmas Eve many a South Slavonian and
peasant swings an axe threateningly against a
nit-tree, while another man standing by intercedes for

In Armenia the same pantomime is sometimes performed by two men for the same purpose on Good Friday.¹ In Lesbos, when an orange-tree or a lemon-tree does not bear fruit, the owner will sometimes set a looking-glass before the tree; then standing with an axe in his hand over against the tree and gazing at its reflection in the glass he will feign to fall into a passion and will say aloud, "Bear fruit, or I'll cut you down."² When cabbages merely curl their leaves instead of forming heads as they ought to do, an Esthonian peasant will go out into the garden before sunrise, clad only in his shirt, and armed with a scythe, which he sweeps over the refractory vegetables as if he meant to cut them down. This intimidates the cabbages and brings them to a sense of their duty.³ If European peasants thus know how to work on the fears of cabbages and fruit-trees, the subtle Malay has learned how to overreach the simple souls of the plants and trees that grow in his native land. Thus, when a bunch of fruit hangs from an *aren* palm-tree, and in reaching after it you tread on some of the fallen fruit, the Galelareese say that you ought to grunt like a wild boar in order that your feet may not itch. The chain of reasoning seems weak to a European mind, but the natives find no flaw in it. They have observed that wild boars are fond of the fruit, and run freely about among it as it lies on the ground. From this they infer that the animal's feet are proof against the itch which men suffer through treading on the fruit; and hence they conclude that if, by grunting in a natural and life-like manner, you can impress the fruit with the belief that you are a pig, it will treat your feet as tenderly as the feet of his friends the real pigs.⁴ Again, pregnant women in Java sometimes take a fancy to eat the wild species of a particular plant (*Colocasia antiquorum*), which, on account of its exceedingly pungent taste, is not commonly used as

¹ M. Tchérax, "Notes sur la Mythologie Arménienne," *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists* (London, 1893), ii. 827.

² Georgeakakis et Pineau, *Folk-lore de Lesbos* (Paris, 1894), p. 354.

³ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten*

abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten, p. 134.

⁴ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen, en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 511.

is amiss, eat this fruit also ; but before plucking it they take the precaution of mimicking the voices of apes, in order to persuade the plant that its fruit is destined for the use of these creatures.² Once more, the Javanese scrape the rind of a certain plant (*Sarcolobus narcoticus*) into a powder, with which they poison such dangerous beasts as tigers and wild boars. But the rind is believed not to be a poison for men. Hence the person who gathers the plant must observe certain precautions in order that its baneful quality may not be lost in passing through his hands. He approaches it naked and creeping on all fours to make the plant think that he is a ravenous beast and not a man, and to strengthen the illusion he bites the stalk. After that the property of the rind is assured. But even when the rind has been gathered and the powder made from it in accordance with certain superstitious rules, care is still taken in handling the powder, which is regarded as alive and intelligent. It may not be brought near a corpse, nor may a corpse be carried past the house in which the powder is kept. For if either of these things were to happen, the powder, seeing the corpse, would hastily conclude that it had already done its work, and so all its medicinal quality would be gone.³

² A conception of the same kind is found in the

idols.¹ In the North-West Provinces of India a marriage ceremony is performed in honour of a newly planted orchard ; a man holding the Salagram represents the bridegroom, and another holding the sacred Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) represents the bride.² On Christmas Eve German peasants used to tie fruit-trees together with straw ropes to make them bear fruit, saying that the trees were thus married.³ In the Moluccas, when the clove-trees are in blossom, they are treated like pregnant women. No noise may be made near them ; no light or fire may be carried past them at night ; no one may approach them with his hat on, all must uncover in their presence. These precautions are observed lest the tree should be alarmed and bear no fruit, or should drop its fruit too soon, like the untimely delivery of a woman who has been frightened in her pregnancy.⁴ So in Amboyna, when the rice is in bloom, the people say that it is pregnant and fire no guns and make no other noises near the field, for fear lest, if the rice were thus disturbed, it would miscarry, and the crop would be all straw and no grain.⁵ The Javanese also regard the bloom on the rice as a sign that the plant is pregnant ; and they treat it accordingly, by mingling in the water that irrigates the fields a certain astringent food prepared from sour fruit, which is believed to be wholesome for women with child.⁶ In some districts of Western Borneo there must be no talk of corpses or demons in the fields, else the spirit of the growing rice would be frightened and flee away to Java.⁷ In Orissa, also, growing rice is "considered as a pregnant woman, and the same ceremonies are observed with regard to it as in the case of human females."⁸

¹ Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 334 sq.

² Sir Henry M. Elliot and J. Beames, *Memoirs on the History, etc., of the Races of the North-Western Provinces of India* (London, 1869), i. 233.

³ *Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie* (Chemnitz, 1759), p. 239 sq. ; U. Jahn, *Die deutsche Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht*, p. 214 sqq.

⁴ Van Schmid, "Aanteekeningen nopens de zeden, gewoonten en gebruiken, etc., der bevolking van de eilanden Saparoea, etc." *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. p. 605 ;

Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 156.

⁵ Van Hoeverell, *Amboen en meer bepaaldelijk de Oeliasers*, p. 62.

⁶ G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme bij de volken van het Indischen archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 958 ; *id.*, *Handleiding voor de verzorgende Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië* (Leyden, 1893), p. 549 sq.

⁷ E. L. M. Kulir, "Schetsen uit Borneo's Westerafdeeling," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlvii. (1897), p. 58 sq.

⁸ *Indian Antiquary*, i. (1872), p. 170.

believe it is the souls of the dead which are believed
in the trees. The Dieri tribe of South Australia
is very sacred certain trees which are supposed to be
ancestors transformed ; hence they speak with reverence
of the trees, and are careful that they shall not be cut down
or destroyed. If the settlers require them to hew down the
trees they earnestly protest against it, asserting that were they
to do so they would have no luck, and might be punished for
offending their ancestors.² Some of the Philippine
natives believe that the souls of their ancestors are in
the trees, which they therefore spare. If they are obliged
to cut down one of these trees, they excuse themselves to it by
saying that it was the priest who made them do it. The
natives make up their abode, by preference, in tall and stately
trees with great spreading branches. When the wind rustles
the leaves, the natives fancy it is the voice of the spirit ; and
never pass near one of these trees without bowing
reverently, and asking pardon of the spirit for disturbing
him. Among the Ignorotes, in the district of Le-
veque, every village has its sacred tree, in which the souls
of the dead forefathers of the hamlet reside. Offerings are
made to the tree, and any injury done to it is believed to
bring some misfortune on the village. Were the tree cut
down the village and all its inhabitants would be destroyed.

dent, as by drowning, it is a sign that the gods mean to exclude him from the realms of bliss. Accordingly his body is not buried, but carried into the forest and there laid down. The souls of such unfortunates pass into trees or animals or fish, and are much dreaded by the Dyaks, who abstain from using certain kinds of wood, or eating certain sorts of fish, because they are supposed to contain the souls of the dead.¹ Once, while walking with a Dyak through the jungle, Sir Hugh Low observed that his companion, after raising his sword to strike a great snake, suddenly arrested his arm and suffered the reptile to escape. On asking the reason, he was told by the Dyak that the bush in front of which they were standing had been a man, a kinsman of his own, who, dying some ten years before, had appeared in a dream to his widow and told her that he had become that particular bamboo-tree. Hence the ground and everything on it was sacred, and the serpent might not be interfered with. The Dyak further related that in spite of the warning given to the woman in the vision, a man had been hardy enough to cut a branch of the tree, but that the fool had paid for his temerity with his life, for he died soon afterwards. A little bamboo altar stood in front of the bush, on which the remnants of offerings presented to the spirit of the tree were still visible when Sir Hugh Low passed that way.² In Corea the souls of people who die of the plague or by the roadside, and of women who expire in childbed, invariably take up their abode in trees. To such spirits offerings of cake, wine, and pork are made on heaps of stones piled under the trees.³ Some of the mountaineers on the north-west coast of New Guinea think that the spirits of their ancestors live on the branches of trees, on which accordingly they hang rags of red or white cotton, always in the number of seven, or a multiple of seven; also, they place food on the trees or hang it in baskets from the boughs.⁴ Among the Buryats of Siberia the bones of a deceased shaman are deposited in a hole hewn in the trunk

¹ F. Grabowsky, "Der Tod, etc., bei den Dajaken," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ii. (1889), p. 181.

² H. Low, *Sarawak*, p. 264.

³ Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neigh-*

bours (London, 1898), i. 106 sq.

⁴ F. S. A. de Clereq, "De West-en Noordkust van Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea," *Tijdschrift van het kon. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 199.

the creaking of the branches in the wind is their voice.⁷ In Romania, they say that witches used to be buried under old trees in the forest, and that their souls passed into the trees to live with the villagers in peace.⁸ A tree that grows on a spot regarded by the South Slavonian peasant as a sort of holy place. Whoever breaks a twig from it, hurts the soul of the dead, but gains thereby a magic wand, since the soul embodied in the twig will be at his service.⁴ This reminds me of the story of Polydorus in Virgil,⁵ and of the bleeding myrtle that grew on the grave of the fratricides Oedipus and Polynices at Thebes.⁶ Similar stories are told in Italy from the classic lands of Italy and Greece. In an Italian tale an old fisherman makes an incision in the bark of a tree which has drifted ashore; but blood flows from the cut, and it appears that an empress with her three sons, who had been cast into the sea, are embodied in the tree.⁷ On the Slave Coast of West Africa the negroes dig up the mouldering bones of a little boy, who had been murdered by his brother in the forest, there sprang up a magic fungus, which spoke and revealed the crime to the mother when she attempted to pluck it.⁸ In most, if not all, of these cases the spirit is viewed as embodied in the tree; it animates the tree and must suffer with it. But according to another and much older

of the tree-spirit, which can quit the injured tree as men quit a dilapidated house. The people of Nias think that, when a tree dies, its liberated spirit becomes a demon, which can kill a cocoa-nut palm by merely lighting on its branches, and can cause the death of all the children in a house by perching on one of the posts that support it. Further, they are of opinion that certain trees are at all times inhabited by roving demons who, if the trees were damaged, would be set free to go about on errands of mischief. Hence the people respect these trees, and are careful not to cut them down.¹ On the Tanga coast of East Africa mischievous sprites reside in great trees, especially in the fantastically shaped baobabs. Sometimes they appear in the shape of ugly black beings, but as a rule they enter unseen into people's bodies, from which, after causing much sickness and misery, they have to be cast out by the sorcerer.² In the Galla region of East Africa, where the vegetation is magnificent, there are many sacred trees, the haunts of jinn. Most of them belong to the sycamore and maple species, but they do not all exhale an equal odour of sanctity. The *wat'sa*, with its edible fruit, is least revered; people climb it to get the fruit, and this disturbs the jinn, who naturally do not care to linger among its boughs. The *gute tubi*, which has no edible fruit, is more sacred. Every Galla tribe has its sacred tree, which is always one individual of a particular species called *lafto*. When a tree has been consecrated by a priest it becomes holy, and no branch of it may be broken. Such trees are loaded with long threads, woollen bands, and bracelets; the blood of animals is poured on their roots and sometimes smeared on their trunks, and pots full of butter, milk, and flesh are placed among the branches or on the ground under them. In many Galla tribes women may not tread on the shadow of sacred trees or even approach the trees.³

Not a few ceremonies observed at cutting down haunted trees are based on the belief that the spirits have it in their power to quit the trees at pleasure or in case of need. Thus when the Pelew Islanders are felling a tree, they conjure the

¹ E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 629.

² O. Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete* (Berlin, 1891), p. 57 sq.

³ Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: Die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somäl* (Berlin, 1896), p. 34 sq.

e the more powerful the demon. Accordingly they
eful not to fell such trees, and they leave offerings at
t of them for the spirits. But sometimes, when they
ring land for cultivation, it becomes necessary to cut
he trees which cumber it. In that case the Alfoor
l to the demon of the tree and beseech him to leave
de and go elsewhere, and he deposits food under the
provision for the spirit on his journey. Then, and
then, he may fell the tree. Woe to the luckless
ho should turn a tree-spirit out of his house without
him due notice!³ In Rotti, an island to the south
or, when they fell a tree to make a coffin, they sacri-
og as compensation to the tree-spirit whose property
e thus making free with.⁴ The Mandelings of
endeavour to lay the blame of all such misdeeds at
r of the Dutch authorities. Thus when a man is
a road through a forest and has to fell a tall tree
locks the way, he will not begin to ply his axe until
aid: "Spirit who lodgest in this tree, take it not ill
at down thy dwelling, for it is done at no wish of
t by order of the Controller." And when he wishes
a piece of forest-land for cultivation, it is necessary
should come to a satisfactory understanding with

letter. Then unfolding a bit of paper he reads aloud an imaginary letter from the Dutch Government, in which he is strictly enjoined to set about clearing the land without delay. Having done so, he says: "You hear that, spirits. I must begin clearing at once, or I shall be hanged."¹ There is a certain tree called *rara* which the Dyaks believe to be inhabited by a spirit. Before they cut down one of these trees they strike an axe into the trunk, leave it there, and call upon the spirit either to quit his dwelling or to give them a sign that he does not wish it to be meddled with. Then they go home. Next day they visit the tree, and if they find the axe still sticking in the trunk, they can fell the tree without danger; there is no spirit in it, or he would certainly have ejected the axe from his abode. But if they find the axe lying on the ground, they know that the tree is inhabited and they will not fell it; for it must surely have been the spirit of the tree in person who expelled the intrusive axe. Some sceptical Europeans, however, argue that what casts out the axe is strychnine in the sap rather than the tree-spirit. They say that if the sap is running, the axe must necessarily be forced out by the action of heat and the expansion of the exuding gutta; whereas if the axe remains in the trunk, this only shows that the tree is not vigorous but ready to die.² In the Greek island of Siphnos, when woodmen have to fell a tree which they regard as possessed by a spirit, they are most careful, when it falls, to prostrate themselves humbly and in silence lest the spirit should chastise them as it escapes. Sometimes they put a stone on the stump of the tree to prevent the egress of the spirit.³ In some parts of Sumatra, so soon as a tree is felled, a young tree is planted on the stump, and some betel and a few small coins are also placed on it.⁴ The purpose of the ceremony seems plain. The spirit of the tree is offered a new home in the young tree planted on the stump

¹ Th. A. L. Heyting, "Beschrijving der onder-afdeeling Groot-mandeling en Batang-natal," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, xiv. (1897), p. 289 sq.

² Crossland, quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British*

North Borneo, i. 286; compare *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 114.

³ J. T. Bent, *The Cyclades*, p. 27.

⁴ Van Hasselt, *Volkshescrijving van Midden-Sumatra* (Leyden, 1882), p. 156.

the orders of the strangers for the work."¹ In Halma-
however, the motive for placing a sprig on the stump is
to be to deceive the spirit into thinking that the fallen
tree is still growing in its old place.² German woodmen
place a cross upon the stump while the tree is falling, in the
belief that this enables the spirit of the tree to live upon the

Before the Katodis fell a forest tree, they choose a
tree of the same kind and worship it by presenting a cocoa-
nut incense, applying a red pigment, and begging it
to undertake the undertaking.⁴ The intention, perhaps, is to induce
the spirit of the former tree to shift its quarters to the latter.
When felling a wood, a Galelareese must not cut down the last
tree, lest the spirit in it has been induced to go away.⁵ When
the Kaks fell the jungle on the hills, they often leave a few
trees standing on the hill-tops as a refuge for the dispossessed
spirits.⁶ Similarly in India, the Gonds allow a grove of
trees to remain as a home or reserve for the woodland
spirits when they are clearing away a jungle.⁷ The Mundaris
leave sacred groves which were left standing when the land
was cleared, lest the sylvan gods, disquieted at the felling of
the trees, should abandon the place.⁸ The Miris in Assam
are unwilling to break up new land for cultivation so long as
there is fallow land available; for they fear to offend the

spirits of the woods by hewing down trees needlessly.¹ On the other hand, when a child has been lost, the Padams of Assam think that it has been stolen by the spirits of the wood; so they retaliate on the spirits by felling trees till they find the child. The spirits, fearing to be left without a tree in which to lodge, give up the child, and it is found in the fork of a tree.²

Thus the tree is regarded, sometimes as the body, sometimes as merely the house of the tree-spirit; and when we read of sacred trees which may not be cut down because they are the seat of spirits, it is not always possible to say with certainty in which way the presence of the spirit in the tree is conceived. In the following cases, perhaps, the trees are regarded as the dwelling-place of the spirits rather than as their bodies. The Sea Dyaks point to many a tree as sacred because it is the abode of a spirit or spirits, and to cut one of these down would provoke the spirit's anger, who might avenge himself by visiting the sacrilegious woodman with sickness.³ The Battas of Sumatra have been known to refuse to cut down certain trees because they were the abode of mighty spirits who would resent the injury.⁴ One of the largest and stateliest of the forest trees in Perak is known as *toallong*; it has a very poisonous sap which produces great irritation when it comes into contact with the skin. Many trees of this species have large hollow projections on their trunks where branches have been broken off. These projections are looked upon by the Malays as houses of spirits, and they object strongly to cut down trees that are thus disfigured, believing that the man who fells one of them will die within the year. When clearings are made in the forest, these trees are generally left standing to the annoyance and expense of planters.⁵ The Siamese fear to cut down any very fine trees, lest they should incur

¹ Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 33; Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 16. Compare W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*,² p. 132 sq.

² Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 25; Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 37.

³ J. Perham, "Sea Dyak Religion," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 10 (Decem-

ber 1882), p. 217; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 184.

⁴ B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. 530. note.

⁵ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 202.

would be sacrilegious and dangerous to hew down. The stone is generally placed at the foot of one of these images or emblems, and turmeric powder is rubbed on it. In the deserts of Arabia a recent traveller found a solitary acacia-tree which the Bedouin believed to be haunted by a jinnee. Shreds of cotton and horns of goats hung on the boughs, and nails were knocked into the trunk. An Arab strongly dissuaded the traveller from cutting down the tree, assuring him that it was death to do so. Yourouks, who inhabit the southern coasts of Persia and the heights of Mount Taurus, have sacred trees which they never cut down from fear of driving away the spirits that own them.⁶ The old Prussians, it is said, believed that gods inhabited high trees, such as oaks, from which they gave audible answers to inquirers; hence these trees were not felled, but worshipped as the homes of the gods.

The great oak at Romove was the especial place of the god; it was veiled with a cloth, which was never removed to allow worshippers to behold the face of the god.⁸ The Samagitians thought that if any one

⁶ *The Kingdom of the Westminster*, 1898, p.

Die Völker des östlichen

⁷ Erasmus Stella, "De Borussia antiquitatibus," in *Nomen orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, p. 510: Lasiecki (Lascinski).

ventured to injure certain groves, or the birds or beasts in them, the spirits would make his hands or feet crooked.¹ Down to the nineteenth century the Esthonians stood in such awe of many trees, which they considered as the seat of mighty spirits, that they would not even pluck a flower or a berry on the ground where the shadow of the trees fell; much less would they dare to break a branch from the tree itself.²

Even where no mention is made of wood-spirits, we may generally assume that when trees or groves are sacred and inviolable, it is because they are believed to be either inhabited or animated by sylvan deities. In Livonia there is a sacred grove in which, if any man fells a tree or breaks a branch, he will die within the year.³ The Wotjaks have sacred groves. A Russian who ventured to hew a tree in one of them fell sick and died next day.⁴ Near a chapel of St. Ninian, in the parish of Belly, there stood more than a century and a half ago a row of trees, "all of equal size, thick planted for about the length of a butt," which were "looked upon by the superstitious papists as sacred trees, from which they reckon it sacrilege to take so much as a branch, or any of the fruit."⁵ So in the island of Skye some two hundred and fifty years ago there was a holy lake, "surrounded by a fair wood, which none presumes to cut"; and those who ventured to infringe its sanctity by breaking even a twig either sickened on the spot or were visited afterwards by "some signal inconvenience."⁶ Sacrifices offered at cutting down trees are doubtless meant to appease the wood-spirits. In Gilgit it is usual to sprinkle goat's blood on a tree of any kind before felling it.⁷ Before thinning a grove a Roman farmer had to sacrifice a pig to the god or goddess of the grove.⁸ The priestly college of the Arval Brothers at Rome had to make expiation when a rotten bough fell to the ground in the sacred grove, or when an old

¹ Mathias Michov, in *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, p. 457.

² J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 277.

³ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 497; cp. ii. 540, 541.

⁴ Max Buch, *Die Wotjaken*, p. 124.

⁵ Dalryell, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 400.

⁶ Dalryell, *loc. cit.*

⁷ Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Kooch*, p. 116.

⁸ Cato, *De agri cultura*, 139.

d for a longer or shorter time by a supernatural
ho, as he can pass freely from tree to tree, thereby
a certain right of possession or lordship over the
id, ceasing to be a tree-soul, becomes a forest god.
1 as the tree-spirit is thus in a measure disengaged
ch particular tree, he begins to change his shape and
the body of a man, in virtue of a general tendency
thought to clothe all abstract spiritual beings in
human form. Hence in classical art the sylvan
re depicted in human shape, their woodland character
noted by a branch or some equally obvious symbol.²
; change of shape does not affect the essential
of the tree-spirit. The powers which he exercised
e-soul incorporate in a tree, he still continues to
a god of trees. This I shall now prove in detail.
ow, first, that trees considered as animate beings
ed with the power of making the rain to fall, the
ine, flocks and herds to multiply, and women to
h easily; and, second, that the very same powers
uted to tree-gods conceived as anthropomorphic
as actually incarnate in living men.

then, trees or tree-spirits are believed to give rain
ine. When the missionary Jerome of Prague was
g the heathen Lithuanians to fell their sacred
multitude of women besought the Prince of

to get rain and sunshine.¹ The Mundaris in Assam think that if a tree in the sacred grove is felled, the sylvan gods evince their displeasure by withholding rain.² In Cambodia each village or province has its sacred tree, the abode of a spirit. If the rains are late, the people sacrifice to the tree.³ In time of drought the elders of the Wakamba assemble and take a calabash of cider and a goat to a baobab-tree, where they kill the goat but do not eat it.⁴ When Ovambo women go out to sow corn they take with them in the basket of seed two green branches of a particular kind of tree (*Peltophorum africanum* Sond.), one of which they plant in the field along with the first seed sown. The branch is believed to have the power of attracting rain; hence in one of the native dialects the tree goes by the name of the "rain-bush."⁵ To extort rain from the tree-spirit a branch is sometimes dipped in water, as we have seen above.⁶ In such cases the spirit is doubtless supposed to be immanent in the branch, and the water thus applied to the spirit produces rain by a sort of sympathetic magic, exactly as we saw that in New Caledonia the rain-makers pour water on a skeleton, believing that the soul of the deceased will convert the water into rain.⁷ There is hardly room to doubt that Mannhardt is right in explaining as a rain-charm the European custom of drenching with water the trees which are cut at certain popular festivals, as midsummer, Whitsuntide, and harvest.⁸

Again, tree-spirits make the crops to grow. Amongst the Mundaris every village has its sacred grove, and "the grove deities are held responsible for the crops, and are especially honoured at all the great agricultural festivals."⁹ The negroes of the Gold Coast are in the habit of sacrificing at the foot of certain tall trees, and they think that if one of

¹ Aeneas Sylvius, *Opera* (Bâle, 1571), p. 418 [wrongly numbered 420]; cp. Erasmus Stella, "De Borussiae antiquitatibus," in *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, p. 510.

² Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 186.

³ Aymonier in *Cochinchine française: Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 16, p. 175 sq.

⁴ L. Deele, *Three Years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 489.

⁵ H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 295 sq.

⁶ See above, pp. 82, 113.

⁷ Above, p. 99 sq.

⁸ Mannhardt, *B.A.* pp. 158, 159, 170, 197, 214, 351, 514.

⁹ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 188.

custom of the Harvest-May. This is a large branch of a holly tree, which is decked with ears of corn, brought in the last waggon from the harvest-field, and fastened to the roof of the farmhouse or of the barn, where it remains all the year. Mannhardt has proved that this branch or tree is the tree-spirit conceived as the spirit of vegetation, whose vivifying and fructifying influence is thus to bear upon the corn in particular. Hence in the Harvest-May is fastened amongst the last stalks left standing on the field ; in other places it is planted in the corn-field and the last sheaf cut is attached to its top.

The Harvest-May of Germany has its counterpart in the *eiressione* of ancient Greece.² The *eiressione* was a bough of olive or laurel, bound about with ribbons and decked with a variety of fruits. This branch was carried in procession at a harvest festival and was fastened over the door of the house, where it remained for a year. The object of having the Harvest-May or the *eiressione* for a year is that the life-giving virtue of the bough may foster the growth of the crops throughout the year. By the end of the year the virtue of the bough is supposed to be exhausted and it is replaced by a new one. Following a similar train of thought, some of the Dyaks of Sarawak are careful at the end of the year to take up the roots of a certain plant, which they

for the Dyaks say that the rice will not grow unless a plant of this sort be in the field.¹

Customs like that of the Harvest-May appear to exist in India and Africa. At a harvest festival of the Lhoosai of South-Eastern India the chief goes with his people into the forest and fells a large tree, which is then carried into the village and set up in the midst. Sacrifice is offered, and spirits and rice are poured over the tree. The ceremony closes with a feast and a dance, at which the unmarried men and girls are the only performers.² Among the Bechuanas the hack-thorn is very sacred, and it would be a serious offence to cut a bough from it and carry it into the village during the rainy season. But when the corn is ripe in the ear the people go with axes, and each man brings home a branch of the sacred hack-thorn, with which they repair the village cattle-yard.³ According to another authority, it is a rule with the Bechuanas that "neither the hook-thorn nor the milk-tree must be cut down while the corn is on the ground, for this, they think, would prevent rain. When I was at Lattakoo, though Mr. Hamilton stood in much need of some milk-tree timber, he durst not supply himself till all the corn was gathered in."⁴ Many tribes of South-Eastern Africa will not cut down timber while the corn is green, fearing that if they did so, the crops would be destroyed by blight, hail, or early frost.⁵ Again, the fructifying power of the tree is put forth at seed-time as well as at harvest. Among the Aryan tribes of Gilgit, on the north-western frontier of India, the sacred tree is the *Chili*, a species of cedar (*Juniperus excelsa*). At the beginning of wheat-sowing the people receive from the rajah's granary a quantity of wheat, which is placed in a skin mixed with sprigs of the sacred cedar. A large bonfire of the cedar

¹ H. Low, *Sarawak*, p. 274; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxv. (1896), p. 111.

² T. H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India*, p. 270.

³ J. Mackenzie, *Ten Years north of the Orange River*, p. 385.

⁴ J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey*, ii. 203.

⁵ Rev. J. Macdonald, MS. notes; compare *id.*, *Light in Africa*, p. 210;

id., in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 140. Among some of the hill-tribes of the Punjab no one is allowed to cut grass or any green thing with an iron sickle till the festival of the ripening grain has been celebrated; otherwise the field-god would be angry and send frost to destroy or injure the harvest (Ibbetson, *Outlines of Punjab Ethnography*, p. 121).

wood is lighted, and the wheat which is to be sown is held over the smoke. The rest is ground and made into a large cake, which is baked on the same fire and given to the ploughman.¹ Here the intention of fertilising the seed by means of the sacred cedar is unmistakable.

In all these cases the power of fostering the growth of crops, and, in general, of cultivated plants, is ascribed to trees. The ascription is not unnatural. For the tree is the largest and most powerful member of the vegetable kingdom, and man is familiar with it before he takes to cultivating corn. Hence he naturally places the feebler and, to him, newer plant under the dominion of the older and more powerful.

Again, the tree-spirit makes the herds to multiply and blesses women with offspring. The sacred *Chili* or cedar of Gilgit was supposed to possess this virtue in addition to that of fertilising the corn. At the commencement of wheat-sowing three chosen unmarried youths, after undergoing daily washing and purification for three days, used to start for the mountain where the cedars grew, taking with them wine, oil, bread, and fruit of every kind. Having found a suitable tree they sprinkled the wine and oil on it, while they ate the bread and fruit as a sacrificial feast. Then they cut off the branch and brought it to the village, where, amid general rejoicing, it was placed on a large stone beside running water. "A goat was then sacrificed, its blood poured over the cedar branch, and a wild dance took place, in which weapons were brandished about, and the head of the slaughtered goat was borne aloft, after which it was set up as a mark for arrows and bullet-practice. Every good shot was rewarded with a gourd full of wine and some of the flesh of the goat. When the flesh was finished the bones were thrown into the stream and a general ablution took place, after which every man went to his house taking with him a spray of the cedar. On arrival at his house he found the door shut in his face, and on his knocking for admission, his wife asked, 'What have you brought?' To which he answered, 'If you want children, I have brought them to you; if you want food, I have brought it; if you want cattle, I have brought them; what-

¹ Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 103 sq.

ever you want, I have it.' The door was then opened and he entered with his cedar spray. The wife then took some of the leaves, and pouring wine and water on them placed them on the fire, and the rest were sprinkled with flour and suspended from the ceiling. She then sprinkled flour on her husband's head and shoulders, and addressed him thus, 'Ai Shiri Bagerthum, son of the fairies, you have come from far!' *Shiri Bagerthum*, 'the dreadful king,' being the form of address to the cedar when praying for wants to be fulfilled. The next day the wife baked a number of cakes, and taking them with her, drove the family goats to the Chili stone. When they were collected round the stone, she began to pelt them with pebbles, invoking the Chili at the same time. According to the direction in which the goats ran off, omens were drawn as to the number and sex of the kids expected during the ensuing year. Walnuts and pomegranates were then placed on the Chili stone, the cakes were distributed and eaten, and the goats followed to pasture in whatever direction they showed a disposition to go. For five days afterwards this song was sung in all the houses :—

'Dread Fairy King, I sacrifice before you,
How nobly do you stand! you have filled up my house,
You have brought me a wife when I had not one,
Instead of daughters you have given me sons.
You have shown me the ways of right,
You have given me many children.'"¹

Here the driving of the goats to the stone on which the cedar had been placed is clearly meant to impart to them the fertilising influence of the cedar. In Europe the May-tree or May-pole is supposed to possess similar powers over both women and cattle. In some parts of Germany on the first of May the peasants set up May-trees at the doors of stables and byres, one May-tree for each horse and cow; this is thought to make the cows yield much milk.² Camden says of the Irish, "They fancy a green bough of a tree,

¹ Biddulph, *op. cit.* p. 106 sq.

² Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 161; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 397; A.

Peter, *Völkstümliches aus Österreichisch-Schlesien*, ii. 286; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 210.

fastened on May-day against the house, will produce plenty of milk that summer."¹ In Suffolk there was an old custom, observed in most farm-houses, that any servant who could bring in a branch of hawthorn in blossom on the first of May was entitled to a dish of cream for breakfast.² Similarly, "in parts of Cornwall, till certainly ten years ago, any child who brought to a dairy on May morning a piece of hawthorn in bloom, or a piece of fresh bracken, long enough to surround the earthenware bowl in which cream is kept, was given a bowl of cream."³

On the second of July some of the Wends used to set up an oak-tree in the middle of the village with an iron cock fastened to its top; then they danced round it, and drove the cattle round it to make them thrive.⁴ Some of the Esthonians believe in a mischievous spirit called Metsik, who lives in the forest and has the weal of the cattle in his hands. Every year a new image of him is prepared. On an appointed day all the villagers assemble and make a straw man, dress him in clothes, and take him to the common pasture-land of the village. Here the figure is fastened to a high tree, round which the people dance noisily. On almost every day of the year prayer and sacrifice are offered to him that he may protect the cattle.* Sometimes the image of Metsik is made of a corn-sheaf and fastened to a tall tree in the wood. The people perform strange antics before it to induce Metsik to guard the corn and the cattle.⁵ The Circassians regard the pear-tree as the protector of cattle. So they cut down a young pear-tree in the forest, branch it, and carry it home, where it is adored as a

¹ Quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 227, Bohn's ed.

² *County Folk-lore: Suffolk*, collected and edited by Lady Eveline Camilla Gurdon, p. 117.

³ Mr. E. F. Benson, in a letter to the author dated December 15th, 1892. A somewhat different explanation of these customs is that the green boughs are intended to save the milk from the witches, who make great efforts to steal it on May morning, and, if they succeed, own it for the rest of the year. Hence to keep off the witches on that morning the Irish scatter prim-

roses on the threshold, keep a piece of red-hot iron on the hearth, or twine branches of whitethorn and mountain-ash about the door. To save the milk they cut and peel boughs of mountain-ash, and bind the twigs round the milk-pails and the churn. See Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland* (London, 1887), i. 196 sq.

⁴ Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 174.

⁵ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der Estnischen Gesell. zu Dorpat*, vii. No. 2, p. 10 sq.; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 407 sq.

divinity. Almost every house has one such pear-tree. In autumn, on the day of the festival, the tree is carried into the house with great ceremony to the sound of music and amid the joyous cries of all the inmates, who compliment it on its fortunate arrival. It is covered with candles, and a cheese is fastened to its top. Round about it they eat, drink, and sing. Then they bid the tree good-bye and take it back to the courtyard, where it remains for the rest of the year, set up against the wall, without receiving any mark of respect.¹

The common European custom of placing a green bush on May Day before or on the house of a beloved maiden probably originated in the belief of the fertilising power of the tree-spirit.² In some parts of Bavaria such bushes are set up also at the houses of newly-married pairs, and the practice is only omitted if the wife is near her confinement; for in that case they say that the husband has "set up a May-bush for himself."³ Among the South Slavonians a barren woman, who desires to have a child, places a new chemise on a fruitful tree on the eve of St. George's Day. Next morning before sunrise she examines the garment, and if she finds that some living creature has crept on it, she hopes that her wish will be fulfilled within the year. Then she puts on the chemise, confident that she will be as fruitful as the tree on which the chemise has passed the night.⁴ Among the Kara-Kirghiz barren women roll themselves on the ground under a solitary apple-tree, in order to obtain offspring.⁵ Some of the hill-tribes of India have a custom of marrying the bride and bridegroom to two trees before they are married to each other. For example, among the Mundas the bride

¹ Potocki, *Voyage dans les steppes d'Astrakhan et du Caucase* (Paris, 1829), i. 309.

² Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 163 sqq. To his authorities add for France, A. Meyrac, *Traditions, coutumes, légendes et contes des Ardennes*, p. 84 sqq.; L. F. Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 131 sq.; Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances*, v. 309 sq.; for Moravia, W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 263; for Sardinia, R. Tennant, *Sar-*

dinia and its Resources (Rome and London, 1885), p. 185 sq. In Brunswick the custom is observed at Whitsuntide (K. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 248).

³ Bavaria, *Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 373.

⁴ F. S. Krauss, *Volks glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 35.

⁵ Radloff, *Proben der Volksliteratur der nördlichen Türkischen Stämme*, v. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1885).

touches with red lead a *malwad*-tree, clasps it in her arms, and is tied to it; and the bridegroom goes through a like ceremony with a mango-tree.¹ The intention of the custom may perhaps be to communicate to the newly-wedded pair the vigorous reproductive power of the trees.² Lastly, the power of granting to women an easy delivery at child-birth is ascribed to trees both in Sweden and Africa. In some districts of Sweden there was formerly a *bårdträd* or guardian-tree (lime, ash, or elm) in the neighbourhood of every farm. No one would pluck a single leaf of the sacred tree, any injury to which was punished by ill-luck or sickness. Pregnant women used to clasp the tree in their arms in order to ensure an easy delivery.³ In some negro tribes of the Congo region pregnant women make themselves garments out of the bark of a certain sacred tree, because they believe that this tree delivers them from the dangers that attend child-bearing.⁴ The story that Leto clasped a palm-tree and an olive-tree or two laurel-trees, when she was about to give birth to Apollo and Artemis, perhaps points to a similar Greek belief in the efficacy of certain trees to facilitate delivery.⁵

From this review of the beneficent qualities commonly ascribed to tree-spirits, it is easy to understand why customs like the May-tree or May-pole have prevailed so widely and figured so prominently in the popular festivals of European peasants. In spring or early summer or even on Midsummer Day, it was and still is in many parts of Europe the custom

¹ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 194; a similar custom is practised among the Kurmis, *ibid.*, p. 319. Among the Mundas the custom seems now to have fallen into disuse (H. H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal: Ethnographic Glossary*, ii. 102).

² The explanation has been suggested by Mr. W. Crooke (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxviii. (1899), p. 243). There are other facts, however, which point to a different explanation, namely, that the practice is intended to avert possible evil consequences from bride or bridegroom. See J. G. Frazer, *Totemism*, p. 35; *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. § 252, iii. §§ 12, 90, 562, iv. § 396; *North*

Indian Notes and Queries, i. § 110; Ibbetson, *Settlement Report of the Karnal District*, p. 155; W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, ii. 263; *id.*, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, pp. 258-261. I was formerly disposed to connect the custom with totemism, but of this there seems to be no sufficient evidence.

³ Mannhardt, *R.A.* p. 51 sq.

⁴ Merolla, "Voyage to Congo," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 236 sq.

⁵ Bötticher, *Der Baumkultus der Hellenen*, p. 30 sq.

to go out to the woods, cut down a tree and bring it into the village, where it is set up amid general rejoicings. Or the people cut branches in the woods, and fasten them on every house. The intention of these customs is to bring home to the village, and to each house, the blessings which the tree-spirit has in its power to bestow. Hence the custom in some places of planting a May-tree before every house, or of carrying the village May-tree from door to door, that every household may receive its share of the blessing. Out of the mass of evidence on this subject a few examples may be selected.

Sir Henry Piers, in his *Description of Westmeath*, writing in 1682 says: "On May-eve, every family sets up before their door a green bush, strewn over with yellow flowers, which the meadows yield plentifully. In countries where timber is plentiful, they erect tall slender trees, which stand high, and they continue almost the whole year; so as a stranger would go nigh to imagine that they were all signs of ale-sellers, and that all houses were ale-houses."¹ In Northamptonshire a young tree ten or twelve feet high used to be planted before each house on May Day so as to appear growing.² "An antient custom, still retained by the Cornish, is that of decking their doors and porches on the 1st of May with green boughs of sycamore and hawthorn, and of planting trees, or rather stumps of trees, before their houses."³ In the north of England it was formerly the custom for young people to rise very early on the morning of the first of May, and go out with music into the woods, where they broke branches and adorned them with nosegays and crowns of flowers. This done, they returned about sunrise and fastened the flower-decked branches over the doors and windows of their houses.⁴ At Abingdon in Berkshire young people formerly went about in groups on May morning, singing a carol of which the following are two of the verses—

"We've been rambling all the night;
And sometime of this day;
And now returning back again,
We bring a garland gay.

¹ Quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 246 (ed. Bohn).

² Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 254.

³ Borlase, cited by Brand, *op. cit.* i. 222.

⁴ Brand, *op. cit.* i. 212 sq.

"A garland gay we bring you here ;
And at your door we stand ;
It is a sprout well budded out,
The work of our Lord's hand."¹

At the villages of Saffron Walden and Debden in Essex on the first of May little girls go about in parties from door to door singing a song almost identical with the above and carrying garlands; a doll dressed in white is usually placed in the middle of each garland.² Similar customs have been and indeed are still observed in various parts of England. The garlands are generally in the form of hoops intersecting each other at right angles. Thus on May morning the girls of the neighbouring villages used to flock into Northampton bringing their garlands, which they exhibited from house to house. The skeleton of the garland was formed of two hoops of osier or hazel crossing each other at right angles, and so twined with flowers and ribbons that no part of them could be seen. In the centre of the garlands were placed gaily dressed dolls, one, two, or three in number according to the size of the garland. The whole was fixed to a staff about five feet long, by which it was carried. In showing their garlands the children chanted some simple ditties and received in return pennies, which furnished forth a feast on their return to their homes. A merry dance round the garland concluded the festivity.³ At Uttoxeter groups of children carry garlands of flowers about the town on May Day. "The garlands consist of two hoops, one passing through the other, which give the appearance of four half-circles, and they are decorated with flowers and evergreens, and surmounted with a bunch of flowers as a sort of crown, and in the centre of the hoops is a pendant orange and flowers." One or more of the children carry a little pole or stick upright with a bunch of flowers fastened to the top.

¹ Dyer, *Popular British Customs*, p. 233.

² Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 578; Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 237 sq.

³ Hone, *Every Day Book*, ii. 615 sq.; Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 251 sq. At Polebrook in Northamptonshire the verses sung by the

children on their rounds include two which are almost identical with those sung at Abingdon in Berkshire. See Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 255 sq. The same verses were formerly sung on May Day at Hitchin in Hertfordshire (Hone, *Every Day Book*, i. 567 sq.; Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 240 sq.).

They are themselves decorated with flowers and ribbons, and receive pence from the houses which they visit.¹ At Watford in Hertfordshire, groups of children, almost entirely girls, go about the streets from door to door on May Day singing some verses, of which two agree almost verbally with those which, as we have seen, are sung at Abingdon in Berkshire. They are dressed in white, and adorned with gay ribbons and sashes of many hues. "Two of the girls carry between them on a stick what they call 'the garland,' which, in its simplest form, is made of two circular hoops, intersecting each other at right angles; a more elaborate form has, in addition, smaller semicircles inserted in the four angles formed by the meeting of the hoops at the top of 'the garland.' These hoops are covered with any wild-flowers in season, and are further ornamented with ribbons. The 'garland' in shape reminds me of the 'Christmas' which used to form the centre of the Christmas decorations in Yorkshire some few years ago, except that the latter had a bunch of mistletoe inside the hoops."² A similar custom was observed at Bampton-in-the-Bush in Oxfordshire down to about fifty years ago. The garland consisted of two crossed hoops covered with moss, flowers, and ribbons. Two girls, known as the Lady and her Maid, bore the garland between them on a stick; and a boy called the Lord, who carried a stick dressed with ribbons and flowers, collected contributions from the spectators. From time to time the Lady sang a few lines and was then kissed by the Lord.³ At Sevenoaks in Kent the children carry boughs and garlands from door to door on May Day. The boughs consist of sticks carried upright with bunches of leaves and wild-flowers fastened to the top. The garlands are formed of two hoops interlaced cross-wise and covered with blue and yellow flowers from the woods and hedges. Sometimes the garlands are fastened to the end of a stick carried perpendicularly, sometimes they hang from the middle of a stick borne horizontally by two children.⁴ In the streets of Cambridge little girls regularly

¹ Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 263.

² Percy Manning, in *Folklore*, iv. (1893), p. 403 sq.

³ *Id.*, in *Folklore*, viii. (1897), p. 308. Customs of the same sort are

reported also from Combe, Headington, and Islip, all in Oxfordshire (Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 261 sq.). See below, p. 220 sq.

⁴ Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 243.

make their appearance every May Day with female dolls enclosed in hoops, which are covered with ribbons and flowers. These they show to passers-by, inviting them to remember the May Lady by paying a small sum to her bearers.¹ At Salisbury girls go through the streets on May Day in pairs, carrying between them on a stick a circular garland or hoop adorned with flowers and bows; they visit the shops asking for money. A similar custom is observed at Wilton a few miles from Salisbury.² It appears that a hoop wreathed with rowan and marsh marigold, and bearing suspended within it two balls, is still carried on May Day by villagers in some parts of Ireland. The balls, which are sometimes covered with gold and silver paper, are said to have originally represented the sun and moon.³ In some villages of the Vosges Mountains on the first Sunday of May young girls go in bands from house to house, singing a song in praise of May, in which mention is made of the "bread and meal that come in May." If money is given them, they fasten a green bough to the door; if it is refused, they wish the family many children and no bread to feed them.⁴ In the French department of Mayenne, boys who bore the name of *Maillotins* used to go about from farm to farm on the first of May singing carols, for which they received money or a drink; they planted a small tree or a branch of a tree.⁵ Among the Germans of Moravia on the third Sunday before Easter, which goes by the name of *Laetare* Sunday, it is customary in some places for young girls to carry a small fir-tree about from door to door, while they sing songs, for which they receive

¹ W. H. D. Rouse, in *Folklore*, iv. (1893), p. 53. I have witnessed the ceremony almost annually for many years. It was performed this year (1900) as usual. Many of the hoops have no doll, and ribbons or rags of coloured cloth are more conspicuous than flowers in their decoration.

² J. P. Emslie in *Folk-lore*, xi. (1900), p. 210.

³ Lady Wilde, *Ancient Cures, Charms, and Usages of Ireland* (London, 1890), p. 101 sq. At the ancient Greek festival of the Daphnephoria or

"Laurel-bearing" a staff of olive-wood, decked with laurels, purple ribbons, and many-coloured flowers, was carried in procession, and attached to it were two large globes representing the sun and moon, together with a number of smaller globes which stood for the stars. See Proclus, quoted by Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 321, ed. Bekker.

⁴ E. Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 167 sqq.

⁵ *Revue des traditions populaires*, ii. (1887), p. 200.

presents. The tree is tricked out with many-coloured ribbons, and sometimes with flowers and dyed eggshells, and its branches are twined together so as to form what is called a crown.¹ In Corfu the children go about singing May songs on the first of May. The boys carry small cypresses adorned with ribbons, flowers, and the fruits of the season. They receive a glass of wine at each house. The girls carry nosegays. One of them is dressed up like an angel, with gilt wings, and scatters flowers.²

On the Thursday before Whitsunday the Russian villagers "go out into the woods, sing songs, weave garlands, and cut down a young birch-tree, which they dress up in woman's clothes, or adorn with many-coloured shreds and ribbons. After that comes a feast, at the end of which they take the dressed-up birch-tree, carry it home to their village with joyful dance and song, and set it up in one of the houses, where it remains as an honoured guest till Whitsunday. On the two intervening days they pay visits to the house where their 'guest' is; but on the third day, Whitsunday, they take her to a stream and fling her into its waters," throwing their garlands after her. "All over Russia every village and every town is turned, a little before Whitsunday, into a sort of garden. Everywhere along the streets the young birch-trees stand in rows, every house and every room is adorned with boughs, even the engines upon the railway are for the time decked with green leaves."³ In this Russian custom the dressing of the birch in woman's clothes shows how clearly the tree is conceived as personal; and the throwing it into a stream is most probably a rain-charm. In some villages of Altmark it was formerly the custom for serving-men, grooms, and cowherds to go from farm to farm at Whitsuntide distributing crowns made of birch branches and flowers to the farmers; these crowns were hung up in the houses and left till the following year.⁴

In the neighbourhood of Zabern in Alsace bands of

¹ W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren* (Wien und Olmütz, 1893), pp. 319 sq., 355-359.

² *Folklore*, i. (1890), p. 518 sqq.

³ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 234 sq.

⁴ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 315.

the burden of their songs is a prayer for fine weather, a harvest, and worldly and spiritual blessings. One carries a basket in which he collects gifts of eggs and

If they are well received they stick a leafy twig in over the cottage door.²

In Sweden midsummer is the season when these games are chiefly observed. On the Eve of St. John (twenty-third of June) the houses are thoroughly washed and garnished with green boughs and flowers. Fir-trees are raised at the doorway and elsewhere in the homestead; and very often small umbrageous arbours are constructed in the garden. In Stockholm every day a leaf-market is held at which thousands of poles (*Maj Stänger*), from six inches to twelve feet long, decorated with leaves, flowers, slips of coloured paper, gilt egg-shells strung on reeds, and so on, are exposed for sale. Bonfires are lit on the hills, and the people dance round them and jump over them. But the chief event of the day is setting up the May-pole. This consists of a tall and spruce-pine tree, stripped of its branches. To it are attached hoops and at others pieces of wood, placed cross-wise and attached to it at intervals; whilst at others it is decorated with bows, representing, so to say, a man with his arms outstretched. From top to bottom not only the 'May-pole' itself but the hoops, bows, etc., are ornamented

ceremony; the people flock to it from all quarters, and dance round it in a great ring.¹ In some parts of Bohemia also a May-pole or midsummer-tree is erected on St. John's Eve. The lads fetch a tall fir or pine from the wood and set it up on a height, where the girls deck it with nosegays, garlands, and red ribbons. It is afterwards burned.²

It would be needless to illustrate at length the custom, which has prevailed in various parts of Europe, such as England, France, and Germany, of setting up a village May-tree or May-pole on May Day.³ A few examples will suffice. The puritanical writer Stubbs in his *Anatomic of Abuses* has described with manifest disgust how they used to bring in the May-pole in the days of good Queen Bess. His description affords us a vivid glimpse of merry England in the olden time. "They have twentie or fourtie yoke of oxen, every oxe havyng a sweete nosegaie of flowers tyed on the tippe of his hornes, and these oxen draw home this Maie poole (this stinckyng idoll rather), which is covered all over with flowers and hearbes, bounde rounde aboute with stringes, from the top to the bottome, and sometyme painted with variable colours, with twoo or three hundred men, women and children followyng it with great devotion. And thus beyng reared up, with handkerchiefes and flagges streamyng on the toppe, they strawe the grounde aboute, binde greene boughes about it, sett up sommer haules, bowers, and arbours, hard by it. And then fall they to banquet and feast, to leap and daunce aboute it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idolles, whereof this is a perfect patterne, or rather the thyng itself."⁴ Of the Cornish people their historian Borlase says: "From townes they make incursions, on May Eve, into the country, cut down a tall elm, bring it into the town with rejoicings, and having fitted a straight taper pole to the end of it, and painted it, erect it in the most public part, and upon holidays

¹ L. Lloyd, *op. cit.* p. 257 *sqq.*

² Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 308 *sq.* A fuller description of the ceremony will be given later (ch. iv. § 2).

³ For the evidence see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 234 *sqq.*; Hone,

Every Day Book, i. 547 *sqq.*, ii. 574 *sqq.*; Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 574 *sqq.*; Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 228 *sqq.*; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 168 *sqq.*

⁴ Quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 235.

and festivals dress it with garlands of flowers, or ensigns and streamers."¹ In Northumberland, down apparently to near the end of the eighteenth century, young people of both sexes used to go out early on May morning to gather the flowering thorn and the dew off the grass, which they brought home with music and acclamations; then, having dressed a pole on the green with garlands, they danced about it. A syllabub made of warm milk from the cow, sweet cakes, and wine was prepared for the feast; and a kind of divination, to discover who should be wedded first, was practised by dropping a marriage-ring into the syllabub and fishing for it with a ladle.² In Swabia on the first of May a tall fir-tree used to be fetched into the village, where it was decked with ribbons and set up; then the people danced round it merrily to music. The tree stood on the village green the whole year through, until a fresh tree was brought in next May Day.³ At Bordeaux on the first of May the boys of each street used to erect in it a May-pole, which they adorned with garlands and a great crown; and every evening during the whole of the month the young people of both sexes danced singing about the pole.⁴ Down to the present day May-trees decked with flowers and ribbons are set up on May Day in every village and hamlet of gay Provence. Under them the young folk make merry and the old folk rest.⁵

In all these cases, apparently, the custom is of was to bring in a new May-tree each year. However, in England the village May-pole seems as a rule, at least in later times, to have been permanent, not renewed annually.⁶ Villages of Upper Bavaria renew their May-pole once every three, four, or five years. It is a fir-tree fetched from the forest, and amid all the wreaths, flags, and inscriptions with which it is bedecked, an essential part is the bunch of dark green foliage

¹ Quoted by Brand, *op. cit.* i. 237, note.

² Hutchinson, *Hist. of Northumberland* (1778), vol. ii., Appendix, p. 14, quoted by Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 257.

³ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 396.

⁴ De Nore, *Contumes, mythes et*

traditions des provinces de France, p. 137.

⁵ Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et survivances* (Paris, 1896), v. 308 sq. Compare *id.*, *Reminiscences populaires de la Provence*, pp. 21 sq., 26, 27.

⁶ Hone, *Every Day Book*, i. 547 sqq.; Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 571.

left at the top "as a memento that in it we have to do, not with a dead pole, but with a living tree from the greenwood."¹ We can hardly doubt that originally the practice everywhere was to set up a new May-tree every year. As the object of the custom was to bring in the fructifying spirit of vegetation, newly awakened in spring, the end would have been defeated if, instead of a living tree, green and sappy, an old withered one had been erected year after year or allowed to stand permanently. When, however, the meaning of the custom had been forgotten, and the May-tree was regarded simply as a centre for holiday merry-making, people saw no reason for felling a fresh tree every year, and preferred to let the same tree stand permanently, only decking it with fresh flowers on May Day. But even when the May-pole had thus become a fixture, the need of giving it the appearance of being a green tree, not a dead pole, was sometimes felt. Thus at Weverham in Cheshire "are two May-poles, which are decorated on this day (May Day) with all due attention to the ancient solemnity; the sides are hung with garlands, and the top terminated by a birch or other tall slender tree with its leaves on; the bark being peeled, and the stem spliced to the pole, so as to give the appearance of one tree from the summit."² Thus the renewal of the May-tree is like the renewal of the Harvest-May; each is intended to secure a fresh portion of the fertilising spirit of vegetation, and to preserve it throughout the year. But whereas the efficacy of the Harvest-May is restricted to promoting the growth of the crops, that of the May-tree or May-branch extends also, as we have seen, to women and cattle. Lastly, it is worth noting that the old May-tree is sometimes burned at the end of the year. Thus in the district of Prague young people break pieces off the public May-tree and place them behind the holy pictures in their rooms, where they remain till next May Day, and are then burned on the hearth.³ In Würtemberg the bushes which are set up on the houses on Palm Sunday are sometimes left there for a

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 372.

² Hone, *Every Day Book*, ii. 597 sq.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 217; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 566.

as described presently, but before examining them we notice an Esthonian folk-tale which illustrates the same of thought very clearly. Once upon a time, so runs the tale, a young peasant was busy raking the hay in a field, when on the rim of the horizon a heavy thunder-loomed black and angry, warning him to make haste with his work before the storm should break. He did in time, and was wending his way homeward, when under a tree he espied a stranger fast asleep. "He will be skinned to the skin," thought the good-natured young man to himself, "if I allow him to sleep on." So he crept up to the sleeper and shaking him forcibly roused him from his slumber. The stranger started up, and at sight of the thunder-cloud, which now darkened the sky, he started, fumbled in his pockets, and finding nothing in them wherewith to reward the friendly swain, he said, "This I am your debtor. But the time will come when I shall be able to repay your kindness. Remember what I have said to you. You will enlist. You will be parted from your home for years, and one day a feeling of homesickness will overtake you in a foreign land. Then look up, and you shall see a crooked birch-tree a few steps from you. Go to it, and knock thrice on the trunk, and ask, 'Is the Crooked One here?' The rest will follow." With these words the stranger hastened away and was out of sight in a moment.

served in a cavalry regiment for years. One day, when he was quartered with his regiment in the north of Finland, it fell to his turn to tend the horses while his comrades were roistering in the tavern. Suddenly a great yearning for home, such as he had never known before, came over the lonely trooper; tears started to his eyes, and dear visions of his native land crowded on his soul. Then he bethought him of the sleeping stranger in the wood, and the whole scene came back to him as fresh as if it had happened yesterday. He looked up, and there, strange to tell, he was aware of a crooked birch-tree right in front of him. More in jest than in earnest he went up to it and did as the stranger had bidden him. Hardly had the words, "Is the Crooked One at home?" passed his lips when the stranger himself stood before him and said, "I am glad you have come. I feared you had forgotten me. You wish to be at home, do you not?" The trooper said yes, he did. Then the Crooked One cried into the tree, "Young folks, which of you is the fleetest?" A voice from the birch replied, "Father, I can run as fast as a moor-hen flies." "Well, I need a fleeter messenger to-day." A second voice answered, "I can run like the wind." "I need a swifter envoy," said the father. Then a third voice cried, "I can run like the thought of man." "You are after my own heart. Fill a bag full of gold and take it with my friend and benefactor to his home." Then he caught the soldier by the hat, crying, "The hat to the man, and the man to the house!" The same moment the soldier felt his hat fly from his head. When he looked about for it, lo! he was at home in the old familiar parlour wearing his old peasant clothes, and the great sack of money stood beside him. Yet on parade and at the roll-call he was never missed. When the man who told this story was asked, "Who could the stranger be?" he answered, "Who but a tree-elf?"¹

There is an instructive class of cases in which the tree-spirit is represented simultaneously in vegetable form and in

¹ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, pp. 112-114. Some traits in this story seem to suggest that

the return of the trooper to his old home was, like that of the war-broken veteran in Campbell's poem, only a soldier's dream.

human form, which are set side by side as if for the express purpose of explaining each other. In these cases the human representative of the tree-spirit is sometimes a doll or puppet, sometimes a living person; but whether a puppet or a person, it is placed beside a tree or bough; so that together the person or puppet, and the tree or bough, form a sort of bilingual inscription, the one being, so to speak, a translation of the other. Here, therefore, there is no room left for doubt that the spirit of the tree is actually represented in human form. Thus in Bohemia, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, young people throw a puppet called Death into the water; then the girls go into the wood, cut down a young tree, and fasten to it a puppet dressed in white clothes to look like a woman; with this tree and puppet they go from house to house collecting gratuities and singing songs with the refrain—

“ We carry Death out of the village,
We bring Summer into the village.”¹

Here, as we shall see later on, the “Summer” is the spirit of vegetation returning or reviving in spring. In some parts of our own country children go about asking for pence with some small imitations of May-poles, and with a finely-dressed doll which they call the Lady of the May.² In these cases the tree and the puppet are obviously regarded as equivalent.

At Thann, in Alsace, a girl called the Little May Rose, dressed in white, carries a small May-tree, which is gay with garlands and ribbons. Her companions collect gifts from door to door, singing a song—

“ Little May Rose turn round three times,
Let us look at you round and round !
Rose of the May, come to the greenwood away,
We will be merry all.
So we go from the May to the roses.”

In the course of the song a wish is expressed that those who give nothing may lose their fowls by the marten, that

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 86 sqq.; Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 156.

² Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 573. Compare the Cambridge custom, described above, p. 199 sq.

their vine may bear no clusters, their tree no nuts, their field no corn ; the produce of the year is supposed to depend on the gifts offered to these May singers.¹ Here and in the cases mentioned above, where children go about with green boughs or garlands on May Day singing and collecting money, the meaning is that with the spirit of vegetation they bring plenty and good luck to the house, and they expect to be paid for the service. In Russian Lithuania, on the first of May, they used to set up a green tree before the village. Then the rustic swains chose the prettiest girl, crowned her, swathed her in birch branches and set her beside the May-tree, where they danced, sang, and shouted "O May! O May!"² In Brie (Isle de France) a May-tree is set up in the midst of the village ; its top is crowned with flowers ; lower down it is twined with leaves and twigs, still lower with huge green branches. The girls dance round it, and at the same time a lad wrapt in leaves and called Father May is led about.³ In the small towns of the Franken Wald mountains in Northern Bavaria, on the second of May, a *Walber* tree is erected before a tavern, and a man dances round it, enveloped in straw from head to foot in such a way that the ears of corn unite above his head to form a crown. He is called the *Walber*, and used to be led in procession through the streets, which were adorned with sprigs of birch.⁴ In Carinthia, on St. George's Day (the twenty-third of April), the young people deck with flowers and garlands a tree which has been felled on the eve of the festival. The tree is then carried in procession, accompanied with music and joyful acclamations, the chief figure in the procession being the Green George, a young fellow clad from head to foot in green birch branches. At the close of the ceremonies the Green George, that is an effigy of him, is thrown into the water. It is the aim of the lad who acts Green George to step out of his leafy envelope and substitute the effigy so adroitly that no one shall perceive the change. In many

¹ Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 312.

² Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 313.

³ *Ibid.* p. 314.

⁴ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 357; Mann-

hardt, *B.A.* p. 312 *sq.* The word *Walber* probably comes from Walburgis, which is doubtless only another form of the better known Walpurgis. The second of May is called Walburgis Day, at least in this part of Bavaria.

we see that the same powers of making rain and
ing the cattle, which are ascribed to the tree-spirit
ded as incorporate in the tree, are also attributed to the
pirit represented by a living man.

among the gypsies of Transylvania and Roumania the
al of Green George is the chief celebration of spring.

of them keep it on Easter Monday, others on St.
e's Day. On the eve of the festival a young willow
cut down, adorned with garlands and leaves, and set
the ground. Women with child place one of their
ents under the tree, and leave it there over night; if
morning they find a leaf of the tree lying on the
ent, they know that their delivery will be easy. Sick
old people go to the tree in the evening, spit on it
and say, "You will soon die, but let us live." Next
ng the gypsies gather about the willow. The chief
of the festival is Green George, a lad who is concealed
op to toe in green leaves and blossoms. He throws a few
als of grass to the beasts of the tribe, in order that they
ave no lack of fodder throughout the year. Then he
es three iron nails, which have lain for three days and
in water, and knocks them into the willow; after
he pulls them out and throws them into a running
to propitiate the water-spirits. Finally, a pretence is

municating vital energy to the sick and old are clearly ascribed to the willow ; while Green George, the human double of the tree, bestows food on the cattle, and further ensures the favour of the water-spirits by putting them in indirect communication with the tree.

An example of the double representation of the spirit of vegetation by a tree and a living man is reported from Bengal. The Oraons have a festival in spring while the *sál*-trees are in blossom, because they think that at this time the marriage of earth is celebrated and the *sál* flowers are necessary for the ceremony. On an appointed day the villagers go with their priest to the Sarna, the sacred grove, a remnant of the old *sál* forest in which a goddess Sarna Burhi, or woman of the grove, is supposed to dwell. She is thought to have great influence on the rain ; and the priest arriving with his party at the grove sacrifices to her five fowls, of which a morsel is given to each person present. Then they gather the *sál* flowers and return laden with them to the village. Next day the priest visits every house, carrying the flowers in a wide open basket. The women of each house bring out water to wash his feet as he approaches, and kneeling make him an obeisance. Then he dances with them and places some of the *sál* flowers over the door of the house and in the women's hair. No sooner is this done than the women empty their water-jugs over him, drenching him to the skin. A feast follows, and the young people, with *sál* flowers in their hair, dance all night on the village green.¹ Here, the equivalence of the flower-bearing priest to the goddess of the flowering tree comes out plainly. For she is supposed to influence the rain, and the drenching of the priest with water is, doubtless, like the ducking of the Green George in Carinthia and elsewhere, a rain-charm. Thus the priest, as if he were the tree goddess herself, goes from door to door dispensing rain and bestowing fruitfulness on each house, but especially on the women.

Without citing more examples to the same effect, we may sum up the results of the preceding pages in the words of Mannhardt. "The customs quoted suffice to establish with certainty the conclusion that in these spring

¹ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 261.

The procession with this representative of the
 was supposed to produce the same beneficial effects
 fowls, the fruit-trees, and the crops as the presence of
 ty himself. In other words, the mummer was re-
 not as an image but as an actual representative of
 rit of vegetation ; hence the wish expressed by the
 nts on the May-rose and the May-tree that those who
 rem gifts of eggs, bacon, and so forth, may have no share
 lessings which it is in the power of the itinerant spirit
 ow. We may conclude that these begging processions
 ay-trees or May-boughs from door to door ('bringing
 y or the summer') had everywhere originally a
 and, so to speak, sacramental significance ; people
 believed that the god of growth was present unseen in
 gh ; by the procession he was brought to each house
 ow his blessing. The names May, Father May, May
 Queen of the May, by which the anthropomorphic
 of vegetation is often denoted, show that the idea
 spirit of vegetation is blent with a personification
 season at which his powers are most strikingly
 ted." ¹

As far we have seen that the tree-spirit or the spirit
 tation in general is represented either in vegetable
 lone, as by a tree, bough, or flower ; or in vegetable
 man form simultaneously, as by a tree, bough, or

marked by dressing him or her in leaves or flowers; sometimes too it is indicated by the name he or she bears.

We saw that in Russia at Whitsuntide a birch-tree is dressed in woman's clothes and set up in the house. Clearly equivalent to this is the custom observed on Whit-Monday by Russian girls in the district of Pinsk. They choose the prettiest of their number, envelop her in a mass of foliage taken from the birch-trees and maples, and carry her about through the village. In a district of Little Russia they take round a "poplar," represented by a girl wearing bright flowers in her hair.¹ At Whitsuntide in Holland poor women used to go about begging with a little girl called Whitsuntide Flower (*Pinxterbloem*, perhaps a kind of iris): she was decked with flowers and sat in a waggon. In North Brabant she wears the flowers from which she takes her name and a song is sung—

"Whitsuntide Flower,
Turn yourself once round."²

All over Provence on the first of May pretty little girls are dressed in white, decked with crowns and wreaths of roses, and set on seats or platforms strewn with flowers in the streets, while their companions go about begging coppers for the Mayos or Mayes, as they are called, from the passers-by.³ In some parts of the Ardennes on May Day a small girl, clad in white and wearing a chaplet of flowers on her head, used to go from house to house with her play-mates, collecting contributions and singing that it was May, the month of May, the pretty month of May, that the wheat was tall, the hawthorn in bloom, and the lark carolling in the sky.⁴

In Ruhla (Thüringen) as soon as the trees begin to grow green in spring, the children assemble on a Sunday and go

¹ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 234.

² Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 318; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 657.

³ A. de Nore, *Contumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, p. 17 sq.; Béranger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, p. 1 sq.

⁴ A. Meyrac, *Traditions, coutumes, légendes et contes des Ardennes* (Charleville, 1890), pp. 79-82. The girl was called the Trimouzette. A custom of the same general character was practised down to recent times in the Jura (Béranger-Féraud, *Réminiscences populaires de la Provence*, p. 18).

they have collected.¹ At Röllshausen on the in Hesse, when afternoon service is over on White schoolboys and schoolgirls go out into the there clothe a boy from head to foot in leaves so dy would know him. He is called the Little de Man. A procession is then formed. Two their leaf-clad playfellow ; two others precede him sket ; and two girls with another basket bring up Thus they go from house to house singing popular songs and collecting eggs and cakes in ts. When they have feasted on these, they strip trade of his verdant envelope on an open place in ie village.² In some parts of Rhenish Bavaria at de a boy or lad is swathed in the yellow blossom oom, the dark green twigs of the firs, and other Thus attired he is known as the Quack and goes r to door, whirling about in the dance, while an te song is chanted and his companions levy con-
3

England the best-known example of these leaf-clad ; is the Jack-in-the-Green, a chimney-sweeper who cased in a pyramidal framework of wickerwork, covered with holly and ivy, and surmounted by a

collect pence.¹ The ceremony was witnessed at Cheltenham on the second of May 1892, by Mr. W. H. D. Rouse, who has described in detail the costume of the performers. They were all chimney-sweeps of the town. Jack-in-the-Green or the Bush-carrier was enclosed in a wooden framework on which leaves were fastened so as to make a thick cone about six feet high, topped with a crown which consisted of two wooden hoops placed crosswise and covered with flowers. The leafy envelope was unbroken except for a single opening through which peered the face of the mummer. From time to time in their progress through the streets the performers halted, and three of them, dressed in red, blue, and yellow respectively, tripped lightly round the leaf-covered man to the inspiring strains of a fiddle and a tin whistle, on which two of their comrades with blackened faces discoursed sweet music. The leader of the procession was a clown fantastically clad in a long white pinafore or blouse with coloured fringes and frills, and wearing on his head a beaver hat of the familiar pattern, the crown of which hung loose and was adorned with ribbons and a bird or a bundle of feathers. Large black rings surrounded his eyes, and a red dab over mouth and chin lent a pleasing variety to his countenance. He contributed to the public hilarity by flapping the yellow fringe of his blouse with quaint gestures and occasionally fanning himself languidly. His efforts were seconded by another performer, who wore a red fool's cap, all stuck with flowers, and a white pinafore enriched with black human figures in front and a black gridiron-like pattern, crossed diagonally by a red bar, at the back. Two boys in white pinafores, with similar figures, or stars, on the breast, and a fish on the back, completed the company. Formerly there used to be a man in woman's clothes, who personated the clown's wife.² In some parts also of France a young fellow is encased in a wicker framework covered with leaves and is led about.³ In Frickthal (Aargau) a similar frame of basketwork is called the Whitsuntide Basket.

¹ Mannhardt, *R.A.* p. 322; Hone, *Every Day Book*, i. 583 *sqq.*; Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 230 *sq.*

² W. H. D. Rouse, "May-day in Cheltenham," *Folklore*, iv. (1893),

pp. 50-53. On May Day 1891 I saw a Jack-in-the-Green in the streets of Cambridge.

³ Mannhardt, *R.A.* p. 323.

upporters is to set up the Whitsuntide Basket beside
age well, and to keep it and him there, despite the
of the lads from neighbouring villages, who seek to
f the Whitsuntide Basket and set it up at their own
In the neighbourhood of Ertingen (Württemberg) a
of the same sort, known as the Lazy Man (*Latzmann*),
out the village on Midsummer Day ; he is hidden
a great pyramidal or conical frame of wicker-work,
twelve feet high, which is completely covered with
of fir. He has a bell which he rings as he goes, and
tended by a suite of persons dressed up in character
tman, a colonel, a butcher, an angel, the devil, the
etc. They march in Indian file and halt before
ouse, where each of them speaks in character, except
y Man, who says nothing. With what they get by
from door to door they hold a feast.²

he class of cases of which the above are specimens
vious that the leaf-clad person who is led about is
nt to the May-tree, May-bough, or May-doll, which is
from house to house by children begging. Both are
tatives of the beneficent spirit of vegetation, whose visit
ouse is recompensed by a present of money or food.
n the leaf-clad person who represents the spirit of
on is known as the king or the queen ; thus, for
; he or she is called the May King, Whitsuntide

In a village near Salzwedel a May-tree is set up at Whitsuntide and the boys race to it; he who reaches it first is king; a garland of flowers is put round his neck and in his hand he carries a May-bush, with which, as the procession moves along, he sweeps away the dew. At each house they sing a song, wishing the inmates good luck, referring to the "black cow in the stall milking white milk, black hen on the nest laying white eggs," and begging a gift of eggs, bacon, and so on.¹ In some villages of Brunswick at Whitsuntide a May King is completely enveloped in a May-bush. In some parts of Thüringen also they have a May King at Whitsuntide, but he is dressed up rather differently. A frame of wood is made in which a man can stand; it is completely covered with birch boughs and is surmounted by a crown of birch and flowers, in which a bell is fastened. This frame is placed in the wood and the May King gets into it. The rest go out and look for him, and when they have found him they lead him back into the village to the magistrate, the clergyman, and others, who have to guess who is in the verdurous frame. If they guess wrong, the May King rings his bell by shaking his head, and a forfeit of beer or the like must be paid by the unsuccessful guesser.² At Hildesheim, in Hanover, five or six young fellows go about on the afternoon of Whit-Monday cracking long whips in measured time and collecting eggs from the houses. The chief person of the band is the Leaf King, a lad swathed so completely in birchen twigs that nothing of him can be seen but his feet. A huge head-dress of birchen twigs adds to his apparent stature. In his hand he carries a long crook, with which he tries to catch stray dogs and children.³ In some parts of Bohemia on Whit-Monday the young fellows dis-

¹ Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 380.

² Kuhn und Schwartz, *op. cit.* p. 384; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 342. At Wahrstedt in Brunswick the boys at Whitsuntide choose by lot a king and a high-steward (*Jüste-meier*). The latter is completely concealed in a May-bush, wears a wooden crown wreathed with flowers, and carries a wooden sword. The king, on the other hand, is only distinguished by a

nosegay in his cap, and a reed, with a red ribbon tied to it, in his hand. They beg for eggs from house to house, threatening that, where none are given, none will be laid by the hens throughout the year. See R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 249 sq.

³ K. Seifart, *Sagen, Märchen, Schwänke und Gebräuche aus Stadt und Stift Hildesheim*, Zweite Auflage (Hildesheim, 1889), p. 180 sq.

ies given them.' At Grossvargula, near Langensalza, eighteenth century a Grass King used to be led about procession at Whitsuntide. He was encased in a pyramid of branches, the top of which was adorned with a crown of branches and flowers. He rode on horseback under a leafy pyramid over him, so that its lower end touched the ground, and an opening was left in it only for him. Surrounded by a cavalcade of young fellows, he went in procession to the town hall, the parsonage, and so on, where they all got a drink of beer. Then under the seven oaks of the neighbouring Sommerberg, the Grass King stepped out of his green casing; the crown was handed to him, and the branches were stuck in the flax fields in order to make the flax grow tall.² In this last trait the influence ascribed to the representative of the tree-gods comes out clearly. In the neighbourhood of Pilsen there is a conical hut of green branches, without any door, erected at Whitsuntide in the midst of the village. To it rides a troop of village lads with a king at their head. He wears a sword at his side and a sugar-loaf hat on his head. In his train are a judge, a crier, and a man called the Frog-flayer or Hangman. This last is a ragged merryandrew, wearing a rusty old sword and carrying a sorry hack. On reaching the hut the crier shouts and goes round it looking for a door. Finding

where there is a chair, on which he seats himself and proceeds to criticise in rhyme the girls, farmers, and farm-servants of the neighbourhood. When this is over, the Frog-flayer steps forward and, after exhibiting a cage with frogs in it, sets up a gallows on which he hangs the frogs in a row.¹ In the neighbourhood of Plas the ceremony differs in some points. The king and his soldiers are completely clad in bark, adorned with flowers and ribbons; they all carry swords and ride horses, which are gay with green branches and flowers. While the village dames and girls are being criticised at the arbour, a frog is secretly pinched and poked by the crier till it quacks. Sentence of death is passed on the frog by the king; the hangman beheads it and flings the bleeding body among the spectators. Lastly, the king is driven from the hut and pursued by the soldiers.² The pinching and beheading of the frog are doubtless, as Mannhardt observes,³ a rain-charm. We have seen⁴ that some Indians of the Orinoco beat frogs for the express purpose of producing rain, and that killing a frog is a German rain-charm.

Often the spirit of vegetation in spring is represented by a queen instead of a king. In the neighbourhood of Libchowitz (Bohemia), on the fourth Sunday in Lent, girls dressed in white and wearing the first spring flowers, as violets and daisies, in their hair, lead about the village a girl who is called the Queen and is crowned with flowers. During the procession, which is conducted with great solemnity, none of the girls may stand still, but must keep whirling round continually and singing. In every house the Queen announces the arrival of spring and wishes the inmates good luck and blessings, for which she receives presents.⁵ In German Hungary the girls choose the prettiest girl to be their Whitsuntide Queen, fasten a towering wreath on her brow, and carry her singing through the streets. At every house they stop, sing old ballads, and receive presents.⁶ In the south-

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 253 sq.

³ *B.K.* p. 355.

⁴ Above, p. 103.

² Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 262; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 353 sq.

⁵ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 93; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 344.

⁶ Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 343 sq.

and familiar in England.

Again the spirit of vegetation is sometimes represented as a king and queen, a lord and lady, or a bridegroom and bride.

Here again the parallelism holds between the anthropomorphic and the vegetable representation of the spirit, for we have seen above that trees are sometimes identified with each other.³ In a Bohemian village near Prague on Whit-Monday the children play the king's and queen's court, at which a king and queen march about under a garland, the queen wearing a garland, and the youngest girl carrying two wreaths on a plate behind them. They are followed by boys and girls called groom's men and bridesmaids, and they go from house to house collecting gifts.⁴ In Grenoble, in France, a king and queen are chosen on the first of May and are set on a throne for all to see.⁵ At Abington, near Oxford, children used to carry garlands door to door on May Day. Each garland was borne by two girls, and they were followed by a lord and lady—and a girl linked together by a white handkerchief, of which each held an end, and dressed with ribbons, sashes, and flowers. At each door they sang a verse—

“Gentlemen and ladies,
We wish you happy May ;
We come to show you a garland,
Because it is May-day.”

On receiving money the lord put his arm about his lady's waist and kissed her.¹ In some Saxon villages at Whitsuntide a lad and a lass disguise themselves and hide in the bushes or high grass outside the village. Then the whole village goes out with music "to seek the bridal pair." When they find the couple they all gather round them, the music strikes up, and the bridal pair is led merrily to the village. In the evening they dance. In some places the bridal pair is called the prince and the princess.²

In a parish of Denmark it used to be the custom at Whitsuntide to dress up a little girl as the Whitsun-bride (*pinse-bruden*) and a little boy as her groom. She was decked in all the finery of a grown-up bride, and wore a crown of the freshest flowers of spring on her head. Her groom was as gay as flowers, ribbons, and knots could make him. The other children adorned themselves as best they could with the yellow flowers of the trollius and caltha. Then they went in great state from farmhouse to farmhouse, two little girls walking at the head of the procession as bridesmaids, and six or eight outriders galloping ahead on hobby-horses to announce their coming. Contributions of eggs, butter, loaves, cream, coffee, sugar, and tallow-candles were received and conveyed away in baskets. When they had made the round of the farms, some of the farmers' wives helped to arrange the wedding feast, and the children danced merrily in clogs on the stamped clay floor till the sun rose and the birds began to sing. All this is now a thing of the past. Only the old folks still remember the little Whitsun-bride and her mimic pomp.³

In the neighbourhood of Briançon (Dauphiné) on May Day the lads wrap up in green leaves a young fellow whose sweetheart has deserted him or married another. He lies down on the ground and feigns to be asleep. Then a girl

¹ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 233 *sq.*; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 424. We have seen (p. 199) that a custom of the same sort used to be observed at Bampton-in-the-Bush in Oxfordshire.

² E. Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen*, p. 151 *sq.*; Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 431 *sq.*

³ H. F. Feilberg, in *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 194 *sq.*

gay, and wears it at her breast next day, when he
her again to the alehouse.¹ Like this is a Russian
observed in the district of Nerechta on the Thursday
Whitsunday. The girls go out into a birch-wood,
girdle or band round a stately birch, twist its lower
es into a wreath, and kiss each other in pairs through
eath. The girls who kiss through the wreath call
ther gossips. Then one of the girls steps forward, and
cing a drunken man, flings herself on the ground, rolls
: grass, and feigns to fall fast asleep. Another girl
s the pretended sleeper and kisses him; then the whole
tips singing through the wood to twine garlands, which
hrow into the water. In the fate of the garlands
; on the stream they read their own.² Here the
f the sleeper was probably at one time played by

In these French and Russian customs we have a
n bridegroom, in the following a forsaken bride. On

Tuesday the Slovenes of Oberkrain drag a straw
with joyous cries up and down the village; then
row it into the water or burn it, and from the height
flames they judge of the abundance of the next
. The noisy crew is followed by a female masker,
ags a great board by a string and gives out that she
saken bride.³

aved in the light of what has gone before, the

bridegroom and to the girl who wakes him from his slumber. Is the sleeper the leafless forest or the bare earth of winter? Is the girl who wakens him the fresh verdure or the genial sunshine of spring? It is hardly possible, on the evidence before us, to answer these questions. The Oraons of Bengal, it may be remembered, celebrate the marriage of earth in the springtime, when the *sál*-tree is in blossom. But from this we can hardly argue that in the European ceremonies the sleeping bridegroom is "the dreaming earth" and the girl the spring blossoms.

In the Highlands of Scotland the revival of vegetation in spring used to be graphically represented as follows. On Candlemas Day (the second of February) in the Hebrides "the mistress and servants of each family take a sheaf of oats, and dress it up in women's apparel, put it in a large basket, and lay a wooden club by it, and this they call Brüd's bed; and then the mistress and servants cry three times, 'Brüd is come, Brüd is welcome.' This they do just before going to bed, and when they rise in the morning they look among the ashes, expecting to see the impression of Brüd's club there; which if they do they reckon it a true presage of a good crop and prosperous year, and the contrary they take as an ill omen."¹ The same custom is described by another witness thus: "Upon the night before Candlemas it is usual to make a bed with corn and hay, over which some blankets are laid, in a part of the house near the door. When it is ready, a person goes out and repeats three times, . . . 'Bridget, Bridget, come in; thy bed is ready.' One or more candles are left burning near it all night."²

¹ Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 613; Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 436. The Rev. James Macdonald, of Reay in Caithness, was assured by old people that the sheaf used in making Brüd's bed was the last sheaf cut at harvest (J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 141). Later on we shall see that the last sheaf is often regarded as embodying the spirit of the corn, and special care is therefore taken of it.

² John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, *Scot-*

land and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century, edited by Alex. Allardyce (Edinburgh, 1888), ii. 447. At Ballinasloe in Galwayshire it is customary to fasten a cross of twisted corn in the roof of the cottages on Candlemas Day. The cross is fastened by means of a knife stuck through a potato, and remains in its place for months, if not for a year. This custom (of which I was informed by Miss Nina Hill in a letter dated 5th May 1898) may be connected with the Highland one described in the text.

, and tells the inmates of each house that if they
 r something they will themselves have something the
 year through; but if they give her nothing they will
 lves have nothing.¹ In some parts of Westphalia
 is lead a flower-crowned girl called the Whitsuntide
 rom door to door, singing a song in which they ask
 s.² At Waggum in Brunswick, when service is over
 itsunday, the village girls assemble, dressed in white
 ht colours, decked with flowers, and wearing chaplets
 g flowers in their hair. One of them represents the
 ride, and carries a crown of flowers on a staff as a
 her dignity. As usual the children go about from
 to cottage singing and begging for eggs, sausages,
 or money. In other parts of Brunswick it is a boy
 all in birch leaves who personates the May Bride.³
 sse in the month of May a girl called *la Mariée* is
 out with ribbons and nosegays and is led about by a
 She is preceded by a lad carrying a green May-
 d appropriate verses are sung.⁴

§ 5. *Tree-worship in Antiquity*

h then are some of the ways in which the tree-spirit
 spirit of vegetation is represented in the customs of
 ropean peasantry. From the remarkable persistence

portant element in the religion of the Aryan race in Europe, and that the rites and ceremonies of the worship were marked by great uniformity everywhere, and did not substantially differ from those which are still or were till lately observed by our peasants at their spring and midsummer festivals. For these rites bear internal marks of great antiquity, and this internal evidence is confirmed by the resemblance which the rites bear to those of rude peoples elsewhere.¹ Therefore it is hardly rash to infer, from this consensus of popular customs, that the Greeks and Romans, like the other Aryan peoples of Europe, once practised forms of tree-worship similar to those which are still kept up by our peasantry. In the palmy days of ancient civilisation, no doubt, the worship had sunk to the level of vulgar superstition and rustic merrymaking, as it has done among ourselves. We need not therefore be surprised that the traces of such popular rites are few and slight in ancient literature. They are not less so in the polite literature of modern Europe; and the negative argument cannot be allowed to go for more in the one case than in the other. Enough, however, of positive evidence remains to confirm the presumption drawn from analogy. Much of this evidence has been collected and analysed with his usual learning and judgment by W. Mannhardt.² Here I shall content myself with citing certain Greek festivals which, though unnoticed, I believe, by Mannhardt, seem to be the classical equivalents of an English May Day in the olden time.

Every few years the Boeotians of Plataea held a festival which they called the Little Daedala. On the day of the festival they went out into an ancient oak forest, the trees of which were of gigantic girth. Here they set some boiled meat on the ground, and watched the birds that gathered round it. When a raven was observed to carry off a piece of the meat and settle on an oak, the people followed it and cut down the tree. With the wood of the tree they made an image, dressed it as a bride, and placed it on a bullock-cart with a bridesmaid beside it. It seems then to have

¹ Above, pp. 189 *sqq.*, 195, 211.

² See especially his *Antike Waldund Feldkulte*.

the beams of wood mixed together, with brushwood
over it. Animals were sacrificed by being burned
altar, and the altar itself, together with the images, was
ed by the flames. The blaze, we are told, rose to a
ous height and was seen for many miles. To explain
gin of the festival a story ran that once upon a time
ad quarrelled with Zeus and left him in high dudgeon.
her back Zeus gave out that he was about to marry
nph Plataea, daughter of the river Asopus. He had
ak cut down, shaped and dressed as a bride, and con-
n a bullock-cart. Transported with rage and jealousy,
aw to the cart, and tearing off the veil of the pretended
discovered the deceit that had been practised on her.
ge now turned to laughter, and she became reconciled
usband Zeus.¹

resemblance of this festival to some of the European
and midsummer festivals is tolerably close. We have
at in Russia at Whitsuntide the villagers go out into
d, fell a birch-tree, dress it in woman's clothes, and
back to the village with dance and song. On the
y it is thrown into the water.² Again, we have seen
Bohemia on Midsummer Eve the village lads fell a
or pine-tree in the wood and set it up on a height,
t is adorned with garlands, nosegays, and ribbons,
erwards burnt.³ The reason for burning the tree
near afterwards: the custom itself is not uncommon

up, and burned.¹ In Angoulême on St. Peter's Day, the twenty-ninth of June, a tall leafy poplar is set up in the market-place and burned.² In Cornwall "there was formerly a great bonfire on Midsummer Eve ; a large summer pole was fixed in the centre, round which the fuel was heaped up. It had a large bush on the top of it."³ In Dublin on May-morning boys used to go out and cut a May-bush, bring it back to town, and then burn it.⁴

Probably the Boeotian festival belonged to the same class of rites. It represented the marriage of the powers of vegetation—the union of the oak-god with the oak-goddess—in spring or midsummer, just as the same event is represented in modern Europe by a King and Queen or a Lord and Lady of the May. In the Boeotian, as in the Russian, ceremony the tree dressed as a woman stands for the English May-pole and May-queen in one. All such ceremonies, it must be remembered, are not, or at least were not originally, mere spectacular or dramatic exhibitions. They are magical charms designed to produce the effect which they dramatically set forth. If the revival of vegetation in spring is mimicked by the awakening of a sleeper, the mimicry is intended actually to quicken the growth of leaves and blossoms ; if the marriage of the powers of vegetation is simulated by a King and Queen of May, the idea is that the powers thus personated will really be rendered more productive by the ceremony. In short, all these spring and midsummer festivals fall under the head of sympathetic or imitative magic. The thing which people wish to bring about they represent dramatically, and the very representation is believed to effect, or at least to contribute to, the production of the desired result. In the case of the Daedala the story of Hera's quarrel with Zeus and her sullen retirement may perhaps without straining be interpreted as a mythical expression for a bad season and the failure of the crops. The same disastrous effects were attributed to the anger and seclusion of Demeter after the loss of her daughter Proserpine.⁵ Now the institution of a festival is often explained

¹ Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 177.

² Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 177 sq.

³ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 318 ; *B.K.* p. 178.

⁴ Hone, *Every Day's Look*, ii. 595 sq. ; *B.K.* p. 178.

⁵ Pausanias, viii. 42.

prevent the occurrence of such disasters ; and, if I am right in my interpretation of the festival, the object was supposed to be effected by dramatically enacting the marriage of divinities most concerned with the production of trees and plants.¹ The marriage of Zeus and Hera was dramatically presented at annual festivals in various parts of Greece and it is at least a fair conjecture that the nature and intention of these ceremonies were such as I have assigned to the Attic festival of the Daedala ; in other words, that Zeus and Hera at these festivals were the Greek equivalents of the Lord and Lady of the May. Homer's glowing picture of Zeus and Hera couched on fresh hyacinths and crocuses and Milton's description of the dalliance of Zephyr with Aurora, "as he met her once a-Maying," was perhaps painted from the life.

Once upon a time the Wotjaks of Asia, being distressed by a series of bad harvests, ascribed the calamity to the wrath of one of their gods, *Keremet*, who was then single and unmarried. So they went in procession to the sacred grove, riding in richly-decked waggons, as they do now, and when they are fetching home a bride. In the sacred grove they feasted all day, and next morning they cut in the middle of a square piece of turf which they

at Athens, Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. *λεγάμενον* ; *Etymolog. Magn.* s.v. *λεγομενοι*, p. 468. 52. A fragment of Pheocides relating to the marriage of Zeus and Hera came to light a few years ago. See Grenfell and Hunt, *New Classical Fragments and other Greek and Latin Papyri* (Oxford, 1897), p. 23 ; H. Weil, *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, x. (1897) pp. 1-9.

¹ *Iliad*. xiv. 227 *καὶ* *Ἡρα* *καὶ* *Ζεύς*.

Still more confidently may the same character be vindicated for the annual marriage at Athens of the Queen to Dionysus in the Flowery Month (*Anthesterion*) of spring.¹ For Dionysus, as we shall see later on, was essentially a god of vegetation, and the Queen at Athens was a purely religious or priestly functionary.² Therefore at their annual marriage in spring he can hardly have been anything but a King, and she a Queen, of May. The women who attended the Queen at the marriage ceremony would correspond to the bridesmaids, who wait on the May-queen or the Whitsun-bride.³ From a phrase of Aristotle we infer that the consummation of the divine union was graphically enacted in the official residence of the King, which went by a name that appears to have some reference to ploughing with oxen.⁴ Again, the story, dear to poets and artists, of the forsaken and sleeping Ariadne waked and wedded by Dionysus, resembles so closely the little drama acted by French peasants of the Alps on May Day⁵ that, considering the character of Dionysus as a god of vegetation, we can hardly help regarding it as the description of a spring ceremony corresponding to the French one. In point of fact the marriage of Dionysus and Ariadne is believed by Preller to have been acted every spring in Crete.⁶ His evidence, indeed, is inconclusive, but the view itself is probable. If I am right in instituting the comparison, the chief difference between the French and the Greek ceremonies must have been that in the former the sleeper was the forsaken bridegroom, in the latter the forsaken bride; and the group of stars in the sky, in which fancy saw Ariadne's wedding-crown,⁷ may have been only a translation to heaven of the garland worn by the Greek girl who played the Queen of May.

¹ Demosthenes, *Neacr.* § 73 sqq. p. 1369 sq.; Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, iii. 5; Hesychius, s.v. Διονύσου γάμος and γεραίαι; *Etymol. Magn.* s.v. γεραίραι; Pollux, viii. 108; Hermann, *Gottesdienstliche Alterthümer*,² § 32. 15, § 58. 11 sqq.; Aug. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen im Altertum* (Leipsic, 1898), pp. 391-394.

² Above, p. 7.

³ Above, pp. 220, 221.

⁴ ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς εἶχε τὸ νῦν καλούμενον βουκολεῖον, πλεῖστον τοῦ πρυτανεῖον·

σημεῖον δέ· ἐνι καὶ νῦν γὰρ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως γυναικὸς ἡ σύμμεξις ἐνταῦθα γίνεται τῷ Διονύσῳ καὶ ὁ γάμος, Aristotle, *loc. cit.* It does not appear whether the part of the divine husband in the ceremony was played by an image or a man.

⁵ Above, p. 221 sq.

⁶ L. Preller, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, pp. 293-296; compare *id.*, *Griechische Mythologie*,⁴ ed. C. Robert, i. 681 sqq.

⁷ Hyginus, *Astronomica*, i. 5.

On the whole, alike from the analogy of modern folk-custom and from the facts of ancient ritual and mythology, we are justified in concluding that the archaic forms of tree-worship disclosed by the spring and midsummer festivals of our peasants were practised by the Greeks and Romans in prehistoric times. Do then these forms of tree-worship help to explain the priesthood of Aricia, the subject of our inquiry? I believe they do. In the first place the attributes of Diana, the goddess of the Arician grove, are those of a tree-spirit or sylvan deity. Her sanctuaries were in groves, indeed every grove was her sanctuary,¹ and she is often associated with the wood-god Silvanus in inscriptions.² Like a tree-spirit, she helped women in travail, and in this respect her reputation appears to have stood high at the Arician grove, if we may judge from the votive offerings found on the spot.³ Again, she was the patroness of wild animals;⁴ just as in Finland the wood-god Tapio was believed to care for the wild creatures that roamed the wood, they being considered his cattle.⁵ Similarly, the forest-god of the Lapps ruled over all forest animals, which were regarded as his herds, and good or bad luck in hunting depended on his will.⁶ So, too, the Samagitians deemed the birds and beasts of the woods sacred, doubtless because they were under the protection of the god of the wood.⁷ Again, there are indications that domestic cattle were protected by Diana,⁸ as they certainly were supposed to be by Silvanus.⁹ But we have seen that special influence over cattle is ascribed to wood-spirits; in Finland the herds enjoyed the protection of the wood-gods both while they were in their stalls and while they strayed in the forest.¹⁰ Lastly, in the sacred spring which bubbled, and the perpetual fire which seems to have burned in the Arician grove,¹¹ we

¹ Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 332: "nam, ut diximus, et omnis quercus Jovi est consecrata, et omnis lucus Dianae."

² Roscher's *Lexikon d. Griech. u. Röm. Mythologie*, i. 1005.

³ See above, p. 5. For Diana in this character, see Roscher, *op. cit.* i. 1007.

⁴ Roscher, *op. cit.* i. 1006 sq.

⁵ Castren, *Finnische Mythologie* (St. Petersburg, 1853), p. 97.

⁶ J. Abercromby, *The Pre- and*

Proto-historic Finns (London, 1898), i. 161.

⁷ Mathias Michov, "De Sarmatia Asiana atque Europea," in *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, p. 457.

⁸ Livy, i. 45; Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, 4.

⁹ Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 600 sq., with Servius's note.

¹⁰ Castren, *op. cit.* p. 97 sq.

¹¹ Above, p. 5 sq.

may perhaps detect traces of other attributes of forest gods, the power, namely, to make the rain to fall and the sun to shine.¹ This last attribute perhaps explains why Virbius, the companion deity of Diana at Nemi, was by some believed to be the sun.²

Thus the cult of the Arician grove was essentially that of a tree-spirit or sylvan deity. But our examination of European folk-custom demonstrated that a tree-spirit is frequently represented by a living person, who is regarded as an embodiment of the tree-spirit and possessed of its fertilising powers; and our previous survey of primitive belief proved that this conception of a god incarnate in a living man is common among rude races. Further we have seen that the living person who is believed to embody in himself the tree-spirit is often called a king, in which respect, again, he strictly represents the tree-spirit. For the sacred cedar of the Gilgit tribes is called, as we have seen, "the Dreadful King";³ and the chief forest god of the Finns, by name Tapio, represented as an old man with a brown beard, a high hat of fir-cones and a coat of tree-moss, was styled the Wood King, Lord of the Woodland, Golden King of the Wood.⁴ May not then the King of the Wood in the Arician grove have been, like the King of May, the Leaf King, the Grass King, and the like, an incarnation of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation? His title, his sacred office, and his residence in the grove all point to this conclusion, which is confirmed by his relation to the Golden Bough. For since the King of the Wood could only be assailed by him who had plucked the Golden Bough, his life was safe from assault so long as the bough or the tree on which it grew remained uninjured. In a sense, therefore, his life was bound up with that of the tree; and thus to some extent he stood to the tree in the same relation in which the incorporate or immanent tree-spirit stands to it. The representation of the tree-spirit both by the King of the Wood and by the Golden Bough (for it will hardly be disputed that the Golden Bough was looked upon as a very special manifestation of the divine life of the grove) need not surprise us, since we have found that the tree-spirit is not

¹ Above, p. 188 *sq.*

² Above, p. 6. ³ Above, p. 193. ⁴ Castren, *Finnische Mythologie*, pp.

92, 95.

and sunshine, making the crops to grow, women to flourish, and flocks and herds to multiply, which are popularly ascribed to the tree-spirit itself. The reputed possessor of powers so exalted must have been a very important person; and in point of fact his influence appears to have extended far and wide. For in the days when the champaign country around was still parcelled out among the petty tribes which composed the Latin League, the sacred grove on the Alban Mount is known to have been an object of their common reverence and care.¹ And just as the kings of Cambodia used to send offerings to the mystic Kings of Fire and Water in the dim depths of the tropical forest, so, we may well believe, from all sides of the broad Latian plain the eyes of pilgrims turned to the quarter where, standing sharply out against the faint blue line of the Apennines or the deeper blue of the distant sea, the Alban Mountain rose before them, the home of the mysterious priest of Nemi, the King of the Wood.

¹ Cato, *Frag.* 58 (*Historic. Roman.* ed. Peter, p. 52). Compare J. Haines von Aricia," *Fleckeisen's Jahrbücher*, xxix. (1883), 169-175. Koch, "Die Weihinschrift des Diana-

CHAPTER II

THE PERILS OF THE SOUL

“ O liebe flüchtige Seele
Dir ist so bang und weh ! ”
HEINE.

§ 1. *Royal and Priestly Taboos*

IN the preceding chapter we saw that in early society the king or priest is often thought to be endowed with supernatural powers or to be an incarnation of a deity ; in consequence of which the course of nature is supposed to be more or less under his control, and he is held responsible for bad weather, failure of the crops, and similar calamities. Thus far it appears to be assumed that the king's power over nature, like that over his subjects and slaves, is exerted through definite acts of will ; and therefore if drought, famine, pestilence, or storms arise, the people attribute the misfortune to the negligence or guilt of their king, and punish him accordingly with stripes and bonds, or, if he remains obdurate, with deposition and death. Sometimes, however, the course of nature, while regarded as dependent on the king, is supposed to be partly independent of his will. His person is considered, if we may express it so, as the dynamical centre of the universe, from which lines of force radiate to all quarters of the heaven ; so that any motion of his—the turning of his head, the lifting of his hand—instantaneously affects and may seriously disturb some part of nature. He is the point of support on which hangs the balance of the world ; and the slightest irregularity on his part may overthrow the delicate equi-pose. The

spends a month at his court. During month, the name of which means "without gods," no one visits the temples, for they are believed to be deserted.¹ The following description of the Mikado's mode of life written about two hundred years ago: ²—

' Even to this day the princes descended of this family, particularly those who sit on the throne, are looked upon as persons most holy in themselves, and as Popes by the people. And, in order to preserve these advantageous notions in the minds of their subjects, they are obliged to take an uncommon care of their sacred persons, and to do such things, which, examined according to the customs of other nations, would be thought ridiculous and impertinent. It would not be improper to give a few instances of it. He is so sacred that it would be very prejudicial to his dignity and majesty to touch the ground with his feet; for this reason, when he intends to go anywhere, he must be carried thither upon men's shoulders. Much less will they suffer that he should expose his sacred person to the open air, and the sun is not thought worthy to shine on his head. There is such a holiness ascribed to all the parts of his body that he is not to cut off neither his hair, nor his beard, nor his nails. Nor, lest he should grow too dirty, they may clean him only at night when he is asleep: because then he is not

imperial crown on his head, but to sit altogether like a statue, without stirring either hands or feet, head or eyes, nor indeed any part of his body, because, by this means, it was thought that he could preserve peace and tranquillity in his empire; for if, unfortunately, he turned himself on one side or the other, or if he looked a good while towards any part of his dominions, it was apprehended that war, famine, fire, or some great misfortune was near at hand to desolate the country. But it having been afterwards discovered that the imperial crown was the palladium which by its immobility¹ could preserve peace in the empire, it was thought expedient to deliver his imperial person, consecrated only to idleness and pleasures, from this burthensome duty, and therefore the crown is at present placed on the throne for some hours every morning. His victuals must be dressed every time in new pots, and served at table in new dishes: both are very clean and neat, but made only of common clay; that without any considerable expense they may be laid aside, or broken, after they have served once. They are generally broke, for fear they should come into the hands of laymen, for they believe religiously that if any layman should presume to eat his food out of these sacred dishes, it would swell and inflame his mouth and throat. The like ill effect is dreaded from the Dairi's sacred habits; for they believe that if a layman should wear them, without the Emperor's express leave or command, they would occasion swellings and pains in all parts of his body." To the same effect an earlier account of the Mikado says: "It was considered as a shameful degradation for him even to touch the ground with his foot. The sun and moon were not even permitted to shine upon his head. None of the superfluities of the body were ever taken from him, neither his hair, his beard, nor his nails were cut. Whatever he eat was dressed in new vessels."²

¹ In Pinkerton's reprint this word appears as "mobility." I have made the correction from a comparison with the original (Kaempfer, *History of Japan*, translated from the original Dutch manuscript by J. G. Scheuchzer, London, 1728, vol. i. p. 150).

² Caron, "Account of Japan," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, vii. 613. Compare Varenus, *Descriptio regni Japoniae*, p. 11: "*Nunquam attingebant (quemadmodum et hodie id observat) pedes ipsius terram: radiis Solis caput nunquam illustrabatur:*"

Similar priestly or rather divine kings are found, at a lower level of barbarism, on the west coast of Africa. At Shark Point near Cape Padron, in Lower Guinea, lives the priestly king Kukulu, alone in a wood. He may not touch a woman nor leave his house; indeed he may not even quit his chair, in which he is obliged to sleep sitting, for if he lay down no wind would arise and navigation would be stopped. He regulates storms, and in general maintains a wholesome and equable state of the atmosphere.¹ In the West African kingdom of Congo there was a supreme pontiff called Chitomé or Chitombé, whom the negroes regarded as a god on earth and all-powerful in heaven. Hence before they would taste the new crops they offered him the first-fruits, fearing that manifold misfortunes would befall them if they broke this rule. When he left his residence to visit other places within his jurisdiction, all married people had to observe strict continence the whole time he was out; for it was supposed that any act of incontinence would prove fatal to him. And if he were to die a natural death, they thought that the world would perish, and the earth, which he alone sustained by his power and merit, would immediately be annihilated.² Amongst the semi-barbarous nations of the New World, at the date of the Spanish conquest, there were found hierarchies or theocracies like those of Japan. Some of these we have already noticed.³ But the high pontiff of the Zapotecs in Southern Mexico appears to have presented a still closer parallel to the Mikado. A powerful rival to the king himself, this spiritual lord governed Yopaa, one of the chief cities of the kingdom, with absolute dominion. It is impossible, we are told, to overrate the reverence in which he was held. He was looked on as a god whom the earth was not worthy to hold nor the sun to shine upon. He profaned his sanctity if he even touched the ground with his foot. The officers who bore his palanquin on their shoulders were members of the highest families; he hardly deigned to look on anything around him; and all who met him fell

in apertum aërem non procedebat," etc. My copy of this last work lacks the title-page, but the dedication is dated Amsterdam, 1649.

¹ A. Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedi-*

tion an der Loango-Küste, i. 287 sq., cp. p. 353 sq.

² Labat, *Relation historique de l'Éthiopie occidentale*, i. 254 sqq.

³ Above, pp. 153 sq., 160.

with their faces to the earth, fearing that death would overtake them if they saw even his shadow. A rule of continence was regularly imposed on the Zapotec priests, especially upon the high pontiff; but "on certain days in each year, which were generally celebrated with feasts and dances, it was customary for the high priest to become drunk. While in this state, seeming to belong neither to heaven nor to earth, one of the most beautiful of the virgins consecrated to the service of the gods was brought to him." If the child she bore him was a son, he was brought up as a prince of the blood, and the eldest son succeeded his father on the pontifical throne.¹ The supernatural powers attributed to this pontiff are not specified, but probably they resembled those of the Mikado and Chitomé.

Wherever, as in Japan and West Africa, it is supposed that the order of nature, and even the existence of the world, is bound up with the life of the king or priest, it is clear that he must be regarded by his subjects as a source both of infinite blessing and of infinite danger. On the one hand, the people have to thank him for the rain and sunshine which foster the fruits of the earth, for the wind which brings ships to their coasts, and even for the existence of the earth beneath their feet. But what he gives he can refuse; and so close is the dependence of nature on his person, so delicate the balance of the system of forces whereof he is the centre, that the least irregularity on his part may set up a tremor which shall shake the earth to its foundations. And if nature may be disturbed by the slightest involuntary act of the king, it is easy to conceive the convulsion which his death might provoke. The death of the Chitomé, as we have seen, was thought to entail the destruction of the world. Clearly, therefore, out of a regard for their own safety, which might be imperilled by any rash act of the king, and still more by his death, the people will exact of their king or priest a strict conformity to those rules, the observance of which is necessary for his own preservation, and consequently for the preservation of his people and the world. The idea

¹ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-centrale*, iii. 29 sq.; Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 142 sq.

missed ignominiously, and may be thankful if he escape
h his life. Worshipped as a god by them one day, he
killed by them as a criminal the next. But in the
nged behaviour of the people there is nothing capricious
inconsistent. On the contrary, their conduct is entirely
a piece. If their king is their god, he is or should be
their preserver; and if he will not preserve them, he
must make room for another who will. So long, however
he answers their expectations, there is no limit to the
which they take of him, and which they compel him to
of himself. A king of this sort lives hedged in by a
monious etiquette, a network of prohibitions and obser-
ves, of which the intention is not to contribute to his
ity, much less to his comfort, but to restrain him from
uct which, by disturbing the harmony of nature, might
ve himself, his people, and the universe in one common
strophe. Far from adding to his comfort, these obser-
es, by trammelling his every act, annihilate his freedom
often render the very life, which it is their object to
rve, a burden and sorrow to him.

Of the supernaturally endowed kings of Loango it is
that the more powerful a king is, the more taboos is he
d to observe; they regulate all his actions, his walking

of an extinct volcano, enclosed on all sides by grassy slopes, lie the scattered huts and yam-fields of Riabba, the capital of the native king of Fernando Po. This mysterious being lives in the lowest depths of the crater, surrounded by a harem of forty women, and covered, it is said, with old silver coins. Naked savage as he is, he yet exercises far more influence in the island than the Spanish governor at Santa Isabel. In him the conservative spirit of the Boobies or aboriginal inhabitants of the island are, as it were, incorporated. He has never seen a white man and, according to the firm conviction of all the Boobies, the sight of a pale face would cause his instant death. He cannot bear to look upon the sea; indeed it is said that he may never see it even in the distance, and that therefore he wears away his life with shackles on his legs in the dim twilight of his hut. Certain it is that he has never set foot on the beach. With the exception of his musket and knife, he uses nothing that comes from the whites; European cloth never touches his person, and he scorns tobacco, rum, and even salt.¹ The ancient kings of Ireland, as well as the kings of the four provinces of Leinster, Munster, Connaught, and Ulster, were subject to certain quaint prohibitions or taboos, on the due

¹ O. Baumann, *Eine Afrikanische Tropen-Insel, Fernando Póo und die Bube* (Wien und Olmütz, 1888), p. 103 sq. The writer thinks there may be some exaggeration in the report that the king may not look upon the sea even from afar. But the report is confirmed by analogous taboos elsewhere. The king of Great Ardra in Guinea might not see the sea (Bosman's "Guinea" in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 500); and the king of Loango is subject to the same taboo (Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 263). The sea is the fetish of the Eyeos, to the north-west of Dahomey, and they and their king are threatened with death by their priests if ever they dared to look upon it (A. Dalzell, *History of Dahomey* (London, 1793), p. 15; Th. Winterbottom, *An Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone*, p. 229 sq.). The Egyptian priests loathed the sea and

called it the foam of Typhon; they were forbidden to set salt on their table, and they would not speak to pilots because they got their living by the sea; hence too they would not eat fish, and the hieroglyphic symbol for hatred was a fish (Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 32). When the Indians of the Peruvian Andes were sent to work in the hot valleys of the coast, the vast ocean which they saw before them as they descended the Cordillera was dreaded by them as a cause of disease; hence they prayed to it that they might not fall ill (E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 451). Similarly the inland people of Lampong, in Sumatra, "are said to pay a kind of adoration to the sea, and to make it an offering of cakes and sweetmeats on their beholding it for the first time, deprecating its power of doing them mischief" (Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, p. 301).

...king of Ulster might not go round ... hand-wise on Wednesday, nor sleep between the Doth ... (odder) and the Duibhlinn¹ with his head inclining to o ...; nor encamp for nine days on the plains of Cualann, n ...vel the road of Duibhlinn on Monday, nor ride a dirt ...ck-heeled horse across Magh Maistean. The king ...nster was prohibited from enjoying the feast of Lo ...n from one Monday to another; from banqueting l ...at in the beginning of harvest before Geim at Leitreach ...n encamping for nine days upon the Siuir; and fro ...ding a border meeting at Gabhran. The king of Co ...ght might not conclude a treaty respecting his ancie ...ice of Cruachan² after making peace on All-Hallow ...z, nor go in a speckled garment on a grey speckled ste ...the heath of Dal Chais, nor repair to an assembly ...nen at Seaghais, nor sit in autumn on the sepulchr ...nds of the wife of Maine, nor contend in running wi ...rider of a grey one-eyed horse at Ath Gallta betwee ...posts. The king of Ulster was forbidden to attend th ...e fair at Rath Line among the youths of Dal Araidh ...listen to the fluttering of the flocks of birds of Lir ...each after sunset, to celebrate the feast of the bull ...re-mic-Daire, to go into Magh Cobha in the month ...ch, and to drink of the water of Bo Neimhidh betwee ...darknesses. If the kings of Ireland strictly observe ...and many other customs which were enjoined b

years without experiencing the decay of old age ; that no epidemic or mortality would occur during their reigns ; and that the seasons would be favourable and the earth yield its fruit in abundance ; whereas, if they set the ancient usages at naught, the country would be visited with plague, famine, and bad weather.¹

The kings of Egypt, as we have seen,² were worshipped as gods, and the routine of their daily life was regulated in every detail by precise and unvarying rules. "The life of the kings of Egypt," says Diodorus, "was not like that of other monarchs who are irresponsible and may do just what they choose ; on the contrary, everything was fixed for them by law, not only their official duties, but even the details of their daily life. . . . The hours both of day and night were arranged at which the king had to do, not what he pleased, but what was prescribed for him. . . . For not only were the times appointed at which he should transact public business or sit in judgment ; but the very hours for his walking and bathing and sleeping with his wife, and, in short, performing every act of life were all settled. Custom enjoined a simple diet ; the only flesh he might eat was veal and goose, and he might only drink a prescribed quantity of wine."³ Of the taboos imposed on priests we may see a striking example in the rules of life observed by the Flamen Dialis at Rome, who has been interpreted as a living image of Zeus⁴ or a human embodiment of the sky-spirit.⁵ Since the worship of Virbius at Nemi was conducted, as we have seen,⁶ by a Flamen, who may possibly have been the King of the Wood himself, and whose mode of life may have resembled that of the Roman Flamen, these rules have a special interest for us. They were such as the following : The Flamen Dialis might not ride or even touch a horse, nor see an army

¹ *The Book of Rights*, edited with translation and notes by John O'Donovan (Dublin, 1847), pp. 3-8. This work, comprising a list both of the prohibitions (*urgharta* or *geasa*) and the prerogatives (*buaitha*) of the Irish kings, is preserved in a number of manuscripts, of which the two oldest date from 1390 and about 1418 respectively. The list is repeated twice, first in prose and then in verse. I

have to thank my friend Professor J. Rhys for kindly calling my attention to this interesting record of a long-vanished past in Ireland.

² P. 161 sq.

³ Diodorus Siculus, i. 70.

⁴ L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³ i. 201.

⁵ F. B. Jevons, *Plutarch's Romane Questions*, p. lxxiii.

⁶ P. 6.

under arms,¹ nor wear a ring which was not broken, nor have a knot on any part of his garments; no fire except a sacred fire might be taken out of his house; he might not touch wheaten flour or leavened bread; he might not touch or even name a goat, a dog,² raw meat, beans, and ivy; he might not walk under a vine; the feet of his bed had to be daubed with mud; his hair could be cut only by a free man and with a bronze knife, and his hair and nails when cut had to be buried under a lucky tree; he might not touch a dead body nor enter a place where one was burned;³ he might not see work being done on holy days; he might not be uncovered in the open air; if a man in bonds were taken into his house, the captive had to be unbound and the cords had to be drawn up through a hole in the roof and so let down into the street. His wife, the Flaminica, had to observe nearly the same rules, and others of her own besides. She might not ascend more than three steps of the kind of staircase called Greek; at a certain festival she might not comb her hair; the leather of her shoes might not be made from a beast that had died a natural death, but only from one that had been slain or sacrificed; if she heard thunder she was tabooed till she had offered an expiatory sacrifice.⁴

¹ Among the Gallas the king, who also acts as priest by performing sacrifices, is the only man who is not allowed to fight with weapons; he may not even ward off a blow (Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somali*, p. 136).

² Among the Kafirs of the Hindoo Koosh men who are preparing to be headmen are considered ceremonially pure, and wear a semi-sacred uniform which must not be defiled by coming into contact with dogs. "The Kaneash [persons in this state of ceremonial purity] were nervously afraid of my dogs, which had to be fastened up whenever one of these august personages was seen to approach. The dressing has to be performed with the greatest care, in a place which cannot be defiled with dogs. Utah and another had convenient dressing-rooms on the top of their houses which

happened to be high and isolated, but another of the four Kaneash had been compelled to erect a curious-looking square pen made of poles in front of his house, his own roof being a common thoroughfare" (Sir George Scott Robertson, *The Kafirs of the Hindu Kush* (London, 1898), p. 466).

³ Similarly among the Kafirs of the Hindoo Koosh the high priest "may not traverse certain paths which go near the receptacles for the dead, nor may he visit the cemeteries. He may not go into the actual room where a death has occurred until after an effigy has been erected for the deceased. Slaves may cross his threshold, but must not approach the hearth" (Sir George Scott Robertson, *op. cit.* p. 416).

⁴ Aulus Gellius, x. 15; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 109-112; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 146; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* i. 179, 448, iv. 518; Macro-

The burdensome observances attached to the royal or priestly office produced their natural effect. Either men refused to accept the office, which hence tended to fall into abeyance ; or accepting it, they sank under its weight into spiritless creatures, cloistered recluses, from whose nerveless fingers the reins of government slipped into the firmer grasp of men who were often content to wield the reality of sovereignty without its name. In some countries this rift in the supreme power deepened into a total and permanent separation of the spiritual and temporal powers, the old royal house retaining their purely religious functions, while the civil government passed into the hands of a younger and more vigorous race.

To take examples. We saw¹ that in Cambodia it is often necessary to force the kingships of Fire and Water upon the reluctant successors, and that in Savage Island the monarchy actually came to an end because at last no one could be induced to accept the dangerous distinction.² In some parts of West Africa, when the king dies, a family council is secretly held to determine his successor. He on whom the choice falls is suddenly seized, bound, and thrown into the fetish-house, where he is kept in durance till he consents to accept the crown. Sometimes the heir finds means of evading the honour which it is sought to thrust upon him ; a ferocious chief has been known to go about constantly armed, resolute to resist by force any attempt to set him on the throne.³ A reluctance to accept the sovereignty in the Ethiopian kingdom of Gingiro was simulated, if not really felt, as we learn from the old Jesuit missionaries. "They wrap up the dead king's body in costly garments, and killing a cow, put it into the hide ; then all those who hope to succeed him, being his sons or others of the royal blood, flying from the honour they covet, abscond and hide themselves in the woods. This done, the electors, who are all great sorcerers, agree among themselves who shall be king, and go out to seek him, when entering

bius, *Saturni*, i. 16. 8 sq. ; Festus, p. 161 A, ed. Müller. For more details see Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.² 326 sqq.

¹ Pp. 164, 166. ² P. 159.

³ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 354 sq. ; ii. 9, 11.

way by force, he still struggling and seeming to refu
aking upon him the burthen of government, all which
ere cheat and hypocrisy." ¹ The Mikados of Japan se
arly to have resorted to the expedient of transferring t
onours and burdens of supreme power to their infan
children ; and the rise of the Tycoons, long the tempo
overeigns of the country, is traced to the abdication of
ertain Mikado in favour of his three-year-old son. T
overeignty having been wrested by a usurper from t
fant prince, the cause of the Mikado was championed b
oritomo, a man of spirit and conduct, who overthrew t
urper and restored to the Mikado the shadow, while h
tained for himself the substance of power. He bequeath
his descendants the dignity he had won, and thus becam
e founder of the line of Tycoons. Down to the latt
lf of the sixteenth century the Tycoons were active ar
icient rulers ; but the same fate overtook them which ha
fallen the Mikados. Immeshed in the same inextricab
b of custom and law, they degenerated into mere puppet
rdly stirring from their palaces and occupied in a perpetua
nd of empty ceremonies, while the real business of
vernment was managed by the council of state. ² In
nquin the monarchy ran a similar course. Living 131.

descendants the dignity of general of all the forces. Thenceforward the kings or *dovas*, though invested with the title and pomp of sovereignty, ceased to govern. While they lived secluded in their palaces, all real political power was wielded by the hereditary generals or *chovas*.¹ The custom regularly observed by the Tahitian kings of abdicating on the birth of a son, who was immediately proclaimed sovereign and received his father's homage, may perhaps have originated, like the similar custom occasionally practised by the Mikados, in a wish to shift to other shoulders the irksome burden of royalty; for in Tahiti as elsewhere the sovereign was subjected to a system of vexatious restrictions.² In Mangaia, another Polynesian island, religious and civil authority were lodged in separate hands, spiritual functions being discharged by a line of hereditary kings, while the temporal government was entrusted from time to time to a victorious war-chief, whose investiture, however, had to be completed by the king. To the latter were assigned the best lands, and he received daily offerings of the choicest food.³ The Mikado and Tycoon of Japan had their counterparts in the Roko Tui and Vunivalu of Fiji. The Roko Tui was the Reverend or Sacred King. The Vunivalu was the Root of War or War King. In one kingdom a certain Thakambau, who was the War King, kept all power in his own hands, but in a neighbouring kingdom the real ruler was the Sacred King.⁴ At Athens the kings degenerated into little more than sacred functionaries, and it is said that the institution of the new office of Polemarch or War Lord was rendered necessary by their growing effeminacy.⁵ American examples of the partition of authority between an emperor and a pope have already been cited from the early history of Mexico and Colombia.⁶

In some parts of Western Africa two kings reign side by side, a fetish or religious king and a civil king, but the

¹ Richard, "History of Tonquin," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 744 *sqq.*

² W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 99 *sqq.*, ed. 1836.

³ Gill, *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, p. 293 *sqq.*

⁴ Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26th, 1898.

⁵ Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, iii. 2. My friend Dr. Henry Jackson kindly called my attention to this passage.

⁶ Pp. 154, 236 *sq.*

...down to some two
ears ago, but the office expired on account of its respon-
ilities and expenses. One of the practical inconveni-
f the office, at least on the Grain Coast, is that the ho-
f the fetish king enjoys the right of sanctuary, and so ten-
o become little better than a rookery of bad character.
ne Bodio or fetish king on the Grain Coast resigns
fice because of the sort of people who quartered them-
lves on him, the cost of feeding them, and the squabbles
ey had among themselves. He led a sort of cat-and-mouse
g life with them for three years. Then there came a
man with homicidal mania varied by epileptic fits.
d soon afterwards the spiritual shepherd retired into
ivate life, but not before he had lost an ear and sustained
er bodily injury in a personal conflict with this vicious
ck sheep.¹

In some parts of the East Indian island of Timor we
et with a partition of power like that which is repre-
ted by the civil king and the fetish king of West Africa.
Some of the Timorese tribes recognise two rajahs: an
ordinary or civil rajah, who governs the people, and
fetish or taboo rajah (*radja pomali*), who is charged
h the control of everything that concerns the earth
l its products. This latter ruler has the right of

must perform certain necessary ceremonies when the work is being carried out. If drought or blight threatens the crops, his help is invoked to save them. Though he ranks below the civil rajah, he exercises a momentous influence on the course of events, for his secular colleague is bound to consult him in all important matters. In some of the neighbouring islands, such as Rotti and eastern Flores, a spiritual ruler of the same sort is recognised under various native names, which all mean "lord of the ground."¹

§ 2. *The Nature of the Soul*

But if the object of the taboos observed by a divine king or priest is to preserve his life, the question arises, How is their observance supposed to effect this end? To understand this we must know the nature of the danger which threatens the king's life, and which it is the intention of the taboos to guard against. We must, therefore, ask: What does early man understand by death? To what causes does he attribute it? And how does he think it may be guarded against?

As the savage commonly explains the processes of inanimate nature by supposing that they are produced by living beings working in or behind the phenomena, so he explains the phenomena of life itself. If an animal lives and moves, it can only be, he thinks, because there is a little animal inside which moves it. If a man lives and moves, it can only be because he has a little man or animal inside who moves him. The animal inside the animal, the man inside the man, is the soul. And as the activity of an animal or man is explained by the presence of the soul, so the repose of sleep or death is explained by its absence; sleep or trance being the temporary, death being the permanent absence of the soul. Hence if death be the permanent absence of the soul, the way to guard against it is either to prevent the soul

¹ J. J. de Hollander, *Handleiding bij de Beoefening der Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, ii. 606 sq. In other parts of Timor the spiritual ruler is called *Anaha paha* or "conjurer of the land." Compare

H. Zondervan, "Timor en de Timoreezen," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, v. (1888), Afdeling, mehr uitgebreide artikelen, pp. 400-402.

they laughed. You may laugh as much as you like," continued the missionary, "I tell you that I am two in one; this great body that you see is one; within that there is another little one which is not visible. The great body is buried, but the little body flies away when the great one dies." To this some of the blacks replied, "Yes, we also are two, we also have a little body within the breast." When being asked where the little body went after death, some said it went behind the bush, others said it went into the air, and some said they did not know.¹ The Hurons thought that the soul had a head and body, arms and legs; in short, that it was a complete little model of the man himself.² The esquimaux believe that "the soul exhibits the same shape as the body it belongs to, but is of a more subtle and ethereal nature."³ According to the Nootkas of British Columbia the soul has the shape of a tiny man; its seat is the crown of the head. So long as it stands erect, its owner is hale and strong; but when from any cause it loses its upright position, he loses his senses.⁴ Among the Indian tribes of the Lower Fraser River, man is held to have four souls, of which the principal one has the form of a mannikin, while the other three are shadows of it.⁵ The Malays conceive the human soul (*semangat*) as a little man, mostly invisible and of the bigness of a thumb, who corresponds exactly in shape, position, and

¹ R. Salvado, *Mémoires historiques* . . . ⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on*

portion, and even in complexion to the man in whose body he resides. This mannikin is of a thin unsubstantial nature, though not so impalpable but that it may cause displacement on entering a physical object, and it can flit quickly from place to place; it is temporarily absent from the body in sleep, trance, and disease, and permanently absent after death.¹ The ancient Egyptians believed that every man has a soul (*ka*) which is his exact counterpart or double, with the same features, the same gait, even the same dress as the man himself. Many of the monuments dating from the eighteenth century onwards represent various kings appearing before divinities, while behind the king stands his soul or double, portrayed as a little man with the king's features. Some of the reliefs in the temple at Luxor illustrate the birth of King Amenophis III. While the queen-mother is being tended by two goddesses acting as midwives, two other goddesses are bringing away two figures of new-born children, only one of which is supposed to be a child of flesh and blood: the inscriptions engraved above their heads show that, while the first is Amenophis, the second is his soul or double. And as with kings and queens, so it was with common men and women. Whenever a child was born, there was born with him a double which followed him through the various stages of life; young while he was young, it grew to maturity and declined along with him. And not only human beings, but gods and animals, stones and trees, natural and artificial objects, everybody and everything had its own soul or double. The doubles of oxen and sheep were the duplicates of the original oxen or sheep; the doubles of linen or beds, of chairs or knives, had the same form as the real linen, beds, chairs, and knives. So thin and subtle was the stuff, so fine and delicate the texture of these doubles that they made no impression on ordinary eyes. Only certain classes of priests or seers were enabled by natural gifts or special training to perceive the doubles of the gods, and to win from them a knowledge of the past and the future. The doubles of men and things were hidden from sight in the ordinary course of life; still, they sometimes flew out of the body endowed with colour and voice, left it in a kind of trance, and departed to

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 47.

of the desired weight or length is measured out to the heaviest soul ever given out weighs about ten grammes; length of a man's life is proportioned to the length of his soul; children who die young had short souls.³ The ancient conception of the soul as a tiny human being commonly out in the customs observed at the death of a chief among the Nakelo tribe. When a chief dies, certain men are the hereditary undertakers, call him, as he lies, oilk ornamented, on fine mats, saying, "Rise, sir, the chief let us be going. The day has come over the land when they conduct him to the river side, where the ghost of a man comes to ferry Nakelo ghosts across the stream; they thus attend the chief on his last journey, they hold their great fans close to the ground to shelter him, because one of them explained to a missionary, "His soul is only a little child."⁴ Sometimes, however, as we shall see, the human soul is conceived not in human but in animal form.

3. Maspero, *Études de Mythologie Égyptienne* (Paris, 1891), i. 388 *sq.*; A. Wiedemann, *Ancient Egyptian Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul* (London, 1895), p. 138 *sqq.* In Greek works of art, especially vase-paintings, the human soul is sometimes represented as a tiny figure in human form, generally winged, sometimes clothed and armed, some-

times *Berlin dargebracht* (Berlin, 1890), p. 89-95. Greek artists of a later period sometimes portrayed the human soul in the form of a butterfly (O. Jahn, *op. cit.* p. 138 *sqq.*). There was a particular sort of butterfly to which the Greeks gave the name of soul (*ψυχή*). See Aristotle, *Hist. Anim.* v. 19, p. 550, b. 26, 1 551, b. 13 *sq.*; Plutarch, *Quæst. Conviv.* ii. 3 2.

The soul is commonly supposed to escape by the natural openings of the body, especially the mouth and nostrils. Hence in Celebes they sometimes fasten fish-hooks to a sick man's nose, navel, and feet, so that if his soul should try to escape it may be hooked and held fast.¹ When a Sea Dyak sorcerer or medicine-man is initiated, his fingers are supposed to be furnished with fish-hooks, with which he will thereafter clutch the human soul in the act of flying away, and restore it to the body of the sufferer.² One of the implements of a Haida medicine-man is a hollow bone, in which he bottles up departing souls, and so restores them to their owners.³ When any one yawns in their presence the Hindoos always snap their thumbs, believing that this will hinder the soul from issuing through the open mouth.⁴ The Marquesans used to hold the mouth and nose of a dying man, in order to keep him in life, by preventing his soul from escaping,⁵ and with the same intention the Bagobos of the Philippine Islands put rings of brass wire on the wrists or ankles of their sick.⁶ On the other hand, the Itonamas in South America seal up the eyes, nose, and mouth of a dying person, in case his ghost should get out and carry off others;⁷ and for a similar reason the people of Nias, who fear the spirits of the recently deceased and identify them with the breath, seek to confine the vagrant soul in its earthly tabernacle by bunging up the nose or tying up the jaws of the corpse.⁸ Esquimaux mourners plug their nostrils with deerskin, hair, or hay for several days,⁹ probably to prevent their souls from following

¹ B. F. Matthes, *Over de Bissoes of heidensche priesters en priesteressen der Borginezen*, p. 24.

² H. Ling Roth, "Low's Natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 115.

³ G. M. Dawson, "On the Haida Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands," *Geological Survey of Canada, Report of Progress for 1878-1879*, pp. 123 B, 139 H.

⁴ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 114, § 665.

⁵ M. Radiguet, *Les derniers sauvages*, p. 245 (ed. 1882); Matthias G***, *Lettres sur les Iles Marquises*

(Paris, 1843), p. 115; Clavel, *Les Marquisiens*, p. 42 note.

⁶ F. Blumentritt, "Das Stromgebiet des Rio Grande de Mindano," *Petermanns Mittheilungen*, xxxvii. (1891), p. 111.

⁷ D'Orbigny, *L'Homme Américain*, ii. 241; T. J. Hutchinson, "The Chaco Indians," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., iii. (1865), p. 322 sq.; Bastian, *Culturkinder des alten Amerika*, i. 476.

⁸ E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 283.

⁹ Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo,"

t the soul of the babe should escape and be lost on as it is born, the Alfoors of Celebes, when a birth out to take place, are careful to close every opening in the house, even the keyhole ; and they stop up every chink a chimney in the walls. Also they tie up the mouths of animals inside and outside the house, for fear one of them might swallow the child's soul. For a similar reason persons present in the house, even the mother herself, are obliged to keep their mouths shut the whole time the birth is taking place. When the question was put, Why they do not hold their noses also, lest the child's soul should get in the mouth of them? the answer was that breath being exhaled as well as inhaled through the nostrils, the soul would be expelled before it could have time to settle down.⁴

Popular expressions in the language of civilised people such as to have one's heart in one's mouth, or the soul on one's lips or in the nose, show how natural is the idea that the soul may escape by the mouth or nostrils.⁵

¹ *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 613.

Among the Esquimaux of Smith Sound male mourners plug up the left nostril and female mourners the right. (E. Bessels in *American Naturalist*, x. (1884), p. 877 ; cp. J. Murdoch, "Ethnological Results of the Point Barrow Expedition," *Ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*

(London, 1824), p. 370.

² B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes*, p. 5.

³ J. L. van der Toorn, "Fetichisme en Animisme bij den Minangkabauer en de Padagnische Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 1.

⁴ Zimmermann, *Die Inseln des Indischen und Stillen Meeres* ii. 286.

Often the soul is conceived as a bird ready to take flight. This conception has probably left traces in most languages,¹ and it lingers as a metaphor in poetry. But what is metaphor to a modern European poet was sober earnest to his savage ancestor, and is still so to many people. The Bororos of Brazil fancy that the human soul has the shape of a bird, and passes in that shape out of the body in dreams.² According to the Bilqula or Bella Coola Indians of British Columbia the soul dwells in the nape of the neck and resembles a bird enclosed in an egg. If the shell breaks and the soul flies away, the man must die. If he swoons or becomes crazed, it is because his soul has flown away without breaking its shell. The shaman can hear the buzzing of its wings, like the buzz of a mosquito, as the soul flits past; and he may catch and replace it in the nape of its owner's neck.³ A Melanesian wizard in Lepers' Island has been known to send out his soul in the form of an eagle to pursue a ship and learn the fortunes of some natives who were being carried off in it.⁴ The soul of Aristeas of Proconnesus was seen to issue from his mouth in the shape of a raven.⁵ There is a popular opinion in Bohemia that the parting soul comes forth from the mouth like a white bird.⁶ The Malays carry out the conception of the bird-soul in a number of odd ways. If the soul is a bird on the wing, it may be attracted by rice, and so either prevented from taking wing or lured back again from its perilous flight. Thus in Java when a

Sat. 62; "in primis labris animam habere," Seneca, *Natur. Quaest.* iii. praef. 16; "Voilà un pauvre malade qui a le feu dans le corps, et l'âme sur le bout des lèvres," J. de Brebeuf, in *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 113 (Canadian reprint); "This posture keeps the weary soul hanging upon the lip; ready to leave the carcass, and yet not suffered to take its wing," R. Bentley, "Sermon on Popery," quoted in Monk's *Life of Bentley*,² i. 382. In Czech they say of a dying person that his soul is on his tongue (Br. Jelinek, in *Mittheilungen der anthropolog. Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxi. (1891), p. 22).

¹ Compare the Greek *πνέουμαι*,

πνέω, etc.

² K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 511, 512.

³ Fr. Boas, in *Seventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 14 sq. (separate reprint of the *Report of the British Association for 1891*).

⁴ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 207 sq.

⁵ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 174. Compare Herodotus, iv. 14 sq.; Maximus Tyrius, *Dissert.* xvi. 2.

⁶ Br. Jelinek, "Materialien zur Vorgeschichte und Volkskunde Böhmens," *Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxi. (1891), p. 22.

... have escaped a great danger or have returned home unexpectedly after it had been supposed that they were lost.² Similarly in the district of Sintang, West Borneo, if any one has had a great fright, or escaped serious peril, or comes back after a long and dangerous journey, or has taken a solemn oath, the first thing that relations or friends do is to strew yellow rice on his head, mumbling, "Cluck! cluck! soul!" (*koer, koer semangka*) and when a person, whether man, woman, or child, has fallen out of a house or off a tree, and has been brought home, his wife or other kinswoman goes as speedily as possible to the spot where the accident happened, and there strews rice, which has been coloured yellow, while she utters the words, "Cluck! cluck! soul! So-and-so is back in the house again. Cluck! cluck! soul!" Then she gathers up the rice in a basket, carries it to the sufferer, and drops a few grains from her hand on his head, saying again, "Cluck! cluck! soul!"³ Here the intention clearly is to decoy back the loitering bird-soul and replace it in the head of its owner. In Southern Celebes they think that a bridegroom's soul is liable to fly away at marriage, so coloured rice is scattered over him to induce it to stay. And, in general, at festivals in Southern Celebes rice is strewed on the head of the person in whose honour the festival is held with the words, "Cluck! cluck! soul!"

successful war the welcome to the victorious prince takes the form of strewing him with roasted and coloured rice "to prevent his life-spirit, as if it were a bird, from flying out of his body in consequence of the envy of evil spirits."¹ Among the Minangkabauers of Sumatra the old rude notions of the soul seem to be dying out. Nowadays most of the people hold that the soul, being immaterial, has no shape or form. But some of the sorcerers assert that the soul goes and comes in the shape of a tiny man. Others are of opinion that it does so in the form of a fly; hence they make food ready to induce the absent soul to come back, and the first fly that settles on the food is regarded as the returning truant. But in native poetry and popular expressions there are traces of the belief that the soul quits the body in the form of a bird.²

The soul of a sleeper is supposed to wander away from his body and actually to visit the places, to see the persons, and to perform the acts of which he dreams. For example, when an Indian of Brazil or Guiana wakes up from a sound sleep, he is firmly convinced that his soul has really been away hunting, fishing, felling trees, or whatever else he has dreamed of doing, while all the time his body has been lying motionless in his hammock. A whole Bororo village has been thrown into a panic and nearly deserted because somebody had dreamed that he saw enemies stealthily approaching it. A Macusi Indian in weak health, who dreamed that his employer had made him haul the canoe up a series of difficult cataracts, bitterly reproached his master next morning for his want of consideration in thus making a poor invalid go out and toil during the night.³ Now this absence

words, the former means the sound made in calling fowls, and the latter means the soul. The expression for the ceremonies described in the text is *apakberrie soemāngā*. So common is the recall of the bird-soul among the Malays that the words *koer* or *kur semangat* ("cluck! cluck! soul!") often amount to little more than an expression of astonishment, like our "Good gracious me!" See W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 47, note 2.

¹ J. K. Niemann, "De Boegineezen

en Makassaren," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxviii. (1889), p. 281.

² J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), pp. 56-58.

³ K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, p. 340; E. F. im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, p. 344 sqq. A

e child will never wake.

Many causes may detain the sleeper's soul. Thus, the soul may meet the soul of another sleeper and the two so may fight; if a Guinea negro wakens with sore bones in the morning, he thinks that his soul has been thrashed by another soul in sleep.⁴ Or it may meet the soul of a person just deceased and be carried off by it; hence in the Malay lands the inmates of a house will not sleep the night after a death has taken place in it, because the soul of the deceased is supposed to be still in the house and they may meet it in a dream.⁵ Again, the soul may be prevented from returning by an accident or by physical force from returning. When a Dyak dreams of falling into the water, he supposes that this accident has really befallen his spirit, and he sends a wizard, who fishes for the spirit with a hand-net in the water till he catches it and restores it to its owner. The Santals tell how a man fell asleep, and growing very thirsty, his soul, in the form of a lizard, left his body and entered a pitcher of water to drink. Just then the owner

giving instance of the faith which natives repose in their dreams may be read in the *Relations des Jésuites*, t. 2, p. 86 sq. (Canadian reprint).

An Indian dreamed that he was taken and burnt alive by the Iroquois. So the next day his friends kindled a number of fires and partially burned him, by

Volksbrauch der Siebenbürger Sachsen (Berlin, 1893), p. 167.

⁴ J. L. Wilson, *Western Africa* (London, 1856), p. 220; A. B. H. *The Eve-speaking Peoples of the S. Coast*, p. 20.

⁵ J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebe*.

the pitcher happened to cover it; so the soul could not return to the body and the man died. While his friends were preparing to burn the body some one uncovered the pitcher to get water. The lizard thus escaped and returned to the body, which immediately revived; so the man rose up and asked his friends why they were weeping. They told him they thought he was dead and were about to burn his body. He said he had been down a well to get water, but had found it hard to get out and had just returned. So they saw it all.¹ A similar story is reported from Transylvania as follows. In the account of a witch's trial at Mühlbach last century it is said that a woman had engaged two men to work in her vineyard. After noon they all lay down to rest as usual. An hour later the men got up and tried to waken the woman, but could not. She lay motionless with her mouth wide open. They came back at sunset and still she lay like a corpse. Just at that moment a big fly came buzzing past, which one of the men caught and shut up in his leathern pouch. Then they tried again to waken the woman but could not. Afterwards they let out the fly; it flew straight into the woman's mouth and she awoke. On seeing this the men had no further doubt that she was a witch.²

It is a common rule with primitive people not to waken a sleeper, because his soul is away and might not have time to get back; so if the man wakened without his soul, he would fall sick. If it is absolutely necessary to rouse a sleeper, it must be done very gradually, to allow the soul time to return.³ A Fijian in Matuku, suddenly wakened

¹ *Indian Antiquary*, vii. (1878), p. 273; Bastian, *Völkerstämme am Brahmaputra*, p. 127. A similar story is told by the Hindoos, though the lizard form of the soul is not mentioned. See *Panjab Notes and Queries*, iii. § 679.

² E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 27 sq. A similar story is told in Holland (J. W. Wolf, *Nederlandse Sagen*, No. 250, p. 343 sq.). The story of King Gunthram belongs to the same class; the king's soul comes out of his mouth as a small reptile (Paulus Diaconus, *Hist. Langobardorum*, iii. 34). In an East Indian story of the same

type the sleeper's soul issues from his nose in the form of a cricket (Wilken in *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 940). In a Swabian story a girl's soul creeps out of her mouth in the form of a white mouse (Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. 303).

³ Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 103; R. G. Woodthorpe in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvi. (1897), p. 23; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 389; Blumentritt, "Der Ahnencultus und die religiösen Anschauungen der Malaier des Philipinen-Archipels," *Mittheilungen der*

one from which a man sometimes suffers after a deep sleep by saying that his soul is tired with the exertion made to return quickly to the body.² A Highland tale told to Hugh Miller on the picturesque shores of Loch Leven well illustrates the haste made by the soul to regain its throne when the sleeper has been prematurely roused by an insect friend. Two young men had been spending the heart of a warm summer day in the open air, and sat on a mossy bank to rest. Hard by was an ancient ruin separated from the bank on which they sat only by a slender runnel, across which there lay, immediately over a miniature cascade, a few withered stalks of grass. "Come, by the heat of the day, one of the young men fell asleep; his companion watched drowsily beside him; and when at once the watcher was aroused to attention by seeing the indistinct form, scarce larger than a humble-bee, issue from the mouth of the sleeping man, and, leaping upon the grass, move downwards to the runnel, which it crossed along the withered grass stalks, and then disappeared among the crevices of the ruin. Alarmed by what he saw, the watcher hastily shook his companion by the shoulder, and awoke him; though, with all his haste, the little cloud-creature, still more rapid in its movements, issued from

interstice into which it had gone, and, flying across the runnel, instead of creeping over the grass stalks and over the sward, as before, it re-entered the mouth of the sleeper, just as he was in the act of awakening. 'What is the matter with you?' said the watcher, greatly alarmed, 'what ails you?' 'Nothing ails me,' replied the other; 'but you have robbed me of a most delightful dream. I dreamed I was walking through a fine rich country, and came at length to the shores of a noble river; and, just where the clear water went thundering down a precipice, there was a bridge all of silver, which I crossed; and then, entering a noble palace on the opposite side, I saw great heaps of gold and jewels; and I was just going to load myself with treasure, when you rudely awoke me, and I lost all.'"¹

Still more dangerous is it in the opinion of primitive man to move a sleeper or alter his appearance, for if this were done the soul on its return might not be able to find or recognise its body, and so the person would die. The Minangkabauers of Sumatra deem it highly improper to blacken or dirty the face of a sleeper, lest the absent soul should shrink from re-entering a body thus disfigured.² In Bombay it is thought equivalent to murder to change the aspect of a sleeper, as by painting his face in fantastic colours or giving moustaches to a sleeping woman. For when the soul returns it will not know its own body and the person will die.³ The Servians believe that the soul of a sleeping witch often leaves her body in the form of a butterfly. If during its absence her body be turned round, so that her feet are placed where her head was before, the butterfly soul will not find its way back into her body through the mouth, and the witch will die.⁴ The Esthonians of the island of Oesel think that the gusts which sweep up

¹ Hugh Miller, *My Schools and Schoolmasters* (Edinburgh, 1854), ch. vi. p. 106 sq.

² J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagnsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdrage tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 50.

³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 116, § 530.

⁴ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 117 sq.; F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 112. The latter writer tells us that the witch's spirit is also supposed to assume the form of a fly, a hen, a turkey, a crow, and especially a toad.

business, his body lies
lead; and if meanwhile the body were accidentally m
he soul would never more find its way into it, but v
remain in the body of a wolf till death.² In the pictur
ut little known Black Mountain of Southern France, v
orms a sort of link between the Pyrenees and the Ceven
ey tell how a woman, who had long been suspecte
eing a witch, one day fell asleep at noon among
apers in the field. Resolved to put her to the test
apers carried her, while she slept, to another part of
ld, leaving a large pitcher on the spot from which
ld moved her. When her soul returned, it entered
tcher and cunningly rolled it over and over till the v
y beside her body, of which the soul thereupon
ssession.³

But in order that a man's soul should quit his bod
not necessary that he should be asleep. It may quit
his waking hours, and then sickness, insanity, or d
ll be the result. Thus the Ilocanes of Luzon think th
in may lose his soul in the woods or gardens, and tha
o has thus lost his soul loses also his senses. Hence be
y quit the woods or the fields they call to their s
et us go! let us go!" lest it should loiter behind or
ray. And when a man becomes crazed or mad, t
e him to the place where he is supposed to have lost
l and invite the truant spirit to return.

Mongols sometimes explain sickness by supposing that the patient's soul is absent, and either does not care to return to its body or cannot find the way back. To secure the return of the soul it is therefore necessary on the one hand to make its body as attractive as possible, and on the other hand to show the soul the way home. To make the body attractive all the sick man's best clothes and most valued possessions are placed beside him; he is washed, incensed, and made as comfortable as may be; and all his friends march thrice round the hut calling out the sick man's name and coaxing his soul to return. To help the soul to find its way back a coloured cord is stretched from the patient's head to the door of the hut. The priest in his robes reads a list of the horrors of hell and the dangers incurred by souls which wilfully absent themselves from their bodies. Then turning to the assembled friends and the patient he asks, "Is it come?" All answer "Yes," and bowing to the returning soul throw seed over the sick man. The cord which guided the soul back is then rolled up and placed round the patient's neck, who must wear it for seven days without taking it off. No one may frighten or hurt him, lest his soul, not yet familiar with its body, should again take flight.¹ Some of the Congo tribes believe that when a man is ill, his soul has left his body and is wandering at large. The aid of the sorcerer is then called in to capture the vagrant spirit and restore it to the invalid. Generally the physician declares that he has successfully chased the soul into the branch of a tree. The whole town thereupon turns out and accompanies the doctor to the tree, where the strongest men are deputed to break off the branch in which the soul of the sick man is supposed to be lodged. This they do and carry the branch back to the town, insinuating by their gestures that the burden is heavy and hard to bear. When the branch has been brought to the sick man's hut, he is placed in an upright position by its side, and the sorcerer performs the enchantments by which the soul is believed to be restored to its owner.² The soul or shade of a Déné or

¹ Bastian, *Die Seele und ihre Erscheinungsweisen in der Ethnographie*, p. 36.

² H. Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals* (London, 1890), p. 53 sq.

nothing more could reasonably be demanded for a people.¹ Among the Dyaks of the Kajan and Lower Melak districts you will often see, in houses where there are children, a basket of a peculiar shape with shells and dried fruit attached to it. These shells contain the remains of children's navel-strings, and the basket to which they are attached is commonly hung beside the place where the children sleep. When a child is frightened, for example by being bathed or by the bursting of a thunderstorm, it is taken from its body and nestles beside its old familiar friend, the navel-string in the basket, from which the mother easily induces it to return by shaking the basket and pressing it to the child's body.² In an Indian story a king conveys his soul into the dead body of a Brahman, and a hunchback conveys his soul into the deserted body of the king. The hunchback is a Brahman and the king is a Brahman. However, the hunchback is induced to show his skill by transferring his soul to the dead body of a parrot, and the king seizes the opportunity to regain possession of his own body.³ In another Indian story a Brahman reanimates the dead body of a king by conveying his soul into it. Meantime the Brahman's body has been buried, and his soul is obliged to remain in the body of the king. Similarly the Greeks told how the soul of Hermotimus

A. G. Morice, "The Western World," *Atlas de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*

Clazomenae used to quit his body and roam far and wide, bringing back intelligence of what he had seen on his rambles to his friends at home; until one day, when his spirit was abroad, his enemies contrived to seize his deserted body and committed it to the flames.¹ It is said that during the last seven years of his life Sultan Bayazid ate nothing that had life and blood in it. One day, being seized with a great longing for sheep's trotters, he struggled long in this glorious contest with his soul, until at last, a savoury dish of trotters being set before him, he said unto his soul, "My soul, the trotters are before thee; if thou wishest to enjoy them, leave the body and feed on them." Hardly had he uttered these words when a living creature was seen to issue from his mouth and drink of the juice in the dish, after which it endeavoured to return whence it came. But the austere sultan, determined to mortify his carnal appetite, prevented it with his hand from entering his mouth, and when it fell to the ground commanded that it should be beaten. The pages kicked it to death, and after this murder of his soul the sultan remained in gloomy seclusion, taking no part or interest in the affairs of government.²

The departure of the soul is not always voluntary. It may be extracted from the body against its will by ghosts, demons, or sorcerers. Hence, when a funeral is passing the house, the Karens of Burma tie their children with a special kind of string to a particular part of the house, in case the souls of the children should leave their bodies and go into the corpse which is passing. The children are kept tied in this way until the corpse is out of sight.³ And after the corpse has been laid in the grave, but before the earth has

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 174; Plutarch, *De genio Socratis*, 22; Lucian, *Musae Enconium*, 7. Plutarch calls the man Hermodorus. Epimenides, the Cretan seer, had also the power of sending his soul out of his body and keeping it out as long as he pleased. See Hesychius Milesius, in *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, ed. Müller, iv. 162; Suidas, s.v. 'Ερμηνίδης.

² *Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa in the Seventeenth Century by Evliyâ Efendi*, translated

from the Turkish by the Ritter Joseph von Hammer (Oriental Translation Fund), vol. i. pt. ii. p. 3. I have not seen this work. An extract from it, containing the above narrative, was kindly sent me by Colonel F. Tyrrel, and the exact title and reference were supplied to me by Mr. R. A. Nicholson, who was so good as to consult the book for me in the British Museum.

³ E. B. Cross, "On the Karens," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, iv. (1854), p. 311.

and when the people leave the spot they carry away
bamboos, begging their souls to come with them.¹ Fur-
ther returning from the grave each Karen provides him-
self with three little hooks made of branches of trees, and call-
ing his spirit to follow him, at short intervals, as he returns
makes a motion as if hooking it, and then thrusts the hook
into the ground. This is done to prevent the soul of the
living from staying behind with the soul of the dead.²
On the return of a Burmese or Shan family from a burial
they tie up the wrists of each member of the family
with a string, to prevent his or her "butterfly" or soul from
escaping; and this string remains till it is worn out and
falls off.³ When a mother dies leaving a young baby
Burmese think that the "butterfly" or soul of the living
follows that of the mother, and that if it is not recovered
the child must die. So a wise woman is called in to
rescue the baby's soul. She places a mirror near the coffin
and on the mirror a piece of feathery cotton down.
Holding a cloth in her open hands at the foot of the mirror
she with wild words entreats the mother not to take
after the "butterfly" or soul of her child, but to send it back.
As the gossamer down slips from the face of the mirror
it catches it in the cloth and tenderly places it on the baby's
breast. The same ceremony is sometimes observed when
one of two children that have played together dies. and

husband or wife.¹ Among some of the Dyak tribes of south-eastern Borneo, as soon as the coffin is carried to the place of burial, the house in which the death occurred is sprinkled with water, and the father of the family calls out the names of all his children and the other members of his household. For they think that the ghost loves to decoy away the souls of his kinsfolk, but that his designs upon them can be defeated by calling out their names, which has the effect of bringing back the souls to their owners. The same ceremony is repeated on the return from the burial.² It is a rule with the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia that a corpse must not be confined in the house, or the souls of the other inmates would enter the coffin, and they, too, would die. The body is taken out either through the roof or through a hole made in one of the walls, and is then confined outside the house.³ In the East Indian island of Keisar it is deemed imprudent to go near a grave at night, lest the ghosts should catch and keep the soul of the passer-by.⁴ The Kei Islanders believe that the spirits of their forefathers, angry at not receiving food, make people sick by detaining their souls. So they lay offerings of food on the grave and beg their ancestors to allow the soul of the sick to return or to drive it home speedily if it should be lingering by the way.⁵

In Bolang Mongondo, a district in the west of Celebes, all sickness is ascribed to the ancestral spirits who have carried off the patient's soul. The object therefore is to bring back the soul of the sufferer and restore it to him. An eye-witness has thus described the attempted cure of a sick boy. The priestesses, who acted as physicians, made a doll of cloth and fastened it to the point of a spear, which an old woman held upright. Round this doll the priestesses danced, uttering charms, and chirruping as when one calls

¹ C. J. S. F. Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 99 sq.; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 102; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 389.

² F. Grabowsky, in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ii. (1889), p. 182.

³ Fr. Boas, in *Eleventh Report on*

the North-Western Tribes of Canada, p. 6 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1896*).

⁴ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 414.

⁵ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 221 sq.

gravity, holding their hands on the patient's head. Suddenly there was a jerk, the priestesses whispered and shook heads, and the cloth was taken off—the soul had escaped. The priestesses gave chase to it, running round and round the house, clucking and gesticulating as if they were driving hens into a poultry-yard. At last they recaptured the soul at the foot of the stair and restored it to its owner as best they could. Much in the same way an Australian medicine-man sometimes brings the lost soul of a sick man into a puppet and restores it to the patient by pressing the puppet to the breast.² In Uea, one of the Loyalty Islands, the souls of the dead seem to have been credited with the power of stealing the souls of the living. For when a man was sick the soul-doctor would go with a large troop of men and women to the graveyard. Here the men played on flutes and the women whistled softly to lure the soul home. As this had gone on for some time they formed in procession and moved homewards, the flutes playing and the women whistling all the way, while they led back the wandering soul and delivered it gently along with open palms. On entering the patient's room, swelling they commanded the soul in a loud voice to enter his body.³ In Madagascar when a man was sick or lunatic in consequence of the loss of his soul, his friends dispatched a lizard in haste to fetch him a soul from the graveyard. The emissary repaired by night to the spot and having re-

or daughter, who had none. So saying he applied a bonnet to the hole, then folded it up and rushed back to the house of the sufferer, saying he had a soul for him. With that he clapped the bonnet on the head of the invalid, who at once said he felt much better and had recovered the soul which he had lost.¹

When a Dyak or Malay of some of the western tribes or districts of Borneo is taken ill, with vomiting and profuse sweating as the only symptoms, he thinks that one of his deceased kinsfolk or ancestors is at the bottom of it. To discover which of them is the culprit, a wise man or woman pulls a lock of hair on the crown of the sufferer's head, calling out the names of all his dead relations. The name at which the lock gives forth a sound is the name of the guilty party. If the patient's hair is too short to be pulled with effect, he knocks his forehead seven times against the forehead of a kinsman who has long hair. The hair of the latter is then pulled instead of that of the patient and answers to the test quite as well. When the blame has thus been satisfactorily laid at the door of the ghost who is responsible for the sickness, the physician, who is generally an old woman, remonstrates with him on his ill behaviour. "Go back," says she, "to your grave; what do you come here for? The soul of the sick man does not choose to be called by you, and will remain yet a long time in its body." Then she puts some ashes from the hearth in a winnowing van and moulds out of them a small figure or image in human likeness. Seven times she moves the basket with the little ashen figure up and down before the patient, taking care not to obliterate the figure, while at the same time she says, "Sickness, settle in the head, belly, hands, etc.; then quickly pass into the corresponding part of the image," whereupon the patient spits on the ashen image and pushes it from him with his left hand. Next the beldame lights a candle and goes to the grave of the person whose ghost is doing all the mischief. On the grave she throws the figure of ashes, calling out, "Ghost, plague the sick man no longer, and stay in your grave, that he may see you no more." On her return she asks the anxious relations in the house, "Has

¹ De Flacourt, *Histoire de la grande Isle Madagascar* (Paris, 1658), p. 101 sq.

a puppet on which to work his will instead of on the soul. In San Cristoval, one of the Melanesian island vicarious sacrifice takes the form of a pig or a fish. A malignant ghost of the name of Tapia is supposed to seize on the sick man's soul and tied it up to a banyan. Accordingly a man who has influence with Tapia takes a pig or fish to the holy place where the ghost resides and offers it to him, saying, "This is for you to eat in place of that man's soul; at this, don't kill him." This satisfies the ghost; the soul is loosed from the tree and carried back to the sufferer, and he naturally recovers.² In one of the New Hebrides a ghost will sometimes impound the souls of trespassers with a magic fence in his garden, and will only consent to put the souls out on receiving an unequal apology and a satisfactory assurance that no personal disrespect was intended.³ In Motlav, another Melanesian island, it is enough to call out the sick man's name in the same place where he rashly intruded, and then, when the cry of a kingfisher or some other bird is heard, to shout "Come back" to the soul of the sick man and run back with it to the house.⁴

It is a comparatively easy matter to save a soul which is merely tied up to a tree or detained as a vagrant in the other world; but it is a far harder task to fetch it up from the other world, if it once gets down there. When a D-

is ; for it may have strayed, or been stolen, or be languishing in the prison of the gloomy Erlik, lord of the world below. If it is anywhere in the neighbourhood, the shaman soon catches and replaces it in the patient's body. If it is far away, he searches the wide world till he finds it, ransacking the deep woods, the lonely steppes, and the bottom of the sea, not to be thrown off the scent even though the cunning soul runs to the sheep-walks in the hope that its footprints will be lost among the tracks of the sheep. But when the whole world has been searched in vain for the errant soul, the shaman knows that there is nothing for it but to go down to hell and seek the lost one among the spirits in prison. At the stern call of duty he does not shrink from the task, though he knows that the journey is toilsome, and that the travelling expenses, which are naturally defrayed by the patient, are very heavy. Sometimes the lord of the infernal regions will only agree to release the soul on condition of receiving another in its stead, and that one the soul of the sick man's dearest friend. If the patient consents to the substitution, the shaman turns himself into a hawk, pounces upon the soul of the friend as it soars from his slumbering body in the form of a lark, and hands over the fluttering, struggling thing to the grim warden of the dead, who thereupon sets the soul of the sick man at liberty. So the sick man recovers and his friend dies.¹ Among the Twana Indians of Washington Territory the descent of the medicine-men into the nether world to rescue lost souls is represented in pantomime before the eyes of the spectators, who include women and children as well as men. The surface of the ground is often broken to facilitate the descent of the rescue party. When the adventurous band is supposed to have reached the bottom, they journey along, cross at least one stream, and travel till they come to the abode of the spirits. These they surprise, and after a desperate struggle, sustained with great ardour and a prodigious noise, they succeed in rescuing the poor souls, and so, wrapping them up in cloth, they make the best of their way back to the upper world and restore the recovered souls to their

¹ V. M. Mikhailovskii, "Shamanism in Siberia and European Russia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), p. 69 sq.

rejoice in the high-sounding titles of "celestial age:
 bestriding galloping horses" and "literary graduates resi
 halfway up in the sky." When an infant is writhin
 convulsions, the frightened mother hastens to the roof o
 house, and, waving about a bamboo pole to which o
 he child's garments is attached, cries out several times, '
 child So-and-so, come back, return home!" Meant
 nother inmate of the house bangs away at a gong in
 hope of attracting the attention of the strayed soul, whic
 upposed to recognise the familiar garment and to slip
 :. The garment containing the soul is then placed o
 eside the child, and if the child does not die recover
 ure to follow sooner or later.³ Similarly we saw that s
 ndians catch a man's lost soul in his boots and restore i
 is body by putting his feet into them.⁴ When Galelari
 ariners are sailing past certain rocks or come to a r
 here they never were before, they must wash their faces,
 otherwise the spirits of the rocks or the river would sna
 way their souls.⁵ When a Dyak is about to leave a fo
 ough which he has been walking alone, he never forg
 ask the demons to give him back his soul, for it may
 at some forest-devil has carried it off. For the abduct
 a soul may take place without its owner being aw
 his loss, and it may happen either while he is awake

asleep.¹ The Papuans of Geelvinks Bay in New Guinea are apt to think that the mists which sometimes hang about the tops of tall trees in their tropical forests envelop a spirit or god called Narbrooi, who draws away the breath or soul of those whom he loves, thus causing them to languish and die. Accordingly, when a man lies sick, a friend or relation will go to one of these mist-capped trees and endeavour to recover the lost soul. At the foot of the tree he makes a peculiar sound to attract the attention of the spirit, and lights a cigar. In its curling smoke his fancy discerns the fair and youthful form of Narbrooi himself, who, decked with flowers, appears and informs the anxious inquirer whether the soul of his sick friend is with him or not. If it is, the man asks, "Has he done any wrong?" "Oh no!" the spirit answers, "I love him, and therefore I have taken him to myself." So the man lays down an offering at the foot of the tree, and goes home with the soul of the sufferer in a straw bag. Arrived at the house, he empties the bag with its precious contents over the sick man's head, rubs his arms and hands with ginger-root, which he had first chewed small, and then ties a bandage round one of the patient's wrists. If the bandage bursts, it is a sign that Narbrooi has repented of his bargain, and is drawing away the sufferer once more to himself.² In the Moluccas when a man is unwell it is thought that some devil has carried away his soul to the tree, mountain, or hill where he (the devil) resides. A sorcerer having pointed out the devil's abode, the friends of the patient carry thither cooked rice, fruit, fish, raw eggs, a hen, a chicken, a silken robe, gold, armlets, and so forth. Having set out the food in order they pray, saying: "We come to offer to you, O devil, this offering of food, clothes, gold, and so on; take it and release the soul of the patient for whom we pray. Let it return to his body, and he who now is sick shall be made whole." Then they eat a little and let the hen loose as a ransom for the soul of the patient; also they put down the raw eggs; but the silken robe, the gold, and the armlets

¹ Perelaer, *Ethnographische Beschrijving der Dajaks*, p. 26 sq.

de Papoeas van de Geelvinksbaai van Nieuw-Guinea," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nêderlandsch Indië*, ii. (1854), p. 375 sq.

² "Eenige bijzonderheden betreffende

...the demon, making a motion with a cloth as if he caught the soul in it. He must not look to right or left, speak a word to any one he meets, but must go straight to the patient's house. At the door he stands, and calling the sick person's name, asks whether he is returned. If answered from within that he is returned, he enters and holds the cloth in which he has caught the soul on the patient's throat, saying, "Now you are returned to the house." Sometimes a substitute is provided; a doll, dressed up in clothing and tinsel, is offered to the demon in exchange for the patient's soul, with these words, "Give us back the one which you have taken away and receive this pretty instead."² Among the Alfoors of Poso, in Central Celebes, a wooden puppet is offered to the demon as a substitute for the soul which he has abstracted, and the patient must identify himself with the puppet in order to identify himself with it. The effigy is then hung on a bamboo pole, which is planted at the place of sacrifice outside of the house. Here too are deposited offerings of rice, an egg, a little wood (which is afterwards kindled), a sherd of a broken cooking-pot, and so forth. A long rattan extends from the place of sacrifice to the sufferer, who grasps one end of it firmly, for along it his lost soul returns when the devil has kindly released it. All being ready, the priestess informs the demon that he has come to the wrong place, and that there are no doubt much better quarters where he could reside. Then the father of the patient

"O demon, we forgot to sacrifice to you. You have visited us with this sickness; will you now go away from us to some other place? We have made ready provisions for you on the journey. See, here is a cooking-pot, here are rice, fire, and a fowl. O demon, go away from us." With that the priestess strews rice towards the bamboo-pole to lure back the wandering soul; and the fowl promised to the devil is thrown in the same direction, but is instantly jerked back again by a string which, in a spirit of intelligent economy, has been previously attached to its leg. The demon is now supposed to accept the puppet, which hangs from the pole, and to release the soul, which, sliding down the pole and along the rattan, returns to its proper owner. And lest the evil spirit should repent of the barter which has just been effected, all communication with him is broken off by cutting down the pole.¹ Similarly the Mongols make up a horse of birch-bark and a doll, and invite the demon to take the doll instead of the patient and to ride away on the horse.²

Demons are especially feared by persons who have just entered a new house. Hence at a house-warming among the Alfoors of Minahassa in Celebes the priest performs a ceremony for the purpose of restoring their souls to the inmates. He hangs up a bag at the place of sacrifice and then goes through a list of the gods. There are so many of them that this takes him the whole night through without stopping. In the morning he offers the gods an egg and some rice. By this time the souls of the household are supposed to be gathered in the bag. So the priest takes the bag, and holding it on the head of the master of the house, says, "Here you have your soul; go (soul) to-morrow away

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), pp. 5-8.

² Bastian, *Die Seele*, p. 36 sq.; J. G. Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*, ii. 359 sq. This mode of curing sickness, by inducing the demon to swap the soul of the patient for an effigy, is practised also by the Dyaks and by some tribes

on the northern coast of New Guinea. See H. Ling Roth, "Low's Natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 117; E. L. M. Kühr, "Schetsen uit Borneo's Westersafdeeling," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlvii. (1897), p. 62 sq.; F. S. A. de Clercq, "De west- en Noordkust van Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea," *Tijdschrift van het kon. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 633 sq.

getting wet, in case it should rain ; and he is followed by a man brandishing a sword to deter other souls from attempting to rescue the captured spirit.³

In Nias, when a man dreams that a pig is flying under a neighbour's house, it is a sign that some one in the house will die. They think that the sun-god is driving away the shadows or souls of that household from this world of shadows to his own bright world of radiant light. A ceremony must needs be performed to win back these wandering souls to earth. Accordingly, while it is still night, the priest begins to drum and pray, and he continues his ceremony till about nine o'clock next morning. Then he takes a stand at an opening in the roof through which he can behold the sun, and spreading out a cloth waits till the beams of the morning sun fall full upon it. In the sun he thinks the wandering souls have come back again ; he wraps the cloth up tightly, and quitting the opening in the roof, hastens with his precious charge to the expectant household. Before each member of it he stops, and dipping his fingers into the cloth takes out his or her soul and returns it to the owner by touching the person on the forehead. The Samoans tell how two young wizards, passing a night where a chief lay very sick, saw a company of gods sitting on the mountain sitting in the doorway. They were handing from one to another the soul of the dying chief.

wrapt in a leaf, and had been passed from the gods inside the house to those sitting in the doorway. One of the gods handed the soul to one of the wizards, taking him for a god in the dark, for it was night. Then all the gods rose up and went away; but the wizard kept the chief's soul. In the morning some women went with a present of fine mats to fetch a famous physician. The wizards were sitting on the shore as the women passed, and they said to the women, "Give us the mats and we will heal him." So they went to the chief's house. He was very ill, his jaw hung down, and his end seemed near. But the wizards undid the leaf and let the soul into him again, and forthwith he brightened up and lived.¹

The Battas of Sumatra believe that the soul of a living man may transmigrate into the body of an animal. Hence, for example, the doctor is sometimes desired to extract the patient's soul from the body of a fowl, in which it has been hidden away by an evil spirit.²

Sometimes the lost soul is brought back in a visible shape. In Melanesia a woman knowing that a neighbour was at the point of death heard a rustling in her house, as of a moth fluttering, just at the moment when a noise of weeping and lamentation told her that the soul was flown. She caught the fluttering thing between her hands and ran with it, crying out that she had caught the soul. But though she opened her hands above the mouth of the corpse, it did not revive.³ In Lepers' Island, one of the New Hebrides, for ten days after a birth the father is careful not to exert himself or the baby would suffer for it. If during this time he goes away to any distance, he will bring back with him on his return a little stone representing the infant's soul. Arrived at home he cries, "Come hither," and puts down the stone in the house. Then he waits till the child sneezes, at which he cries, "Here it is"; for now he knows that the little soul has not been lost after all.⁴ The Salish

¹ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 142 sq.

² J. B. Neumann, "Het Pane en Bila-stroomgebied op het eiland Sumatra," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, dl. iii., Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 2 (1886),

p. 302.

³ Codrington, "Religious Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, x. (1881), p. 281; *id.*, *The Melanesians*, p. 267.

⁴ Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 229.

employ him to recover their souls. The whole night these soulless men go about the village from lodge to dancing and singing. Towards daybreak they go to a separate lodge, which is closed up so as to be totally dark. A small hole is then made in the roof, through which the medicine-man, with a bunch of feathers, brushes in the shape of bits of bone and the like, which he rubs on a piece of matting. A fire is next kindled, by the light of which the medicine-man sorts out the souls. He puts aside the souls of dead people, of which there are several; for if he were to give the soul of a dead person to a living man, the man would die instantly. Next he calls out the souls of all the persons present, and making them all to sit down before him, he takes the soul of each, in the shape of a splinter of bone, wood, or shell, and placing it on the owner's head, pats it with many prayers and continues till it descends into the heart and so resumes its place.¹ In Amboyna the sorcerer, to recover a soul devoured by demons, plucks a branch from a tree, and waving it from side to side as if to catch something, calls out the sick man's name. Returning he strikes the patient over the head and shoulders with the branch, into which the lost soul is supposed to have passed, and from which it returns to the patient.

¹ Horatio Hale, *U.S. Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, from the *Report of the British Expedition for 1889*; *id.*, in *Sixth*

the Babar Islands offerings for evil spirits are laid at the root of a great tree (*wokiorai*), from which a leaf is plucked and pressed on the patient's forehead and breast; the lost soul, which is in the leaf, is thus restored to its owner.¹ In some other islands of the same seas, when a man returns ill and speechless from the forest, it is inferred that the evil spirits which dwell in the great trees have caught and kept his soul. Offerings of food are therefore left under a tree and the soul is brought home in a piece of wax.² Amongst the Dyaks of Sarawak the priest conjures the lost soul into a cup, where it is seen by the uninitiated as a lock of hair, but by the initiated as a miniature human being. This the priest pokes back into the patient's body through an invisible hole in his skull.³ In Nias the sick man's soul is restored to him in the shape of a firefly, visible only to the sorcerer, who catches it in a cloth and places it on the forehead of the patient.⁴

Again, souls may be extracted from their bodies or detained on their wanderings not only by ghosts and demons but also by men, especially by sorcerers. In Fiji, if a criminal refused to confess, the chief sent for a scarf with which "to catch away the soul of the rogue." At the sight or even at the mention of the scarf the culprit generally made a clean breast. For if he did not, the scarf would be waved over his head till his soul was caught in it, when it would be carefully folded up and nailed to the end of a chief's canoe; and for want of his soul the criminal would pine and die.⁵ The sorcerers of Danger Island used to set snares for souls. The snares were made of stout cinet, about fifteen to thirty feet long, with loops on either side of different sizes, to suit the different sizes of souls; for fat souls there were large loops, for thin souls there were small ones. When a man was sick against whom the sorcerers had a grudge, they set

¹ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 356 sq.

² Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 376.

³ Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,³ i. 189; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 261. Sometimes the souls resemble cotton seeds (Spenser St. John, *l.c.*). Cp. *id.* i. 183.

⁴ Nieuwenhuisen en Rosenberg, "Verslag omtrent het Eiland Nias," *Verhandel. van het Batav. Genootsch. van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxx. 116; Rosenberg, *Der Malayische Archipel*, p. 174; E. Modigliani, *Viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 192.

⁵ Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 250.

of Senegambia, when a man wishes to revenge himself on his enemy he goes to the *Fitaure* (chief and priest) and prevails on him by presents to conjure the soul of his enemy into a large jar of red earthenware, which is deposited under a consecrated tree. The man whose soul is thus shut up in the jar soon dies.³ Some of the Congo natives think that enchanter's can get possession of human souls by enclosing them in tusks of ivory, sell them to the whites who makes them work for him in his country under the lash. It is believed that very many of the coast labourers are thus obtained ; so when these people go to trade they look anxiously about for their dead relations. The man whose soul is thus sold into slavery will die "in due course, if the time."⁴ In some parts of West Africa, indeed, wizards continually setting traps to catch souls that wander from bodies in sleep ; and when they have caught one, they throw it up over the fire, and as it shrivels in the heat the wizard sickens. This is done, not out of any grudge toward the sufferer, but purely as a matter of business. The wizard does not care whose soul he has captured, and will restore it to its owner if he is only paid for doing so. Sorcerers keep regular asylums for strayed souls, and any body who has lost or mislaid his own soul can always get another one from the asylum on payment of the usual fee. No blame whatever attaches to men who keep these

unkindly feelings. But there are also wretches who from pure spite or for the sake of lucre set and bait traps with the deliberate purpose of catching the soul of a particular man ; and in the bottom of the pot, hidden by the bait, are knives and sharp hooks which tear and rend the poor soul, either killing it outright or mauling it so as to impair the health of its owner when it succeeds in escaping and returning to him. Miss Kingsley knew a Kruman who became very anxious about his soul, because for several nights he had smelt in his dreams the savoury smell of smoked crawfish seasoned with red pepper. Clearly some ill-wisher had set a trap baited with this dainty for his dream-soul, intending to do him grievous bodily, or rather spiritual, harm ; and for the next few nights great pains were taken to keep his soul from straying abroad in his sleep. In the sweltering heat of the tropical night he lay sweating and snorting under a blanket, his nose and mouth tied up with a handkerchief to prevent the escape of his precious soul.¹

When Dyaks of the Upper Melawie are about to go out head-hunting they take the precaution of securing the souls of their enemies before they attempt to kill their bodies, calculating apparently that mere bodily death will soon follow the spiritual death, or capture, of the soul. With this intention they clear a small space in the underwood of the forest, and set up in the clearing one of those miniature houses in which it is customary to deposit the ashes of the dead. Food is placed in the little house, which, though raised on four posts, is connected with the ground by a tiny inverted ladder of the sort up which spirits are believed to swarm. When these preparations have been completed, the leader of the expedition comes and sits down a little way from the miniature house, and addressing the spirits of kinsmen who had the misfortune to be beheaded by their enemies, he says, "O ghosts of So-and-so, come speedily back to our village. We have rice in abundance. Our trees all bear ripe fruit. Our baskets are full to the brim. O ghosts, come swiftly back and forget not to bring your new friends and acquaintances with you." But by the new friends and acquaintances of the ghosts he means the souls of the

¹ Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 461 sq.

the souls of their toemen swarming unseen in the air. Taken completely by surprise, the panic-stricken souls flee in all directions, and are fain to hide under every leaf and stone on the ground. But even here their retreat is cut off. Now the leader of the expedition is hard at work, grubbing up with his hands every stone and leaf to right and left, thrusting them with feverish haste into the basket, which at once ties up securely. He now flatters himself that he has the souls of the enemy safe in his possession; and when in the course of the expedition the heads of the foe severed from their bodies, he will pack them into the basket in which their souls are already languishing in captivity.¹

In Hawaii there were sorcerers who caught souls of living people, shut them up in calabashes, and gave them to people to eat. By squeezing a captured soul in their hands they discovered the place where people had been secretly buried. Amongst the Canadian Indians, when a wizard wished to kill a man, he sent out his familiar spirits, who brought him the victim's soul in the shape of a stone or the like. The wizard struck the soul with a sword or an axe till it bled profusely, and as it bled the man to whom it belonged fell ill and died.² In Amboyna if a doctor is convinced that a patient's soul has been carried away by a demon beyond recovery

¹ E. L. M. Kühr. in *Internationales* prisoners whom they are about

seeks to supply its place with a soul abstracted from another man. For this purpose he goes by night to a house and asks, "Who's there?" If an inmate is incautious enough to answer, the doctor takes up from before the door a clod of earth, into which the soul of the person who replied is thought to have passed. This clod the doctor lays under the sick man's pillow, and performs certain ceremonies by which the stolen soul is conveyed into the patient's body. Then as he goes home the doctor fires two shots to frighten the soul from returning to its proper owner.¹ A Karen wizard will catch the wandering soul of a sleeper and transfer it to the body of a dead man. The latter, therefore, comes to life as the former dies. But the friends of the sleeper in turn engage a wizard to steal the soul of another sleeper, who dies as the first sleeper comes to life. In this way an indefinite succession of deaths and resurrections is supposed to take place.²

Nowhere perhaps is the art of abducting human souls more carefully cultivated or carried to higher perfection than in the Malay Peninsula. Here the methods by which the wizard works his will are various, and so too are his motives. Sometimes he desires to destroy an enemy, sometimes to win the love of a cold or bashful beauty. Some of the charms operate entirely without contact; in others, the receptacle into which the soul is to be lured has formed part of, or at least touched, the person of the victim. Thus, to take an instance of the latter sort of charm, the following are the directions given for securing the soul of one whom you wish to render distraught. Take soil from the middle of his footprint; wrap it up in pieces of red, black, and yellow cloth, taking care to keep the yellow outside; and hang it from the centre of your mosquito curtain with parti-coloured thread. It will then become your victim's soul. To complete the spiritual transformation, however, it is needful to switch the packet with a birch composed of seven leaf-ribs from a "green" cocoa-nut. Do this seven times at sunset, at midnight, and at sunrise, saying, "It is not earth that I switch,

¹ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Celebes en Papua*, p. 78 sq.

² E. B. Cross, "On the Karens," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, iv. (1854), p. 307.

the appropriate spell. In the following cases the charm takes effect without any contact whatever, whether direct or indirect, with the victim. When the moon, just risen, loomed above the eastern horizon, go out, and standing in moonlight, with the big toe of your right foot on the big toe of your left, make a speaking-trumpet of your right hand and recite through it the following words :

"OM. I loose my shaft, I loose it and the moon clouds over,
I loose it, and the sun is extinguished.
I loose it, and the stars burn dim.
But it is not the sun, moon, and stars that I shoot at,
It is the stalk of the heart of that child of the congregation,
So-and-so.

Cluck ! cluck ! soul of So-and-so, come and walk with me,
Come and sit with me,
Come and sleep and share my pillow.
Cluck ! cluck ! soul."

Repeat this thrice and after every repetition blow through your hollow fist.³ Or you may catch the soul in your turban. Go out on the night of the full moon and the two succeeding nights ; sit down on an ant-hill facing the moon, burn incense, and recite the following incantation :

"I bring you a betel leaf to chew,
Dab the lime on to it, Prince Ferocious,

As you remember your house and house-ladder, remember me.
 When thunder rumbles, remember me ;
 When wind whistles, remember me ;
 When the heavens rain, remember me ;
 When cocks crow, remember me ;
 When the dial-bird tells its tales, remember me ;
 When you look up at the sun, remember me ;
 When you look up at the moon, remember me,
 For in that self-same moon I am there.
 Cluck ! cluck ! soul of Somebody come hither to me.
 I do not mean to let you have my soul,
 Let your soul come hither to mine."

Now wave the end of your turban towards the moon seven times each night. Go home and put it under your pillow, and if you want to wear it in the daytime, burn incense and say, "It is not a turban that I carry in my girdle, but the soul of Somebody."¹

Perhaps the magical ceremonies just described may help to explain a curious rite, of immemorial antiquity, which was performed on a very solemn occasion at Athens. On the eve of the sailing of the fleet for Syracuse, when all hearts beat high with hope, and visions of empire dazzled all eyes, consternation suddenly fell on the people one May morning when they rose and found that most of the images of Hermes in the city had been mysteriously mutilated in the night. The impious perpetrators of the sacrilege were unknown, but whoever they were the priests and priestesses solemnly cursed them according to the ancient ritual, standing with their faces to the west and shaking red cloths up and down.² Perhaps in these cloths they were catching the souls of those at whom their curses were levelled, just as we have seen that Fijian chiefs used to catch the souls of criminals in scarves and nail them to canoes.³

The Indians of the Nass River, in British Columbia, are impressed with a belief that a physician may swallow his patient's soul by mistake. A doctor who is believed to have done so is made by the other doctors to stand over the patient, while one of them thrusts his fingers down the

¹ W. W. Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 576 sq.

² Lysias, *Or.* vi. 51, p. 51 ed. C. Scheibe. The passage was pointed out to me by my friend Mr. W. Wyse.

As to the mutilation of the Hermae, see Thucydides, vi. 27-29, 60 sq. ; Andocides, *Or.* i. 37 sqq. ; Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 18. ³ Above, p. 277.

doctor's throat, another kneads him in the stomach with his knuckles, and a third slaps him on the back. If the soul is not in him after all, and if the same process has been repeated upon all the doctors without success, it is concluded that the soul must be in the head-doctor's box. A party of doctors, therefore, waits upon him at his house and requests him to produce his box. When he has done so and arranged its contents on a new mat, they take him and hold him up by the heels with his head in a hole in the floor. In this position they wash his head, and "any water remaining from the ablution is taken and poured upon the sick man's head."¹ Among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia it is forbidden to pass behind the back of a shaman while he is eating, lest the shaman should inadvertently swallow the soul of the passer-by. When that happens, both the shaman and the person whose soul he has swallowed fall down in a swoon. Blood flows from the shaman's mouth, because the soul is too large for him and is tearing his inside. Then the clan of the person whose soul is doing this mischief must assemble and sing the song of the shaman. In time the suffering sorcerer vomits out the soul, which he exhibits in the shape of a small bloody ball in the open palms of his hands. He restores it to its owner, who is lying prostrate on a mat, by throwing it at him and then blowing on his head. The man whose soul was swallowed has very naturally to pay for the damage he did to the shaman as well as for his own cure.²

¹ J. B. McCullagh in *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, xiv. No. 164 (August 1887), p. 91. The same account is copied from the "North Star" (Sitka, Alaska, December 1888), in *Journal of American Folk-lore*, ii. (1889), p. 74 sq. Mr. McCullagh's account (which is closely followed in the text) of the latter part of the custom is not quite clear. It would seem that failing to find the soul in the head-doctor's box it occurs to them that he may have swallowed it, as the other doctors were at first supposed to have done. With a view of testing this hypothesis they hold him up by the heels to empty out

the soul; and as the water with which his head is washed may possibly contain the missing soul, it is poured on the patient's head to restore the soul to him. We have already seen that the recovered soul is often conveyed into the sick person's head.

² Fr. Boas, in *Eleventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 571 (*Report of the British Association for 1896*). For other examples of the capture or recovery of lost, stolen, and strayed souls, in addition to those which have been cited in the preceding pages, see Riedel, "De Topantunuasu of oorspronkelijke volksstammen van Central

But the spiritual dangers I have enumerated are not the only ones which beset the savage. Often he regards his shadow or reflection as his soul, or at all events as a vital part of himself, and as such it is necessarily a source of danger to him. For if it is trampled upon, struck, or stabbed, he will feel the injury as if it were done to his person; and if it is detached from him entirely (as he believes that it may be) he will die. In the island of Wetar there are magicians who can make a man ill by stabbing his shadow with a pike or hacking it with a sword.¹ After Sankara had destroyed the Buddhists in India, it is said that he journeyed to Nepaul, where he had some difference of opinion with the Grand Lama. To prove his supernatural powers, he soared into the air. But as he mounted up, the Grand Lama, perceiving his shadow swaying and wavering on the ground, struck his knife into it and down fell Sankara and broke his neck.² In the Babar Islands the

Selebes," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxv. (1886), p. 93; Neumann, "Het Pane en Bilastroom-gebeid," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, dl. iii., Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 2 (1886), p. 300 sq.; J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bei den Minangkabauer," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 51 sq.; H. Ris, "De onderafdeeling Klein Mandailing Oeloe en Pahantan," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1896), p. 529; H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 274; W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 49-51, 452-455, 570 sqq.; *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), pp. 128, 287; Priklonski, "Die Jakuten," in Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde*, ii. 218 sq.; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 388, iii. 236; *id.*, *Völkerstämme am Brahmaputra*, p. 23; *id.*, "Hügelstämme Assam's," *Verhandlungen der Berlin. Gesell. für Anthropol. Ethnol. und Urgeschichte*, 1881, p. 156; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, i. 283 sq., ii. 101 sq.;

Sproat, *Scenes and Studies of Savage Life*, p. 214; Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese*, p. 110 sq. (ed. Paxton Hood); T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 242; E. B. Cross, "On the Karens," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, iv. (1854), p. 309 sq.; A. W. Howitt, "On some Australian Beliefs," in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiii. (1884), p. 187 sq.; *id.*, "On Australian Medicine Men," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xvi. (1887), p. 41; E. P. Houghton, "On the Land Dayaks of Upper Sarawak," *Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London*, iii. (1870), p. 196 sq.; L. Dahle, "Sikidy and Vintana," *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Annual*, xi. (1887), p. 320 sq.; C. Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarckiae eorumque lingua, vita et religione pristina commentatio* (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 416 sq. My friend W. Robertson Smith suggested to me that the practice of hunting souls, which is denounced in Ezekiel xiii. 17 sqq., may have been akin to those described in the text.

¹ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 440.

² Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, v. 455.

demons get power over a man's soul by holding fast his shadow, or by striking and wounding it.¹ The natives of Nias tremble at the sight of a rainbow, because they think it is a net spread by a powerful spirit to catch their souls.² In the Banks Islands, Melanesia, there are certain stones of a remarkably long shape which go by the name of *tamate gangan* or "eating ghosts," because certain powerful and dangerous ghosts are believed to lodge in them. If a man's shadow falls on one of these stones, the ghost will draw his soul out from him, so that he will die. Such stones, therefore, are set in a house to guard it; and a messenger sent to a house by the absent owner will call out the name of the sender, lest the watchful ghost in the stone should fancy that he came with evil intent and should do him a mischief.³ In Florida, one of the Solomon Islands, there are places sacred to ghosts, some in the village, some in the gardens, and some in the bush. No man would pass one of these places when the sun was so low as to cast his shadow into it, for then the ghost would draw it from him.⁴ The Indian tribes of the Lower Fraser River believe that man has four souls, of which the shadow is one, though not the principal, and that sickness is caused by the absence of one of the souls. Hence no one will let his shadow fall on a sick shaman, lest the latter should purloin it to replace his own lost soul.⁵ At a funeral in China, when the lid is about to be placed on the coffin, most of the bystanders, with the exception of the nearest kin, retire a few steps or even retreat to another room, for a person's health is believed to be endangered by allowing his shadow to be enclosed in a coffin. And when the coffin is about to be lowered into the grave most of the spectators recoil to a little distance lest their shadows should fall into the grave and harm should thus be done to their persons. The geomancer and his assistants stand on the side of the grave which is turned away from the sun; and the grave-diggers and coffin-bearers attach their shadows firmly to their persons by tying a strip of cloth tightly round

¹ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 340.

² E. Modigliani, *Viaggio a Nias*, p. 620, cp. p. 624.

³ Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 184.

⁴ Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 176.

⁵ Fr. Boas, in *Ninth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 461 sq. (*Report of the British Association for 1894*).

their waists.¹ When members of some Victorian tribes were performing magical ceremonies for the purpose of bringing disease and misfortune on their enemies, they took care not to let their shadows fall on the object by which the evil influence was supposed to be wafted to the foe.² In Darfur people think that they can do an enemy to death by burying a certain root in the earth on the spot where the shadow of his head happens to fall. The man whose shadow is thus tampered with loses consciousness at once and will die if the proper antidote be not administered. In like manner they can paralyse any limb, as a hand or leg, by planting a particular root in the earth in the shadow of the limb they desire to maim.³ Nor is it human beings alone who are thus liable to be injured by means of their shadows. Animals are to some extent in the same predicament. A small snail, which frequents the neighbourhood of the limestone hills in Perak, is believed to suck the blood of cattle through their shadows; hence the beasts grow lean and sometimes die from loss of blood.⁴ The ancients believed that in Arabia, if a hyæna trod on a man's shadow, it deprived him of the power of speech and motion; and that if a dog, standing on a roof in the moonlight, cast a shadow on the ground and a hyæna trod on it, the dog would fall down as if dragged with a rope.⁵ Clearly in these cases the shadow, if not equivalent to the soul, is at least regarded as a living part of the man or the animal, so that injury done to the shadow is felt by the person or animal as if it were done to his body.

Conversely, if the shadow is a vital part of a man, it may under certain circumstances be as hazardous to come into contact with a person's shadow as it would be to come into contact with the person himself. In the Punjaub

¹ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, i. 94, 210 sq.

² J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 54.

³ Mohammed Ebn-Omar El-Tounsy, *l'oyage au Darfour*, traduit de l'Arabe par le Dr. Perron (Paris, 1845), p. 347.

⁴ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 306.

⁵ [Aristotle] *Mirab. Auscult.* 145

(157); *Geoponica*, xv. 1. In the latter passage, for *κατάγει τὰν ῥῆν* we must read *κατάγει αὐτὸν*, an emendation necessitated by the context, and confirmed by the passage of Damiri quoted and translated by Bochart, *Hierozoicon*, i. col. 833, "*cum ad lunam calcet umbram canis, qui supra tectum est, canis ad eam [scil. hyaenam] decedit, et ea illum devorat.*" Cp. W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*,² p. 129.

time of Victoria novices at initiation were cautioned not to let a woman's shadow fall across them, as this would make them thin, lazy, and stupid.³ An Australian native has been known to have once nearly died of fright because the shadow of his mother-in-law fell on his legs as he lay asleep under a tree.⁴ The awe and dread with which the untutored native contemplates his mother-in-law are amongst the most familiar facts of anthropology. In New Britain the imagination fails to conceive the extent and nature of the calamities which would result from a man's accidentally speaking to his wife's mother; suicide of one or both probably be the only course open to them. The most solemn form of oath a New Briton can take is, "I am not telling the truth, I hope I may shake hands with my mother-in-law."⁵ At Vanua Lava in the Banks' Islands a man would not so much as follow his mother-in-law to the beach until the rising tide had washed out her footprints in the sand.⁶ In Uganda a man may not see his mother-in-law or speak to her face to face. If he wishes to have communication with her, it must be done by a third person or through a wall or closed door. Were he to break this rule he would be sure to be seized with shaking

³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 14, § 122. *Tribe," Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiv. (1885), p. 316

⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the*

hands and general debility.¹ To avoid meeting his mother-in-law face to face a very desperate Apache Indian, one of the bravest of the brave, has been seen to clamber along the brink of a precipice at the risk of his life, hanging on to rocks from which had he fallen he would have been dashed to pieces or at least have broken several of his limbs.²

Where the shadow is regarded as so intimately bound up with the life of the man that its loss entails debility or death, it is natural to expect that its diminution should be regarded with solicitude and apprehension, as betokening a corresponding decrease in the vital energy of its owner. An elegant Greek rhetorician has compared the man who lives only for fame to one who should set all his heart on his shadow, puffed up and boastful when it lengthened, sad and dejected when it shortened, wasting and pining away when it dwindled to nothing. The spirits of such an one, he goes on, would necessarily be volatile, since they must rise or fall with every passing hour of the day. In the morning, when the level sun, just risen above the eastern horizon, stretched out his shadow to enormous length, rivalling the shadows cast by the cypresses and the towers on the city wall, how blithe and exultant he would be, fancying that in stature he had become a match for the fabled giants of old ; with what a lofty port he would then strut and show himself in the streets and the market-place and wherever men congregated, that he might be seen and admired of all. But as the day wore on, his countenance would change and he would slink back crestfallen to his house. At noon, when his once towering shadow had shrunk to his feet, he would shut himself up and refuse to stir abroad, ashamed to look his fellow-townsmen in the face ; but in the afternoon his drooping spirits would revive, and as the day declined his joy and pride would swell again with the length of the evening shadows.³ The rhetorician who thus sought to expose the vanity of fame as an object of human ambition by likening it to an ever-changing shadow, little dreamed that in real life there were men who set almost as much store

¹ From a series of notes on the Waganda sent me by my friend the Rev. John Roscoe, missionary to Uganda.

² J. G. Bourke, *On the Border with Crook*, p. 132.

³ Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* lxvii. vol. ii. p. 230, ed. Dindorf.

In the morning, when his shadow fell longest, his was greatest ; but as the shadow shortened toward his strength ebbed with it, till exactly at noon it reached its lowest point ; then, as the shadow stretched out in the afternoon, his strength returned. A certain hero discovered the secret of Tukaitawa's strength and slew him at noon, the only time possible that even in lands outside the tropics the shadow of the diminished shadow at noon may have come into existence, even if it did not give rise, to the superstitious dread of the hour, which that hour has been viewed by many people, from the Greeks, ancient and modern, the Bretons, the Celts, and the Roumanians of Transylvania.³ In this observation, too, we may perhaps detect the reason why noon was regarded by the Greeks as the hour for sacrificing to the shades of the dead.⁴ The loss of the shadow, real or apparent, has often been regarded as a cause or precursor of death. Heracles, when he entered the sanctuary of Zeus on Mount Lycaeus in Arcadia, was believed to lose his shadow and to die within the day. In Lower Austria on the evening of St. Sylvester, the last day of the year—the company seated round the table mark whose shadow is not cast on the wall, and prophesy that the seemingly shadowless person will die next day.

³ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 61.

⁴ Cf. *Myths and Songs of the South*.

Georgeakis et Pineau, *Folklore de la Grèce*, p. 342 ; De Nore, *Mythes, et traditions des Grecs*, p. 333.

Similar presages are drawn in Germany both on St. Sylvester's day and on Christmas Eve.¹ The Galelareese fancy that if a child resembles his father, they will not both live long; for the child has taken away his father's likeness or shadow, and consequently the father must soon die.²

Nowhere, perhaps, does the equivalence of the shadow to the life or soul come out more clearly than in some customs practised to this day in South-Eastern Europe. In modern Greece, when the foundation of a new building is being laid, it is the custom to kill a cock, a ram, or a lamb, and to let its blood flow on the foundation-stone, under which the animal is afterwards buried. The object of the sacrifice is to give strength and stability to the building. But sometimes, instead of killing an animal, the builder entices a man to the foundation-stone, secretly measures his body, or a part of it, or his shadow, and buries the measure under the foundation-stone; or he lays the foundation-stone upon the man's shadow. It is believed that the man will die within the year.³ In the island of Lesbos it is deemed enough if the builder merely casts a stone at the shadow of a passer-by; the man whose shadow is thus struck will die, but the building will be solid.⁴ A Bulgarian mason measures the shadow of a man with a string, places the string in a box, and then builds the box into the wall of the edifice. Within forty days thereafter the man whose shadow was measured will be dead and his soul will be in the box beside the string; but often it will come forth and appear in its former shape to persons who were born on a Saturday. If a Bulgarian builder cannot obtain a human shadow for this purpose, he will content himself with measuring the shadow of the first animal that comes that way.⁵ The Roumanians of Transylvania think that he whose shadow is

¹ Th. Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 341; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 401; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 314.

² M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch -*

Indië, xiv. (1895), p. 459.

³ B. Schmidt, *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen*, p. 196 sq.

⁴ Georgeakis et Pineau, *Folk-lore de Lesbos*, p. 346 sq.

⁵ A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipsic, 1898), p. 199; Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 127.

thus immured will die within forty days ; so persons passing by a building which is in course of erection may hear a warning cry, "Beware lest they take thy shadow!" Not long ago there were still shadow-traders whose business it was to provide architects with the shadows necessary for securing their walls.¹ In these cases the measure of the shadow is looked on as equivalent to the shadow itself, and to bury it is to bury the life or soul of the man, who, deprived of it, must die. Thus the custom is a substitute for the old practice of immuring a living person in the walls, or crushing him under the foundation-stone of a new building, in order to give strength and durability to the structure.¹

As some peoples believe a man's soul to be in his shadow, so other (or the same) peoples believe it to be in his reflection in water or a mirror. Thus "the Andamanese do not regard their shadows but their reflections (in any mirror) as their souls."³ According to one account, some of the Fijians thought that man has two souls, a light one and a dark one ; the dark one goes to Hades, the light one is his reflection in water or a mirror.⁴ When the Motumotu of New Guinea first saw their likenesses in a looking-glass they thought that their reflections were their souls.⁵ The reflection-soul, being external to the man, is exposed to much the same dangers as the shadow-soul. Among the

¹ W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Römischen Siebenbürgens*, p. 27 ; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 17 sq. Compare F. S. Krauss, *Volksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 161.

² As to this custom, see E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,² i. 104 sqq. ; F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, pp. 284-296 ; F. S. Krauss, "Der Bauopfer bei den Südslaven," *Mittheilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xvii. (1887), pp. 16-24 ; P. Sartori, "Ueber das Bauopfer," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xxx. (1898), pp. 1-54.

³ E. H. Mann, *Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands*, p. 94.

⁴ Williams, *Fiji*, i. 241. However, Mr. Lorimer Fison writes to me that

this reported belief in a bright soul and a dark soul "is one of Williams' absurdities. I inquired into it on the island where he was, and found that there was no such belief. He took the word for 'shadow,' which is a reduplication of *yalo*, the word for soul, as meaning the dark soul. But *yalo-yalo* does not mean the soul at all. It is not part of a man as his soul is. This is made certain by the fact that it does not take the possessive suffix *yalo-na* = his soul ; but *mona yalo-yalo* = his shadow. This settles the question beyond dispute. If *yalo-yalo* were any kind of soul, the possessive form would be *yalo-yalona*" (letter dated August 26th, 1898).

⁵ James Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea* (London, 1887), p. 170.

Galelareese, half-grown lads and girls may not look at themselves in a mirror; for they say that the mirror takes away their bloom and leaves them ugly.¹ And as the shadow may be stabbed, so may the reflection. Hence an Aztec mode of keeping sorcerers from the house was to leave a vessel of water with a knife in it behind the door. When a sorcerer entered he was so much alarmed at seeing his reflection in the water transfixed by a knife that he turned and fled.² The Zulus will not look into a dark pool because they think there is a beast in it which will take away their reflections, so that they die.³ The Basutos say that crocodiles have the power of thus killing a man by dragging his reflection under water.⁴ In Saddle Island, Melanesia, there is a pool "into which if any one looks he dies; the malignant spirit takes hold upon his life by means of his reflection on the water."⁵

We can now understand why it was a maxim both in ancient India and ancient Greece not to look at one's reflection in water, and why the Greeks regarded it as an omen of death if a man dreamed of seeing himself so reflected.⁶ They feared that the water-spirits would drag the person's reflection or soul under water, leaving him soulless to die. This was probably the origin of the classical story of the beautiful Narcissus, who languished and died in consequence of seeing his reflection in the water. The explanation that he died for love of his own fair image was probably devised later, after the old meaning of the story was forgotten. The same ancient belief lingers, in a faded form, in the English superstition that whoever sees a water-fairy must pine and die.

¹ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 462.

² Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle-Espagne* (Paris, 1880), p. 314. The Chinese hang brass mirrors over the idols in their houses, because it is thought that evil spirits entering the house and seeing themselves in the mirrors will be scared away (*China Review*, ii. 164).

³ Callaway, *Nursery Tales, Traditions, and Histories of the Zulus*, p. 342.

⁴ Arrousset et Daumas, *Voyage d'exploration au Nord-est de la Colonie du Cap de Bonne-Espérance*, p. 12.

⁵ Codrington, "Religious Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* x. (1881), p. 313; *id.*, *The Melanesians*, p. 186.

⁶ *Fragmenta Philosoph. Graec.* ed. Mullach, i. 510; Artemidorus, *Onirocr.* ii. 7; *Laws of Manu*, iv. 38.

"Alas, the moon should ever beam
To show what man should never see!—
I saw a maiden on a stream,
And fair was she!

"I staid to watch, a little space,
Her parted lips if she would sing;
The waters closed above her face
With many a ring.

"I know my life will fade away,
I know that I must vainly pine,
For I am made of mortal clay,
But she's divine!"

Further, we can now explain the widespread custom of covering up mirrors or turning them to the wall after a death has taken place in the house. It is feared that the soul, projected out of the person in the shape of his reflection in the mirror, may be carried off by the ghost of the departed, which is commonly supposed to linger about the house till the burial. The custom is thus exactly parallel to the Aru custom of not sleeping in a house after a death for fear that the soul, projected out of the body in a dream, may meet the ghost and be carried off by it.¹ In Oldenburg it is thought that if a person sees his image in a mirror after a death he will die himself. So all the mirrors in the house are covered up with white cloth.² In some parts of Germany and Belgium after a death not only the mirrors but everything that shines or glitters (windows, clocks, etc.) is covered up,³ doubtless because they might reflect a person's image. The same custom of covering up mirrors or turning them to the wall after a death prevails in England, Scotland, and Madagascar.⁴ The Suni Mohammedans of Bombay cover with a cloth the mirror in the room of a dying man and do not remove it until the corpse is carried out for burial. They also cover the looking-glasses in their bedrooms before retiring to rest at

¹ See above, p. 256.

² Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 429 sq., § 726.

³ Wuttke, *l.c.*; E. Monseur, *Le Folklore Wallon*, p. 40.

⁴ *Folk-lore Journal*, iii. 281; Dyer, *English Folk-lore*, p. 109; J. Napier, *Folk-lore, or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, p. 60; W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, i. 238; *Revue d'Ethnographie*, v. 215.

night.¹ The reason why sick people should not see themselves in a mirror, and why the mirror in a sick-room is therefore covered up,² is also plain; in time of sickness, when the soul might take flight so easily, it is particularly dangerous to project the soul out of the body by means of the reflection in a mirror. The rule is therefore precisely parallel to the rule observed by some peoples of not allowing sick people to sleep;³ for in sleep the soul is projected out of the body, and there is always a risk that it may not return. "In the opinion of the Raskolniks a mirror is an accursed thing, invented by the devil,"⁴ perhaps on account of the mirror's supposed power of drawing out the soul in the reflection and so facilitating its capture.

As with shadows and reflections, so with portraits; they are often believed to contain the soul of the person portrayed. People who hold this belief are naturally loth to have their likenesses taken; for if the portrait is the soul, or at least a vital part of the person portrayed, whoever possesses the portrait will be able to exercise a fatal influence over the original of it. Mortal terror was depicted on the faces of the Battas upon whom von Bremer turned the lens of his camera; they thought he wished to carry off their shadows or spirits in a little box.⁵ The Canelos Indians of South America think that their soul is carried away in their picture. Two of them having been photographed were so alarmed that they came back next day on purpose to ask if it were really true that their souls had been taken away.⁶

¹ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 169, § 906.

² Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 151, § 1097; *Folk-lore Journal*, vi. (1888), p. 145 sq.; *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 61, § 378.

³ J. G. Frazer, "On certain burial customs as illustrative of the primitive theory of the soul," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xv. (1886), p. 82 sqq. Among the heathen Arabs, when a man had been stung by a scorpion, he was kept from sleeping for seven days, during which he had to wear a woman's bracelets and earrings (Rasmussen, *Addimenta ad historiam Arabum ante Islamismum*, p. 65, compare p. 69). The old

Mexican custom of masking and veiling the images of the gods so long as the king was sick (Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, iii. 571 sq.) may perhaps have been intended to prevent the images from drawing away the king's soul.

⁴ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 117. The objection, however, may be merely Puritanical. W. Robertson Smith informed me that the peculiarities of the Raskolniks are largely due to exaggerated Puritanism.

⁵ Von Bremer, *Besuch bei den Kannibalen Sumatras* (Würzburg, 1894), p. 195.

⁶ A. Simson, "Notes on the Jivaros

artist's picture as a kind of hostage or guarantee.³ The Dakotas hold that every man has several *avana* "apparitions," of which after death one remains in the grave, while another goes to the place of the departed. For many years no Yankton Dakota would consent to his picture taken lest one of his "apparitions" should remain after death in the picture instead of going to spirit-land.⁴ The Araucanians of Chile are unwilling to have their portraits drawn, for they believe that he who has his portraits in his possession could, by means of them, injure or destroy themselves.⁵ Until the reign of the present King of Siam no Siamese coins were ever stamped with the image of the king, "for at that time there was a strong prejudice against the making of portraits in any medium. Europeans who travel into the jungle have, at the present time, only to point a camera at a crowd in order to procure its instant dispersion. When a copy of the face of a person is made and taken away from him, a portion of his life goes with the picture. Unless the sovereign had been blessed with the years of a Methusaleh he scarcely have permitted his life to be distributed in pieces together with the coins of the realm."⁶ When Catat and some companions were exploring the

and Canelos Indians," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ix. (1880), p. 302. Similar notions

³ *Ibid.* ii. 166.

country on the west coast of Madagascar the people suddenly became hostile. The day before the travellers, not without difficulty, had photographed the royal family, and now found themselves accused of taking the souls of the natives for the purpose of selling them when they returned to France. Denial was vain; in compliance with the custom of the country they were obliged to catch the souls, which were then put into a basket and ordered by Dr. Catat to return to their respective owners.¹ The same belief still lingers in various parts of Europe. Not very many years ago some old women in the Greek island of Carpathus were very angry at having their likenesses drawn, thinking that in consequence they would pine and die.² It is a German superstition that if you have your portrait painted, you will die.³ Some people in Russia object to having their silhouettes taken, fearing that if this is done they will die before the year is out.⁴ An artist once vainly attempted to sketch a gypsy girl. "I won't have her drawed out," said the girl's aunt. "I told her I'd make her scrawl the earth before me, if ever she let herself be drawed out again." "Why, what harm can there be?" "I know there's a fiz (a charm) in it. There was my youngest, that the gorja drawed out on Newmarket Heath, she never held her head up after, but wasted away, and died, and she's buried in March churchyard."⁵ There are persons in the West of Scotland "who refuse to have their likenesses taken lest it prove unlucky; and give as instances the cases of several of their friends who never had a day's health after being photographed."⁶

§ 3. *Royal and Priestly Taboos (continued)*

So much for the primitive conceptions of the soul and the dangers to which it is exposed. These conceptions are

¹ E. Clodd, in *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 73 sq., referring to *The Times*, 24th March 1891.

² "A far-off Greek Island," *Blackwood's Magazine*, February 1886, p. 235.

³ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., in *Voigtlande*, p. 423.

⁴ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 117.

⁵ F. H. Groome, *In Gipsy Tents* (Edinburgh, 1880), p. 337 sq.

⁶ James Napier, *Folk-lore, or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, p. 142. For more examples of the same sort, see R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Neue Folge (Leipsic, 1889), p. 18 sqq.

whole people, and whom therefore it was the common interest of all to preserve? Therefore we should expect to find the king's life protected by a system of precautions and safeguards still more numerous and minute than which in primitive society every man adopts for the safety of his own soul. Now in point of fact the life of early kings is regulated, as we have seen and shall see more fully presently, by a very exact code of rules. We do not then conjecture that these rules are in fact very safeguards which we should expect to find adopted for the protection of the king's life? An examination of the rules themselves confirms this conjecture. For from it appears that some of the rules observed by the kings are identical with those observed by private persons out of regard for the safety of their souls; and even of those which seem peculiar to the king, many, if not all, can most readily be explained on the hypothesis that they are nothing but safeguards or lifeguards of the king. We will now enumerate some of these royal rules or taboos, offering on each of them such comments and explanations as may serve to set the original intention of the king in its proper light.

As the object of the royal taboos is to isolate the king from all sources of danger, their general effect is to constrain him to live in a state of seclusion, more or less common

of savage prudence. Hence before strangers are allowed to enter a district, or at least before they are permitted to mingle freely with the inhabitants, certain ceremonies are often performed by the natives of the country for the purpose of disarming the strangers of their magical powers, of counteracting the baneful influence which is believed to emanate from them, or of disinfecting, so to speak, the tainted atmosphere by which they are supposed to be surrounded. Thus in the island of Nanumea (South Pacific) strangers from ships or from other islands were not allowed to communicate with the people until they all, or a few as representatives of the rest, had been taken to each of the four temples in the island, and prayers offered that the god would avert any disease or treachery which these strangers might have brought with them. Meat offerings were also laid upon the altars, accompanied by songs and dances in honour of the god. While these ceremonies were going on, all the people except the priests and their attendants kept out of sight.¹ On returning from an attempted ascent of the great African mountain Kilimanjaro, which is believed by the neighbouring tribes to be tenanted by dangerous demons, Mr. New and his party, as soon as they reached the border of the inhabited country, were disenchanted by the inhabitants, being sprinkled with "a professionally prepared liquor, supposed to possess the potency of neutralising evil influences, and removing the spell of wicked spirits."² In the interior of Yoruba (West Africa) the sentinels at the gates of towns often oblige European travellers to wait till nightfall before they admit them, the fear being that if the strangers were admitted by day the devils would enter behind them.³ Amongst the Ot Danoms of Borneo it is the custom that strangers entering the territory should pay to the natives a certain sum, which is spent in the sacrifice of animals (buffaloes or pigs) to the spirits of the land and water, in order to reconcile them to the presence of the strangers, and to induce them not to

¹ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 291 sq.

² Charles New, *Life, Wanderings, and Labours in Eastern Africa*, p. 432. Cp. *ibid.* pp. 400, 402. For the demons on Mt. Kilimanjaro, see also

Krapf, *Travels, Researches, etc., in Eastern Africa*, p. 192.

³ Pierre Bouche, *La Côte des Esclaves et le Dahomey* (Paris, 1885), p. 133.

be offended and would send disease on the inmates of the Mentawej Islands, when a stranger enters a house there are children, the father or other member of the family takes the ornament which the children wear in their hands and gives it to the stranger, who holds it in his hands while and then gives it back to him. This is to protect the children from the evil effect which the sight of a stranger might have upon them.⁴ When a Dutch steamer was approaching their villages, the people of Biak, an island off the north coast of New Guinea, shook and knocked their idols about in order to ward off ill-luck.⁵ At Shepheard's Isle Captain Moresby had to be disenchanted before he was allowed to land his boat's crew. When he leaped ashore a devil-man seized his right hand and waved a bunch of leaves over the captain's head. Then "he placed the bunch in my left hand, putting a small green twig into my mouth, still holding me fast, and then, as if with great effort, drew the twig from his mouth—this was extracting the spirit—after which he blew violently, as if to speed it. I now held a twig between my teeth, and he went through the same process." Then the two raced round a couple of sticks fixed in the ground and bent to an angle at the top which had leaves tied to it. After some more ceremony the devil-man concluded by leaping to the level of Captain Moresby's shoulders (his hands resting on the captain's shoulders).

conquered the devil, and was now trampling him into the earth."¹ North American Indians "have an idea that strangers, particularly white strangers, are oftentimes accompanied by evil spirits. Of these they have great dread, as creating and delighting in mischief. One of the duties of the medicine chief is to exorcise these spirits. I have sometimes ridden into or through a camp where I was unknown or unexpected, to be confronted by a tall, half-naked savage, standing in the middle of the circle of lodges, and yelling in a sing-song, nasal tone, a string of unintelligible words."²

When Crevaux was travelling in South America he entered a village of the Apalai Indians. A few moments after his arrival some of the Indians brought him a number of large black ants, of a species whose bite is painful, fastened on palm leaves. Then all the people of the village, without distinction of age or sex, presented themselves to him, and he had to sting them all with the ants on their faces, thighs, and other parts of their bodies. Sometimes when he applied the ants too tenderly they called out "More! more!" and were not satisfied till their skin was thickly studded with tiny swellings like what might have been produced by whipping them with nettles.³ The object of this ceremony is made plain by the custom observed in Amboyna and Uliase of sprinkling sick people with pungent spices, such as ginger and cloves, chewed fine, in order by the prickling sensation to drive away the demon of disease which may be clinging to their persons.⁴ In Java a popular cure for gout or rheumatism is to rub Spanish pepper into the nails of the fingers and toes of the sufferer; the pungency of the pepper is supposed to be too much for the gout or rheumatism, who accordingly departs in haste.⁵ So on the Slave Coast of Africa the mother of a sick child sometimes believes that an evil spirit has taken possession of the child's body, and in order to drive him out, she makes small

¹ Capt. John Moresby, *Discoveries and Surveys in New Guinea* (London, 1876), p. 102 sq.

² R. I. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians* (Hartford, Conn., 1886), p. 119.

³ J. Crevaux, *Voyages dans l'Amérique du Sud*, p. 300.

⁴ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selbes en Papua*, p. 78.

⁵ J. Kreemer, "Hoe de Javaan zijne zieken verzorgt," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxxvi. (1892), p. 13.

cuts in the body of the little sufferer and inserts green peppers or spices in the wounds, believing that she will thereby hurt the evil spirit and force him to be gone. The poor child naturally screams with pain, but the mother hardens her heart in the belief that the demon is suffering equally.¹ In Hawaii a patient is sometimes pricked with bamboo needles for the sake of hurting and expelling a refractory demon who is lurking in the sufferer's body and making him ill.² Dyak sorceresses in South-Eastern Borneo will sometimes slash the body of a sick man with sharp knives in order, it is said, to allow the demon of disease to escape through the cuts;³ but perhaps the notion rather is to make the present quarters of the spirit too hot for him. With a similar intention some of the natives of Borneo and Celebes sprinkle rice upon the head or body of a person supposed to be infested by dangerous spirits; a fowl is then brought, which, by picking up the rice from the person's head or body, removes along with it the spirit or ghost which is clinging like a burr to his skin. This is done, for example, to persons who have attended a funeral, and who may therefore be supposed to be infested by the ghost of the deceased.⁴ Similarly Basutos, who have carried a corpse to the grave, have their hands scratched with a knife from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the forefinger, and magic stuff is rubbed into the wound,⁵ for the purpose, no doubt, of removing the ghost which may be adhering to their skin. Among the Barotse of South-Eastern Africa a few days after a funeral the sorcerer makes an incision in the forehead of each surviving member of the family and fills it with medicine, "in order to ward off contagion and the effect of the sorcery which caused the death."⁶ When elephant hunters in East Africa have killed an elephant they get

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast* (London, 1894), p. 113 sq.

² A. Bastian, *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde* (Berlin, 1888), i. 116.

³ J. B. de Callone, "Iets over de geneeswijze en ziekten der Daijakers ter Zuid Oostkust van Borneo," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1840, dl. i. p. 418.

⁴ Perelaer, *Ethnographische Beschrijving der Dajaks*, pp. 44, 54, 252; Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes* (The Hague, 1875), p. 49.

⁵ H. Grützner, "Ueber die Gebräuche der Basutho," in *Verhandl. d. Berlin. Gesell. für Anthropologie*, etc., 1877, p. 84 sq.

⁶ L. Decle, *Three years in Savage Africa* (London, 1898), p. 81.

upon its carcass, make little cuts in their toes, and rub gunpowder into the cuts. This is done with the double intention of counteracting any evil influence that may emanate from the dead elephant, and of acquiring thereby the fleetness of foot possessed by the animal in its life.¹ The people of Nias carefully scrub and scour the weapons and clothes which they buy, in order to efface all connection between the things and the persons from whom they bought them.²

It is probable that the same dread of strangers, rather than any desire to do them honour, is the motive of certain ceremonies which are sometimes observed at their reception, but of which the intention is not directly stated. In the Ontong Java Islands, which are inhabited by Polynesians, and lie a little to the north of the Solomon Islands, the priests or sorcerers seem to wield great influence. Their main business is to summon or exorcise spirits for the purpose of averting or dispelling sickness, and of procuring favourable winds, a good catch of fish, and so on. When strangers land on the islands, they are first of all received by the sorcerers, sprinkled with water, anointed with oil, and girt with dried pandanus leaves. At the same time sand and water are freely thrown about in all directions, and the newcomer and his boat are wiped with green leaves. After this ceremony the strangers are introduced by the sorcerers to the chief.³ In Afghanistan and in some parts of Persia the traveller, before he enters a village, is frequently received with a sacrifice of animal life or food, or of fire and incense. The Afghan Boundary Mission, in passing by villages in Afghanistan, was often met with fire and incense.⁴ Sometimes a tray of lighted embers is thrown under the hoofs of the traveller's horse, with the words, "You are welcome."⁵ On entering a village in Central Africa Emin Pasha was received with the sacrifice of two goats; their

¹ P. Reichard, *Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Leipzig, 1892), p. 431.

² Nieuwenhuis en Rosenberg, "Verslag omtrent het eiland Nias," in *Verhandl. v. h. Batav. Genootsch. v. Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxx. 26.

³ R. Parkinson, "Zur Ethnographie

der Ontong Java- und Tasman-Inseln," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, x. (1897), p. 112.

⁴ *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, i. 35.

⁵ E. O'Donovan, *The Merv Oasis* (London, 1882), ii. 58.

is over, and the stranger is hospitably received. Sometimes the dread of strangers and their magic is great to allow of their reception on any terms. Thus Speke arrived at a certain village, the natives shut doors against him, "because they had never before seen a white man nor the tin boxes that the men were carrying." 'Who knows,' they said, 'but that these very boxes are plundering Watuta transformed and come to kill us? cannot be admitted.' No persuasion could avail with them and the party had to proceed to the next village."³

The fear thus entertained of alien visitors is often met. Entering a strange land the savage feels that he is treading enchanted ground, and he takes steps to guard against demons that haunt it and the magical arts of its inhabitants. Thus on going to a strange land the Maoris perform certain ceremonies to make it *noa* (common), lest it may have been previously *tapu* (sacred).⁴ When Baron Mikl Maclay was approaching a village on the Maclay Coast, New Guinea, one of the natives who accompanied him took a branch from a tree and going aside whispered to it a while; then stepping up to each member of the party after another, he spat something upon his back and gave him some blows with the branch. Lastly, he went into the forest and buried the branch under withered leaves in the thickest part of the jungle. This ceremony was believed

protect the party against all treachery and danger in the village they were approaching.¹ The idea probably was that the malignant influences were drawn off from the persons into the branch and buried with it in the depths of the forest. Before Stuhlmann and his companions entered the territory of the Wanyamwesi in Central Africa, one of his men killed a white cock and buried it in a pot just at the boundary.² In Australia, when a strange tribe has been invited into a district and is approaching the encampment of the tribe which owns the land, "the strangers carry lighted bark or burning sticks in their hands, for the purpose, they say, of clearing and purifying the air."³ So when two Greek armies were advancing to the onset, sacred men used to march in front of each, bearing lighted torches, which they flung into the space between the hosts and then retired unmolested.⁴ When a Spartan king was about to go forth to war, he sacrificed to Zeus, and if the omens were favourable an official called a Fire-bearer took fire from the altar and carried it before the army to the frontier. There the king again sacrificed, and if the omens were again favourable, he crossed the border, and the fire continued to be borne in front of him and might not be quenched.⁵ Amongst the Ovambo of South-Western Africa in time of war the chief names a general who leads the army to battle. Next to the general the highest place in the army is occupied by the *omunene u oshikuni*, that is, "the owner of the firewood," who carries a burning brand before the army on the march. If the brand goes out, it is an evil omen, and the army at once returns.⁶ In these cases the fire borne at the head of the army may have been intended to dissipate the evil influences, whether magical or spiritual, with which the air of the enemy's country might be conceived to teem.

¹ N. von Miklucho-Maclay, "Ethnologische Bemerkungen über die Papuas der Maclay-Küste in Neu-Guinea," *Naturkundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxvi. 317 sq.

² Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 94.

³ Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 134.

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⁴ Scholiast on Euripides, *Phoeniss.* 1377. These men were sacred to the war-god Ares, and were always spared in battle.

⁵ Xenophon, *Respubl. Lacedaem.* xiii. 2 sq.; Nicolaus Damascenus, quoted by Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xliv. 41 (vol. ii. p. 188, ed. Meineke).

⁶ H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 320.

Again, it is thought that a man who has been on a journey may have contracted some magic evil from the strangers with whom he has been brought into contact. Hence, on returning home, before he is readmitted to the society of his tribe and friends, he has to undergo certain purificatory ceremonies. Thus the Bechuanas "cleanse or purify themselves after journeys by shaving their heads, etc., lest they should have contracted from strangers some evil by witchcraft or sorcery."¹ In some parts of Western Africa when a man returns home after a long absence, before he is allowed to visit his wife, he must wash his person with a particular fluid, and receive from the sorcerer a certain mark on his forehead, in order to counteract any magic spell which a stranger woman may have cast on him in his absence, and which might be communicated through him to the women of his village.² Every year about one-third of the men of the Wanyamwesi tribe make journeys to the east coast of Africa either as porters or as traffickers. Before he sets out, the husband smears his cheeks with a sort of meal-porridge, and during his absence his wife must eat no flesh and must keep for him the sediment of the porridge in the pot. On their return from the coast the men sprinkle meal every day on all the paths leading to the camp, for the purpose, it is supposed, of keeping evil spirits off; and when they reach their homes the men again smear porridge on their faces, while the women who have stayed at home strew ashes on their heads.³ A story is told of a Navajo Indian who, after long wanderings, returned to his own people. When he came within sight of his house, his people made him stop and told him not to approach nearer till they had summoned a shaman. When the shaman was come "ceremonies were performed over the returned wanderer, and he was washed from head to foot, and dried with corn-meal; for thus do the Navajo treat all who return to their homes from captivity with another tribe, in order that all alien substances and influences may be removed from them.

¹ John Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, being a Narrative of a Second Journey in the Interior of that Country* (London, 1822), ii. 205.

² Ladislaus Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-*

Afrika (Buda-Pest and Leipsic, 1859), p. 203.

³ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 89.

When he had been thus purified he entered the house, and his people embraced him and wept over him."¹ Two Hindoo ambassadors, who had been sent to England by a native prince and had returned to India, were considered to have so polluted themselves by contact with strangers that nothing but being born again could restore them to purity. "For the purpose of regeneration it is directed to make an image of pure gold of the female power of nature, in the shape either of a woman or of a cow. In this statue the person to be regenerated is enclosed, and dragged through the usual channel. As a statue of pure gold and of proper dimensions would be too expensive, it is sufficient to make an image of the sacred *Yoni*, through which the person to be regenerated is to pass." Such an image of pure gold was made at the prince's command, and his ambassadors were born again by being dragged through it.² When Damaras return home after a long absence, they are given a small portion of the fat of particular animals which is supposed to possess certain virtues.³ In some of the Moluccas, when a brother or young blood-relation returns from a long journey, a young girl awaits him at the door with a *caladi* leaf in her hand and water in the leaf. She throws the water over his face and bids him welcome.⁴ The natives of Savage Island (South Pacific) invariably killed, not only all strangers in distress who were drifted to their shores, but also any of their own people who had gone away in a ship and returned home. This was done out of dread of disease. Long after they began to venture out to ships they would not immediately use the things they obtained from them, but hung them up in quarantine for weeks in the bush.⁵

When precautions like these are taken on behalf of the people in general against the malignant influence supposed to be exercised by strangers, we shall not be surprised to find that special measures are adopted to protect the king

¹ Washington Matthews, "The Mountain Chant: a Navajo Ceremony," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1887), p. 410.

² *Asiatick Researches*, vi. 535 sq. ed. 4to (p. 537 sq. ed. 8vo).

³ C. J. Andersson, *Lake Ngami*,² (London, 1856), p. 223.

⁴ François Valentyn, *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indiën*, iii. 16.

⁵ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 305 sq.

time or after being reborn, they have to endure, with women together, in two brooks on two successive passing the nights under the open sky in the market. After the second bath they proceed, entirely naked, to the house of Kalamba, who makes a long white mark on the breast and forehead of each of them. Then they return to the market-place and dress, after which they undergo the pepper ordeal. Pepper is dropped into the eyes of each of them, and while this is being done the sufferer has to make a confession of all his sins, to answer all questions that may be put to him, and to take certain vows. This ends the ceremony, and the strangers are now free to take up quarters in the town for as long as they choose to remain. At Kilema, in Eastern Africa, when a stranger arrives, medicine is made out of a certain plant or a tree bark from a distance, mixed with the blood of a sheep or goat. With this mixture the stranger is besmeared or bespattered before he is admitted to the presence of the king.³ The King of Monomotapa, in South-East Africa, might not use any foreign stuffs for fear of their being poisoned.⁴ The King of Cacongo, in West Africa, might not possess or touch European goods, except metals, arms, and articles made of wood and ivory. Persons wearing foreign clothes were very careful to keep at a distance from his person.

³ De Plano Carpini, *Historia Mon-* Station Mukenge," *Mittheilu*

they should touch him.¹ The King of Loango might not look upon the house of a white man.² We have already seen how the native King of Fernando Po dwells secluded from all contact with the whites in the depths of an extinct volcano, shunning the very sight of a pale face, which, in the belief of his subjects, would be instantly fatal to him.³ In a wild mountainous district of Java, to the south of Bantam, there exists a small aboriginal race who have been described as a living antiquity. These are the Baduwis, who about the year 1443 fled from Bantam to escape conversion to Islam, and in their mountain fastnesses, holding aloof from their neighbours, still cleave to the quaint and primitive ways of their heathen forefathers. Their villages are perched in spots which deep ravines, lofty precipices, raging torrents, and impenetrable forests combine to render almost inaccessible. Their hereditary ruler bears the title of Girang-Pu-un and unites in his hands the temporal and spiritual power. He must never quit the capital, and none even of his subjects who live outside the town are ever allowed to see him. Were an alien to set foot in his dwelling, the place would be desecrated and abandoned. In former times the representatives of the Dutch Government and the Regent of Java once paid a visit to the capital of the Baduwis. That very night all the people fled the place and never returned.⁴

In the opinion of savages the acts of eating and drinking are attended with special danger; for at these times the soul may escape from the mouth, or be extracted by the magic arts of an enemy present. Among the Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast "the common belief seems to be that the indwelling spirit leaves the body and returns to it through the mouth; hence, should it have gone out, it behoves a man to be careful about opening his mouth, lest a homeless spirit should take advantage of the opportunity and enter his

¹ Proyard, "History of Loango, Kakongo," etc., in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 583; Dapper, *op. cit.* p. 340; J. Ogilby, *Africa* (London, 1670), p. 521. Cp. Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 288.

² Bastian, *op. cit.* i. 268 sq.

³ See above, p. 238 sq.

⁴ L. von Ende, "Die Baduwis auf Java," *Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xix. (1889), pp. 7-10. As to the Baduwis (Badoejs), see also G. A. Wilken, *Handleiding voor de vergelijkende Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Leyden, 1893), pp. 640-643.

good things set before it.”² The Zafimanelo in Madagascar lock their doors when they eat, and hardly any one sees them eating.³ In Shoa, one of the southern provinces of Abyssinia, the doors of the house are scrupulously closed at meals to exclude the evil eye, and a fire is invariably lighted, else devils would enter and there would be no blessing on the meat.⁴ The Warua will not allow a woman to see them eating and drinking, being doubly particular that no person of the opposite sex shall see them do so. “I had to pay a man to let me see him drink; I could not make a man let a woman see him drink.” When they drink of *pombe* they often ask that a cloth may be held up to hide them whilst drinking. Further, each man and woman must cook for themselves; each person must have his own fire.⁵ In Fiji persons who suspected others of plotting against them avoided eating in their presence, or were careful to leave no fragment of food behind.⁶

If these are the ordinary precautions taken by common people, the precautions taken by kings are extraordinary. The King of Loango may not be seen eating or drinking by any man or beast under pain of death. A favourite dog once broken into the room where the king was dining, the king ordered it to be killed on the spot. Once the

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Zanzibar Annual and M.*

own son, a boy of twelve years old, inadvertently saw the king drink. Immediately the king ordered him to be finely apparelled and feasted, after which he commanded him to be cut in quarters, and carried about the city with a proclamation that he had seen the king drink. "When the king has a mind to drink, he has a cup of wine brought; he that brings it has a bell in his hand, and as soon as he has delivered the cup to the king he turns his face from him and rings the bell, on which all present fall down with their faces to the ground, and continue so till the king has drank." "His eating is much in the same style, for which he has a house on purpose, where his victuals are set upon a bensa or table: which he goes to and shuts the door: when he has done, he knocks and comes out. So that none ever see the king eat or drink. For it is believed that if any one should, the king shall immediately die." The remnants of his food are buried, doubtless to prevent them from falling into the hands of sorcerers, who by means of these fragments might cast a fatal spell over the monarch.¹ The rules observed by the neighbouring King of Cacongo were similar; it was thought that the king would die if any of his subjects were to see him drink.² It is a capital offence to see the King of Dahomey at his meals. When he drinks in public, as he does on extraordinary occasions, he hides himself behind a curtain, or handkerchiefs are held up round his head, and all the people throw themselves with their faces to the earth.³ Any one who saw the Muata Jamwo (a great potentate in the Congo Basin) eating or drinking would certainly be put to death.⁴ Among the Monbutto of Central Africa the king invariably takes his meals in private; no one may see the contents of his dish, and all that he leaves is carefully thrown into a pit set apart for that purpose. Everything that the king has handled is held sacred and

¹ "Adventures of Andrew Battel," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 330; Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 330; Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 262 sq.; R. F. Burton, *Abeokuta and the Cameroons Mountains*, i. 147.

² Proyart's "History of Loango,

Kakongo," etc., in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 584.

³ J. L. Wilson, *Western Africa*, p. 202; John Duncan, *Travels in Western Africa*, i. 222. Cp. W. W. Reade, *Savage Africa*, p. 543.

⁴ Paul Pogge, *Im Reiche des Muata Jamwo* (Berlin, 1880), p. 231.

of Tonga ate, all the people turned their backs to him.⁴ In the palace of the Persian kings there were two dining-rooms opposite each other; in one of them the king dined, in the other his guests. He could see them through a curtain at the door, but they could not see him. Generally the king took his meals alone; but sometimes his wife or some of his sons dined with him.⁵

In these cases, however, the intention may perhaps be to hinder evil influences from entering the body rather than to prevent the escape of the soul. To the former rather than to the latter motive is to be ascribed the custom observed by some African sultans of veiling their faces. The Sultan of Darfur wraps up his face with a piece of white muslin, which goes round his head several times, covering his mouth and nose first, and then his forehead, so that only his eyes are visible. The same custom of veiling the face as a mark of sovereignty is said to be observed in other parts of Central Africa.⁶ The Sultan of Wadai always speaks from behind a curtain; no one sees his face except

⁴ G. Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa*, ii. 45 (third edition, London, 1878); G. Casati, *Ten Years in Equatoria* (London and New York, 1891), i. 177.

⁵ W. Cornwallis Harris, *The High-*

eat except in the presence of a witness. A slave is appointed to witness the king's meals, and his office is esteemed honourable. See Ph. Pitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrika*, die geistige Cultur der Dandkil, G.

his intimates and a few favoured persons.¹ The King of Jebu, on the Slave Coast of West Africa, is surrounded by a great deal of mystery. Until lately his face might not be seen even by his own subjects, and if circumstances compelled him to communicate with them he did so through a screen which concealed him from view. Now, though his face may be seen, it is customary to hide his body; and at audiences a cloth is held before him so as to conceal him from the neck downwards, and it is raised so as to cover him altogether whenever he coughs, sneezes, spits, or takes snuff. His face is partially hidden by a conical cap with hanging strings of beads.² Amongst the Touaregs of the Sahara all the men (but not the women) keep the lower part of their face, especially the mouth, veiled constantly; the veil is never put off, not even in eating or sleeping.³ In Samoa a man whose family god was the turtle might not eat a turtle, and if he helped a neighbour to cut up and cook one he had to wear a bandage tied over his mouth lest an embryo turtle should slip down his throat, grow up, and be his death.⁴ In West Timor a speaker holds his right hand before his mouth in speaking lest a demon should enter his body, and lest the person with whom he converses should harm the speaker's soul by magic.⁵ In New South Wales for some time after his initiation into the tribal mysteries, a young blackfellow (whose soul at this time is in a critical state) must always cover his mouth with a rug when a woman is present.⁶ We have already seen how common is the notion that the life or soul may escape by the mouth or nostrils.⁷

By an extension of the like precaution kings are sometimes forbidden ever to leave their palaces; or, if they are allowed to do so, their subjects are forbidden to see them abroad. We have seen that the priestly king at Shark

¹ Mohammed Ibn-Omar el Tounsy, *Voyage au Ouaddy* (Paris, 1851), p. 375.

² A. B. Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 170.

³ H. Duveyrier, *Exploration du Sahara: les Touareg du Nord*, p. 391 sq.; Reclus, *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*, xi. 838 sq.; James Richardson, *Travels in the Great Desert of Sahara*, ii. 208. Amongst the Arabs men some-

times veiled their faces (Weillhausen, *Reise Arabischen Heidentumes*,¹ p. 146).

⁴ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 67 sq.

⁵ Riedel, "Die Landschaft Dawan oder West-Timor," *Deutsche Geographische Blätter*, x. 230.

⁶ A. W. Howitt, "On some Australian Ceremonies of Initiation," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiii. (1884), p. 456.

⁷ Above, p. 251 sq.

Point, West Africa, may never quit his house or even his chair, in which he is obliged to sleep sitting, and that the King of Fernando Po, whom no white man may see, is reported to be confined to his house with shackles on his legs.¹ The fetish king of Benin, who was worshipped as a deity by his subjects, might not quit his palace.² After his coronation the King of Loango is confined to his palace, which he may not leave.³ The King of Ibo, West Africa, "does not step out of his house into the town unless a human sacrifice is made to propitiate the gods: on this account he never goes out beyond the precincts of his premises."⁴ The kings of Ethiopia were worshipped as gods, but were mostly kept shut up in their palaces.⁵ On the mountainous coast of Pontus there dwelt in antiquity a rude and warlike people named the Mosyni or Mosynoeci, through whose rugged country the Ten Thousand marched on their famous retreat from Asia to Europe. These barbarians kept their king in close custody at the top of a high tower, from which after his election he was never more allowed to descend. Here he dispensed justice to his people; but if he offended them, they punished him by stopping his rations for a whole day, or even starving him to death.⁶ The kings of Sabaea or Sheba, the spice country of Arabia, were not allowed to go out of their palaces; if they did so, the mob stoned them to death.⁷ But at the top of the palace there was a window

¹ See above, p. 239.

² This rule was mentioned to me in conversation by Miss Mary H. Kingsley. As to the worship of the King of Benin, see above, p. 147 sq.

³ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 263. However, a case is recorded in which he marched out to war (*ibid.* i. 268 sq.).

⁴ S. Crowther and J. C. Taylor, *The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger*, p. 433. On p. 379 of the same work mention is made of the king's "annual appearance to the public," but this may have taken place within "the precincts of his premises."

⁵ Strabo, xvii. 2. 2, *σέβονται δ' ὡς θεοὺς τοὺς βασιλεῖς, κατακλειστοὺς ὄντας καὶ οἰκουμένους τὸ πᾶν*.

⁶ Xenophon, *Anabasis*, v. 4. 26;

Scymnus Chius, *Orbis descriptio*, 900 sqq. (*Geographi Graeci Minores*, ed. C. Müller, i. 234); Diodorus Siculus, xiv. 30. 6 sq.; Nicolaus Damascenus, quoted by Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, xlv. 41 (vol. ii. p. 185, ed. Meineke); Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* ii. 1026, sqq., with the note of the scholiast; Pomponius Mela, i. 106, p. 29, ed. Parthey. Die Chrysostom refers to the custom without mentioning the name of the people (*Or.* xiv. vol. i. p. 257, ed. Dindorf).

⁷ Strabo, xvi. 4. 19; Diodorus Siculus, iii. 47. Inscriptions found in Sheba (the country about two hundred miles north of Aden) seem to show that the land was at first ruled by a succession of priestly kings, who were afterwards followed by kings in the

with a chain attached to it. If any man deemed he had suffered wrong, he pulled the chain, and the king perceived him and called him in and gave judgment.¹ So to this day the kings of Corea, whose persons are sacred and receive "honours almost divine," are shut up in their palace from the age of twelve or fifteen; and if a suitor wishes to obtain justice of the king he sometimes lights a great bonfire on a mountain facing the palace; the king sees the fire and informs himself of the case.² The Emperor of China seldom quits his palace, and when he does so, no one may look at him; even the guards who line the road must turn their backs.³ The King of Tonquin was permitted to appear abroad twice or thrice a year for the performance of certain religious ceremonies; but the people were not allowed to look at him. The day before he came forth notice was given to all the inhabitants of the city and country to keep from the way the king was to go; the women were obliged to remain in their houses and durst not show themselves under pain of death, a penalty which was carried out on the spot if any one disobeyed the order, even through ignorance. Thus the king was invisible to all but his troops and the officers of his suite.⁴ In Mandalay a stout lattice-paling, six feet high and carefully kept in repair, lined every street in the walled city and all those streets in the suburbs through which the king was likely at any time to pass. Behind this paling, which stood two feet or so from the houses, all the people had to stay when the king or any of the queens went out.

ordinary sense. The names of many of these priestly kings (*makarribs*, literally "blessers") are preserved in inscriptions. See Prof. S. R. Driver, in *Authority and Archaeology, Sacred and Profane*, edited by D. G. Hogarth (London, 1899), p. 82. Probably these "blessers" are the kings referred to by the Greek writers. We may suppose that the blessings they dispensed consisted in a proper regulation of the weather, abundance of the fruits of the earth, and so on.

¹ Heraclides Cumanus, in Athenaeus, xii. p. 517 B-C.

² Ch. Dallet. *Histoire de l'Église de Corée* (Paris, 1874), i. pp. xxiv.-xxvi.

The king sometimes, though rarely, leaves his palace. When he does so, notice is given beforehand to his people. All doors must be shut and each household must kneel before his threshold with a broom and a dust-pan in his hand. All windows, especially the upper ones, must be sealed with slips of paper, lest some one should look down upon the king. See W. E. Griffis, *Corea, the Hermit Nation*, p. 222.

³ This I learned from the late Mr. W. Simpson, formerly artist of the *Illustrated London News*.

⁴ Richard, "History of Tonquin," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 746.

Any one who was caught outside it by the beadles after the procession had started was severely handled, and might think himself lucky if he got off with a beating. Nobody was supposed to peep through the holes in the lattice-work, which were besides partly stopped up with flowering shrubs.¹

Again, magic mischief may be wrought upon a man through the remains of the food he has partaken of, or the dishes out of which he has eaten. On the principles of sympathetic magic a real connection continues to subsist between the food which a man has in his stomach and the refuse of it which he has left untouched, and hence by injuring the refuse you can simultaneously injure the eater. Among the Narrinyeri of South Australia every adult is constantly on the look-out for bones of beasts, birds, or fish, of which the flesh has been eaten by somebody, in order to construct a deadly charm out of them. Every one is therefore careful to burn the bones of the animals which he has eaten lest they should fall into the hands of a sorcerer. Too often, however, the sorcerer succeeds in getting hold of such a bone, and when he does so he believes that he has the power of life and death over the man, woman, or child who ate the flesh of the animal. To put the charm in operation he makes a paste of red ochre and fish oil, inserts in it the eye of a cod and a small piece of the flesh of a corpse, and having rolled the compound into a ball sticks it on the top of the bone. After being left for some time in the bosom of a dead body, in order that it may derive a deadly potency by contact with corruption, the magical implement is set up in the ground near the fire, and as the ball melts, so the person against whom the charm is directed wastes with disease; if the ball is melted quite away, the victim will die. When the bewitched man learns of the spell that is being cast upon him, he endeavours to buy the bone from the sorcerer, and if he obtains it he breaks the charm by throwing the bone into a river or lake.² Further, the Narrinyeri think that if a man eats of the totem animal of his tribe, and an enemy obtains a portion of the flesh, the latter can make it

¹ Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, i. 30 sq.; cp. *Indian Antiquary*, xx. (1891), p. 49.

² G. Taplin, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, pp. 24-26; *id.*, in E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, ii. p. 247.

grow in the inside of the eater, and so cause his death. Therefore when a man partakes of his totem he is careful either to eat it all or else to conceal or destroy the refuse.¹ In the Encounter Bay Tribe of South Australia, when a man cannot get the bone of an animal which his enemy has eaten, he cooks a bird, beast, or fish, and keeping back one of the creature's bones, offers the rest under the guise of friendship to his enemy. If the man is simple enough to partake of the proffered food, he is at the mercy of his perfidious foe, who can kill him by placing the abstracted bone near the fire.² Ideas and practices of the same sort prevail in Melanesia; all that was needed to injure a man was to bring the leavings of his food into contact with a malignant ghost or spirit. Hence in the island of Florida when a scrap of an enemy's dinner was secreted and thrown into a haunted place, the man was supposed to fall ill; and in the New Hebrides if a snake of a certain sort carried away a fragment of food to a spot sacred to a spirit, the man who had eaten the food would sicken as the fragment decayed. In Aurora the refuse is made up with certain leaves; as these rot and stink, the man dies. Hence it is, or was, a constant care with the Melanesians to prevent the remains of their meals from falling into the hands of persons who bore them a grudge; for this reason they regularly gave the refuse of food to the pigs.³ In Tana, one of the New Hebrides, people bury or throw into the sea the leavings of their food, lest these should fall into the hands of the disease-makers. For if a disease-maker finds the remnants of a meal, say the skin of a banana, he picks it up and burns it slowly in the fire.

¹ G. Taplin, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 63; *id.*, "Notes on the Mixed Races of Australia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, iv. (1875), p. 53; *id.*, in E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, ii. 245.

² H. E. A. Meyer, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 196.

³ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 203 sq., cp. pp. 178, 188, 214. A corollary from these principles, as Dr. Codrington points out, is that no one who intends to harm a man by the refuse of his food will himself partake of that food; because if he did so,

he would suffer equally with his enemy from any injury done to the refuse. This is the idea which in primitive society lends sanctity to the bond produced by eating together; by partaking of the same food the eaters give each other the best possible guarantee that they will devise no mischief one against the other, since any such mischief would affect the plotter just as much as his victim. In strict logic, however, the sympathetic bond lasts only so long as the food is in the stomach of each of the parties. See W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*,² p. 270.

As it burns the person who ate the banana falls ill and sends to the disease-maker, offering him presents if he will stop burning the banana skin.¹ For the same reason, no one may touch the food which the King of Loango leaves upon his plate; it is buried in a hole in the ground. And no one may drink out of the king's vessel.² Similarly no man may drink out of the same cup or glass with the King of Fida, in Guinea; "he hath always one kept particularly for himself; and that which hath but once touched another's lips he never uses more, though it be made of metal that may be cleansed by fire."³ Amongst the Alfoors of Celebes there is a priest called the *Leleen*, whose duty appears to be to make the rice grow. His functions begin about a month before the rice is sown, and end after the crop is housed. During this time he has to observe certain taboos; amongst others he may not eat or drink with any one else, and he may drink out of no vessel but his own.⁴

We have seen that the Mikado's food was cooked every day in new pots and served up in new dishes; both pots and dishes were of common clay, in order that they might be broken or laid aside after they had been once used. They were generally broken, for it was believed that if any one else ate his food out of these sacred dishes, his mouth and throat would become swollen and inflamed. The same ill effect was thought to be experienced by any one who should wear the Mikado's clothes without his leave; he would have swellings and pains all over his body.⁵ In Fiji there is a special name (*kana lama*) for the disease supposed to be caused by eating out of a chief's dishes or wearing his clothes. "The throat and body swell, and the impious person dies. I had a fine mat given to me by a man who durst not use it because Thakambau's eldest son had sat

¹ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 320 sq. For other examples of witchcraft wrought by means of the refuse of food, see E. S. Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, ii. 83 sqq.

² Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 330. We have seen that the food left by the King of the Monbutto, is carefully buried (above, p. 311).

³ Bosman's "Guinea," in Pinker-

ton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 487.

⁴ P. N. Wilken, "Bijdragen tot de kennis van de zeden en gewoonten der Alfoeren in de Minahassa," *Afdeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelingsgenootschap*, vii. (1863), p. 126.

⁵ Kaempfer's "History of Japan," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, vii. 717.

upon it. There was always a family or clan of commoners who were exempt from this danger. I was talking about this once to Thakambau. 'Oh yes,' said he. 'Here, So-and-so! come and scratch my back.' The man scratched; he was one of those who could do it with impunity.'" The name of the men thus highly privileged was *Na nduka ni*, or the dirt of the chief.¹

In the evil effects thus supposed to follow upon the use of the vessels or clothes of the Mikado and a Fijian chief we see that other side of the god-man's character to which attention has been already called. The divine person is a source of danger as well as of blessing; he must not only be guarded, he must also be guarded against. His sacred organism, so delicate that a touch may disorder it, is also electrically charged with a powerful spiritual force which may discharge itself with fatal effect on whatever comes in contact with it. Hence the isolation of the man-god is quite as necessary for the safety of others as for his own. His divinity is a fire, which, under proper restraints, confers endless blessings, but, if rashly touched or allowed to break bounds, burns and destroys what it touches. Hence the disastrous effects supposed to attend a breach of taboo; the offender has thrust his hand into the divine fire, which shrivels up and consumes him on the spot. In Tonga, for example, it was believed that if any one fed himself with his own hands after touching the sacred person of a superior chief or anything that belonged to him, he would swell up and die; the sanctity of the chief, like a virulent poison, infected the hands of his inferior, and, being communicated through them to the food, proved fatal to the eater. A commoner who had incurred this danger could disinfect himself by performing a certain ceremony, which consisted in touching the sole of a chief's foot with the palm and back of each of his hands, and afterwards rinsing his hands in water. If there was no water near, he rubbed his hands with the juicy stem of a plantain or banana. After that he was free to feed himself with his own hands without danger of being attacked by the malady which would other-

¹ Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author dated August 26th, 1898. In Fijian, *kana* is to eat; the meaning of *lama* is unknown.

wise follow from eating with tabooed or sanctified hands. But until the ceremony of expiation or disinfection had been performed, if he wished to eat, he had either to get some one to feed him, or else to go down on his knees and pick up the food from the ground with his mouth like a beast. He might not even use a toothpick himself, but might guide the hand of another person holding the toothpick. The Tongans were subject to induration of the liver and certain forms of scrofula, which they often attributed to a failure to perform the requisite expiation after having inadvertently touched a chief or his belongings. Hence they often went through the ceremony as a precaution, without knowing that they had done anything to call for it. The King of Tonga could not refuse to play his part in the rite by presenting his foot to such as desired to touch it, even when they applied to him at an inconvenient time. A fat unwieldy king, who perceived his subjects approaching with this intention, while he chanced to be taking his walks abroad, has been sometimes seen to waddle as fast as his legs could carry him out of their way, in order to escape the importunate and not wholly disinterested expression of their homage. If any one fancied he might have already unwittingly eaten with tabooed hands, he sat down before the chief, and, taking the chief's foot, pressed it against his own stomach, that the food in his belly might not injure him, and that he might not swell up and die.¹ As scrofula was regarded by the Tongans as a result of eating with tabooed hands, we may conjecture that persons who suffered from it among them often resorted to the touch or pressure of the king's foot as a cure for their malady. The analogy of the custom with the old English practice of bringing scrofulous patients to the king to be healed by his touch is sufficiently obvious, and suggests that among our own remote ancestors scrofula may have obtained its name of the King's - evil, from a belief like that of the Tongans, that it was caused

¹ W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*,² i. 141 sq. note, 434 note, ii. 82 sq., 221-224; Cook, *Voyages* (London, 1809), v. 427 sq. Similarly in Fiji any person who had touched the head of a living

chief or the body of a dead one was forbidden to handle his food, and must be fed by another (J. E. Erskine, *The Western Pacific*, p. 254).

as well as cured by contact with the divine majesty of kings.¹

In New Zealand the dread of the sanctity of chiefs was at least as great as in Tonga. Their ghostly power, derived from an ancestral spirit or *atua*, diffused itself by contagion over everything they touched, and could strike dead all who rashly or unwittingly meddled with it.² For instance, it once happened that a New Zealand chief of high rank and great sanctity had left the remains of his dinner by the wayside. A slave, a stout, hungry fellow, coming up after the chief had gone, saw the unfinished dinner, and ate it up without asking questions. Hardly had he finished when he was informed by a horror-stricken spectator that the food of which he had eaten was the chief's. "I knew the unfortunate delinquent well. He was remarkable for courage, and had signalised himself in the wars of the tribe," but "no sooner did he hear the fatal news than he was seized by the most extraordinary convulsions and cramp in the stomach, which never ceased till he died, about sundown the same day. He was a strong man, in the prime of life, and if any pakeha [European] freethinker should have said he was not killed by the *tapu* of the chief, which had been communicated to the food by contact, he would have been listened to with feelings of contempt for

¹ On the custom of touching for the King's-evil, see T. J. Pettigrew, *Superstitions connected with the History and Practice of Medicine and Surgery* (London, 1844), pp. 117-154; W. E. H. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1892), i. 84-90; W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 140 *sqq.* The power of healing scrofula by the touch was claimed by the French as well as by the English kings. The English kings were supposed to have inherited the power from Edward the Confessor; the French kings from St. Louis or Clovis. Down to the end of the eighteenth century it was believed in the Highlands of Scotland that certain tribes of Macdonalds had the power of curing a certain disease by their touch and the use of a certain set of words. Hence the disease, which attacked the

chest and lungs, was called "the Macdonald's disease." We are told that the faith of the people in the touch of a Macdonald was very great. See Rev. Dr. Th. Bisset, "Parish of Logierait," Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, iii. 84.

² "The idea in which this law [the law of taboo or *tapu*, as it was called in New Zealand] originated appears to have been, that a portion of the spiritual essence of an *atua* or of a sacred person was communicated directly to objects which they touched, and also that the spiritual essence so communicated to any object was afterwards more or less retransmitted to anything else brought into contact with it" (E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 102). Compare *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, p. 25.

his ignorance and inability to understand plain and direct evidence."¹ This is not a solitary case. A Maori woman having eaten of some fruit, and being afterwards told that the fruit had been taken from a tabooed place, exclaimed that the spirit of the chief, whose sanctity had been thus profaned, would kill her. This was in the afternoon, and next day by twelve o'clock she was dead.² An observer who knows the Maoris well, says, "Tapu [taboo] is an awful weapon. I have seen a strong young man die the same day he was tapued; the victims die under it as though their strength ran out as water."³ A Maori chief's tinder-box was once the means of killing several persons; for, having been lost by him, and found by some men who used it to light their pipes, they died of fright on learning to whom it had belonged. So, too, the garments of a high New Zealand chief will kill any one else who wears them. A chief was observed by a missionary to throw down a precipice a blanket which he found too heavy to carry. Being asked by the missionary why he did not leave it on a tree for the use of a future traveller, the chief replied that "it was the fear of its being taken by another which caused him to throw it where he did, for if it were worn, his tapu" (that is, his spiritual power communicated by contact to the blanket and through the blanket to the man) "would kill the person."⁴

No wonder therefore that the savage should rank his human gods among what he regards as the dangerous classes of society, and should impose upon them the same sort of restraints that he lays on man-slayers, menstruous women, and other persons whom he looks upon with a certain fear and horror. For example, sacred kings and

¹ *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori (London, 1884), p. 96 sq.

² W. Brown, *New Zealand and its Aborigines* (London, 1845), p. 76. For more examples of the same kind see *ibid.* p. 77 sq.

³ E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), p. 100.

⁴ R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui: or, New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,³ p.

164. Death from purely imaginary causes occurs also not uncommonly among the aborigines of Australia. A native will die after the infliction of even the most superficial wound if only he believes that the weapon which inflicted the wound had been sung over, and thus endowed with magical virtue. He simply lies down, refuses food, and pines away. See Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 537 sq.

priests in Polynesia were not allowed to touch food with their hands, and had therefore to be fed by others;¹ and, as we have just seen, their vessels, garments, and other property might not be used by others on pain of disease and death. Now precisely the same observances are exacted by some savages from girls at their first menstruation, women after childbirth, homicides, mourners, and all persons who have come into contact with the dead. Thus for example among the Maoris any one who had handled a corpse, helped to convey it to the grave, or touched a dead man's bones, was cut off from all intercourse and almost all communication with mankind. He could not enter any house, or come into contact with any person or thing, without utterly bedevilling them. He might not even touch food with his hands, which had become so frightfully tabooed or unclean as to be quite useless. Food would be set for him on the ground, and he would then sit or kneel down, and, with his hands carefully held behind his back, would gnaw at it as best he could. In some cases he would be fed by another person, who with outstretched arm contrived to do it without touching the tabooed man; but the feeder was himself subjected to many severe restrictions, little less onerous than those which were imposed upon the other. In almost every populous village there lived a degraded wretch, the lowest of the low, who earned a sorry pittance by thus waiting upon the defiled. Clad in rags, daubed from head to foot with red ochre and stinking shark oil, always solitary and silent, generally old, haggard, and wizened, often half crazed, he might be seen sitting motionless all day apart from the common path or

¹ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 388. Ellis appears to imply that the rule was universal in Polynesia, but perhaps he referred only to Hawaii, of which in this part of his work he is treating specially. We are told that in Hawaii the priest who carried the principal idol about the country was tabooed during the performance of this sacred office; he might not touch anything with his hands, and the morsels of food which he ate had to be put into his mouth by the chiefs of the villages through which he passed or even by the king himself, who accompanied the

priest on his rounds (L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde*, Historique, ii. Première Partie, p. 596). In Tonga the rule applied to chiefs only when their hands had become tabooed by touching a superior chief (Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 82 sq.). In New Zealand chiefs were fed by slaves (A. S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, i. 102); or they may, like tabooed people in general, have taken up their food from little stages with their mouths or by means of fern-stalks (R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Māui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, p. 162).

offices of respect and friendship to the dead. And when the dismal term of his seclusion being over, the mourner about to mix with his fellows once more, all the dishes had used in his seclusion were diligently smashed and garments he had worn were carefully thrown away, lest they should spread the contagion of his defilement among the living, just as the vessels and clothes of sacred kings and chiefs were destroyed or cast away for a similar reason. So common in these respects is the analogy which the savage draws between the spiritual influences that emanate from the living and from the dead, between the odour of sanctity and the stench of corruption.

Among the Shushwap of British Columbia widows and widowers in mourning are secluded and forbidden to touch their own head or body; the cups and cooking-vessels they use may be used by no one else. They must sit in a sweat-house beside a creek, sweat there all night and bathe regularly, after which they must rub their bodies with branches of spruce. The branches may not be used more than once, and when they have served their purpose they are stuck into the ground all round the hut. No

¹ *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori (London, 1884), pp. 104-114. The rule that corpse-bearers, mourners, etc., might not touch food with their hands would seem to have been universal

Angas, *Savage Life and Society in Australia and New Zealand*, Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 104 sq.; Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour du monde et à la recherche*

would come near such mourners, for their presence is unlucky. If their shadow were to fall on any one, he would be taken ill at once. They employ thorn bushes for bed and pillow, in order to keep away the ghost of the deceased ; and thorn bushes are also laid all around their beds.¹ This last precaution shows clearly what the spiritual danger is which leads to the exclusion of such persons from ordinary society ; it is simply a fear of the ghost who is supposed to be hovering near them.

In general, we may say that the prohibition to use the vessels, garments, and so on of certain persons, and the effects supposed to follow an infraction of the rule, are exactly the same whether the persons to whom the things belong are sacred or what we might call unclean and polluted. As the garments which have been touched by a sacred chief kill those who handle them, so do the things which have been touched by a menstruous woman. An Australian black-fellow, who discovered that his wife had lain on his blanket at her menstrual period, killed her and died of terror himself within a fortnight.² Hence Australian women at these times are forbidden under pain of death to touch anything that men use, or even to walk on a path that any man frequents. They are also secluded at childbirth, and all vessels used by them during their seclusion are burned.³ In Uganda whatever a woman touches while the impurity of childbirth or of menstruation is on her should be destroyed.⁴ No Esquimaux of Alaska will willingly drink out of the same cup or eat out of the same dish that has been used by a woman at her confinement until it has been purified by certain incantations.⁵ Amongst some of the Indians of North America, women at menstruation are forbidden to touch men's utensils, which would be so defiled by their touch that their subsequent use would be attended by certain

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 91 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

² Capt. W. E. Armit, "Customs of the Australian aborigines," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ix. (1880), p. 459.

³ W. Ridley, "Report on Aus-

tralian Languages and Traditions," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ii. (1873), p. 268.

⁴ This I learned in a conversation with Messrs. Roscoe and Miller, missionaries to Uganda, June 24th, 1897.

⁵ *Report of the International Polar Expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska* (Washington, 1885), p. 46.

which they never lay aside till the first monthly infir over. A fringe of shells, bones, and so on hangs down their forehead so as to cover their eyes lest any male sorcerer should harm them during this critical period. On the islands of Mabuiag and Saibai, in Torres Strait, at their first menstruation are strictly secluded from the sight of men. In Mabuiag the seclusion lasts three months; on Saibai about a fortnight. During the time of her seclusion the girl is forbidden to feed herself or to handle food, which is put into her mouth by women or girls told off to wait on her.¹ In Tahiti a woman after childbirth was secluded for a fortnight or three weeks in a temporary hut erected on a sacred ground; during the time of her seclusion she was debarred from touching provisions, and had to be waited on by another. Further, if any one else touched the child during this period, he was subjected to the same restrictions as the mother until the ceremony of her purification had

¹ Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America*, p. cxxiii.

² Gavin Hamilton, "Customs of the New Caledonian Women," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vii. (1878), p. 206. Among the Nootkas of British Columbia a girl at puberty is hidden from the sight of men for several days behind a partition of mats; during her

Again, among the Shushwap of British Columbia a girl at puberty lies in a little hut on the mountain side, forbidden to touch her head or her body; but she may scratch her head with a three-toothed comb. See Fr. Boas, *op. cit.* p. 89 sq. On the East Indian island of Serang a girl at puberty is not allowed to scratch herself with her fi

performed.¹ Similarly in Manahiki, an island of the Southern Pacific, for ten days after her delivery a woman was not allowed to handle food, and had to be fed by some other person.² Among the Creek Indians a lad at initiation had to abstain for twelve moons from picking his ears or scratching his head with his fingers; he had to use a small stick for these purposes. For four moons he must have a fire of his own to cook his food at; and a little girl, a virgin, might cook for him. During the fifth moon any person might cook for him, but he must serve himself first, and use one spoon and pan. On the fifth day of the twelfth moon he gathered corn cobs, burned them to ashes, and with the ashes rubbed his body all over. At the end of the twelfth moon he sweated under blankets, and then bathed in water, which ended the ceremony. While the ceremonies lasted, he might touch no one but lads who were undergoing a like course of initiation.³ Caffre boys at circumcision live secluded in a special hut, and when they are healed all the vessels which they had used during their seclusion and the boyish mantles which they had hitherto worn are burned together with the hut.⁴

Once more, warriors are conceived by the savage to move, so to say, in an atmosphere of spiritual danger which constrains them to practise a variety of superstitious observances quite different in their nature from those rational precautions which as a matter of course they adopt against foes of flesh and blood. The general effect of these observances is to place the warrior, both before and after victory, in the same state of seclusion or spiritual quarantine in which, for his own safety, primitive man isolates his human gods and other dangerous characters. Thus when the Maoris went out on the war-path they were sacred or taboo in the highest degree, and they and their friends at home had to observe strictly many curious customs over and above the numerous taboos of ordinary life. They became, in the

¹ James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 354.

² G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 276.

³ B. Hawkins, "The Creek Confederacy," *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, iii. pt. i. (Savannah, 1848), p. 78 sq. Hawkins's account is

reproduced by A. S. Gatschett, in his *Migration Legend of the Creek Indians*, i. 185 sq. (Philadelphia, 1854).

⁴ L. Alberti, *De Kaffers* (Amsterdam, 1810), p. 76 sq.; H. Lichtenstein, *Reisen im südlichen Afrika*, (Berlin, 1811-12), i. 427.

irreverent language of Europeans who knew them in the old fighting days, "tabooed an inch thick"; and as for the leader of the expedition, he was quite unapproachable.¹ Similarly, when the Israelites marched forth to war they were bound by certain rules of ceremonial purity identical with rules observed by Maoris and Australian black-fellows on the war-path. The vessels they used were sacred, and they had to practise continence and a custom of personal cleanliness of which the original motive, if we may judge from the avowed motive of savages who conform to the same custom, was a fear lest the enemy should obtain the refuse of their persons, and thus be enabled to work their destruction by magic.² Among some Indian tribes of North America a young warrior in his first campaign had to conform to certain customs, of which two were identical with the observances imposed by the same Indians on girls at their first menstruation: the vessels he ate and drank out of

¹ *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori (London, 1884), pp. 96, 114 sq. One of the customs mentioned by the writer was that all the people left in the camp had to fast strictly while the warriors were out in the field. This rule is obviously based on the sympathetic connection supposed to exist between friends at a distance, especially at critical times. See above, p. 27 sqq.

² Deuteronomy xxiii. 9-14; 1 Samuel xxi. 5. The rule laid down in Deuteronomy xxiii. 10, 11, suffices to prove that the custom of continence observed in time of war by the Israelites, as by a multitude of savage and barbarous peoples, was based on a superstitious, not a rational motive. The evidence on this subject is decisive, but must be reserved for another work. Here I will only mention that the rule is often observed by warriors for some time after their victorious return, and also by the persons left at home during the absence of the fighting men. In these cases the observance of the rule evidently does not admit of a rational explanation, which could hardly, indeed, be entertained by any one conversant with savage modes of thought. For some examples of

these cases, see above, pp. 29, 31 sq., and below, pp. 332 sq., 336, 339. The other rule of personal cleanliness referred to in the text is exactly observed, for the reason I have indicated, by the aborigines in various parts of Australia. See (Sir) George Grey, *Journals*, ii. 344; R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 165; J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 12; Beveridge, in *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, 1883, p. 69 sq. Compare W. Stanbridge, "On the Aborigines of Victoria," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, i. (1861), p. 299; Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 251; E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, iii. 178 sq., 547. The same dread has resulted in a similar custom of cleanliness in Melanesia and Africa. See R. Parkinson, *Im Bismarck-Archipel*, p. 143 sq.; R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 203 note; J. Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, Superstitions, and Religions of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 131. Mr. Lorimer Fison has sent me some notes on the Fijian practice, which agrees with the one described by Dr. Codrington.

might be touched by no other person, and he was forbidden to scratch his head or any other part of his body with his fingers; if he could not help scratching himself, he had to do it with a stick.¹ The latter rule, like the one which forbids a tabooed person to feed himself with his own fingers, seems to rest on the supposed sanctity or pollution, whichever we choose to call it, of the tabooed hands.² Moreover, among these Indian tribes the men on the war-path had always to sleep at night with their faces turned towards their own country; however uneasy the posture they might not change it. They might not sit upon the bare ground, nor wet their feet, nor walk on a beaten path if they could help it; when they had no choice but to walk on a path, they sought to counteract the ill effect of doing so by doctoring their legs with certain medicines or charms which they carried with them for the purpose. No member of the party was permitted to step over the legs, hands, or body of any other member who chanced to be sitting or lying on the ground; and it was equally forbidden to step over his blanket, gun, tomahawk, or anything that belonged to him. If this rule was inadvertently broken, it became

¹ *Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner* (London, 1830), p. 122.

² We have seen (pp. 326, 327) that the same rule is observed by girls at puberty among some Indian tribes of British Columbia and by Creek lads at initiation. It is also observed by Kwakiutl Indians who have eaten human flesh (see below, p. 342). Among the Blackfoot Indians the man who was appointed every four years to take charge of the sacred pipe and other emblems of their religion might not scratch his body with his finger-nails, but carried a sharp stick in his hair which he used for this purpose. During the term of his priesthood he had to fast and practise strict continence. None but he dare handle the sacred pipe and emblems (W. W. Warren, "History of the Ojibways," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, v. (1885), p. 68 sq.). In Vedic India the man who was about to offer the solemn sacrifice of soma prepared himself for his duties

by a ceremony of consecration, during which he carried the horn of a black deer or antelope wherewith to scratch himself if necessary (*Satapatha-Brâhmana*, Bk. iii. 31, vol. ii. p. 33 sq. trans. by J. Eggeling; H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 399). Amongst the Macusis of British Guiana, when a woman has given birth to a child, the father hangs up his hammock beside that of his wife and stays there till the navel-string drops off the child. During this time the parents have to observe certain rules, of which one is that they may not scratch their heads or bodies with their nails, but must use for this purpose a piece of palm-leaf. If they broke this rule, they think the child would die or be an invalid all its life (R. Schomburgk, *Reisen in Britisch-Guiana*, ii. 314). We have seen (p. 85) that some aborigines of Queensland believe that if they scratched themselves with their fingers during a rain-making ceremony, no rain would fall.

the duty of the member whose person or property had been stepped over to knock the other member down, and it was similarly the duty of that other to be knocked down peaceably and without resistance. The vessels out of which the warriors ate their food were commonly small bowls of wood or birch bark, with marks to distinguish the two sides; in marching from home the Indians invariably drank out of one side of the bowl, and in returning they drank out of the other. When on their way home they came within a day's march of the village, they hung up all their bowls on trees, or threw them away on the prairie,¹ doubtless to prevent

¹ *Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner* (London, 1830), p. 123. The superstition that harm is done to a person or thing by stepping over him or it is very widely spread. Thus the Galelareese think that if a man steps over your fishing-rod or your arrow, the fish will not bite when you fish with that rod, and the game will not be hit by that arrow when you shoot it. They say it is as if the implements merely skimmed past the fish or the game (M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 513). Similarly, if a Highland sportsman saw a person stepping over his gun or fishing-rod, he presumed but little on that day's diversion (John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 456). When a Dacota had bad luck in hunting, he would say that a woman had been stepping over some part of the animal which he revered (Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, ii. 175). Some of the aborigines of Australia are seriously alarmed if a woman steps over them as they lie asleep on the ground (E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 50). Amongst many South African tribes it is considered highly improper to step over a sleeper; if a wife steps over her husband, he cannot hit his enemy in war; if she steps over his assegais, they are from that time useless, and are given to boys to play with (J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p. 209). Malagasy porters believe that if a woman strides

over their poles, the skin will certainly peel off the shoulders of the bearers when next they take up the burden (J. Richardson, in *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, Reprint of the First Four Numbers, p. 529; J. Sibree, *The Great African Island*, p. 288; compare De Flacourt, *Histoire de la Grande Isle Madagascar* (Paris, 1658), p. 99). According to the South Slavonians, the most serious maladies may be communicated to a person by stepping over him, but they can afterwards be cured by stepping over him in the reverse direction (F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 52). The belief that to step over a child hinders it from growing is found in France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, and Syria; in Syria, Germany, and Bohemia the mischief can be remedied by stepping over the child in the opposite direction. See L. F. Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 226, cp. p. 219 sq.; E. Monseur, *Le Folk-lore Wallon*, p. 39; A. Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 603; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 208, § 42; J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., im Voigtlande, p. 423; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Nord-deutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 462, § 461; Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 109, §§ 798, 799; Eijüb Abēla, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss, abergläubischer Gebräuche in Syrien," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palaestina-Vereins*, vii. (1884), p. 81.

their sanctity or defilement from being communicated with disastrous effects to their friends, just as we have seen that the vessels and clothes of the sacred Mikado, of women at childbirth and menstruation, of boys at circumcision, and of persons defiled by contact with the dead are destroyed or laid aside for a similar reason. The first four times that an Apache Indian goes out on the war-path, he is bound to refrain from scratching his head with his fingers and from letting water touch his lips. Hence he scratches his head with a stick, and drinks through a hollow reed or cane. Stick and reed are attached to the warrior's belt and to each other by a leathern thong.¹ The rule not to scratch their heads with their fingers but to use a stick for the purpose instead was regularly observed by Ojebways on the war-path.²

If the reader still doubts whether the rules of conduct which we have just been considering are based on superstitious fears or dictated by a rational prudence, his doubts will probably be dissipated when he learns that rules of the same sort are often imposed even more stringently on warriors after the victory has been won and when all fear of the living corporeal foe is at an end. In such cases one motive for the inconvenient restrictions laid on the victors in their hour of triumph is probably a dread of the angry ghosts of the slain; and that the fear of the vengeful ghosts does influence the behaviour of the slayers is often expressly affirmed. The general effect of the taboos laid on sacred chiefs, mourners, women at childbirth, men on the war-path, and so on is to seclude or isolate the tabooed persons from ordinary society, this effect being attained by a variety of rules, which oblige the persons to live in separate huts or in the open air, to shun the commerce of the sexes, to avoid the use of vessels employed by others, and so forth. Now the same effect is produced by similar means in the case of victorious warriors, particularly such as have actually shed the blood of their enemies. In the island of Timor,

¹ J. G. Bourke, *On the Border with* *Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, Crook (New York, 1891), p. 133; 1892), p. 490.
² J. G. Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, ii. *id.*, in *Ninth Annual Report of the* 168.

when a warlike expedition has returned in triumph bringing the heads of the vanquished foe, the leader of the expedition is forbidden by religion and custom to return at once to his own house. A special hut is prepared for him in which he has to reside for two months, undergoing bodily and spiritual purification. During this time he may not go to his wife nor feed himself; the food must be put into his mouth by another person.¹ That these observances are dictated by fear of the ghosts of the slain seems certain; for from another account of the ceremonies performed on the return of a successful head-hunter in the same island we learn that sacrifices are offered on this occasion to appease the soul of the man whose head has been taken; the people think that some misfortune would befall the victor were such offerings omitted. Moreover, a part of the ceremony consists of a dance accompanied by a song, in which the death of the slain man is lamented and his forgiveness is entreated. "Be not angry," they say, "because your head is here with us; had we been less lucky, our heads might now have been exposed in your village. We have offered the sacrifice to appease you. Your spirit may now rest and leave us at peace. Why were you our enemy? Would it not have been better that we should remain friends? Then your blood would not have been spilt and your head would not have been cut off."² In some Dyak tribes men on returning from an

¹ S. Müller, *Reizen en Onderzoekingen in den Indischen Archipel* (Amsterdam, 1857), ii. 252.

² J. S. G. Gramberg, "Eene maand in de binnenlanden van Timor," *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxxvi. 208, 216 sq. Compare H. Zondervan, "Timor en de Timoreezen," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, v. (1888), Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, pp. 399, 413. Similarly Gallas returning from war sacrifice to the jinn or guardian spirits of their slain foes before they will re-enter their own houses (Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, die geistige Cultur der Dandkil, Galla und Somdl*, pp. 50, 136). Sometimes perhaps the sacrifice consists of the

slayers' own blood. Among some Brazilian tribes the man who put a prisoner to death was scarified in his breast, arms, legs, and other parts of his body, because it was thought that he would die if his own blood were not drawn after he had taken that of the enemy. See Lery, *Historia Navigations in Brasiliani, quae et America dicitur* (1586), p. 192; Pero de Magalhães de Gandavo, *Histoire de la province de Sancta-Cruz* (Paris, 1837), p. 139 (Ternaux-Compans, *Voyages, relations et mémoires originaux pour servir à l'histoire de la découverte de l'Amérique*); Lafitau, *Mœurs des Sauvages Américains*, ii. 305. So Orestes is said to have appeased the Furies of his murdered mother by biting off one of his fingers (Pausanias, viii. 34. 3).

expedition in which they have taken human heads are obliged to keep by themselves and abstain from a variety of things for several days ; they may not touch iron nor eat salt or fish with bones, and they may have no intercourse with women.¹ In the Toaripi or Motumotu tribe of south-eastern New Guinea a man who has killed another may not go near his wife, and may not touch food with his fingers. He is fed by others, and only with certain kinds of food. These observances last till the new moon.² Among the tribes at the mouth of the Wanigela River, in New Guinea, "a man who has taken life is considered to be impure until he has undergone certain ceremonies : as soon as possible after the deed he cleanses himself and his weapon. This satisfactorily accomplished, he repairs to his village and seats himself on the logs of sacrificial staging. No one approaches him or takes any notice of him. A house is prepared for him which is put in charge of two or three small boys as servants. He may eat only toasted bananas, and only the centre portion of them—the ends being thrown away. On the third day of his seclusion a small feast is prepared by his friends, who also fashion some new perineal bands for him. This is called *ivi poro*. The next day the man dons all his best ornaments and badges for taking life, and sallies forth fully armed and parades the village. The next day a hunt is organised, and a kangaroo selected from the game captured. It is cut open and the spleen and liver rubbed over the back of the man. He then walks solemnly down to the nearest water, and standing straddle-legs in it washes himself. All the young untried warriors swim between his legs. This is supposed to impart courage and strength to them. The following day, at early dawn, he dashes out of his house, fully armed, and calls aloud the name of his victim. Having satisfied himself that he has thoroughly scared the ghost of the dead man, he returns to his house. The beating of flooring-boards and the lighting of fires is also a certain method of scaring the ghost. A day later his

¹ S. W. Tromp, "Uit de Salasila van Koetei," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxvii. (1888), p. 74.

² Rev. J. Chalmers, "Toaripi," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898), p. 333.

stream. At the moment they enter the water a divi placed higher up, throws some purifying substances into current. This is, however, not strictly necessary. javelins and battle-axes also undergo the process of washing." ¹ Nothing is here said of an enforced seclusion at the ceremonial washing, but some South African tribes certainly require the slayer of a very gallant foe in war to keep apart from his wife and family for ten days after he has washed his body in running water. He also receives from the tribal doctor a medicine which he chews with food. ² A Zulu who has killed a man in battle is obliged to perform certain purificatory ceremonies before he may return to ordinary life. Amongst other things, he must be surmised to make an incision in the corpse of his slain foe, in order to let the gases escape and so prevent the body from swelling. If he fails to do so, his own body will swell in proportion as the corpse becomes inflated. ⁴ Among the Ovambo in Southern Africa, when the warriors return to their villages those who have killed an enemy pass the first night in the open fields, and may not enter their houses until they have been cleansed of the guilt of blood by an older man, who sm

¹ R. E. Guise, "On the Tribes inhabiting the Mouth of the Wanigela River, New Guinea," *Journal of the*

Romans had also to bathe in running water before they might touch things (Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 719 sqq.).

them for this purpose with a kind of porridge.¹ After the slaughter of the Midianites the Israelitish warriors were obliged to remain outside the camp for seven days: whoever had killed a man or touched the slain had to purify himself and his captive. The spoil taken from the enemy had also to be purified, according to its nature, either by fire or water.² Similarly among the Basutos cattle taken from the enemy are fumigated with bundles of lighted branches before they are allowed to mingle with the herds of the tribe.³

The Arunta of Central Australia believe that when a party of men has been out against the enemy and taken a life, the spirit of the slain man follows the party on its return and is constantly on the watch to do a mischief to those of the band who actually shed the blood. It takes the form of a little bird called the *chichurkna*, and may be heard crying like a child in the distance as it flies. If any of the slayers should fail to hear its cry, he would become paralysed in his right arm and shoulder. At night-time especially, when the bird is flying over the camp, the slayers have to lie awake and keep the right arm and shoulder carefully hidden, lest the bird should look down upon and harm them. When once they have heard its cry, their minds are at ease, because the spirit of the dead then recognises that he has been detected, and can therefore do no mischief. On their return to their friends, as soon as they come in sight of the main camp, they begin to perform an excited war-dance, approaching in the form of a square and moving their shields as if to ward off something which was being thrown at them. This action is intended to repel the angry spirit of the dead man, who is striving to attack them. Next the men who did the deed of blood separate themselves from the others, and forming a line, with spears at rest and shields held out in front, stand silent and motionless like statues. A number of old women now approach with a sort of exulting skip and strike the shields of the men-slayers with fighting-clubs till they ring again. They are followed by men who smite the shields with

¹ H. Schinz, *Deutsch - Südwest-Afrika*, p. 321.

² Numbers xxxi. 19-24.

³ Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 258 sq.

boomerangs. This striking of the shields is supposed to be a very effective way of frightening away the spirit of the dead man. The natives listen anxiously to the sounds emitted by the shields when they are struck; for if any man's shield gives forth a hollow sound under the blow, that man will not live long, but if it rings sharp and clear, he is safe. For some days after their return the slayers will not speak of what they have done, and continue to paint themselves all over with powdered charcoal, and to decorate their foreheads and noses with green twigs. Finally, they paint their bodies and faces with bright colours, and become free to talk about the affair; but still of nights they must lie awake listening for the plaintive cry of the bird in which they fancy they hear the voice of their victim.¹

In the Washington group of the Marquesas Islands, the man who has slain an enemy in battle becomes tabooed for ten days, during which he may hold no intercourse with his wife, and may not meddle with fire. Hence another has to make fire and to cook for him. Nevertheless he is treated with marked distinction and receives presents of pigs.² In the Pelew Islands, when the men return from a warlike expedition in which they have taken a life, the young warriors who have been out fighting for the first time, and all who handled the slain, are shut up in the large council-house and become tabooed. They may not quit the edifice, nor bathe, nor touch a woman, nor eat fish; their food is limited to cocoa-nuts and syrup. They rub themselves with charmed leaves and chew charmed betel. After three days they go together to bathe as near as possible to the spot where the man was killed.³ Among the Natchez of North America young braves who had taken their first scalps were obliged to observe certain rules of abstinence for six months. They might not sleep with their wives nor eat flesh; their only food was fish and hasty-pudding. If they broke these rules, they believed that the soul of the man they had killed would work their death by magic, that they would gain no more successes over the

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 493-495. (Frankfort, 1812), i. 114 sq.

² Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt* (Berlin, 1885), p. 131.

³ J. Kubary, *Die sozialen Einrichtungen der Pelauer* (Berlin, 1885), p. 131.

enemy, and that the least wound inflicted on them would prove mortal.¹ When a Choctaw had killed an enemy and taken his scalp, he went into mourning for a month, during which he might not comb his hair, and if his head itched he might not scratch it except with a little stick which he wore fastened to his wrist for the purpose.² This ceremonial mourning for the enemies they had slain was not uncommon among the North American Indians. Thus the Dacotas, when they had killed a foe, unbraided their hair, blackened themselves all over, and wore a small knot of swan's down on the top of the head. "They dress as mourners yet rejoice."³ A Thompson River Indian of British Columbia, who had slain an enemy, used to blacken his own face, lest his victim's ghost should blind him.⁴ When the Osages have mourned over their own dead, "they will mourn for the foe just as if he was a friend."⁵ From observing the great respect paid by the Indians to the scalps they had taken, and listening to the mournful songs which they howled to the shades of their victims, Catlin was convinced that "they have a superstitious dread of the spirits of their slain enemies, and many conciliatory offices to perform, to ensure their own peace."⁶ When a Pima Indian has killed an Apache, he must undergo purification. Sixteen days he fasts, and only after the fourth day is he allowed to drink a little pinole. During the whole time he may not touch meat nor salt, nor look on a blazing fire, nor speak to a human being. He lives alone in the woods, waited on by an old woman, who brings him his scanty dole of food. He bathes often in a river, and keeps his head covered almost the whole time with a plaster of mud. On the seventeenth day a large space is cleared near the village and a fire lit in the middle of it. The men of the tribe form a circle round the fire, and outside of it sit all the warriors who have just been purified, each in a small excavation. Some of the old men then take the weapons

¹ "Relation des Natchez," *Voyages au Nord*, ii. 24 (Amsterdam, 1737); *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, vii. 26; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 186 sq.

² Bossu, *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes occidentales* (Paris, 1768), ii. 94.

³ Schoolcraft's *Indian Tribes*, iv. 63.

⁴ J. Teit, in *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 357.

⁵ J. O. Dorsey, "An Account of the War Customs of the Osages," *American Naturalist*, xviii. (1884), p. 126.

⁶ Catlin, *North American Indians*, i. 246.

of the purified and dance with them in the circle, after which both the slayer and his weapon are considered clean ; but not until four days later is the man allowed to return to his family.¹ The Apaches, the enemies of the Pimas, purify themselves for the slaughter of their foes by means of baths in the sweat-house, singing, and other rites. These ceremonies they perform for all the dead simultaneously after their return home ; but the Pimas, more punctilious on this point, resort to their elaborate ceremonies of purification the moment a single one of their own band or of the enemy has been laid low.² How heavily these religious scruples must tell against the Pimas in their wars with their ferocious enemies is obvious enough.

Far away from the torrid home of the Pima and Apaches, an old traveller witnessed ceremonies of the same sort practised near the Arctic Circle by some Indians who had surprised and brutally massacred an unoffending and helpless party of Esquimaux. His description is so interesting that I will quote it in full. "Among the various superstitious customs of those people, it is worth remarking, and ought to have been mentioned in its proper place, that immediately after my companions had killed the Esquimaux at the Copper River, they considered themselves in a state of uncleanness, which induced them to practise some very curious and unusual ceremonies. In the first place, all who were absolutely concerned in the murder were prohibited from cooking any kind of victuals, either for themselves or others. As luckily there were two in company who had not shed blood, they were employed always as cooks till we joined the women. This circumstance was exceedingly favourable on my side ; for had there been no persons of the above description in company, that task, I was told, would have fallen on me ; which would have been no less fatiguing and troublesome, than humiliating and vexatious. When the victuals were cooked, all the murderers took a kind of red earth, or oker, and painted all the space between the nose and chin, as well as the greater

¹ H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 553 ; Capt. Grossman, cited in *Ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*,

(Washington, 1892), p. 475 sq.

² J. G. Bourke, *On the Border with Crook*, p. 203.

part of their cheeks, almost to the ears, before they would taste a bit, and would not drink out of any other dish, or smoke out of any other pipe, but their own; and none of the others seemed willing to drink or smoke out of theirs. We had no sooner joined the women, at our return from the expedition, than there seemed to be an universal spirit of emulation among them, vying who should make a suit of ornaments for their husbands, which consisted of bracelets for the wrists, and a band for the forehead, composed of porcupine quills and moose-hair, curiously wrought on leather. The custom of painting the mouth and part of the cheeks before each meal, and drinking and smoking out of their own utensils, was strictly and invariably observed, till the winter began to set in; and during the whole of that time they would never kiss any of their wives or children. They refrained also from eating many parts of the deer and other animals, particularly the head, entrails, and blood; and during their uncleanness, their victuals were never sodden in water, but dried in the sun, eaten quite raw, or broiled, when a fire fit for the purpose could be procured. When the time arrived that was to put an end to these ceremonies, the men, without a female being present, made a fire at some distance from the tents, into which they threw all their ornaments, pipe-stems, and dishes, which were soon consumed to ashes; after which a feast was prepared, consisting of such articles as they had long been prohibited from eating; and when all was over, each man was at liberty to eat, drink, and smoke as he pleased; and also to kiss his wives and children at discretion, which they seemed to do with more raptures than I had ever known them to do it either before or since."¹

¹ S. Hearne, *Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean* (London, 1795), pp. 204-206. The custom of painting the face or the body of the manslayer, which may perhaps be intended to disguise him from the vengeful spirit of the slain, is practised by other peoples. Among the Borāna Gallas, when a war-party has returned to the village, the victors who have slain a foe are washed by the women with a

mixture of fat and butter, and their faces are painted with red and white (Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die materielle Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somali* (Berlin, 1893), p. 258). Among the Angoni of Central Africa, after a successful raid, the leader calls together all who have killed an enemy and paints their faces and heads white; also he paints a white band round the body under the arms and across the chest (*British*

the blood of a fellow-tribesman, had at first the same significance, and that the idea of a moral or spiritual regeneration symbolised by the washing, the fasting, and so on, was in a later interpretation put upon the old custom by men who had outgrown the primitive modes of thought in which the custom originated. The conjecture will be confirmed if we can show that savages have actually imposed certain restrictions on the murderer of a fellow-tribesman from a deep fear that he is haunted by the ghost of his victim. This we can do with regard to the Omahas, a tribe of the Siouan in North America. Among these Indians the kinsmen of a murdered man had the right to put the murderer to death, but sometimes they refrained from exercising their right in consideration of presents which they consented to accept. When the life of the murderer was spared, he had to observe certain stringent rules for a period which varied from ten to four years. He must walk barefoot, and he might eat no meat, nor food, nor raise his voice, nor look around. He was compelled to pull his robe around him and to have it tied at the neck even in hot weather; he might not let it hang loosely open. He might not move his hands about, but he must keep them close to his body. He might not comb his hair, and it might not be blown about by the wind. When the tribe went out hunting, he was obliged to pitch his

about a quarter of a mile from the rest of the people "lest the ghost of his victim should raise a high wind, which might cause damage." Only one of his kindred was allowed to remain with him at his tent. No one wished to eat with him, for they said, "If we eat with him whom Wakanda hates, Wakanda will hate us." Sometimes he wandered at night crying and lamenting his offence. At the end of his long isolation the kinsmen of the murdered man heard his crying and said, "It is enough. Begone, and walk among the crowd. Put on moccasins and wear a good robe."¹ Here the reason alleged for keeping the murderer at a considerable distance from the hunters gives the clue to all the other restrictions laid on him: he was haunted and therefore dangerous. The ancient Greeks believed that the soul of a man who had just been killed was wroth with his slayer and troubled him; wherefore it was needful even for the involuntary homicide to depart from his country for a year until the anger of the dead man had cooled down; nor might the slayer return until sacrifice had been offered and ceremonies of purification performed. If his victim chanced to be a foreigner, the homicide had to shun the native country of the dead man as well as his own.² The legend of the matricide Orestes, how he roamed from place to place pursued by the Furies of his murdered mother, and none would sit at meat with him, or take him in, till he had been purified,³ reflects faithfully the real Greek dread of such as were still haunted by an angry ghost.

Among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia, men who have partaken of human flesh as a ceremonial rite are subject for a long time afterwards to many restrictions or taboos of the sort we have been dealing with. They may not touch their wives for a whole year; and during the same time they are forbidden to work or gamble. For four months they must live alone in their bedrooms, and when they are obliged to quit the house for a necessary purpose,

¹ J. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 369.

² Plato, *Laws*, ix. pp. 865D-866A; Demosthenes, *Contra Aristocr.* p. 643 sq.; Hesychius, s.v. ἀνεναυστός.

³ Euripides, *Iphig. in Taur.* 940

sqq.; Pausanias, ii. 31. 8. We may compare the wanderings of the other matricide Alcmaeon, who could find no rest till he came to a new land on which the sun had not yet shone when he murdered his mother (Thucydides, ii. 102; Apollodorus, iii. 7. 5; Pausanias, viii. 24. 8).

they may not go out at the ordinary door, but must use only the secret door in the rear of the house. On such occasions each of them is attended by all the rest, carrying small sticks. They must all sit down together on a long log, then get up, then sit down again, repeating this three times before they are allowed to remain seated. Before they rise they must turn round four times. Then they go back to the house. Before entering they must raise their feet four times; with the fourth step they really pass the door, taking care to enter with the right foot foremost. In the doorway they turn four times and walk slowly into the house. They are not permitted to look back. During the four months of their seclusion each man in eating must use a spoon, dish, and kettle of his own, which are thrown away at the end of the period. Before he draws water from a bucket or a brook, he must dip his cup into it thrice; and he may not take more than four mouthfuls at one time. He must carry a wing-bone of an eagle and drink through it, for his lips may not touch the brim of his cup. He also wears a copper nail to scratch his head with, for were his own nails to touch his own skin they would drop off. For sixteen days after he has partaken of human flesh he may not eat any warm food, and for the whole of the four months he is forbidden to cool hot food by blowing on it with his breath. At the end of winter, when the season of ceremonies is over, he feigns to have forgotten the ordinary ways of men, and has to learn everything anew. The reason for these remarkable restrictions imposed on men who have eaten human flesh is not stated; but we may surmise that fear of the ghost of the man whose body was eaten has at least a good deal to do with them. We are confirmed in our conjecture by observing that though these cannibals sometimes content themselves with taking bites out of living people, the rules in question are especially obligatory on them after they have devoured a corpse. Moreover, the careful treatment of the bones of the victim points to the same conclusion; for during the four months of seclusion observed by the cannibals, the bones of the person on whom they dined are kept alternately for four days at a time under rocks in the sea and in their bedrooms on the north side of

the house, where the sun cannot strike them. Finally the bones are thrown into the sea.¹

Thus in primitive society the rules of ceremonial purity observed by divine kings, chiefs, and priests agree in many respects with the rules observed by homicides, mourners, women in childbed, girls at puberty, and so on. To us these various classes of persons appear to differ totally in character and condition; some of them we should call holy, others we might pronounce unclean and polluted. But the savage makes no such moral distinction between them; the conceptions of holiness and pollution are not yet differentiated in his mind. To him the common feature of all these persons is that they are dangerous and in danger, and the danger in which they stand and to which they expose others is what we should call spiritual or supernatural, that is, imaginary. The danger, however, is not less real because it is imaginary; imagination acts upon man as really as does gravitation, and may kill him as certainly as a dose of prussic acid. To seclude these persons from the rest of the world so that the dreaded spiritual danger shall neither reach them, nor spread from them, is the object of the taboos which they have to observe. These taboos act, so to say, as electrical insulators to preserve the spiritual force with which these persons are charged from suffering or inflicting harm by contact with the outer world.²

¹ Fr. Boas, "The social organization and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 537 sq.

² On the nature of taboo see my article "Taboo" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edition, vol. xxiii. p. 15 sqq.; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 148 sqq., 446 sqq. Some languages have retained a word for that general idea which includes under it the notions which we now distinguish as sanctity and pollution. The word in Latin is *sacer*, in Greek, *ἅγιος*. In Polynesian it is *tabu* (Tongan), *tapu* (Samoan, Tahitian, Marquesan, Maori, etc.), or *kapu* (Hawaiian). See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Wellington, N.Z., 1891), s.v.

tapu. In Dacotan the word is *wakan*, which in Riggs's *Dakota-English Dictionary* (*Contributions to North American Ethnology*, vol. vii., Washington, 1890, p. 507 sq.) is defined as "*spiritual, sacred, consecrated; wonderful, incomprehensible*"; said also of women at the menstrual period." Another writer in the same dictionary defines *wakan* more fully as follows: "*Mysterious; incomprehensible; in a peculiar state, which, from not being understood, it is dangerous to meddle with*"; hence the application of this word to women at the menstrual period, and from hence, too, arises the feeling among the wilder Indians, that if the Bible, the church, the missionary, etc., are '*wakan*,' they are to be avoided, or shunned, not as being bad or dangerous,

...and the person thus honoured wear a visible mark (generally a cord of red silk) for the rest of his life. Above all, no iron may touch the king's body. In 1800 King Tieng-tsong-tai-oang died of a tumour on his back, no one dreaming of employing the lancet, which probably have saved his life. It is said that once he suffered terribly from an abscess in the lip, till his physicians called in a jester, whose pranks made the king laugh heartily and so the abscess burst.⁴ Roman and Sabine priests were not to be shaved with iron but only with bronze razors or shears;⁵ and whenever an iron graving-tool was brought

into the house, but as wakan. The word seems to be the only one suitable for *holy*, *sacred*, etc., but the common acceptance of it, given above, makes it quite misleading to the *heathen*." On the notion designated by *wakan*, see also G. H. Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society for the year 1867* (Saint Paul, 1867), p. 33; J. Owen Dorsey, in *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1894), p. 366 sq. It is characteristic of the equivocal notion denoted by these terms that, whereas the condition of women in childhood is commonly regarded by the savage as what we should call unclean, among the Ovaherero the same condition is described as holy; for some

commonly secluded as da among the Warundi of Easter Island. she is led by her grandmother to the house and obliged to touch the threshold (O. Baumann, *Durch Masur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 1) as if her touch imparted a curse instead of a curse.

¹ Plutarch, *Agis*, 19.

² W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 102.

³ J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Congo* (Paris, 1883), i. 226.

⁴ Ch. Dallet, *Histoire de l'Île de Corée* (Paris, 1874), i. p. xx. Griffiths, *Corée, the Hermit Nation*.

⁵ Macrobius, *Sat.* v. 19. 13; on Virgil, *Aen.* i. 448:

into the sacred grove of the Arval Brothers at Rome for the purpose of cutting an inscription in stone, an expiatory sacrifice of a lamb and a pig was offered, which was repeated when the graving-tool was removed from the grove.¹ As a general rule iron might not be brought into Greek sanctuaries.² In Crete sacrifices were offered to Menedemus without the use of iron, because the legend ran that Menedemus had been killed by an iron weapon in the Trojan war.³ The Archon of Plataeae might not touch iron; but once a year, at the annual commemoration of the men who fell at the battle of Plataeae, he was allowed to carry a sword wherewith to sacrifice a bull.⁴ To this day a Hottentot priest never uses an iron knife, but always a sharp splint of quartz, in sacrificing an animal or circumcising a lad.⁵ Amongst the Moquis of Arizona stone knives, hatchets, and so on have passed out of common use, but are retained in religious ceremonies.⁶ After the Pawnees had ceased to use stone arrow-heads for ordinary purposes, they still employed them to slay the sacrifices, whether human captives or buffalo and deer.⁷ Negroes of the Gold Coast remove all

¹ *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, ed. Henzen, pp. 128-135; Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.¹ (*Das Sacralwesen*) p. 459 sq.

² Plutarch, *Præcepta gerendae rei publicae*, xxvi. 7. Plutarch here mentions that gold was also excluded from some temples. At first sight this is surprising, for in general neither the gods nor their ministers have displayed any marked aversion to gold. But a little inquiry suffices to clear up the mystery and set the scruple in its proper light. From an inscription discovered a few years ago we learn that no person might enter the sanctuary of the Mistress at Lycosura wearing golden trinkets, unless for the purpose of dedicating them to the goddess; and if any one did enter the holy place with such ornaments on his body but no such pious intention in his mind, the trinkets were forfeited to the use of religion. See *Ἐφημερίς ἀρχαιολογική* (Athens, 1898), col. 249; compare P. Cavaddias, *Fouilles de Lycosoura* (Athens, 1893), p. 13. The similar rule, that in the procession at the mysteries of Andania no

woman might wear golden ornaments (Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, No. 388, p. 569), was probably subject to a similar exception and enforced by a similar penalty. Once more, if the maidens who served Athena on the Acropolis at Athens put on gold ornaments, the ornaments became sacred, in other words, the property of the goddess (Harpocration, s.v. ἀρρηφορεῖν). Thus it appears that the pious scruple about gold concerned rather its exit from, than its entrance into, the sacred edifice.

³ Callimachus, referred to by the Old Scholiast on Ovid, *Ibis*. See Callimachus, ed. Blomfield, p. 216; Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 686.

⁴ Plutarch, *Aristides*, 21. This passage was pointed out to me by my friend Mr. W. Wyse.

⁵ Theophilus Hahn, *Tsuni - IGoam, the Supreme Being of the K'hoi-Khoi*, p. 22.

⁶ J. G. Bourke, *The Snake Dance of the Moquis of Arizona*, p. 178 sq.

⁷ G. B. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-tales*, p. 253.

iron or steel from their person when they consult their fetish.¹ The men who made the need-fire in Scotland had to divest themselves of all metal.² In the Highlands of Scotland the shoulder-blades of sheep are employed in divination, being consulted as to future marriages, births, deaths, and funerals; but the forecasts thus made will not be accurate unless the flesh has been removed from the bones without the use of any iron.³ In making the *clavie* (a kind of Yule-tide fire-wheel) at Burghead, no hammer may be used; the hammering must be done with a stone.⁴ Amongst the Jews no iron tool was used in building the Temple at Jerusalem or in making an altar.⁵ The old wooden bridge (*Pons Sublicius*) at Rome, which was considered sacred, was made and had to be kept in repair without the use of iron or bronze.⁶ It was expressly provided by law that the temple of Jupiter Liber at Furfo might be repaired with iron tools.⁷ The council chamber at Cyzicus was constructed of wood without any iron nails, the beams being so arranged that they could be taken out and replaced.⁸ The late Raja Vijyanagram, a member of the Viceroy's Council, and described as one of the most enlightened and estimable of Hindoo princes, would not allow iron to be used in the construction of buildings within his territory, believing that its use would inevitably be followed by small-pox and other epidemics.⁹

This superstitious objection to iron perhaps dates from that early time in the history of society when iron was still

¹ C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides* (ed. 1883), p. 195.

² James Logan, *The Scottish Gael* (ed. Alex. Stewart), ii. 68 sq.

³ R. C. MacLagan, M.D., "Notes on folk-lore objects from Argyleshire," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 157. The shoulder-blades of sheep have been used in divination by many peoples, for example by the South Slavs, Tartars, Kirghiz, and Calmucks, as well as by the Scotch. See M. MacPhail, "Traditions, customs, and superstitions of the Lewis," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 167; Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 515 sqq.; F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der*

Südslaven, pp. 166-170; W. Radloff, *Proben der Volksliteratur der Türkischen Stämme Süd-Sibiriens*, iii. 115, note 1, compare p. 132.

⁴ C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, p. 226; E. J. Guthrie, *Old Scottish Customs*, p. 223.

⁵ 1 Kings vi. 7; Exodus xx. 25.

⁶ Dionysius Halicarn. *Antiquit. Roman.* iii. 45, v. 24; Plutarch, *Numa*, 9; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi. 100.

⁷ *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, ed. Henzen, p. 132; *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, i. No. 603.

⁸ Pliny, *l.c.*

⁹ *Indian Antiquary*, x. (1881), p. 364.

a novelty, and as such was viewed by many with suspicion and dislike. For everything new is apt to excite the awe and dread of the savage. "It is a curious superstition," says a pioneer in Borneo, "this of the Dusuns, to attribute anything—whether good or bad, lucky or unlucky—that happens to them to something novel which has arrived in their country. For instance, my living in Kindram has caused the intensely hot weather we have experienced of late."¹ Some years ago a harmless naturalist was collecting plants among the high forest-clad mountains on the borders of China and Tibet. From the summit of a pass he gazed with delight down a long valley which, stretching away as far as eye could reach to the south, resembled a sea of bloom, for everywhere the forest was ablaze with the gorgeous hues of the rhododendron and azalea in flower. In this earthly paradise the votary of science hastened to install himself beside a lake. But hardly had he done so when, alas! the weather changed. Though the season was early June, the cold became intense, snow fell heavily, and the bloom of the rhododendrons was cut off. The inhabitants of a neighbouring village at once set down the unusual severity of the weather to the presence of a stranger in the forest; and a round-robin, signed by them unanimously, was forwarded to the nearest mandarin, setting forth that the snow which had blocked the road, and the hail which was blasting their crops, were alike caused by the intruder, and that all sorts of disturbances would follow if he were allowed to remain. In these circumstances the naturalist, who had intended to spend most of the summer among the mountains, was forced to decamp. "Collecting in this country," he adds pathetically, "is not an easy matter."² The unusually heavy rains which happened to follow the English survey of the Nicobar Islands in the winter of 1886-1887 were imputed by the alarmed natives to the wrath of the spirits at the theodolites, dumpy-levellers, and other strange instruments which had been set up in so many of their favourite haunts; and some of them proposed to soothe the anger of

¹ Frank Hatton, *North Borneo* (1886), p. 233.

² A. E. Pratt, "Two journeys to

Ta-tsien-lu on the eastern borders of Tibet," *Proceedings of the R. Geographical Society*, xiii. (1891), p. 341.

the spirits by sacrificing a pig.¹ According to the Orotchis of Eastern Siberia, misfortunes have multiplied on them with the coming of Europeans; "they even go so far as to lay the appearance of *new* phenomena like thunder at the door of the Russians."² In the seventeenth century a succession of bad seasons excited a revolt among the Esthonian peasantry, who traced the origin of the evil to a water-mill, which put a stream to some inconvenience by checking its flow.³ The first introduction of iron ploughshares into Poland having been followed by a succession of bad harvests, the farmers attributed the badness of the crops to the iron ploughshares, and discarded them for the old wooden ones.⁴ To this day the primitive Baduwis of Java, who live chiefly by husbandry, will use no iron tools in tilling their fields.⁵

The general dislike of innovation, which always makes itself strongly felt in the sphere of religion, is sufficient by itself to account for the superstitious aversion to iron entertained by kings and priests and attributed by them to the gods; possibly this aversion may have been intensified in places by some such accidental cause as the series of bad seasons which cast discredit on iron ploughshares in Poland. But the disfavour in which iron is held by the gods and their ministers has another side. Their antipathy to the metal furnishes men with a weapon which may be turned against the spirits when occasion serves. As their dislike of iron is supposed to be so great that they will not approach persons and things protected by the obnoxious metal, iron may obviously be employed as a charm for banning ghosts and other dangerous spirits. And it often is so used. Thus when Scotch fishermen were at sea,

¹ W. Svoboda, "Die Bewohner des Nikobaren-Archipels," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vi. (1893), p. 13.

² E. H. Fraser, "The fish-skin Tartars," *Journal of the China Branch of the R. Asiatic Society for the year 1891-92*, N.S., xxvi. p. 15.

³ Krentzwald und Neus, *Afytische und magische Lieder der Esten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), p. 113.

⁴ Alexand. Guagninus, "De ducatu

Samogitiae," in *Respublica sive Status Regni Poloniae, Lituaniae, Prussiae, Livoniae*, etc. (Elzevir, 1627), p. 276; Johan. Lasicius, "De diis Samogitarum caeterorumque Sarmatum," in *Respublica*, etc. (*ut supra*), p. 294 (p. 84, ed. Mannhardt, in *Magazin herausgeg. von der Lettisch-Literär Gesellsch.* bd. xiv.).

⁵ L. von Ende, "Die Baduwis von Java," *Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xix. (1889), p. 10.

and one of them happened to take the name of God in vain, the first man who heard him called out "Cauld airn," at which every man of the crew grasped the nearest bit of iron and held it between his hands for a while.¹ So too when he hears the unlucky word "pig" mentioned a Scotch fisherman will feel for the nails in his boots and mutter "cauld airn."² The same magic words are even whispered in the churches of Scotch fishing-villages when the clergyman reads the passage about the Gadarene swine.³ In Morocco iron is considered a great protection against demons; hence it is usual to place a knife or dagger under a sick man's pillow.⁴ The Cingalese believe that they are constantly surrounded by evil spirits, who lie in wait to do them harm. A peasant would not dare to carry good food, such as cakes or roast meat, from one place to another without putting an iron nail on it to prevent a demon from taking possession of the viands and so making the eater ill. No sick person, whether man or woman, would venture out of the house without a bunch of keys or a knife in his hand, for without such a talisman he would fear that some devil might take advantage of his weak state to slip into his body. And if a man has a large sore on his body he tries to keep a morsel of iron on it as a protection against demons.⁵ Among the Majhwâr, an aboriginal tribe in the hill country of South Mirzapur, an iron implement such as a sickle or a betel cutter is constantly kept near an infant's head during its first year for the purpose of warding off the attacks of ghosts.⁶ On the Slave Coast of Africa when a mother sees her child gradually wasting away, she concludes that a demon has entered into the child and takes her measures accordingly. To lure the demon out of the body of her offspring, she offers a sacrifice of food; and while the devil is bolting it, she attaches iron rings and small bells to her

¹ E. J. Guthrie, *Old Scottish Customs*, p. 149; Ch. Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland* (London, 1886), iii, 218.

² J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 91.

³ W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 201. The fishermen think that if the word "pig," "sow," or "swine" be uttered while

the lines are being baited, the line will certainly be lost.

⁴ A. Leared, *Morocco and the Moors* (London, 1876), p. 273.

⁵ Wickremasinghe, in *Am Urquell*, v. (1894), p. 7.

⁶ W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iii. 431.

and no one will either touch him or eat or drink with him; neither can he change his clothes²) he carries the piece of iron about with him to keep off the evil spirit. In Calcutta the Bengali clerks in the Government Offices used to carry a small key on one of their fingers when they had been mourners."³ In the north-east of Scotland immediately after a death had taken place, a piece of iron, such as a nail or a knitting-wire, used to be stuck into all the meal, butter, cheese, flesh, and whisky in the house, "to prevent evil from entering them." The neglect of this precaution is said to have been closely followed by the corruption of the whisky and drink; the whisky has been known to become as sweet as milk.⁴ When iron is used as a protective charm after death, as in these Hindoo and Scotch customs, the evil against which it is directed is the ghost of the deceased.

There is a priestly king to the north of Zengwi in Burma, revered by the Sotih as the highest spiritual and temporal authority, into whose house no weapon or cutting instrument may be brought.⁶ This rule may perhaps be explained by a custom observed by various peoples after death; they refrain from the use of sharp instruments.

¹ A. R. Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 113.

² The reader may observe how closely the taboos laid upon mourners resemble those laid upon kings. From what has

Notes and Queries, iii. p. 202, § 1. On iron as a protective charm see Liebrecht, *Gervasius von Tilburg*, p. 99 sqq.; *id.*, *Zur Volkskunde*, p. 100. L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und*

long as the ghost of the deceased is supposed to be near, lest they should wound it. Thus after a death the Roumanians of Transylvania are careful not to leave a knife lying with the sharp edge uppermost as long as the corpse remains in the house, "or else the soul will be forced to ride on the blade."¹ For seven days after a death, the corpse being still in the house, the Chinese abstain from the use of knives and needles, and even of chopsticks, eating their food with their fingers.² Amongst the Innuits or Esquimaux of Alaska for four days after a death the women in the village do no sewing, and for five days the men do not cut wood with an axe.³ On the third, sixth, ninth, and fortieth days after the funeral the old Prussians and Lithuanians used to prepare a meal, to which, standing at the door, they invited the soul of the deceased. At these meals they sat silent round the table and used no knives, and the women who served up the food were also without knives. If any morsels fell from the table they were left lying there for the lonely souls that had no living relations or friends to feed them. When the meal was over the priest took a broom and swept the souls out of the house, saying, "Dear souls, ye have eaten and drunk. Go forth, go forth."⁴ In cutting the nails and combing the hair of a dead prince in South Celebes only the back of the knife and of the comb may be used.⁵ The Germans say that a knife should not be left edge upwards, because God and the spirits dwell there, or because it will cut the face of God and the angels.⁶ In Uganda, when the hour of a woman's delivery is at hand, her husband carries

¹ W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Rumänen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt, 1866), p. 40; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, i. 312.

² J. H. Gray, *China*, i. 288.

³ W. H. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 146; *id.*, in *American Naturalist*, xii. 7; *id.*, in *The Yukon Territory* (London, 1898), p. 146.

⁴ Jo. Meletius, "De religione et sacrificiis veterum Borussorum," in *De Russorum Muscovitarum et Tartarorum religione, sacrificiis, nuptiarum, funerum ritu* (Spire, 1582), p. 263; Hartknoch, *Alt und neues Preussen*

(Frankfort and Leipsic, 1684), p. 187 *sq.*; J. Menecius, "De sacrificiis et idolotria veterum Borussorum, Livonum, aliarumque vicinarum gentium," reprinted in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, vol. ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848), p. 391 *sq.*

⁵ B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes*, p. 136.

⁶ Tettau und Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens*, p. 285; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ iii. 454, *cp.* pp. 441, 469; Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 198, § 1387.

of hair-dressing, corn-cutting, and the shaving of palm roots, because, as he sagaciously perceived, all these professions call for the use of sharp-edged instruments, which could fail to keep the demon at bay.² We can now understand why no cutting instrument may be taken into the house of the Burmese pontiff. Like so many priestly kings, probably regarded as divine, and it is therefore right that his sacred spirit should not be exposed to the risk of being cut or wounded whenever it quits his body to hover invisibly in the air or to fly on some distant mission.

We have seen that the Flamen Dialis was forbidden to touch or even name raw flesh.³ In the Pelew Islands when a raid has been made on a village and a head cut off, the relations of the slain man are tabooed and have to submit to certain observances in order to escape the visitation of his ghost. They are shut up in the house, touch no raw flesh, and chew betel over which an incantation has been uttered by the exorcist. After this the ghost of the slaughtered man goes away to the enemy's country in pursuit of his murderer.⁴ The taboo is probably based on the common belief that the soul or spirit of the animal slain is in the blood. As tabooed persons are believed to be in a perilous state—for example, the relations of the slain man are liable to the attacks of his indignant ghost—especially necessary to isolate them from contact with sy

taboo is only the special enforcement of a general precept ; in other words, its observance is particularly enjoined in circumstances which seem urgently to call for its application, but apart from such circumstances the prohibition is also observed, though less strictly, as a common rule of life. Thus some of the Esthonians will not taste blood because they believe that it contains the animal's soul, which would enter the body of the person who tasted the blood.¹ Some Indian tribes of North America, "through a strong principle of religion, abstain in the strictest manner from eating the blood of any animal, as it contains the life and spirit of the beast." These Indians "commonly pull their new-killed venison (before they dress it) several times through the smoke and flame of the fire, both by the way of a sacrifice and to consume the blood, life, or animal spirits of the beast, which with them would be a most horrid abomination to eat."² Among the Western Dénés or Tinnéh Indians of British Columbia until lately no woman would partake of blood, "and both men and women abhorred the flesh of a beaver which had been caught and died in a trap, and of a bear strangled to death in a snare, because the blood remained in the carcase."³ Many of the Slave, Hare, and Dogrib Indians scruple to taste the blood of game ; hunters of the former tribes collect the blood in the animal's paunch and bury it in the snow.⁴ Jewish hunters poured out the blood of the game they had killed and covered it up with dust. They would not taste the blood, believing that the soul or life of the animal was in the blood, or actually was the blood.⁵ The same belief was held by the Romans,⁶ and is shared by the Arabs,⁷ and by some of the Papuan tribes of New Guinea.⁸

¹ F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äussern Leben der Esten* (St. Petersburg, 1876), pp. 448, 478.

² James Adair, *History of the American Indians* (London, 1775), pp. 134, 117. The Indians described by Adair are the Creek, Cherokee, and other tribes in the south-east of the United States.

³ A. G. Morice, "The Western Dénés, their Manners and Customs," *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute*, Third Series, vii. (1888-89), p. 164.

⁴ E. Petitot, *Monographie des Dénés-Dindjé* (Paris, 1876), p. 76.

⁵ Leviticus xvii. 10-14. The Hebrew word translated "life" in the English version of verse 11 means also "soul" (marginal note in the Revised Version). Compare Deuteronomy xii. 23-25.

⁶ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* v. 79; compare *id.*, on *Aen.* iii. 67.

⁷ J. Wellhausen, *Reste Arabischen Heidentumes* (Berlin, 1887), p. 217.

⁸ A. Goudswaard, *De Papoea's van de Geelvinkbaai* (Schiedam, 1863), p. 77.

the ground, it being, by their religion, thought great to contaminate the divine blood by mixing it with earth. Other Siamese modes of executing a royal person are starvation, suffocation, stretching him on a scarlet cloth, thrusting a billet of fragrant sandal-wood into his stomach, or lastly, sewing him up in a leather sack with a large nail, and throwing him into the river; sometimes the suet on his neck is broken with sandal-wood clubs before he is thrown into the water.³ When Kublai Khan defeated and took his uncle Nayan, who had rebelled against him, he caused him to be put to death by being wrapt in a carpet and tossed on his back and fro till he died, "because he would not have the blood of his Line Imperial spilt upon the ground or exposed to the eye of Heaven and before the Sun."⁴ "Friar Ricold mentions the Tartar maxim: 'One Khan will put another to death to get possession of the throne, but he takes great care that the blood be not spilt. For they say that it is highly improper that the blood of the Great Khan should be spilt upon the ground; so they cause the victim to be smothered so that the blood be not spilt, or other.' The like feeling prevails at the court of Persia, where a peculiar mode of execution without blood is reserved for princes of the blood."⁵ In 1878 the regent of Theebaw, King of Burma, was despatched by the British and beaten across the throat with a bamboo.⁶ In Tonq

ordinary mode of execution is beheading, but persons of the blood royal are strangled.¹ In Ashantee the blood of none of the royal family may be shed ; if one of them is guilty of a great crime he is drowned in the river Dah.² As the blood royal of Dahomey may not be shed, offenders of the royal family are drowned or strangled. Commonly they are bound hand and foot, carried out to sea in a canoe, and thrown overboard.³ In Madagascar the blood of nobles might not be shed ; hence when four Christians of that class were to be executed they were burned alive.⁴ Formerly when a young king of Uganda came of age all his brothers were burnt except two or three, who were preserved to keep up the succession.⁵ Or a space of ground having been fenced in with a high paling and a deep ditch, the doomed men were led into the enclosure and left there till they died, while guards kept watch outside to prevent their escape.⁶

The reluctance to shed royal blood seems to be only a particular case of a general unwillingness to shed blood or at least to allow it to fall on the ground. Marco Polo tells us that in his day persons caught in the streets of Cambaluc (Peking) at unseasonable hours were arrested, and if found guilty of a misdemeanour were beaten with a stick. "Under this punishment people sometimes die, but they adopt it in order to eschew bloodshed, for their *Bacsis* say that it is an evil thing to shed man's blood."⁷ When Captain Christian was shot by the Manx Government at the Restoration in 1660, the spot on which he stood was covered with white blankets, that his blood might not fall on the ground.⁸ In West

¹ Baron's "Description of the Kingdom of Tonqueen," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 691.

² T. E. Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee* (London, 1873), p. 207.

³ A. B. Ellis, *Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 224, cp. p. 89.

⁴ Sibree, *Madagascar and its People*, p. 430.

⁵ C. T. Wilson and R. W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan* (London, 1882), i. 200.

⁶ This mode of executing the royal princes of Uganda was described to me

by my friend the Rev. John Roscoe, missionary to Uganda. There is an Arab legend of a king who was slain by opening the veins of his arms and letting the blood drain into a bowl ; not a drop might fall on the ground, otherwise there would be blood revenge for it. Robertson Smith conjectured that the legend was based on an old form of sacrifice regularly applied to captive chiefs (*Religion of the Semites*,² p. 369 note, cp. p. 418 note).

⁷ Marco Polo, i. 399, Yule's translation, 2nd ed.

⁸ Sir Walter Scott, note 2 to *Peveril of the Peak*, ch. v.

man, on whose breast the blood flows and may not be
away.³ When Australian blacks bleed each other as
for headache and other ailments, they are very careful
spill any of the blood on the ground, but sprinkle it on
other.⁴ We have already seen that in the Aust
ceremony for making rain the blood which is suppos
imitate the rain is received upon the bodies of the
men.⁵ "Also the Gauls used to drink their enemies'
and paint themselves therewith. So also they write th
old Irish were wont; and so have I seen some of the
do, but not their enemies' but friends' blood, as, na
at the execution of a notable traitor at Limerick, (c
Murrough O'Brien, I saw an old woman, which was his f
mother, take up his head whilst he was quartered and
up all the blood that ran thereout, saying that the earth
not worthy to drink it, and therewith also steeped her
and breast and tore her hair, crying out and shrieking
terribly."⁶ After a battle in Horne Island, South Paci
was found that the brother of the vanquished king
among the wounded. "It was sad to see his wife colle
her hands the blood which had flowed from his wounds,
throw it on to her head, whilst she uttered piercing
All the relatives of the wounded collected in the

³ Charlotte Latham, "Some West 1798), p. 580.

manner the blood which had flowed from them, down even to the last drop, and they even applied their lips to the leaves of the shrubs and licked it all up to the last drop."¹ In the Marquesas Islands the persons who helped a woman at childbirth received on their heads the blood which flowed at the cutting of the navel-string; for the blood might not touch anything but a sacred object, and in Polynesia the head is sacred in a high degree.² In South Celebes at childbirth a female slave stands under the house (the houses being raised on posts above the ground) and receives in a basin on her head the blood which trickles through the bamboo floor.³ Among the Latuka of Central Africa the earth on which a drop of blood has fallen at childbirth is carefully scraped up with an iron shovel, put into a pot along with the water used in washing the mother, and buried tolerably deep outside the house on the left-hand side.⁴ In West Africa, if a drop of your blood has fallen on the ground, you must carefully cover it up, rub and stamp it into the soil; if it has fallen on the side of a canoe or a tree, the place is cut out and the chip destroyed.⁵ The intention of these African customs may be to prevent the blood from falling into the hands of magicians, who might make an evil use of it.

The unwillingness to shed blood is extended by some peoples to the blood of animals. When the Wanika in Eastern Africa kill their cattle for food, "they either stone or beat the animal to death, so as not to shed the blood."⁶ Amongst the Damaras cattle killed for food are suffocated, but when sacrificed they are speared to death.⁷ But like most pastoral tribes in Africa, both the Wanika and Damaras very seldom kill their cattle, which are indeed commonly invested with a kind of sanctity.⁸ In killing an animal for

¹ "Futuna, or Horne Island and its people," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. i. No. 1 (April 1892), p. 43.

² Max Radiguet, *Les derniers sauvages* (Paris, 1882), p. 175.

³ B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes*, p. 53.

⁴ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha in Ilcr von Afrika*, p. 795.

⁵ Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, pp. 440, 447.

⁶ Lieut. Emery, in *Journal of the R. Geographical Society*, iii. 282.

⁷ Ch. Andersson, *Lake Ngami* (London, 1856), p. 224.

⁸ Ch. New, *Life, Wanderings, and Labours in Eastern Africa*, p. 124; Francis Galton, "Domestication of Animals," *Transactions of the Ethnology*.

food the Easter Islanders do not shed its blood, but stun it or suffocate it in smoke.¹ When the natives of San Cristoval, one of the Solomon Islands, sacrifice a pig to a ghost in a sacred place, they take great care that the blood shall not fall on the ground; so they place the animal in a large bowl and cut it up there.²

The explanation of the reluctance to shed blood on the ground is probably to be found in the belief that the soul is in the blood, and that therefore any ground on which it may fall necessarily becomes taboo or sacred.³ In New Zealand anything upon which even a drop of a high chief's blood chances to fall becomes taboo or sacred to him. For instance, a party of natives having come to visit a chief in a fine new canoe, the chief got into it, but in doing so a splinter entered his foot, and the blood trickled on the canoe, which at once became sacred to him. The owner jumped out, dragged the canoe ashore opposite the chief's house, and left it there. Again, a chief in entering a missionary's house knocked his head against a beam, and the blood flowed. The natives said that in former times the house would have belonged to the chief.⁴ As usually happens with taboos of universal application, the prohibition to spill the blood of a tribesman on the ground applies with peculiar stringency to chiefs and kings, and is observed in their case long after it has ceased to be observed in the case of others.

We have seen that the Flamen Dialis was not allowed to walk under a trellised vine.⁵ The reason for this prohibition was perhaps as follows. It has been shown that plants are considered as animate beings which bleed when cut, the red juice which exudes from some of them being regarded as the blood of the plant.⁶ The juice of the grape is therefore

Soc. of London, N.S., iii. (1865), p. 135. On the original sanctity of domestic animals see, above all, W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 280 sqq., 295 sqq.

¹ L. Linton Palmer, "A Visit to Easter Island," *Journ. R. Geographical Society*, xl. (1870), p. 171.

² R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 129.

³ Combined with, or perhaps sometimes independent of this belief may be

a fear lest the blood should be used by magicians to work harm to the person from whose veins it flowed. This is perhaps the motive of the African customs noted above (p. 357).

⁴ R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,² p. 194 sq.

⁵ Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 112; Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 13.

⁶ Above, p. 173.

naturally conceived as the blood of the vine.¹ And since, as we have just seen, the soul is often believed to be in the blood, the juice of the grape is regarded as the soul, or as containing the soul, of the vine. This belief is strengthened by the intoxicating effects of wine. For, according to primitive notions, all abnormal mental states, such as intoxication or madness, are caused by the entrance of a spirit into the person ; such mental states, in other words, are accounted forms of possession or inspiration. Wine, therefore, is considered on two distinct grounds as a spirit or containing a spirit ; first because, as a red juice, it is identified with the blood of the plant, and second because it intoxicates or inspires. Therefore if the Flamen Dialis had walked under a trellised vine, the spirit of the vine, embodied in the clusters of grapes, would have been immediately over his head and might have touched it, which for a person like him in a state of permanent taboo² would have been highly dangerous. This interpretation of the prohibition will be made probable if we can show, first, that wine has been actually viewed by some peoples as blood, and intoxication as inspiration produced by drinking the blood ; and, second, that it is often considered dangerous, especially for tabooed persons, to have either blood or a living person over their heads.

With regard to the first point, we are informed by Plutarch that of old the Egyptian kings neither drank wine nor offered it in libations to the gods, because they held it to be the blood of beings who had once fought against the gods, the vine having sprung from their rotting bodies ; and the frenzy of intoxication was explained by the supposition that the drunken man was filled with the blood of the enemies of the gods.³ The Aztecs regarded *pulque* or the wine of the country as bad, on account of the wild deeds which men did under its influence. But these wild deeds were believed to be the acts, not of the drunken man, but of the wine-god by whom he was possessed and inspired ; and

¹ Cp. W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² p. 230.

² "*Dialis cotidie feriatns est*," Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 16.

³ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 6. A

myth apparently akin to this has been preserved in some native Egyptian writings. See Ad. Erman, *Aegypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 364.

to the inspiration produced by drinking the blood of an animal. The soul or life is in the blood, and wine is the blood of the vine. Hence whoever drinks the blood of an animal is inspired with the soul of the animal or of the god, which we have seen,³ is often supposed to enter into the animal before it is slain; and whoever drinks wine drinks the blood and so receives into himself the soul or spirit of the god of the vine.

With regard to the second point, the fear of passing under blood or under a living person, we are told that the Australian blacks have a dread of passing under a leaning tree or even under the rails of a fence. The reason they give is that a woman may have been upon the tree or fence, and some blood from her may have fallen on it, and might fall from it on them.⁴ In Ugi, one of the Solomonic Islands, a man will never, if he can help it, pass under a tree which has fallen across the path, for the reason that a woman may have stepped over it before him.⁵ Amongst the Kachins of Burma "going under a house, especially if there are females within, is avoided; as is also the passing under trees of which the branches extend downwards in a particular direction, and the butt-end of fallen trees, etc."⁶ The Siamese think it unlucky to pass under a rope on which

³ Bernardino de Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*. ⁴ E. M. Curr, *The Australian*

women's clothes are hung, and to avert evil consequences the person who has done so must build a chapel to the earth-spirit.¹

Probably in all such cases the rule is based on a fear of being brought into contact with blood, especially the blood of women. From a like fear a Maori will never lean his back against the wall of a native house.² For the blood of women is believed to have disastrous effects upon males. The Aruntas of Central Australia believe that a draught of woman's blood would kill the strongest man.³ In the Encounter Bay tribe of South Australia boys are warned that if they see the blood of women they will early become gray-headed and their strength will fail prematurely.⁴ Men of the Booandik tribe think that if they see the blood of their women they will not be able to fight against their enemies and will be killed; if the sun dazzles their eyes at a fight, the first woman they afterwards meet is sure to get a blow from their club.⁵ In the island of Wetar it is thought that if a man or a lad comes upon a woman's blood he will be unfortunate in war and other undertakings, and that any precautions he may take to avoid the misfortune will be vain.⁶ The people of Ceram also believe that men who see women's blood will be wounded in battle.⁷ Similarly the Ovaherero or Damaras of South Africa think that if they see a lying-in woman shortly after childbirth they will become weaklings and will be shot when they go to war.⁸ It is an Esthonian belief that men who see women's blood will suffer from an eruption on the skin.⁹ A Fan negro told Miss Kingsley that a young man in his village, who was so weak that he could hardly crawl about, had fallen

¹ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 230.

² For the reason, see Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 112 sq., 292; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 118.

³ F. J. Gillen in *Report of the Horn Scientific Expedition to Central Australia*, pt. iv. p. 182.

⁴ *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 186.

⁵ Mrs. James Smith, *The Booandik Tribe*, p. 5.

⁶ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tuschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 450.

⁷ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 139, compare p. 209.

⁸ E. Dannert, "Customs of the Ovaherero at the Birth of a Child," (*South African Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1880), p. 63.

⁹ F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem innern und aussern Leben der Esten*, p. 475.

objects, like a vine or women's blood, is a fear that may come in contact with the head; for among many peoples the head is peculiarly sacred. The special sanctity attributed to it is sometimes explained by a belief that the seat of a spirit which is very sensitive to injury or respect. Thus the Yorubas of the Slave Coast hold that every man has three spiritual inmates, of whom the first called *Olori*, dwells in the head and is the man's protector, guardian, and guide. Offerings are made to this spirit, chiefly of fowls, and some of the blood mixed with palm-oil is rubbed on the forehead.¹ The Karens of Burma suppose that being called the *tso* resides in the upper part of the head, and while it retains its seat no harm can befall the person from the efforts of the seven *Kelaks*, or personified passions. "But if the *tso* becomes heedless or weak certain evil to the person is the result. Hence the head is carefully attended to, and all possible pains are taken to provide such dress and attire as will be pleasing to the *tso*."² The Siamese think that a spirit called *khuan* or *kwun* dwells in the human head, of which it is the guardian spirit. The spirit must be carefully protected from injury of every kind; hence the ceremony of shaving or cutting the hair is accompanied with many ceremonies. The *kwun* is very sensitive on points of honor.

¹ Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, ceremony connected with his name.

and would feel mortally insulted if the head in which he resides were touched by the hand of a stranger. When Dr. Bastian, in conversation with a brother of the king of Siam, raised his hand to touch the prince's skull in order to illustrate some medical remarks he was making, a sullen and threatening murmur bursting from the lips of the crouching courtiers warned him of the breach of etiquette he had committed, for in Siam there is no greater insult to a man of rank than to touch his head. If a Siamese touch the head of another with his foot, both of them must build chapels to the earth-spirit to avert the omen. Nor does the guardian spirit of the head like to have the hair washed too often; it might injure or incommode him. It was a grand solemnity when the king of Burmah's head was washed with water taken from the middle of the river. Whenever the native professor, from whom Dr. Bastian took lessons in Burmese at Mandalay, had his head washed, which took place as a rule once a month, he was generally absent for three days together, that time being consumed in preparing for, and recovering from, the operation of head-washing. Dr. Bastian's custom of washing his head daily gave rise to much remark.¹ The head of the king of Persia was cleaned only once a year, on his birthday.² Roman women washed their heads annually on the thirteenth of August.³

Again, the Burmese think it an indignity to have any one, especially a woman, over their heads, and for this reason Burmese houses have never more than one story. The houses are raised on posts above the ground, and whenever anything fell through the floor Dr. Bastian had always difficulty in persuading a servant to fetch it from under the house. In Rangoon a priest, summoned to the bedside of a sick man, climbed up a ladder and got in at the window rather than ascend the staircase, to reach which he must have passed under a gallery. A pious Burman of

¹ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 256, iii. 71, 230, 235 sq. The spirit is called *kunn* by E. Young (*The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 75 sqq.). See below, p. 374 sq.

² Herodotus, ix. 110. This passage was pointed out to me by Mr. E. S.

Shuckburgh.

³ Plutarch, *Quæstiones Romanæ*, 100. Plutarch's words (μάλιστα ῥύπτεσθαι τὰς κεφαλὰς καὶ καθαίρειν ἐπιτηδεύουσι) leave room to hope that the ladies did not strictly confine these ablutions to one day in the year.

Rangoon, finding some images of Buddha in a ship's cabin, offered a high price for them, that they might not be degraded by sailors walking over them on the deck.¹ Formerly in Siam no person might cross a bridge while his superior in rank was passing underneath, nor might he walk in a room above one in which his superior was sitting or lying.² The Cambodians esteem it a grave offence to touch a man's head; some of them will not enter a place where anything whatever is suspended over their heads; and the meanest Cambodian would never consent to live under an inhabited room. Hence the houses are built of one story only; and even the Government respects the prejudice by never placing a prisoner in the stocks under the floor of a house, though the houses are raised high above the ground.³ The same superstition exists amongst the Malays; for an early traveller reports that in Java people "wear nothing on their heads, and say that nothing must be on their heads . . . and if any person were to put his hand upon their head they would kill him; and they do not build houses with storeys, in order that they may not walk over each other's heads."⁴ In Uganda no person belonging to the king's totem clan was allowed to get on the top of the palace to roof it, for that would have been regarded as equivalent to getting on the top of the king. Hence the palace had to be roofed by men of a different clan from the king.⁵

¹ Bastian, *op. cit.* ii. 150; Sangermano, *Description of the Burmese Empire* (Rangoon, 1885), p. 131; C. F. S. Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 334; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, i. 91.

² E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe* (Westminster, 1898), p. 131.

³ J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Camodge*, i. 178, 388.

⁴ Duarte Barbosa, *Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt Society, 1866), p. 197.

⁵ This I learned in conversation with Messrs. Roscoe and Miller, missionaries to Uganda. The system of totemism exists in full force in Uganda. No man will eat his totem animal or marry a woman of his own

totem clan. Among the totems of the clans are the buffalo, sheep, grasshopper, crocodile, otter, beaver, and lizard. See R. P. Ashe, *Two Kings of Uganda* (London, 1889), p. 85; Fr. Stuhlmann, *Alit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 190; L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 443. Further particulars as to the totemism of the Waganda were supplied to me by Messrs. Roscoe and Miller. All the totems seem to be animals—beasts, birds, fish, or insects. Mr. Roscoe did not remember any plant or heavenly body used as a totem. A man will not kill or eat his own totem, but does not object to other people doing so. The rule of exogamy applies to sexual intercourse as well as to marriage and is very strictly observed,

The same superstition as to the head is found in full force throughout Polynesia. Thus of Gattanewa, a Marquesan chief, it is said that "to touch the top of his head, or anything which had been on his head, was sacrilege. To pass over his head was an indignity never to be forgotten. Gattanewa, nay, all his family, scorned to pass a gateway which is ever closed, or a house with a door; all must be as open and free as their unrestrained manners. He would pass under nothing that had been raised by the hand of man, if there was a possibility of getting round or over it. Often have I seen him walk the whole length of our barrier, in preference to passing between our water-casks; and at the risk of his life scramble over the loose stones of a wall, rather than go through the gateway."¹ Marquesan women have been known to refuse to go on the decks of ships for fear of passing over the heads of chiefs who might be below.² The son of a Marquesan high priest has been seen to roll on the ground in an agony of rage and despair begging for death, because some one had desecrated his head and deprived him of his divinity by sprinkling a few drops of water on his hair.³ But it was not the Marquesan chiefs only whose heads were sacred. The head of every Marquesan was taboo, and might neither be touched nor stepped over by another; even a father might not step over the head of his sleeping child;⁴ women were forbidden to carry or touch anything that had been in contact with, or had merely hung over, the head of their husband or father.⁵ No one was allowed to be over the head of the king of Tonga.⁶ In Hawaii (the Sandwich Islands) if a man climbed upon a chief's house or upon the wall of his yard, he was put to

except by the king, who is free to marry his "sister," that is, any woman of his own totem clan. In another respect also the king is an exception to the general rule, for he inherits his totem from his mother instead of from his father. The origin of totemism, according to the Waganda, was that some persons, finding certain foods to disagree with them, abstained from eating these foods and commanded their descendants to do so also.

¹ David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*

made to the Pacific Ocean in the U.S. Frigate "Essex" (New York, 1822), ii. 65.

² Vincendon-Dumoulin et Desgraz (Paris, 1843), *Iles Marquises*, p. 262.

³ Matthias G***, *Lettres sur les Iles Marquises* (Paris, 1843), p. 50.

⁴ Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt*, i. 115 sq.

⁵ Max Radiguet, *Les derniers sautes* (Paris, 1882), p. 156.

⁶ Capt. James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 427 (ed. 1809).

death; if his shadow fell on a chief, he was put to death; if he walked in the shadow of a chief's house with his head painted white or decked with a garland or wetted with water, he was put to death.¹ In Tahiti any one who stood over the king or queen, or passed his hand over their heads, might be put to death.² Until certain rites were performed over it, a Tahitian infant was especially taboo; whatever touched the child's head, while it was in this state, became sacred and was deposited in a consecrated place railed in for the purpose at the child's house. If a branch of a tree touched the child's head, the tree was cut down; and if in its fall it injured another tree so as to penetrate the bark, that tree also was cut down as unclean and unfit for use. After the rites were performed, these special taboos ceased; but the head of a Tahitian was always sacred, he never carried anything on it, and to touch it was an offence.³ In New Zealand "the heads of the chiefs were always tabooed (*tapu*), hence they could not pass, or sit, under food hung up; or carry food as others, on their backs; neither would they eat a meal in a house, nor touch a calabash of water in drinking. No one could touch their head, nor, indeed, commonly speak of it, or allude to it; to do so offensively was one of their heaviest curses, and grossest insults, only to be wiped out with blood."⁴ So sacred was the head of a Maori chief that "if he only touched it with his fingers, he was obliged immediately to apply them to his nose, and snuff up the sanctity which they had acquired by the touch, and thus restore it to the part from whence it was taken."⁵ On account of the sacredness of his head a Maori chief "could not blow the fire with his mouth, for the breath being sacred, communicated his sanctity to it, and a brand might be taken by

¹ Jules Remy, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii, Histoire de l'Archipel Hawaïen* (Paris and Leipzig, 1862), p. 159.

² W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 102.

³ James Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* (London, 1799), p. 354 sq.

⁴ W. Colenso, "The Maori races of New Zealand," p. 43, in *Transac-*

tions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute, 1868, vol. i. (separately pagged).

⁵ R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, p. 165. We have seen that under certain special circumstances common persons also are temporarily forbidden to touch their heads with their hands. See above, pp. 326, 327, 329, 331, 337, 342.

a slave, or a man of another tribe, or the fire might be used for other purposes, such as cooking, and so cause his death."¹ It is a crime for a sacred person in New Zealand to leave his comb, or anything else which has touched his head, in a place where food has been cooked, or to suffer another person to drink out of any vessel which has touched his lips. Hence when a chief wishes to drink he never puts his lips to the vessel, but holds his hands close to his mouth so as to form a hollow, into which water is poured by another person, and thence is allowed to flow into his mouth. If a light is needed for his pipe, the burning ember taken from the fire must be thrown away as soon as it is used; for the pipe becomes sacred because it has touched his mouth; the coal becomes sacred because it has touched the pipe; and if a particle of the sacred cinder were replaced on the common fire, the fire would also become sacred and could no longer be used for cooking.² Some Maori chiefs, like other Polynesians, object to go down into a ship's cabin from fear of people passing over their heads.³ Dire misfortune was thought by the Maoris to await those who entered a house where any article of animal food was suspended over their heads. "A dead pigeon, or a piece of pork hung from the roof, was a better protection from molestation than a sentinel."⁴ If I am right, the reason for the special objection to having animal food over the head is the fear of bringing the sacred head into contact with the spirit of the animal; just as the reason why the Flamen Dialis might not walk under a vine was the fear of bringing his sacred head into contact with the spirit of the vine. Similarly King Darius would not pass through a gate over which there was a tomb, because in doing so he would have had a corpse above his head.⁵

When the head was considered so sacred that it might not

¹ R. Taylor, *l.c.*

² E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand*, p. 293; *id.*, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 107 sq.

³ J. Dumont D'Urville, *l'oyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de La Pérouse, exécuté sous son commandement sur la*

corvette "Australabe": histoire du Voyage, ii. 534.

⁴ R. A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand* (London, 1823), p. 187; Dumont D'Urville, *op. cit.* ii. 533; E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand* (London, 1851), p. 30.

⁵ Herodotus, i. 187.

even be touched without grave offence, it is obvious that the cutting of the hair must have been a delicate and difficult operation. The difficulties and dangers which, on the primitive view, beset the operation are of two kinds. There is first the danger of disturbing the spirit of the head, which may be injured in the process and may revenge itself upon the person who molests him. Secondly, there is the difficulty of disposing of the shorn locks. For the savage believes that the sympathetic connection which exists between himself and every part of his body continues to exist even after the physical connection has been broken, and that therefore he will suffer from any harm that may befall the severed parts of his body, such as the clippings of his hair or the parings of his nails. Accordingly he takes care that these severed portions of himself shall not be left in places where they might either be exposed to accidental injury or fall into the hands of malicious persons who might work magic on them to his detriment or death. Such dangers are common to all, but sacred persons have more to fear from them than ordinary people, so the precautions taken by them are proportionately stringent. The simplest way of evading the peril is not to cut the hair at all; and this is the expedient adopted where the risk is thought to be more than usually great. The Frankish kings were never allowed to crop their hair; from their childhood upwards they had to keep it unshorn.¹ To poll the long locks that floated on their shoulders would have been to renounce their right to the throne. When the wicked brothers Clotaire and Childebert coveted the kingdom of their dead brother Clodomir, they inveigled into their power

¹ Agathias, *Hist.* i. 3; Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, p. 239 sqq. The story of the Phrygian king Midas, who concealed the ears of an ass under his long hair (Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 287; Ovid, *Metam.* xi. 146-193), may perhaps be a distorted reminiscence of a similar custom in Phrygia. Parallels to the story are recorded in modern Greece, Ireland, Brittany, Servia, India, and among the Mongols. See B. Schmidt, *Griechische Märchen, Sagen und Volkslieder*, pp. 70 sq., 224 sq.;

Grimm's *Household Tales*, ii. 498, trans. by M. Hunt; Patrick Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, p. 248 sqq. (ed. 1866); De Nore, *Contumes, mythes, et traditions des provinces de la France*, p. 219 sq.; Karadschitsch, *Völksmärchen der Serben*, No. 39, p. 225 sqq.; North, *Indian Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 104, § 218; Jüllg, *Mongolische Märchen-Sammlung*, No. 22, p. 182 sqq.; *Sagas from the Far East*, No. 21, p. 206 sqq.

their little nephews, the two sons of Clodomir ; and having done so, they sent a messenger bearing scissors and a naked sword to the children's grandmother, Queen Clotilde, at Paris. The envoy showed the scissors and the sword to Clotilde, and bade her choose whether the children should be shorn and live or remain unshorn and die. The proud queen replied that if her grandchildren were not to come to the throne she would rather see them dead than shorn. And murdered they were by their ruthless uncle Clotaire with his own hand.¹ The hair of the Aztec priests hung down to their hams, so that the weight of it became very troublesome ; for they might never poll it so long as they lived, or at least until they had been relieved of their office on the score of old age. They wore it braided in great tresses, six fingers broad, and tied with cotton.² A Haida medicine-man may neither clip nor comb his tresses, so they are always long and tangled.³ Amongst the Alfoors of Celebes the *Leleen* or priest who looks after the rice-fields may not shear his hair during the time that he exercises his special functions, that is from a month before the rice is sown until it is housed.⁴ Men of the Tsetsaut tribe in British Columbia do not cut their hair, believing that if they cut it they would quickly grow old.⁵ In Ceram men do not crop their hair : if married men did so, they would lose their wives ; if young men did so, they would grow weak and enervated.⁶ In Timorlaut married men may not poll their hair for the same reason as in Ceram, but widowers and men on a journey may do so after offering a fowl or a pig in sacrifice.⁷ Malays of the Peninsula are forbidden to clip their hair during their wife's pregnancy and for forty days after the child has been born ; and a similar abstention is said to

¹ Gregory of Tours, *Histoire ecclesiastique des Francs*, iii. 18, cp. vi. 24 (Guizot's translation).

² Herrera, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, iii. 216 (Stevens's translation).

³ G. M. Dawson, "On the Haida Indians of Queen Charlotte Islands," in *Geological Survey of Canada, Report of Progress for 1878-79*, p. 123 B.

⁴ P. N. Wilken, "Bijdragen tot de kennis van de zeden en gewoonten

der Alfoeren in de Minahassa," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, vii. (1863), p. 126.

⁵ Fr. Boas, in *Tenth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 45 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1895*).

⁶ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 137.

⁷ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 292 sq.

have been formerly incumbent on all persons prosecuting a journey or engaged in war.¹ Elsewhere men travelling abroad have been in the habit of leaving their hair unshorn until their return. The reason for this custom is probably the danger to which, as we have seen, a traveller is believed to be exposed from the magic arts of the strangers amongst whom he sojourns; if they got possession of his shorn hair, they might work his destruction through it. The Egyptians on a journey kept their hair uncut till they returned home.² "At Taïf when a man returned from a journey his first duty was to visit the Rabba and poll his hair."³ The custom of keeping the hair unshorn during a dangerous expedition seems to have been observed, at least occasionally, by the Romans.⁴ Achilles kept unshorn his yellow hair, because his father had vowed to offer it to the River Sperchius if ever his son came home from the wars beyond the sea.⁵ Formerly when Dyak warriors returned with the heads of their enemies, each man cut off a lock from the front of his head and threw it into the river as a mode of ending the taboo to which they had been subjected during the expedition.⁶ Bechuanas after a battle had their hair shorn by their mothers "in order that new hair might grow, and that all which was old and polluted might disappear and be no more."⁷

Again, men who have taken a vow of vengeance sometimes keep their hair unshorn till they have fulfilled their vow. Thus of the Marquesans we are told that "occasionally they have their head entirely shaved, except one lock on the crown, which is worn loose or put up in a knot. But the

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 44.

² Diodorus Siculus, i. 18.

³ W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, p. 152 sq.

⁴ Valerius Flaccus, *Argonaut.* i. 378 sq. :—

"*Tectus et Eurytion servatocollacapillo,
Quem pater Aonias reducem tondebit ad
aras.*"

But in this passage the poet perhaps merely imitated Homer. See the next note.

⁵ Homer, *Iliad*, xxiii. 141 sqq. The

Greeks often dedicated a lock of their hair to rivers. See Aeschylus, *Choephori*, 5 sq.; Philostratus, *Heroica*, xiii. 4; Pausanias, i. 37. 3, viii. 20. 3, viii. 41. 3. The lock might be at the side or the back of the head or over the brow; it received a special name (Pollux, ii. 30).

⁶ S. W. Tromp, "Een Dajaksch Feest," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 38.

⁷ Arbousset et Daumas, *Relation d'un voyage d'exploration*, p. 565.

latter mode of wearing the hair is only adopted by them when they have a solemn vow, as to revenge the death of some near relation, etc. In such case the lock is never cut off until they have fulfilled their promise."¹ A similar custom was sometimes observed by the ancient Germans; among the Chatti the young warriors never clipped their hair or their beard till they had slain an enemy.² Six thousand Saxons once swore that they would not poll their hair nor shave their beards until they had taken vengeance on their enemies.³ On one occasion a Hawaiian taboo is said to have lasted thirty years, "during which the men were not allowed to trim their beards, etc."⁴ While his vow lasted, a Nazarite might not have his hair cut: "All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head."⁵ Possibly in this case there was a special objection to touching the tabooed man's head with iron. The Roman priests, as we have seen, were shorn with bronze knives. The same feeling perhaps gave rise to the European rule that a child's nails should not be pared during the first year, but that if it is absolutely necessary to shorten them they should be bitten off by the mother or nurse.⁶ For in all parts of the world a young child is believed to be especially exposed to supernatural dangers, and particular precautions are taken to guard it against them; in other words, the child is under a number of taboos, of which the rule just mentioned is one. "Among Hindus the usual custom seems to be that the nails of a first-born child are cut at the age of six months. With other children a year

¹ D. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean*, ii. 120.

² Tacitus, *Germania*, 31. Vows of the same sort were occasionally made by the Romans (Suetonius, *Julius*, 67; Tacitus, *Hist.* iv. 61).

³ Paulus Diaconus, *Hist. Langobard.* iii. 7; Gregory of Tours, *Histoire ecclésiastique des Français*, v. 15 (Guizot's translation).

⁴ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 387.

⁵ Numbers vi. 5.

⁶ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., im Voigtlande, p. 424; W. Henderson,

Folk-lore of the Northern Counties, p. 16 sq.; F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 258, § 23; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² §§ 46, 72; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 208 § 45, p. 209 § 53; Knoop, *Volkssagen, Erzählungen*, etc., aus dem östlichen Hinterpommern, p. 157 § 23; E. Veckenstedt, *Wendische Sagen, Märchen und abergläubische Gebräuche*, p. 445; J. Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, p. 313; E. Krause, "Abergläubische Kuren u. sonstiger Aberglaube in Berlin," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xv. (1883), p. 84.

or two is allowed to elapse.”¹ The Slave, Hare, and Dogrib Indians of North America do not pare the nails of female children till they are four years of age.² In some parts of Germany it is thought that if a child's hair is combed in its first year the child will be unlucky;³ or that if a boy's hair is cut before his seventh year he will have no courage.⁴

But when it becomes necessary to crop the hair, precautions are taken to lessen the dangers which are supposed to attend the operation. The chief of Namosi in Fiji always ate a man by way of precaution when he had had his hair cut. “There was a certain clan that had to provide the victim, and they used to sit in solemn council among themselves to choose him. It was a sacrificial feast to avert evil from the chief.”⁵ This remarkable custom has been described more fully by another observer. The old heathen temple at Namosi is called Rukunitambua, “and round about it are hundreds of stones, each of which tells a fearful tale. A subject tribe, whose town was some little distance from Namosi, had committed an unpardonable offence, and were condemned to a frightful doom. The earth-mound on which their temple had stood was planted with the mountain *ndalo* (arum), and when the crop was ripe, the poor wretches had to carry it down to Namosi, and give at least one of their number to be killed and eaten by the chief. He used to take advantage of these occasions to have his hair cut, for the human sacrifice was supposed to avert all danger of witchcraft if any ill-wisher got hold of the cuttings of his hair, human hair being the most dangerous channel for the deadliest spells of the sorcerers. The stones round Rukunitambua represented these and other victims who had been

¹ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 205, § 1092.

² G. Gibbs, “Notes on the Tinneh or Chepewyan Indians of British and Russian America,” in *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1866, p. 305; W. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 202. The reason alleged by the Indians is that if the girls' nails were cut sooner the girls would be lazy and unable to embroider in porcupine

quill-work. But this is probably a late invention like the reasons assigned in Europe for the similar custom, of which the commonest is that the child would become a thief if its nails were cut.

³ Knoop, *l.c.*

⁴ Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 209, § 57.

⁵ Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26th, 1898.

killed and eaten at Namosi. Each stone was the record of a murder succeeded by a cannibal feast."¹ Amongst the Maoris many spells were uttered at hair-cutting; one, for example, was spoken to consecrate the obsidian knife with which the hair was cut; another was pronounced to avert the thunder and lightning which hair-cutting was believed to cause.² "He who has had his hair cut is in immediate charge of the Atua (spirit); he is removed from the contact and society of his family and his tribe; he dare not touch his food himself; it is put into his mouth by another person; nor can he for some days resume his accustomed occupations or associate with his fellow-men."³ The person who cuts the hair is also tabooed; his hands having been in contact with a sacred head, he may not touch food with them or engage in any other employment; he is fed by another person with food cooked over a sacred fire. He cannot be released from the taboo before the following day, when he rubs his hands with potato or fern root which has been cooked on a sacred fire; and this food having been taken to the head of the family in the female line and eaten by her, his hands are freed from the taboo. In some parts of New Zealand the most sacred day of the year was that appointed for hair-cutting; the people assembled in large numbers on that day from all the neighbourhood.⁴ Sometimes a Maori chief's hair was shorn by his wife, who was then tabooed for a week as a consequence of having touched his sacred locks.⁵ It is an affair of state when the king of Cambodia's hair is cropped. The priests place on the barber's fingers certain old rings set with large stones, which are supposed to contain spirits favourable to the kings, and during the operation the Brahmans keep up a noisy music to drive away the evil

¹ From the report of a lecture delivered in Melbourne, December 9th, 1898, by the Rev. H. Worrall, of Fiji, missionary. The newspaper cutting from which the above extract is quoted was sent to me by the Rev. Lorimer Fison in a letter, dated Melbourne January 9th, 1899. Mr. Fison omits to give the name and date of the newspaper.

² R. Taylor, *New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, p. 206 sqq.

³ Richard A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, p. 283 sq. Cp. Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de La Pérouse: histoire du voyage* (Paris, 1832), ii. 533.

⁴ E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 108, sqq.; Taylor, *l.c.*

⁵ G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, ii. 90 sq.

spirits.¹ The hair and nails of the Mikado could only be cut while he was asleep,² perhaps because his soul being then absent from his body, there was less chance of injuring it with the shears.

From their earliest days little Siamese children have the crown of the head clean shorn with the exception of a single small tuft of hair, which is daily combed, twisted, oiled, and tied in a little knot until the day when it is finally removed with great pomp and ceremony. The ceremony of shaving the top-knot takes place before the child has reached puberty, and great anxiety is felt at this time lest the *kwun*, or guardian-spirit who commonly resides in the body and especially the head of every Siamese,³ should be so disturbed by the tonsure as to depart and leave the child a hopeless wreck for life. Great pains are therefore taken to recall this mysterious being in case he should have fled, and to fix him securely in the child. This is the object of an elaborate ceremony performed on the afternoon of the day when the top-knot has been cut. A miniature pagoda is erected, and on it are placed several kinds of food known to be favourites of the spirit. When the *kwun* has arrived and is feasting on these dainties, he is caught and held fast under a cloth thrown over the food. The child is now placed near the pagoda, and all the family and friends form a circle, with the child, the captured spirit, and the Brahman priests in the middle. Hereupon the priests address the spirit, earnestly entreating him to enter into the child. They amuse him with tales, and coax and wheedle him with flattery, jest, and song; the gongs ring out their loudest; the people cheer, and only a *kwun* of the sourest and most obdurate disposition could resist the combined appeal. The last sentences of the formal invocation run as follows: "Benignant *kwun*! Thou fickle being who art wont to wander and dally about! From the moment that the child was conceived in the womb, thou hast enjoyed every pleasure, until ten (lunar) months having elapsed and the time of delivery arrived, thou hast suffered and run the risk of perishing by being born alive into the world. Gracious *kwun*! thou wast at

¹ J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 226 sq.

² See above, p. 234.

³ See above, p. 362 sq.

that time so tender, delicate, and wavering as to cause great anxiety concerning thy fate ; thou wast exactly like a child, youthful, innocent, and inexperienced. The least trifle frightened thee and made thee shudder. In thy infantile playfulness thou wast wont to frolic and wander to no purpose. As thou didst commence to learn to sit, and, unassisted, to crawl tottering on all fours, thou wast ever falling flat on thy face or on thy back. As thou didst grow up in years and couldst move thy steps firmly, thou didst begin to run and sport thoughtlessly and rashly all round the rooms, the terrace, and bridging planks of travelling boat or floating house, and at times thou didst fall into the stream, creek, or pond, among the floating water-weeds, to the utter dismay of those to whom thy existence was most dear. O gentle *kwun*, come into thy corporeal abode ; do not delay this auspicious rite. Thou art now full-grown and dost form everybody's delight and admiration. Let all the tiny particles of *kwun* that have fallen on land or water assemble and take permanent abode in this darling little child. Let them all hurry to the site of this auspicious ceremony and admire the magnificent preparations made for them in this hall." The brocaded cloth from the pagoda, under which lurks the captive spirit, is now rolled up tightly and handed to the child, who is told to clasp it firmly to his breast and not let the *kwun* escape. Further, the child drinks the milk of the cocoa-nuts which had been offered to the spirit, and by thus absorbing the food of the *kwun* ensures the presence of that precious spirit in his body. A magic cord is tied round his wrist to keep off the wicked spirits who would lure the *kwun* away from home ; and for three nights he sleeps with the embroidered cloth from the pagoda fast clasped in his arms.¹

But even when the hair and nails have been safely cut, there remains the difficulty of disposing of them, for their owner believes himself liable to suffer from any harm that may befall them. The notion that a man may be bewitched by means of the clippings of his hair, the parings of his nails, or any other severed portion of his person is

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, pp. 64 sq., 67-84. I have abridged the account of the ceremonies by omitting some details.

world-wide, and attested by evidence too ample, too familiar, and too tedious in its uniformity to be here analysed at length. The general idea on which the superstition rests is that of the sympathetic connection supposed to persist between a person and everything that has once been part of his body or in any way closely related to him. A very few examples must suffice. Thus, when the Chilote Indians, inhabiting the wild, deeply indented coasts and dark rain-beaten forests of Southern Chile, get possession of the hair of an enemy, they drop it from a high tree or tie it to a piece of seaweed and fling it into the surf; for they think that the shock of the fall, or the blows of the waves as the tress is tossed to and fro on the heaving billows, will be transmitted through the hair to the person from whose head it was cut.¹ Dread of sorcery, we are told, formed one of the most salient characteristics of the Marquesan islanders in the old days. The sorcerer took some of the hair, spittle, or other bodily refuse of the man he wished to injure, wrapped it up in a leaf, and placed the packet in a bag woven of threads or fibres, which were knotted in an intricate way. The whole was then buried with certain rites, and thereupon the victim wasted away of a languishing sickness which lasted twenty days. His life, however, might be saved by discovering and digging up the buried hair, spittle, or what not; for as soon as this was done the power of the charm ceased.² A Marquesan chief told Lieutenant Gamble that he was extremely ill, the Happah tribe having stolen a lock of his hair and buried it in a plantain leaf for the purpose of taking his life. Lieutenant Gamble argued with him, but in vain; die he must unless the hair and the plantain leaf were brought back to him; and to obtain them he had offered the Happahs the greater part of his property. He complained of excessive pain in the head, breast, and sides.³ A Maori sorcerer intent on bewitching somebody sought to get a tress of his victim's hair, the parings of his nails, some of his

¹ C. Martin, "Ueber die Eingeborenen von Chiloe," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, ix. (1877), p. 177.

Iles Marquises, p. 247 sq.

³ D. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean*, ii. 188.

² Vincendon-Dumoulin et Desgraz,

spittle, or a shred of his garment. Having obtained the object, whatever it was, he chanted some spells and curses over it in a falsetto voice and buried it in the ground. As the thing decayed, the person to whom it had belonged was supposed to waste away.¹ Again, an Australian girl, sick of a fever, laid the blame of her illness on a young man who had come behind her and cut off a lock of her hair; she was sure he had buried it and that it was rotting. "Her hair," she said, "was rotting somewhere, and her *Marm-bu-la* (kidney fat) was wasting away, and when her hair had completely rotted, she would die."² When an Australian blackfellow wishes to get rid of his wife, he cuts off a lock of her hair in her sleep, ties it to his spear-thrower, and goes with it to a neighbouring tribe, where he gives it to a friend. His friend sticks the spear-thrower up every night before the camp fire, and when it falls down it is a sign that his wife is dead.³ The way in which the charm operates was explained to Mr. Howitt by a Mirajuri man. "You see," he said, "when a blackfellow doctor gets hold of something belonging to a man and roasts it with things, and sings over it, the fire catches hold of the smell of the man, and that settles the poor fellow."⁴ A slightly different form of the charm as practised in Australia is to fasten the enemy's hair with wax to the pinion bone of a hawk, and set the bone in a small circle of fire. According as the sorcerer desires the death or only the sickness of his victim he leaves the bone in the midst of the fire or removes it and lays it in the sun. When he thinks he has done his enemy enough harm he places the bone in water, which ends the enchantment.⁵ Lucian describes how a Syrian witch professed to bring back a faithless lover to his forsaken fair one by means of a lock of his hair, his shoes, his garments, or something of that sort. She hung the hair, or whatever it was, on a peg and fumigated it with brimstone, sprinkling salt on the fire and

¹ R. Taylor, *Tē Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, p. 203 sq.; A. S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, i. 116 sq.

² Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 468 sq.

³ J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 36.

⁴ A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine-men," in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xvi. (1887), p. 27.

⁵ E. Palmer, "Notes on some Australian Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 293.

mentioning the names of the lover and his lass. Then she drew a magic wheel from her bosom and set it spinning while she gabbled a spell full of barbarous and fearsome words. This soon brought the false lover back to the feet of his charmer.¹ Apuleius tells how an amorous Thessalian witch essayed to win the affections of a handsome Boeotian youth by similar means. As darkness fell she mounted the roof, and there, surrounded by a hellish array of dead men's bones, she knotted the severed tresses of auburn hair and threw them on the glowing embers of a perfumed fire. But her cunning handmaid had outwitted her; the hair was only goat's hair; and all her enchantments ended in dismal and ludicrous failure.²

In Germany it is a common notion that if birds find a person's cut hair, and build their nests with it, the person will suffer from headache;³ sometimes it is thought that he will have an eruption on the head.⁴ The same superstition prevails, or used to prevail, in West Sussex. "I knew how it would be," exclaimed a maidservant one day, "when I saw that bird fly off with a bit of my hair in its beak that blew out of the window this morning when I was dressing; I knew I should have a clapping headache, and so I have."⁵ Again it is thought that cut or combed-out hair may disturb the weather by producing rain and hail, thunder and lightning. We have seen that in New Zealand a spell was uttered

¹ Lucian, *Dial. Meretr.* iv. 4 sq.

² Apuleius, *Metamorph.* iii. 16 sqq.

For more evidence of the same sort, see Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 248; James Bonwick, *Daily Life of the Tasmanians*, p. 178; James Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 187; J. S. Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders*, i. 282; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 270; Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt*, i. 134 sq.; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 364; A. B. Ellis, *English-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 99; R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 203; Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 447; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² § 178; R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Neue Folge,

p. 12 sqq.; E. S. Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. 64-74, 132-139.

³ Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 509; Birlinger, *Volksheimliches aus Schwaben*, i. 493; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 258; J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch, etc., im Voiglande*, p. 425; A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 282; Zingerle, *op. cit.* § 180; Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 224, § 273. A similar belief prevails among the gypsies of Eastern Europe (H. von Wlislöcki, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Zigeuner*, p. 81).

⁴ Zingerle, *op. cit.* § 181.

⁵ Charlotte Latham, "Some West Sussex Superstitions," *Folk-lore Record*, i. (1878), p. 40.

at hair-cutting to avert thunder and lightning. In the Tyrol, witches are supposed to use cut or combed-out hair to make hailstones or thunderstorms with.¹ Thlinket Indians have been known to attribute stormy weather to the rash act of a girl who had combed her hair outside of the house.² The Romans seem to have held similar views, for it was a maxim with them that no one on shipboard should cut his hair or nails except in a storm,³ that is, when the mischief was already done. In West Africa, when the Mani of Chitombe or Jumba died, the people used to run in crowds to the corpse and tear out his hair, teeth, and nails, which they kept as a rain-charm, believing that otherwise no rain would fall. The Makoko of the Anzikos begged the missionaries to give him half their beards as a rain-charm.⁴ The Wabondëi of Eastern Africa preserve the hair and nails of their dead chiefs and use them both for the making of rain and the healing of the sick.⁵ The hair, beard, and nails of their deceased chiefs are the most sacred possession, the most precious treasure of the Baronga of South-Eastern Africa. Preserved in pellets of cow-dung wrapt round with leathern thongs, they are kept in a special hut under the charge of a high priest, who offers sacrifices and prayers at certain seasons, and has to observe strict continence for a month before he handles these holy relics in the offices of religion. A terrible drought was once the result of this palladium falling into the hands of the enemy.⁶ In some Victorian tribes the sorcerer used to burn human hair in time of drought; it was never burned at other times for fear of causing a deluge of rain. Also when the river was low, the sorcerer would place human hair in the stream to increase the supply of water.⁷

To preserve the cut hair and nails from injury and from the dangerous uses to which they may be put by sorcerers,

¹ Zingerle, *op. cit.* §§ 176, 179.

² A. Krause, *Die Tlinkit-Indianer* (Jena, 1885), p. 300.

³ Petronius, *Sat.* 104.

⁴ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 231 sq.; *id.*, *Ein Besuch in San Salvador*, p. 117 sq.

⁵ O. Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete* (Berlin, 1891), p. 141.

⁶ A. Junod, *Les Baronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), pp. 398-400.

⁷ W. Stanbridge, "On the Aborigines of Victoria," *Transact. Ethnol. Soc. of London*, N.S., i. (1861), p. 300.

it is necessary to deposit them in some safe place. Hence the natives of the Maldives carefully keep the cuttings of their hair and nails and bury them, with a little water, in the cemeteries; "for they would not for the world tread upon them nor cast them in the fire, for they say that they are part of their body, and demand burial as it does; and, indeed, they fold them neatly in cotton; and most of them like to be shaved at the gates of temples and mosques."¹ In New Zealand the severed hair was deposited on some sacred spot of ground "to protect it from being touched accidentally or designedly by any one."² The shorn locks of a chief were gathered with much care and placed in an adjoining cemetery.³ The Tahitians buried the cuttings of their hair at the temples.⁴ In the streets of Soku, West Africa, a recent traveller observed cairns of large stones piled against walls with tufts of human hair inserted in the crevices. On asking the meaning of this, he was told that when any native of the place polled his hair he carefully gathered up the clippings and deposited them in one of these cairns, all of which were sacred to the fetish and therefore inviolable. These cairns of sacred stones, he further learned, were simply a precaution against witchcraft, for if a man were not thus careful in disposing of his hair, some of it might fall into the hands of his enemies, who would, by means of it, be able to cast spells over him and so compass his destruction.⁵ When the top-knot of a Siamese child has been cut with great ceremony, the short hairs are put into a little vessel made of plantain leaves and set adrift on the nearest river or canal. As they float away, all that was wrong or harmful in the child's disposition is believed to depart with them. The long hairs are kept till the child makes a pilgrimage to the holy Footprint of Buddha on the sacred hill at Prabat. They are then presented to the

¹ François Pyrard, *Voyages to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas, and Brazil*, translated by Albert Gray (Hakluyt Society, 1887), i. 110 sq.

² Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 110.

³ Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders*, i. 38 sq. Compare G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and*

Scenes in Australia and New Zealand, ii. 108 sq.

⁴ James Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* (London, 1799), p. 355.

⁵ R. A. Freeman, *Travels and Life in Ashanti and Jaman* (Westminster, 1898), p. 171 sq.

priests, who are supposed to make them into brushes with which they sweep the Footprint; but in fact so much hair is thus offered every year that the priests cannot use it all, so they quietly burn the superfluity as soon as the pilgrims' backs are turned.¹ The cut hair and nails of the Flamen Dialis were buried under a lucky tree.² The shorn tresses of the Vestal virgins were hung on an ancient lotus-tree.³ In Germany the clippings of hair used often to be buried under an elder-bush.⁴ In Oldenburg cut hair and nails are wrapt in a cloth which is deposited in a hole in an elder-tree three days before the new moon; the hole is then plugged up.⁵ In the West of Northumberland it is thought that if the first parings of a child's nails are buried under an ash-tree, the child will turn out a fine singer.⁶ In Amboyna, before a child may taste sago-pap for the first time, the father cuts off a lock of the child's hair, which he buries under a sago-palm.⁷ In the Aru Islands, when a child is able to run alone, a female relation shears a lock of its hair and deposits it on a banana-tree.⁸ In the island of Rotti it is thought that the first hair which a child gets is not his own, and that, if it is not cut off, it will make him weak and ill. Hence, when the child is about a month old, his hair is polled with much ceremony. As each of the friends who are invited to the ceremony enters the house he goes up to the child, snips off a little of its hair and drops it into a cocoa-nut shell full of water. Afterwards the father or another relation takes the hair and packs it into a little bag made of leaves, which he fastens to the top of a palm-tree. Then he gives the leaves of the palm a good shaking,

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 79.

² Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 15. The ancients were not agreed as to the distinction between lucky and unlucky trees. According to Cato and Pliny, trees that bore fruit were lucky, and trees which did not were unlucky (Festus, ed. Müller, p. 29, s.v. *Felices*; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 108); but according to Tarquinius Priscus those trees were unlucky which were sacred to the infernal gods and bore black berries or black fruit (Macrobius,

Saturn. ii. 16, but iii. 20 in L. Jan's edition).

³ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 235; Festus, p. 57 ed. Müller, s.v. *Capillatam vel capillarem arborem*.

⁴ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 294 sq., § 464.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen*, p. 630.

⁶ W. Henderson, *Folk-lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 17.

⁷ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 74.

⁸ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 265.

climbs down, and goes home without speaking to any one.¹ Indians of the Yukon territory, Alaska, do not throw away their cut hair and nails, but tie them up in little bundles and place them in the crotches of trees or wherever they are not likely to be disturbed by animals. For "they have a superstition that disease will follow the disturbance of such remains by animals."²

Often the clipped hair and nails are stowed away in any secret place, not necessarily in a temple or cemetery or at a tree, as in the cases already mentioned. Thus in Swabia you are recommended to deposit your clipped hair in some spot where neither sun nor moon can shine on it, for example in the earth or under a stone.³ In Danzig it is buried in a bag under the threshold.⁴ In Ugi, one of the Solomon Islands, men bury their hair lest it should fall into the hands of an enemy who would make magic with it and so bring sickness or calamity on them.⁵ The same fear seems to be general in Melanesia, and has led to a regular practice of hiding cut hair and nails.⁶ In Fiji, the shorn hair is concealed in the thatch of the house.⁷ The Zend Avesta directs that the clippings of hair and the parings of nails shall be placed in separate holes, and that three, six, or nine furrows shall be drawn round each hole with a metal knife.⁸ In the *Grihya-Sûtras* it is provided that the hair cut from a child's head at the end of the first, third, fifth, or seventh year shall be buried in the earth at a place covered with grass or in the neighbourhood of water.⁹ The Madi or Moru tribe of Central Africa bury the parings of their nails in the ground.¹⁰

¹ G. Heijmering, "Zeden en gewoonten op het eiland Rottie," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. pp. 634-637.

² W. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources* (London, 1870), p. 54; F. Whymper, "The Natives of the Youkon River," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., vii. (1869), p. 174.

³ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 509; Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. 493.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen*, p. 630.

⁵ H. B. Guppy, *The Solomon Islands and their Natives* (London, 1887), p. 54.

⁶ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 203.

⁷ Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 249.

⁸ Fargaard, xvii.

⁹ *Grihya-Sûtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg (Oxford, 1886), vol. i. p. 57. Compare H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 487.

¹⁰ R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the Madi or Moru tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, xii. (1882-84), p. 332.

In Uganda grown people throw away the clippings of their hair, but carefully bury the parings of their nails.¹ The A-lur are careful to collect and bury both their hair and nails in safe places.² The same practice prevails among many tribes of South Africa from a fear lest wizards should get hold of the severed particles and work evil with them.³ The Caffres carry still further this dread of allowing any portion of themselves to fall into the hands of an enemy; for not only do they bury their cut hair and nails in a secret spot, but when one of them cleans the head of another he preserves the vermin which he catches, "carefully delivering them to the person to whom they originally appertained, supposing, according to their theory, that as they derived their support from the blood of the man from whom they were taken, should they be killed by another, the blood of his neighbour would be in his possession, thus placing in his hands the power of some superhuman influence."⁴ Amongst the Wanyoro of Central Africa all cuttings of the hair and nails are carefully stored under the bed and afterwards strewed about among the tall grass.⁵ Similarly the Wahoko of Central Africa take pains to collect their cut hair and nails and scatter them in the forest.⁶ In North Guinea the parings of the finger-nails and the shorn locks of the head are scrupulously concealed, lest they be converted into a charm for the destruction of the person to whom they belong.⁷ Among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia loose hair was buried, hidden, or thrown into the water, because, if an enemy got hold of it, he might bewitch the owner.⁸ In

¹ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 185 note. The same thing was told me in conversation by the Rev. J. Roscoe, missionary to Uganda; but I understood him to mean that the hair was not carelessly disposed of, but thrown away in some place where it would not easily be found.

² Fr. Stuhlmann, *op. cit.* p. 516 sq.

³ J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p. 209; *id.*, "Manners, customs, superstitions and religions of South African tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 131.

⁴ A. Steedman, *Wanderings and Adventures in the Interior of Southern Africa* (London, 1835), i. 266.

⁵ *Emin Pascha in Central Africa, being a Collection of his Letters and Journals* (London, 1888), p. 74.

⁶ Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 625.

⁷ J. L. Wilson, *Western Africa*, p. 215.

⁸ James Teit, "The Thompson River Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. i. part iv. (April 1900), p. 360.

Bolang Mongondo, a district of Western Celebes, the first hair cut from a child's head is kept in a young cocoa-nut, which is commonly hung on the front of the house, under the roof.¹ To spit upon the hair before throwing it away is thought in some parts of Europe to be a sufficient safeguard against its use by witches.² Spitting as a protective charm is well known.³

Sometimes the severed hair and nails are preserved, not to prevent them from falling into the hands of a magician, but that the owner may have them at the resurrection of the body, to which some races look forward. Thus the Incas of Peru "took extreme care to preserve the nail-parings and the hairs that were shorn off or torn out with a comb; placing them in holes or niches in the walls, and if they fell out, any other Indian that saw them picked them up and put them in their places again. I very often asked different Indians, at various times, why they did this, in order to see what they would say, and they all replied in the same words saying, 'Know that all persons who are born must return to life' (they have no word to express resuscitation), 'and the souls must rise out of their tombs with all that belonged to their bodies. We, therefore, in order that we may not have to search for our hair and nails at a time when there will be much hurry and confusion, place them in one place, that they may be brought together more conveniently, and, whenever it is possible, we are also careful to spit in one place.'"⁴ In Chili this custom of stuffing the shorn hair

¹ N. P. Wilken en J. A. Schwarz, "Allerlei over het land en volk van Bolaang Mongondou," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-genootschap*, xi. (1867), p. 322.

² Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² §§ 176, 580; *Mélusine*, 1878, col. 79; E. Monseur, *Le Folklore Wallon*, p. 91.

³ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 35; Theophrastus, *Characters*, *The Superstitious Man*; Theocritus, *Id.*, vi. 39, vii. 127; Persius, *Sat.* ii. 31 sqq. At the siege of Danzig in 1734, when the old wives saw a bomb coming, they used to spit thrice and cry, "Fi, fi, fi, there comes the dragon!" in the persuasion that this secured them against

being hit (Tettau und Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Lithauens und Westpreussens* (Berlin, 1837), p. 284). For more examples, see Mayor on Juvenal, *Sat.* vii. 112; J. E. Crombie, "The Saliva Superstition," *International Folk-lore Congress, 1891, Papers and Transactions*, p. 249 sq.; C. de Mensignac, *Recherches Ethnographiques sur la Salive et le Crachat* (Bordeaux, 1892), p. 50 sqq.; F. W. Nicolson, "The Saliva Superstition in Classical Literature," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, viii. (1897), p. 35 sqq.

⁴ Garcilasso de la Vega, *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, bk. ii. ch. 7 (vol. i. p. 127, Markham's translation).

into holes in the wall is still observed, it being thought the height of imprudence to throw the hair away.¹ Similarly the Turks never throw away the parings of their nails, but carefully stow them in cracks of the walls or of the boards, in the belief that they will be needed at the resurrection.² Some of the Esthonians keep the parings of their finger and toe nails in their bosom, in order to have them at hand when they are asked for them at the day of judgment.³ In a like spirit peasants of the Vosges will sometimes bury their extracted teeth secretly, marking the spot well so that they may be able to walk straight to it on the resurrection day.⁴ The pains taken by the Chinese to preserve corpses entire and free from decay seems to rest on a firm belief in the resurrection of the dead ; hence it is natural to find their ancient books laying down a rule that the hair, nails, and teeth which have fallen out during life should be buried with the dead in the coffin, or at least in the grave.⁵ The Fors of Central Africa object to cut any one else's nails, for should the part cut off be lost and not delivered into its owner's hands, it will have to be made up to him somehow or other after death. The parings are buried in the ground.⁶

Some people burn their loose hair to save it from falling into the power of sorcerers. This is done by the Patagonians and some of the Victorian tribes.⁷ In the Upper Vosges they say that you should never leave the clippings of your hair and nails lying about, but burn them to hinder the sorcerers from using them against you.⁸ For the same reason Italian women either burn their loose hairs or throw them into a place where no one is likely to look for them.⁹ The almost universal dread of witchcraft induces the West

¹ *Mémoires*, 1878, c. 583 sq.

² *The People of Turkey*, by a Consul's daughter and wife, ii. 250.

³ Boeckler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 139 ; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem innern und äussern Leben der Ehsten*, p. 491.

⁴ L. F. Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 41.

⁵ J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, i. 342 sq. (Leyden, 1892).

⁶ R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the For Tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, xiii. (1884-86), p. 230.

⁷ Musters, "On the Races of Patagonia," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* i. (1872), p. 197 ; J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 36.

⁸ L. F. Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 170.

⁹ Z. Zanetti, *La medicina delle nostre donne* (Citta di Castello, 1892), p. 234 sq.

African negroes, the Makololo of South Africa, and the Tahitians to burn or bury their shorn hair.¹ One of the pygmies who roam through the gloomy depths of the vast Central African forests has been seen to collect carefully the clippings of his hair in a packet of banana leaves and keep them till next morning, when, the camp breaking up for the day's march, he threw them into the hot ashes of the abandoned fire.² In the Tyrol many people burn their hair lest the witches should use it to raise thunderstorms; others burn or bury it to prevent the birds from lining their nests with it, which would cause the heads from which the hair came to ache.³ Cut and combed-out hair is burned in Pomerania and sometimes in Belgium.⁴ In Norway the parings of nails are either burned or buried, lest the elves or the Finns should find them and make them into bullets wherewith to shoot the cattle.⁵ In Corea all the clippings and combings of the hair of a whole family are carefully preserved throughout the year and then burned in potsherds outside the house on the evening of New Year's Day. At such seasons the streets of Seoul, the capital, present a weird spectacle. They are for the most part silent and deserted, sometimes muffled deep in snow; but through the dusk of twilight red lights glimmer at every door, where little groups are busy tending tiny fires whose flickering flames cast a ruddy fitful glow on the moving figures. The burning of the hair in these fires is thought to exclude demons from the house for a year; but coupled with this belief may well be, or once have been, a wish to put these relics out of the reach of witches and wizards.⁶

This destruction of the hair and nails plainly involves

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 99; Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 447; David Livingstone, *Narrative of Expedition to the Zambesi*, p. 46 sq.; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 365. In some parts of New Guinea cut hair is destroyed for the same reason (H. H. Romilly, *From my Verandah in New Guinea*, London, 1889, p. 83).

² Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 451.

³ Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und*

Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes, p. 28, §§ 177, 179, 180.

⁴ M. Jahn, *Hexenwesen und Zauberei in Pommern*, p. 15; *Mémoires*, 1878, c. 79; E. Monseur, *Le Folklore Wallon*, p. 91.

⁵ E. H. Meyer, *Indogermanische Mythen*, ii. *Achilleis* (Berlin, 1877), p. 523.

⁶ P. Lowell, *Chosön, the Land of the Morning Calm, a Sketch of Korea* (London, preface dated 1885), pp. 199-201; Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours* (London, 1898), ii. 55 sq.

an inconsistency of thought. The object of the destruction is avowedly to prevent these severed portions of the body from being used by sorcerers. But the possibility of their being so used depends upon the supposed sympathetic connection between them and the man from whom they were severed. And if this sympathetic connection still exists, clearly these severed portions cannot be destroyed without injury to the man.

Before leaving this subject, on which I have perhaps dwelt too long, it may be well to call attention to the motive assigned for cutting a young child's hair in Rotti.¹ In that island the first hair is regarded as a danger to the child, and its removal is intended to avert the danger. The reason of this may be that as a young child is almost universally supposed to be in a tabooed or dangerous state, it is necessary, in removing the taboo, to remove also the separable parts of the child's body because they are infected, so to say, by the virus of the taboo and as such are dangerous. The cutting of the child's hair would thus be exactly parallel to the destruction of the vessels which have been used by a tabooed person.² This view is borne out by a practice, observed by some Australians, of burning off part of a woman's hair after childbirth as well as burning every vessel which has been used by her during her seclusion.³ Here the burning of the woman's hair seems plainly intended to serve the same purpose as the burning of the vessels used by her; and as the vessels are burned because they are believed to be tainted with a dangerous infection, so, we must suppose, is also the hair. We can, therefore, understand the importance attached by many peoples to the first cutting of a child's hair and the elaborate ceremonies by which the operation is accompanied.⁴ Again, we can understand why

¹ Above, p. 381 *sq.*

² Above, pp. 235, 324, 325, 327, 330, 339, 342.

³ W. Ridley, "Report on Australian Languages and Traditions," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ii. (1873), p. 268. So among the Latuka of Central Africa, a woman is secluded for fourteen days after the birth of her child, and at the end

of her seclusion her hair is shaved off and burnt (Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 795).

⁴ See G. A. Wilken, *Ueber das Haaropfer und einige andere Trauergebräuche bei den Völkern Indonesiens*, p. 94 *sqq.*; H. Ploss, *Das Kind in Brauch und Sitte der Völker*,² i. 289 *sqq.*; K. Potkanski, "Die Ceremonie der Haarschur bei den Slaven und Ger-

purify themselves after journeys by shaving their heads lest they should have contracted from strangers some disease by witchcraft or sorcery."³ The cutting of hair after a vow may have the same meaning. The way of ridding the man of what has been infected by a dangerous state of taboo, sanctity, or uncleanness (these are only different expressions for the same general conception) under which he laboured during the continuance of the vow. Still more clearly does the meaning of the practice come out in the case of mourners, who cut their hair and nails and use new vessels when the period of mourning is at an end. This was done in ancient times obviously for the purpose of purifying such persons from the dangerous influence of death and the ghost to which at that time they had been exposed.⁴ At Hierapolis no man might enter the great temple of Astarte on the same day on which he had seen a corpse; next day he might enter, provided he had first purified himself. But the kinsmen of the deceased were not allowed to set foot in the sanctuary for thirty days after the death, and before doing so they had to cut their heads and their nails.⁵ At Agweh, on the Slave Coast of Africa, widows and widowers at the end of their period of mourning wash themselves, shave their heads, cut their nails, and put on new cloths; and the old hair and the shorn hair, and the nail-parings are all burnt.

Kayans of Borneo are not allowed to cut their hair or shave their temples during the period of mourning; but as soon as the mourning is ended by the ceremony of bringing home a newly severed human head, the barber's knife is kept busy enough. As each man leaves the barber's hands, he gathers up the shorn locks and spitting on them murmurs a prayer to the evil spirits not to harm him. He then blows the hair out of the verandah of the house.¹ When a Wakikuyu woman has, in accordance with custom, exposed her misshapen or prematurely born infant in the wood for the hyenas to devour, she is shaved on her return by an old woman and given a magic potion to drink; after which she is regarded as clean.² Similarly at some Hindoo places of pilgrimage on the banks of rivers men who have committed great crimes or are troubled by uneasy consciences have every hair shaved off by professional barbers before they plunge into the sacred stream, from which "they emerge new creatures, with all the accumulated guilt of a long life effaced."³ The matricide Orestes is said to have polled his hair after appeasing the angry Furies of his murdered mother.⁴

The same fear of witchcraft which has led so many people to hide or destroy their loose hair and nails has induced other or the same people to treat their spittle in a like fashion. For on the principles of sympathetic magic the spittle is part of the man, and whatever is done to it will have a corresponding effect on him. A Chilote Indian, who has gathered up the spittle of an enemy, will put it in a potato, and hang the potato in the smoke, uttering certain

¹ W. H. Furness, *Folk-lore in Borneo* (Wallingsford, Pennsylvania, 1899; privately printed), p. 28.

² J. M. Hildebrandt, "Ethnographische Notizen über Wakamba und ihre Nachbarn," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, x. (1878), p. 395. Children who are born in an unusual position, the second born of twins, and children whose upper teeth appear before the lower, are similarly exposed by the Wakikuyu. The mother is regarded as unclean, not so much because she has exposed, as because she has given birth to such a child.

³ Monier Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, p. 375.

⁴ Strabo, xii. 2. 3; Pausanias, viii. 34. 3. In two paintings on Greek vases we see Apollo in his character of the purifier preparing to cut off the hair of Orestes. See *Monumenti Inediti*, 1847, pl. 48; *Annali dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, 1847, pl. x.; *Archaeologische Zeitung*, 1860, pl. cxxxvii. cxxxviii.; L. Stephani, in *Compte Rendu de la Commission Archéologique* (St. Petersburg), 1863, p. 271 sq.

spells as he does so in the belief that his foe will waste away as the potato dries in the smoke. Or he will put the spittle in a frog and throw the animal into an inaccessible, un-navigable river, which will make the victim quake and shake with ague.¹ If a Wotjobaluk sorcerer cannot get the hair of his foe, a shred of his rug, or something else that belongs to the man, he will watch till he sees him spit, when he will carefully pick up the spittle with a stick and use it for the destruction of the careless spitter.² Hence among some tribes of South Africa no man will spit when an enemy is near, lest his foe should find the spittle and give it to a wizard, who would then mix it with magical ingredients so as to injure the person from whom it fell. Even in a man's own house his saliva is carefully swept away and obliterated for a similar reason.³ Negroes of Senegal, the Bissagos Archipelago, and some of the West Indian Islands, such as Guadeloupe and Martinique, are also careful to efface their spittle by pressing it into the ground with their feet, lest a sorcerer should use it to their hurt.⁴ If common folk are thus cautious, it is natural that kings and chiefs should be doubly so. In the Sandwich Islands chiefs were attended by a confidential servant bearing a portable spittoon, and the deposit was carefully buried every morning to put it out of the reach of sorcerers.⁵ On the Slave Coast of Africa, for the same reason, whenever a king or chief expectorates, the saliva is scrupulously gathered up and hidden or buried.⁶ At Bulebane, in Senegambia, a French traveller observed a captive engaged, with an air of great importance, in covering over with sand all the spittle that fell from the lips of a native dignitary; the man used a small stick for the purpose.⁷ Page-boys, who carry tails of elephants, hasten to sweep up or cover with sand the spittle of the King of Ashantee,⁸ and

¹ C. Martin, "Ueber die Eingeborenen von Chiloe," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, ix. (1877), p. 177 sq.

² A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine-men," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xvi. (1887), p. 27.

³ Rev. J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p. 209; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 131.

⁴ C. de Mensignac, *Recherches Ethnographiques sur la Salive et le Crachat* (Bordeaux, 1892), p. 48 sq.

⁵ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 365.

⁶ A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 99.

⁷ A. Raffinell, *Voyage dans l'Afrique occidentale* (Paris, 1846), p. 338.

⁸ C. de Mensignac, *op. cit.* p. 48.

a custom of the same sort prevails or used to prevail at the court of the Muata Jamwo in the valley of the Congo.¹

As might have been expected, the superstitions of the savage cluster thick about the subject of food; and he abstains from eating many animals and plants, wholesome enough in themselves, but which for one reason or another he fancies would prove dangerous or fatal to the eater. Examples of such abstinence are too familiar and far too numerous to quote. But if the ordinary man is thus deterred by superstitious fear from partaking of various foods, the restraints of this kind which are laid upon sacred or tabooed persons, such as kings and priests, are still more numerous and stringent. We have already seen that the Flamen Dialis was forbidden to eat or even name several plants and animals, and that the flesh diet of the Egyptian kings was restricted to veal and goose.² The *Gangas* or fetish priests of the Loango Coast are forbidden to eat or even see a variety of animals and fish, in consequence of which their flesh diet is extremely limited; often they live only on herbs and roots, though they may drink fresh blood.³ The heir to the throne of Loango is forbidden from infancy to eat pork; from early childhood he is interdicted the use of the *cola* fruit in company; at puberty he is taught by a priest not to partake of fowls except such as he has himself killed and cooked; and so the number of taboos goes on increasing with his years.⁴ In Fernando Po the king after installation is forbidden to eat *cocco* (*arum acaule*), deer, and porcupine, which are the ordinary foods of the people.⁵ Amongst the Murrums of Manipur (a district of Eastern India, on the border of Burma), "there are many prohibitions in regard to the food, both animal and vegetable, which the chief should eat, and the Murrums say the chief's post must be a very uncomfortable one."⁶ To explain the ultimate

¹ R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Neue Folge, p. 13.

² Above, pp. 241, 242.

³ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, ii. 170. The blood may perhaps be drunk by them as a medium of inspiration. See above, p. 133 *sqq.*

⁴ Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 336.

⁵ T. J. Hutchinson, *Impressions of Western Africa* (London, 1858), p. 198.

⁶ G. Watt (quoting Col. W. J. McCulloch), "The Aboriginal Tribes of Manipur," in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xvi. (1887), p. 360.

forbade him to have a knot on any part of his
 and another that obliged him to wear no ring un-
 broken.¹ These rules are probably of kindred s
 and may conveniently be considered together.
 with knots, many people in different parts of
 entertain a strong objection to having any knot
 person at certain critical seasons, particularly
 marriage, and death. Thus among the Saxons o
 vania, when a woman is in travail all knots on her
 are untied, because it is believed that this will fac
 delivery, and with the same intention all the loc
 house, whether on doors or boxes, are unlock
 Lapps think that a lying-in woman should have n
 her garments, because a knot would have the
 making the delivery difficult and painful.² In
 Indies this superstition is extended to the whole
 pregnancy; the people believe that if a pregnan
 were to tie knots, or braid, or make anything fast,
 would thereby be constricted or the woman would
 "tied up" when her time came.⁴ Nay, some of the
 the observance of the rule on the father as well as th
 of the unborn child. Among the Sea Dyaks neith
 parents may bind up anything with string or make

¹ Aulus Gellius, x. 15. 6 and 9. zieken vromt " " " "

fast during the wife's pregnancy.¹ Among the Land Dyaks the husband of the expectant mother is bound to refrain from tying things together with rattans until after her delivery.² In the Toumbuluh tribe of North Celebes a ceremony is performed in the fourth or fifth month of a woman's pregnancy, and after it her husband is forbidden, among many other things, to tie any fast knots and to sit with his legs crossed over each other.³ In all these cases the idea seems to be that the tying of a knot would, as they say in the East Indies, "tie up" the woman, in other words impede and perhaps prevent her delivery. On the principles of sympathetic or imitative magic the physical obstacle or impediment of a knot on a cord would create a corresponding obstacle or impediment in the body of the woman. That this is really the explanation of the rule appears from the custom observed by the same peoples of opening all locks, doors, and so on, while a birth is taking place in the house. We have seen that at such a time the Germans of Transylvania open all the locks, and the same thing is done also in Voigtland and Mecklenburg.⁴ Among the Mandelings of Sumatra the lids of all chests, boxes, pans, and so forth, are opened; and if this does not produce the desired effect, the anxious husband has to strike the projecting ends of some of the house-beams in order to loosen them; for they think that "everything must be open and loose to facilitate the delivery."⁵ In some parts of Java, when a woman is in travail, everything in the house that was shut is opened, in order that the birth may not be impeded; not only are doors opened and the lids of chests, boxes, rice-pots, and water-butts lifted up, but even swords are unsheathed and spears drawn out of their cases.⁶ Customs of the same sort

¹ H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Saravak and British North Borneo*, i. 98.

² Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 170.

³ J. G. F. Riedel, "Alte Gebräuche bei Heirathen, Geburt und Sterbefällen bei dem Toumbuluh-Stamm in der Minahasa (Nord Celebes)," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 95 sq.

⁴ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaber-*

glaube,² p. 355, § 574.

⁵ H. Ris, "De onderafdeeling Klein Mandailing Oeloe en Pahantan en hare Bevolking," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1896), p. 503.

⁶ *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvi. 310; J. Kreemer, "Hoe de Javaan zijne zieken verzorgt," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxxvi. (1892), pp. 120, 124.

and impede whatever may be going forward in your
bourhood. Of this important truth the Romans were
aware. To sit beside a pregnant woman or a patient
medical treatment with clasped hands, says the proverb,
is to cast a malignant spell over the person, and it
is still if you nurse your leg or legs with your clasped
or lay one leg over the other. Such postures were re-
banned by the old Romans as a let and hindrance to busi-
ness of every sort, and at a council of war or a meeting of
states, at prayers and sacrifices, no man was suffi-
cient to cross his legs or clasp his hands.² The stock instanc-
es of the dreadful consequences that might flow from doing
one or the other was that of Alcmena, who travailed
Hercules for seven days and seven nights, because the
goddess Lucina sat in front of the house with clasped
and crossed legs, and the child could not be born until
the goddess had been beguiled into changing her attitude.

The magical effect of knots in trammelling and ob-
structing human activity was believed to be manifest in
marriage not less than at birth. During the Middle Ages
and down to the eighteenth century, it seems to have been
commonly held in Europe that the consummation of
marriage could be prevented by any one who, when the
wedding ceremony was taking place, either locked a door
or tied a knot in a cord and then shut the door or cut the

away. The lock or the knotted cord had to be flung into water; and until it had been found and unlocked, or untied, no real union of the married pair was possible.¹ Hence it was a grave offence, not only to cast such a spell, but also to steal or make away with the material instrument of it, whether lock or knotted cord. In the year 1718 the parliament of Bordeaux sentenced some one to be burned alive for having spread desolation through a whole family by means of knotted cords; and in 1705 two persons were condemned to death in Scotland for stealing certain charmed knots which a woman had made, in order thereby to mar the wedded happiness of Spalding of Ashintilly.² The belief in the efficacy of these charms appears to have lingered in the Highlands of Perthshire down to the end of the eighteenth century, for at that time it was still customary in the beautiful parish of Logierait, between the River Tummel and the River Tay, to unloose carefully every knot in the clothes of the bride and bridegroom before the celebration of the marriage ceremony. When the ceremony was over, and the bridal party had left the church, the bridegroom immediately retired one way with some young men to tie the knots that had been loosed a little before; and the bride in like manner withdrew somewhere else to adjust the disorder of her dress.³ In some parts of the Highlands it was deemed enough that the bridegroom's left shoe should be without buckle or latchet, "to prevent witches from depriving him, on the nuptial night, of the power of loosening the virgin zone."⁴ We meet with the same superstition and the same custom

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 897, 983; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 299; Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, pp. 302, 306 sq.; B. Souché, *Croyances, Pré-sages et Traditions diverses*, p. 16; J. G. Bourke, in *Ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1892), p. 567.

² Dalyell, *ll. cc.*

³ Rev. Dr. Th. Bisset, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, v. 83. In his account of the second tour which he made in Scotland in the summer of 1772, Pennant says

that "the precaution of loosening every knot about the new-joined pair is strictly observed" (Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 382). He is here speaking particularly of the Perthshire Highlands.

⁴ Pennant, "Tour in Scotland," Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 91. However, at a marriage in the Island of Skye, the same traveller observed that "the bridegroom put all the powers of magic to defiance, for he was married with both shoes tied with their latchet" (Pennant, "Second Tour in Scotland," Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 325).

bride in which knots have been tied.² A custom
 made of knots at marriage in the little East. In
 of Rotti. When a man has paid the price of a
 cord is fastened round her waist, if she is a maid
 otherwise. Nine knots are tied in the cord, and
 make them harder to unloose, they are smeared
 Bride and bridegroom are then secluded in a chamber
 he has to untie the knots with the thumb and forefinger
 his left hand only. It may be from one to twelve
 before he succeeds in undoing them all. Until he
 so he may not look on the woman as his wife.
 may the cord be broken, or the bridegroom wound
 himself liable to any fine that the bride's father might
 to impose. When all the knots are loosed, the bride
 his wife, and he shows the cord to her father, and
 presents his wife with a golden or silver necklace
 of the cord.³ The meaning of this custom is not
 we may conjecture that the nine knots refer to
 months of pregnancy, and that miscarriage would be
 supposed result of leaving a single knot untied.

The maleficent power of knots may also be seen
 in the infliction of sickness and disease. Babylonian
 and wizards of old used to strangle their victim's
 mouth, wrack his limbs, and tear his entrails by means

² Eiiüb Abfla. "Reitricen" etc. "Scholema" etc. "Zur" etc.

knots in a cord, while at each knot they muttered a spell. But happily the evil could be undone by simply undoing the knots.¹ We hear of a man in one of the Orkney Islands who was utterly ruined by nine knots cast on a blue thread ; and it would seem that sick people in Scotland sometimes prayed to the devil to restore them to health by loosing the secret knot that was doing all the mischief.² In the Koran there is an allusion to the mischief of "those who puff into the knots," and an Arab commentator on the passage explains that the words refer to women who practise magic by tying knots in cords, and then blowing and spitting upon them. He goes on to relate how, once upon a time, a wicked Jew bewitched the prophet Mohammed himself by tying nine knots on a string, which he then hid in a well. So the prophet fell ill, and nobody knows what might have happened if the archangel Gabriel had not opportunely revealed to the holy man the place where the knotted cord was concealed. The trusty Ali soon fetched the baleful thing from the well ; and the prophet recited over it certain charms, which were specially revealed to him for the purpose. At every verse of the charms a knot untied itself, and the prophet experienced a certain relief.³ It will hardly be disputed that by tying knots on the string the pestilent Hebrew contrived, if I may say so, to constrict or astringe or, in short, to tie up some vital organ or organs in the prophet's stomach. At least we are informed that something of this sort is done by Australian blackfellows at the present day, and if so, why should it not have been done by Arabs in the time of Mohammed ? The Australian mode of operation is as follows. When a blackfellow wishes to settle old scores with another blackfellow, he ties a rope of fibre or bark so tightly round the neck of his slumbering friend as to partially choke him. Having done this he takes out the man's caul-fat from under his short rib, ties up his inside carefully with string, replaces the skin, and having effaced all external marks of the wound, makes off with the stolen

¹ M. Jastrow, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 268, 270.

² Dalrymple, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 307.

³ *Al Baidawi's Commentary on the*

Koran, chap. 113, verse 4. I have to thank my friend Prof. A. A. Bevan for indicating this passage to me, and furnishing me with a translation of it.

been for the timely intervention of the archang

If knots are supposed to kill, they are also cure. This follows from the belief that to un- which are causing sickness will bring the sufferer apart from this negative virtue of maleficent knots certain beneficent knots to which a positive power is ascribed. Pliny tells us that some folk cure the groin by taking a thread from a web, tying several knots on it, and then fastening it to the patient's side to make the cure effectual it was necessary to tie a knot as each knot was tied.² In Argyleshire three knots on them are still used to cure the ailments of man and beast. The witch rubs the thread on the cow with the knotted thread, burns two of the knots in the fire, saying, "I put the disease and the sickness into the fire," and ties the rest of the thread with knots round the neck of the person or the tail of the cow but always so that it may not be seen.³

On the principle that prevention is better than cure, Zulu hunters immediately tie a knot in the tail of

¹ E. Palmer, "Notes on some Australian Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 293. The Tahitians ascribed certain painful illnesses to the twisting and knotting of the hair for magical purposes Highland sorcerers use threads of different colors and knots tied on each thread. This aptly compares the mental charm of the very same knotting of the hair.

they have killed, because they believe that this will hinder the meat from giving them pains in their stomachs.¹ An ancient Hindoo book recommends that travellers on a dangerous road should tie knots in the skirts of their garments, for this will cause their journey to prosper.² Similarly among some Caffre tribes, when a man is going on a doubtful journey, he knots a few blades of grass together that the journey may turn out well.³ In Laos hunters fancy that they can throw a spell over a forest so as to prevent any one else from hunting there successfully. Having killed game of any kind, they utter certain magical words, while they knot together some stalks of grass, adding, "As I knot this grass, so let no hunter be lucky here." The virtue of this spell will last, as usually happens in such cases, so long as the stalks remain knotted together.⁴ In Russia amulets often derive their protective virtue in great measure from knots. Here, for example, is a spell which will warrant its employer against all risk of being shot: "I attach five knots to each hostile, infidel shooter, over arquebuses, bows, and all manner of warlike weapons. Do ye, O knots, bar the shooter from every road and way, lock fast every arquebuse, entangle every bow, involve all warlike weapons, so that the shooters may not reach me with their arquebuses, nor may their arrows attain to me, nor their warlike weapons do me hurt. In my knots lies hid the mighty strength of snakes—from the twelve-headed snake." A net, from its affluence of knots, has always been considered in Russia very efficacious against sorcerers; hence in some places, when a bride is being dressed in her wedding attire, a fishing-net is flung over her to keep her out of harm's way. For a similar purpose the bridegroom, as in Lesbos, and his companions are often girt with pieces of net, or at least with tight-drawn girdles, for before a wizard can begin to injure them he must undo all the knots in the net, or take off the girdles. But often a Russian amulet is merely a knotted thread. A skein of red wool wound about the arms and legs is thought

¹ David Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas* (Edinburgh, 1875), p. 147.

³ J. Shooter, *The Kufirs of Natal and the Zulu Country*, p. 217 sq.

² *Grihya-Sūtras*, translated by H. Oldenberg, vol. i. p. 432.

⁴ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos* (Saigon, 1885), p. 23 sq.

grey wolves with this steel lock." After the the padlock is finally locked, and then, when the gone off, it is hidden away somewhere till late in when the time comes for the drove to return quarters. In this case the "firm word" of the posed to lock up the mouths of the wolves. They have a similar mode of guarding their cattle beasts. A woman takes a needle and thread and sews together the skirt of her dress. A child what she is doing, and she tells him that she is the ears, eyes, and jaws of the wolves so that they hear, see, or bite the sheep, goats, calves, and pigs. In antiquity a witch fancied that she could shut up of her enemies by sewing up the mouth of a bronze needle,² and farmers attempted to ward off their crops by tying keys to ropes all round the field. This day a Transylvanian sower thinks he can ward from the corn by carrying a lock in the seed-box. The magical uses of locks and keys are clearly parallel to the magical use of knots, with which we are here. In Ceylon the Cingalese observe "a curious custom at the threshing-floor called 'Goigote'—the tying of the knot. When a sheaf of corn has been threshed it is removed the grain is heaped up and the women, generally six in number, sit round it and take in

been threshed, and the corn winnowed and measured. The object of this ceremony is to prevent the devils from diminishing the quantity of corn in the heap."¹

The precise mode in which the virtue of the knot is supposed to take effect in some of these cases does not clearly appear. But in general we may say that in all the cases we have been considering the leading characteristic of the magic knot or lock is that, in strict accordance with its physical nature, it always acts as an impediment, hindrance, or obstacle, and that its influence is maleficent or beneficent according as the thing which it impedes or hinders is good or evil. The obstructive tendency attributed to the knot in spiritual matters appears in a Swiss superstition that if, in sewing a corpse into its shroud, you make a knot on the thread, it will hinder the soul of the deceased on its passage to eternity.² The Germans of Transylvania place a little pillow with the dead in the coffin; but in sewing it they take great care not to make any knot on the thread, for they say that to do so would hinder the dead man from resting in the grave and his widow from marrying again.³

A similar belief as to rings is held in the Greek island of Carpathus, where the people never button the clothes they put upon a dead body and are careful to remove all rings from it; "for the spirit, they say, can even be detained in the little finger, and cannot rest."⁴ Here it is plain that even if the soul is not definitely supposed to issue at death from the finger-tips, yet the ring is conceived to exercise a certain constrictive influence which detains and imprisons the immortal spirit in spite of its efforts to escape from the tabernacle of clay; in short the ring, like the knot, acts as a spiritual fetter. This may have been the reason of an ancient Greek maxim, attributed to Pythagoras, which forbade people to wear rings.⁵ Nobody might enter the ancient

¹ C. J. R. Le Mesurier, "Customs and superstitions connected with the cultivation of rice in the southern province of Ceylon," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, N.S., xvii. (1885), p. 371.

² H. Runge, "Volks Glaube in der Schweiz," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859),

p. 178, § 25. The belief is reported from Zurich.

³ E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, i. 208.

⁴ "On a far-off Island," *Blackwood's Magazine*, February 1886, p. 238.

⁵ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* v. 5. 28, p. 662, ed. Potter; Jamblichus,

fastened to his right arm until the corpse is safe in the grave. The ring is believed to serve then as an amulet against any harm which the ghost might do him.³ We have seen that magic cords are fastened to the wrists of Siamese children to keep off evil spirits; on the return from a funeral the Burmese tie up the wrists of the surviving members of the family with strings to prevent the escape of their souls;⁴ and with the same intention the Bagobos put brass rings on the ankles of the sick.⁵ This use of wrist-bands, bracelets, or anklets as amulets to keep the soul in the body is parallel to the use of finger-rings which we are here considering. The placing of these spiritual fetters on the fingers is especially appropriate, because some people fancy that the soul resides wherever a pulse is felt beating.⁶ The custom of wearing finger-rings may have been introduced or even have sprung from, a belief in their efficacy to keep the soul in or demons out of the body, is

Adhortatio ad Philosophiam, 23; Plutarch, *De educatione puerorum*, 17. According to others, all that Pythagoras forbade was the wearing of a ring on which the likeness of a god was engraved (Diogenes Laertius, viii. 1. 17; Porphyry, *Vit. Pythag.* 42; Suidas, s.v. Πυθαγόρας); according to

(1890), p. 147 sqq.).

¹ This we learn from a fragment recently found on the stone inscription *μερί ἀρχαιολογική*, *Athenaeum*, 1890, p. 249.

² Zingerle, *Sitten, Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*, 1881, p. 100.

³ J. Scheffer, *Lappo*

which seems worth considering.¹ Here we are only concerned with the belief in so far as it seems to throw light on the rule that the Flamen Dialis might not wear a ring unless it were broken. Taken in conjunction with the rule which forbade him to have a knot on his garments, it points to a fear that the powerful spirit embodied in him might be trammelled and hampered in its goings-out and comings-in by such corporeal and spiritual fetters as rings and knots.

Before quitting the subject of knots I may be allowed to hazard a conjecture as to the meaning of the famous Gordian knot, which Alexander the Great, failing in his efforts to untie it, cut through with his sword. In Gordium, the ancient capital of the kings of Phrygia, there was preserved a waggon of which the yoke was fastened to the pole by a strip of cornel bark twisted and tied in an intricate knot. Tradition ran that the waggon had been dedicated by Midas, the first king of the dynasty, and that whoever untied the knot would be ruler of Asia.² Perhaps the knot was a talisman with which the fate of the dynasty was believed to be bound up in such a way that whenever the knot was loosed the reign of the dynasty would come to an end. We have seen that the magic virtue ascribed to knots is supposed to last only so long as they remain untied. If the Gordian knot was the talisman of the Phrygian kings, the local fame it enjoyed, as guaranteeing to them the rule of Phrygia, might easily be exaggerated by distant rumour into a report that the sceptre of Asia itself would fall to him who should undo the wondrous knot.³

Unable to discriminate clearly between words and things, the savage commonly fancies that the link between a name and the person or thing denominated by it is not a mere arbitrary and ideal association, but a real and substantial bond which unites the two in such a way that, for example, magic may be wrought on a man just as easily through his name as through his hair, his nails, or any other material

¹ A considerable body of evidence as to the custom of wearing rings and the virtues attributed to them has been collected by Mr. W. Jones in his work *Finger-ring Lore* (London, 1877).

² Arrian, *Anabasis*, ii. 3; Quintus

Curtius, iii. 1; Justin, xi. 7.

³ Public talismans, on which the safety of the state was supposed to depend, were common in antiquity. See Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 278 sqq., and my note on Pausanias, viii. 47. 5.

was a part of the man, but that it was that which is termed the soul, the breath of life, or we may choose to define it as being."² However, have been among the primitive Aryans, it is quite clear that many savages at the present day regard the vital parts of themselves, and therefore take great care to conceal their real names, lest these should give their disposed persons a handle by which to injure them.

Thus, to begin with the savages who rank at the bottom of the social scale, we are told that the secrecy among the Australian aborigines personal names is kept from general knowledge "arises out of the fact that an enemy who has your name, has something which he can use magically to your detriment."³ "An Australian says another writer, "is always very unwilling to give his name, and there is no doubt that this reluctance is due to the fear that through his name he may be injured by sorcerers."⁴ On Herbert River the wizards, when they practise their arts against some one, "need only mention the name of the person in question, and for this purpose rarely use their proper names in addressing or referring to each other, but simply their class names."⁵ And

¹ On the primitive conception of the relation of names to persons and things, see F. R. Taylor, *Early History of Man*. *The Nineteenth Century* (December 1891), p. 56.
² A. W. Howitt

who knew the Australians well, observes that in many tribes the belief prevails "that the life of an enemy may be taken by the use of his name in incantations. The consequence of this idea is, that in the tribes in which it obtains, the name of the male is given up for ever at the time when he undergoes the first of a series of ceremonies which end in conferring the rights of manhood. In such tribes a man has no name, and when a man desires to attract the attention of any male of his tribe who is out of his boyhood, instead of calling him by name, he addresses him as brother, nephew, or cousin, as the case may be, or by the name of the class to which he belongs. I used to notice, when I lived amongst the Bangerang, that the names which the males bore in infancy were soon almost forgotten by the tribe."¹ It may be questioned, however, whether the writer of these words was not deceived in thinking that among these tribes men gave up their individual names on passing through the ceremony of initiation into manhood. It is more in harmony with savage beliefs and practices to suppose either that the old names were retained but dropped out of use in daily life, or that new names were given at initiation and sedulously concealed from fear of sorcery. A missionary who resided among the aborigines at Lake Tyers, in Victoria, informs us that "the blacks have great objections to speak of a person by name. In speaking to each other they address the person spoken to as brother, cousin, friend, or whatever relation the person spoken to bears. Sometimes a black bears a name which we would term merely a nickname, as the left-handed, or the bad-handed, or the little man. They would speak of a person by this name while living, but they would never mention the proper name. I found great difficulty in collecting the native names of the blacks here. I found afterwards that they had given me wrong names; and, on asking the reason why, was informed they had two or three names, but they never mentioned their right name for fear any one got it, when they would die."² Amongst the tribes of Central Australia every man, woman, and child has,

¹ E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 46.

² J. Bulmer, in Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 94. The writer

appears to mean that the natives feared they would die if any one, or at any rate, an enemy, learned their real names.

that it shall be heard by no one but members of
"The native thinks that a stranger knowing
name would have special power to work him i
of magic." ¹

The same fear seems to have led to a custom
sort amongst the ancient Egyptians, whose co
high civilisation was strangely dashed and che
relics of the lowest savagery. Every Egypti
two names, which were known respectively :
name and the good name, or the great name ar
name ; and while the good or little name was in
the true or great name appears to have bee
concealed.² Similarly in Abyssinia at the prese
customary to conceal the real name which a per
at baptism and to call him only by a sort of nick
his mother gives him on leaving the church.
for this concealment is that a sorcerer cannot
person whose real name he does not know. Bu
ascertained his victim's real name, the magician t
ticular kind of straw, and muttering something o
it into a circle and places it under a stone. '
aimed at is taken ill at the very moment of the
the straw ; and if the straw snaps, he dies.³ Th
name of a Hindoo is quite distinct from his real na
only used at formal ceremonies such as marriage.⁴

the Kru negroes of West Africa a man's real name is always concealed from all but his nearest relations ; to other people he is known only under an assumed name.¹ The Ewe-speaking people of the Slave Coast "believe that there is a real and material connection between a man and his name, and that by means of the name injury may be done to the man. An illustration of this has been given in the case of the tree-stump that is beaten with a stone to compass the death of an enemy ; for the name of that enemy is not pronounced solely with the object of informing the animating principle of the stump who it is whose death is desired, but through a belief that, by pronouncing the name, the personality of the man who bears it is in some way brought to the stump."² The Wolofs of Senegambia are very much annoyed if any one calls them in a loud voice, even by day ; for they say that their name will be remembered by an evil spirit and made use of by him to do them a mischief at night.³ Similarly, the natives of Nias believe that harm may be done to a person by the demons who hear his name pronounced. Hence the names of infants, who are especially exposed to the assaults of evil spirits, are never spoken ; and often in haunted spots, such as the gloomy depths of the forest, the banks of a river, or beside a bubbling spring, men will abstain from calling each other by their names for a like reason.⁴

The Indians of Chiloe, a large island off the southern coast of Chili, keep their names secret and do not like to have them uttered aloud ; for they say that there are fairies or imps on the mainland or neighbouring islands who, if they knew folk's names, would do them an injury ; but so long as they do not know the names, these mischievous sprites are powerless.⁵ The Araucanians, who inhabit the mainland of Chili to the north of Chiloe, will hardly ever tell a stranger their names because they fear that he would thereby acquire some supernatural power over themselves. Asked his name by a stranger, who is ignorant of their

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 109.

² A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 98.

³ Bèrenget-Féraud, *Les peuples de la Sénégambie* (Paris, 1879), p. 28.

⁴ E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias* (Milan, 1890), p. 465.

⁵ This I learned from my wife, who spent some years in Chili and visited the island of Chiloe.

to the relationship of the caller and the called, sister, father, mother, and so on; or, when the relationship, as boy, girl, companion, and so on, terms, therefore, practically form the names as by Indians amongst themselves."² Amongst the the Goajira peninsula in Colombia it is a punishment to mention a man's name; in aggravated cases compensation is demanded.³ The Indians of Darien reveal their names, and when one of them is asked, "What name?" he answers, "I have none."⁴ In North America superstitions of the same sort are current. "Names with ceremony in childhood," says Schoolcraft, "are sacred, and are seldom pronounced, out of respect seem, to the spirits under whose favour they are selected. Children are usually called in by some name which can be familiarly used."⁵ The Indians of New Mexico are most unwilling to reveal their names or those of their friends; they generally give Mexican names which they have received from the Spaniards. "No Apache will give his name to a stranger, for his hidden power may thus be placed in the hands of a stranger to his detriment."⁷ The Tonkawe Indians of Texas

¹ E. R. Smith, *The Araucanians* (London, 1855), p. 222. *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., iv. (1864), p. 10.

² E. F. Tuckey, *Among the Indians of the Amazon*, p. 10. ³ H. R. Schoolcraft, *Indians of North America*, p. 10.

their children Comanche and English names in addition to their native names, which they are unwilling to communicate to others; for they believe that when somebody calls a person by his or her native name after death the spirit of the deceased may hear it, and may be prompted to take revenge on such as disturbed his rest; whereas if the spirit be called by a name drawn from another language, it will pay no heed.¹ Blackfoot Indians believe that they would be unfortunate in all their undertakings if they were to speak their names.² When an Ojebway is asked his name, he will look at some bystander and ask him to answer. "This reluctance arises from an impression they receive when young, that if they repeat their own names it will prevent their growth, and they will be small in stature. On account of this unwillingness to tell their names, many strangers have fancied that they either have no names or have forgotten them."³

In this last case no scruple seems to be felt about communicating a man's name to strangers, and no ill effects appear to be dreaded as a consequence of divulging it; harm is only done when a name is spoken by its owner. Why is this? and why in particular should a man be thought to stunt his growth by uttering his own name? We may conjecture that to savages who act and think thus a person's name only seems to be a part of himself when it is uttered with his own breath; uttered by the breath of others it has no vital connection with him, and no harm can come to him through it. Whereas, so these primitive philosophers may have argued, when a man lets his own name pass his lips, he is parting with a living piece of himself, and if he persists in so reckless a course he must certainly end by dissipating his energy and shattering his constitution. Many a broken-down debauchee, many a feeble frame wasted with consumption, may have been pointed out by these simple moralists

¹ A. S. Gatschet, *The Karankawa Indians, the Coast people of Texas* (*Archaeological and Ethnological Papers of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University*, vol. i. No. 2), p. 69.

² G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 194.

³ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, p. 162. Compare A. P. Reid, "Religious Beliefs of the Ojibois or Sautaux Indians," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, iii. (1874), p. 107.

it is *fady* or taboo for a person to tell his own name; a slave or attendant will answer for him.¹ "Chattin old Sakalava while the men were packing up, we to ask him his name; whereupon he politely refused to ask one of his servants standing by. On expression of astonishment that he should have forgotten this, that it was *fady* (tabooed) for one of his tribe to tell his own name. We found this was perfectly true in this district, but it is not the case with the Sakalava a little farther down the river."² The same curious incident as it may seem to us, is recorded of some tribes of Indians. Thus we are told that "the name of an Indian is a sacred thing, not to be divulged by himself without due consideration. One may ask of any tribe to give his name, and the question will be met with either a point-blank refusal or the more evasive evasion that he cannot understand what is wanted. The moment a friend approaches, the warrior first suggested will whisper what is wanted, and the friend will give the name, receiving a reciprocation of the courtesy from the other."³ This general statement applies, for example, to the Indian tribes of British Columbia, as to which we have said that "one of their strangest prejudices, which pervades all tribes alike, is a dislike to telling their names—thus you never get a man's right name from

but they will tell each other's names without hesitation."¹ Though it is considered very rude for a stranger to ask an Apache his name, and the Apache will never mention it himself, he will allow his friend at his side to mention it for him.² The Abipones of South America thought it a sin in a man to utter his own name, but they would tell each other's names freely; when Father Dobrizhoffer asked a stranger Indian his name, the man would nudge his neighbour with his elbow as a sign that his companion should answer the question.³ In the whole of the East Indian Archipelago the etiquette is the same. As a general rule no one will utter his own name. To inquire, "What is your name?" is a very indelicate question in native society. When in the course of administrative or judicial business a native is asked his name, instead of replying he will look at his comrade to indicate that he is to answer for him, or he will say straight out, "Ask him." The superstition is current all over the East Indies without exception,⁴ and it is found also among the Motu and Motumotu tribes of New Guinea.⁵ Among many tribes of South Africa men and women never mention their names if they can get any one else to do it for them, but they do not absolutely refuse when it cannot be avoided.⁶

¹ R. C. Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island* (London, 1862), p. 278 sq.

² J. G. Bourke, *On the Border with Crook*, p. 131 sq.

³ Dobrizhoffer, *Historia de Abiponibus* (Vienna, 1784), ii. 498.

⁴ G. A. Wilken, *Handleiding voor de vergelijkende Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, p. 221. The custom is reported for the British settlements in the Straits of Malacca by Newbold (*Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* (London, 1839), ii. 176); for Sumatra in general by Marsden (*History of Sumatra*, p. 286 sq.); for the Batta's by Baron van Hoëvell ("Iets over 't oorlogvoeren der Batta's," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, N.S., vii. (1878), p. 436, note); for the Dyaks by C. Hupe ("Korte Verhandeling over de Godsdienst, Zeden, enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor Nêr-*

lands Indië, 1846, dl. iii. p. 250); for the island of Sumba by S. Roos ("Bijdrage tot de Kennis van Taal, Land en Volk op het Eiland Soemba," p. 70, *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxxvi.); and for Bolang Mongondo, in the west of Celebes, by N. P. Wilken and J. A. Schwarz ("Allerlei over het land en volk van Bolaang Mongondou," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xi. (1867), p. 356).

⁵ J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 187. If a Motumotu man is hard pressed for his name and there is nobody near to help him, he will at last in a very stupid way mention it himself.

⁶ J. Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, Superstitions, and Religions of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 131.

his child. Thus we are informed that "the blacks objected strongly to let any one outside know their names, lest their enemies, learning the make them vehicles of incantation, and so charm away. As children were not thought to have ene: used to speak of a man as 'the father, uncle, or So-and-so,' naming a child; but on all occasions abst: mentioning the name of a grown-up person."² Th of Poso, in Celebes, will not pronounce their ow Among them, accordingly, if you wish to ascertain name, you ought not to ask the man himself, but sh of others. But if this is impossible, for example, w is no one else near, you should ask him his child's 1 then address him as the "Father of So-and-so." 1 Alfoors are shy of uttering the names even of chi when a boy or girl has a nephew or niece, he or she is as "Uncle of So-and-so," or "Aunt of So-and-so." facts go to show that the widespread custom of namir and especially fathers, after their children, originat in a reluctance to utter the real names of persons or directly referred to. That reluctance is proba in part on a fear of attracting the notice of evil sp

It might naturally be expected that the r

¹ Cameron, *Across Africa* (London, gaande het geestelijk en ma
1877). ii. 61. leven van den Poso-Alfoor

commonly maintained with regard to personal names would be dropped or at least relaxed among relations and friends. But the reverse of this is often the case. It is precisely the persons most intimately connected by blood and especially by marriage to whom the rule applies with the greatest stringency. Such people are often forbidden, not only to pronounce each other's names, but even to utter ordinary words which resemble or have a single syllable in common with these names. The persons who are thus mutually debarred from mentioning each other's names are especially husbands and wives, a man and his wife's parents, and a woman and her husband's father. For example, among the Caffres of South Africa a woman may not publicly pronounce the birth-name of her husband or of any of his brothers, nor may she use the interdicted word in its ordinary sense. If her husband, for instance, be called u-Mpaka, from *impaka*, a small feline animal, she must speak of that beast by some other name.¹ Further, a Caffre wife is forbidden to pro-

Sumatra, p. 286 : among the Battas, see Baron van Hoëvell, "Iets over 't oorlogvoeren der Batta's," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, N.S., vii. (1878), p. 436, note : among the Dyaks, see C. Hupe, "Korte Verhandeling over de Godsdienst, Zeden, enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, 1846, dl. iii. p. 249 ; H. Low, *Sarawak*, p. 197 : among the Kayans of Borneo, see W. H. Furness, *Folklore in Borneo* (Wallingford, Pennsylvania, 1899, privately printed), p. 26 : among the Kasias of Northern India, see Yule, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, ix. (1880), p. 298 : among the Caffres and Bechuanas of South Africa, see J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal* (London, 1857), p. 220 sq. ; D. Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*² (Edinburgh, 1875), p. 171 sq. ; Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, p. 225 : among the Mayas of Guatemala, see Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 680 : and among the Tinnah and occasionally the Thlinket Indians of North-West America, see E. Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjé* (Paris, 1876), p. 61 ; H. J. Holmberg, "Ethnographische Skizzen über die Völker des russischen Amerika,"

Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, iv. (1856), p. 319. G. A. Wilken held that the custom springs from a desire on the part of the father to assert his paternity, and Prof. E. B. Tylor seems disposed to take the same view. See G. A. Wilken, *Handleiding voor de vergelijkende Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, p. 216 sqq. (where more evidence of the prevalence of the custom in the East Indies is given) ; E. B. Tylor, in *Journ. Anthropol. Institute*, xviii. (1889), p. 248 sqq. (who refers to a paper by Wilken in *De Indische Gids* for 1880, which I have not seen). But this explanation fails to account not merely for the custom of naming the mother after her child, but also for the parallel custom in Poso of naming young children after their nephews and nieces. Wilken's explanation is rejected by Mr. A. C. Kruijt (*l.c.*) in favour of the one indicated in the text ; but that explanation itself hardly covers the many cases discussed above, where, though a man will not mention his own name, he does not object to other people doing so.

¹ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 221.

definite rules can be given for the formation of substituted words, nor is it possible to form a dictionary of their number being so great—since there may be even in the same tribe, who would be no more than substitutes employed by some others, to use the original words themselves.”¹ A Caluso, may not mention the name of his mother-in-law, nor she pronounce his; but he is free to utter where the emphatic syllable of her name occurs.² In Nyasaland no woman will speak the name of her husband or even use a word that may be synonymous with it; she were to call him by his proper name, she would be unlucky and would affect her position. In like manner women abstain, for various reasons, from using the common names of art and craft, which they designate by terms peculiar to themselves. Among the Barea and Bogos of Eastern Africa a woman never mentions her husband's name; a Bogo

¹ Maclean, *Compendium of Kafir Laws and Customs* (Cape Town, 1866), p. 92 sq.; D. Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*,² pp. 141 sq., 172; Kranz, *Natur- und Kulturleben der Zulus* (Wiesbaden, 1880), p. 114 sq.; Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*² (London, 1886), p. 214.

² Rev. Francis Fleming, *etc.*

limited to the names of her children; the woman is connected with her blood relations.

³ Maclean, *op. cit.*; Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*,² pp. 46, 102, 103.

rather be unfaithful to him than commit the monstrous sin of allowing his name to pass her lips.¹ A Kirghiz woman dares not pronounce the names of the older relations of her husband, nor even use words which resemble them in sound. For example, if one of these relations is called Shepherd, she may not speak of sheep, but must call them "the bleating ones"; if his name is Lamb, she must refer to lambs as "the young of the bleating ones."² Among the Ojebways husbands and wives never mention each other's names;³ among the Omahas a man and his father-in-law and mother-in-law will on no account utter each other's names in company.⁴ A Dacota "is not allowed to address or to look towards his wife's mother, especially, and the woman is shut off from familiar intercourse with her husband's father and others, and etiquette prohibits them from speaking the names of their relatives by marriage." "None of their customs," adds the same writer, "is more tenacious of life than this; and no family law is more binding."⁵

Among the Dyaks a child never pronounces the names of his parents, and is angry if any one else does so in his presence. A husband never calls his wife by her name, and she never calls him by his. If they have children, they name each other after them, "Father of So-and-so" and "Mother of So-and-so"; if they have no children they use the pronouns "he" and "she," or an expression such as "he or she whom I love"; and in general members of a Dyak family do not mention each other's names.⁶ Moreover, when the personal names happen also, as they often do, to be names of common objects, the Dyak is debarred from designating these objects by their ordinary names. For instance, if a man or one of his family is called Bintang, which means "star," he must not call a star a star (*bintang*); he must call it a *pariama*. If he or a member of

¹ W. Munzinger, *Ostafrikanische Studien* (Schaffhausen, 1864), p. 526; *id.*, *Sitten und Recht der Bogos* (Winterthur, 1859), p. 95.

² W. Radloff, *Proben der Volkslitteratur der Türkischen Stämme Süd-Sibiriens*, iii. 13, note 3.

³ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, p. 162.

⁴ E. James, *Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains* (London, 1823), i. 232.

⁵ S. R. Riggs, *Dakota Grammar, Texts, and Ethnography* (Washington, 1893), p. 204.

⁶ C. Hupe, "Korte Verhandeling over de Godsdienst, Zeden, enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1846, dl. iii. p. 249 sq.

ordinary words of the language, they may never pass their words in their common significance to pass their example, if my father is called Njara ("horse") I may not speak of him by that name; but in speaking of an animal I am free to use the word horse (*njara*). If my father-in-law is called Njara, the case is different: not only may I not refer to him by his name, but I may even call a horse a horse; in speaking of the animal I may use some other word. The missionary who is acquainted with a man whose mother-in-law is in the name of Ringgi ("rixdollar"). When the occasion to refer to real rixdollars, he alludes to them indirectly as "large guilders" (*roepia bouse*). Another may not use the ordinary word for water (*oeuwe*); in speaking of water he employs a word (*owai*) taken from a dialect. Indeed, among these Alfoors it is the custom to practice in such cases to replace the forbidden word by a kindred word of the same significance borrowed from a dialect. In this way many fresh terms or new words pass into general circulation.² Among the people of Minahassa, in Northern Celebes, the custom is further so as to forbid the use even of words which resemble the personal names in sound. It is the name of a father-in-law which is thus laid under

If he, for example, is called Kalala, his son-in-law may not speak of a horse by its common name *kawalo*; he must call it a "riding-beast" (*sasakajan*).¹ So among the Alfoors of the island of Buro it is taboo to mention the names of parents and parents-in-law, or even to speak of common objects by words which resemble these names in sound. Thus, if your mother-in-law is called Dalu, which means "betel," you may not ask for betel by its ordinary name, you must ask for "red mouth" (*mue miha*); if you want betel-leaf, you may not say betel-leaf (*dalu 'mun*), you must say *karon fenna*. In the same island it is also taboo to mention the name of an elder brother in his presence.² In Bolang Mongondo, a district in the west of Celebes, the unmentionable names are those of parents, parents-in-law, uncles and aunts.³ Among the Alfoors of Halmahera a son-in-law may never use his father-in-law's name in speaking to him; he must simply address him as "Father-in-law."⁴ In Sunda it is thought that a particular crop would be spoilt if a man were to mention the names of his father and mother.⁵ In the Banks Islands, Melanesia, the taboos laid on the names of persons connected by marriage are very strict. A man will not mention the name of his father-in-law, much less the name of his mother-in-law, nor may he name his wife's brother; but he may name his wife's sister, she is nothing to him. A woman may not name her father-in-law, nor on any account her son-in-law. Two people whose children have intermarried are also debarred from mentioning each other's names. And not only are all these persons

¹ G. A. Wilken, *op. cit.* p. 599 sq.

² G. A. Wilken, "Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Alfoeren van het Eiland Boeroe," p. 26 (*Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxxvi.). The words for taboo among these Alfoors are *poto* and *koin*; *poto* applies to actions, *koin* to things and places. The literal meaning of *poto* is "warm," "hot" (Wilken, *op. cit.* p. 25).

³ N. P. Wilken and J. A. Schwarz, "Allerlei over het Land en Volk van Bolaang Mongondou," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-genootschap*, xi. (1867), p. 356.

⁴ C. F. H. Campen, "De godsdienstbegrippen der Halmaherasche Alfoeren," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-Land- en Volkskunde*, xxvii. (1882), p. 450.

⁵ K. F. Holle, "Snippers van den Regent van Galoeh," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-Land- en Volkskunde*, xxvii. (1882), p. 101 sq. The precise consequence supposed to follow is that the *oebi*(?) plantations would have no bulbs (*geen knollen*). The names of several animals are also tabooed in Sunda. See Note A at the end of this volume, "Taboos on Common Words."

might not use the common words for "pig" because these words occurred in the polysyllabic son-in-law; and we are told of another who might not pronounce the everyday words for "hot" on account of his wife's brother's name, even debarred from mentioning the number "one" because the word for "one" formed part of the name of his cousin.¹

It might be expected that similar taboos of relations and on words resembling them would occur among the aborigines of Australia, and that they might be thrown on their origin and meaning by primitive modes of thought and forms of society prevalent among these savages. Yet this expectation can hardly be fulfilled; for the evidence of the observed customs in Australia is scanty and hardly of sufficient value to explain their origin. We are told that there is "in which the names of natives are never alluded to, as those of a father or mother-in-law, of a son or daughter, and some cases arising from a connection with wives."² Among some Victorian tribes, a man may not mention the name of his mother from the time of his betrothal to his death, neither his sisters might ever look at or speak to him. He must not go within fifty yards of their habitations.

walked in a stooping posture and spoke in whispers until he had gone by. They might not talk with him, and when he and they spoke to other people in each other's presence they used a special form of speech which went by the name of "turn tongue." This was not done with any intention of concealing their meaning, for "turn tongue" was understood by everybody.¹ A writer, who enjoyed unusually favourable opportunities of learning the language and customs of the Victorian aborigines, informs us that, "A stupid custom existed among them, which they called *kna!-oyne*. Whenever a female child was promised in marriage to any man, from that very hour neither he nor the child's mother were permitted to look upon or hear each other speak or hear their names mentioned by others; for, if they did, they would immediately grow prematurely old and die."² In the Booandik tribe of South Australia persons connected by marriage, except husbands and wives, spoke to each other in a low whining voice and employed words different from those in common use.³ Another writer, speaking of the same tribe, says: "Mothers-in-law and sons-in-law studiously avoid each other. A father-in-law converses with his son-in-law in a low tone of voice, and in a phraseology differing somewhat from the ordinary one."⁴

It will perhaps occur to the reader that customs of this latter sort may possibly have originated in the intermarriage of tribes speaking different languages; and there are some Australian facts which seem at first sight to favour this supposition. Thus with regard to the natives of South Australia we are told that "the principal mark of distinction between the tribes is difference of language or dialect; where the tribes intermix greatly no inconvenience is experienced on this account, as every person understands, in addition to his own dialect, that of the neighbouring tribe; the consequence is that two persons commonly converse in

¹ J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 29. Specimens of this peculiar form of speech are given by Mr. Dawson. For example, "It will be very warm by and by" was expressed in the ordinary language *Baawan kulluun*; in "turn tongue" it was *Gnullewa*

gnatnan tirambud.

² Joseph Parker, in Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 156.

³ Mrs. James Smith, *The Booandik Tribe*, p. 5.

⁴ D. Stewart, in E. M. Curr's *Australian Race*, iii. 461.

two languages, just as an Englishman and German would hold a conversation, each person speaking his own language, but understanding that of the other as well as his own. This peculiarity will often occur in one family through intermarriages, neither party ever thinking of changing his or her dialect for that of the other. Children do not always adopt the language of the mother, but that of the tribe among whom they live."¹ Among some tribes of Western Victoria a man was actually forbidden to marry a wife who spoke the same dialect as himself; and during the preliminary visit, which each paid to the tribe of the other, neither was permitted to speak the language of the tribe whom he or she was visiting. The children spoke the language of their father and might never mix it with any other. To her children the mother spoke in their father's language, but to her husband she spoke in her own, and he answered her in his; "so that all conversation is carried on between husband and wife in the same way as between an Englishman and a Frenchwoman, each speaking his or her own language. This very remarkable law explains the preservation of so many distinct dialects within so limited a space, even where there are no physical obstacles to ready and frequent communication between the tribes."² So amongst the Sakais, an aboriginal race of the Malay Peninsula, a man goes to a considerable distance for a wife, generally to a tribe who speak quite a different dialect.³ It is well known that the Carib women spoke a language which differed in some respects from that of the men, and the explanation generally given of the difference is that the women preserved the language of a race of whom the men had been exterminated and the women married by the Caribs. This explanation is not, as some seem to suppose, a mere hypothesis of the learned, devised to clear up a curious discrepancy; it was a tradition current among the Caribs themselves in the seventeenth

¹ C. W. Schürmann, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 249.

² J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, pp. 27, 30 sq., 40. So among the Gowmditch-mara tribe of Western Victoria the child spoke his father's language, and not his mother's, when

she happened to be of another tribe (Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 276).

³ A. Hale, "On the Sakais," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886), p. 291.

century,¹ and as such it deserves serious attention. But there are other facts which seem to point to a different explanation.² However this may be, a little reflection will probably convince us that a mere intermixture of races speaking different tongues could scarcely account for the phenomena of language under consideration. For the reluctance to mention the names or even syllables of the names of persons connected with the speaker by marriage can hardly be separated from the reluctance evinced by so many people to utter their own names or the names of the dead or of chiefs and kings; and if the reticence as to these latter names springs mainly from superstition, we may infer that the reticence as to the former has no better foundation. That the savage's unwillingness to mention his own name is based, at least in part, on a superstitious fear of the ill use that might be made of it by his foes, whether human or spiritual, has already been shown. It remains to examine the similar usage in regard to the names of the dead and of royal personages.

The custom of abstaining from all mention of the names of the dead was observed in antiquity by the Albanians of the Caucasus,³ and at the present day it is in full force among many savage tribes. Thus we are told that one of the customs most rigidly observed and enforced amongst the Australian aborigines is never to mention the name of a deceased person, whether male or female; to name aloud one who has departed this life would be a gross violation of their most sacred prejudices, and they carefully abstain from it.⁴ The chief motive for this abstinence appears to be a

¹ De Rochefort, *Histoire Naturelle et Morale des Isles Antilles de l'Amerique*² (Rotterdam, 1665), p. 349 sq.; De la Borde, "Relation de l'origine, etc., des Caraïbs sauvages des Isles Antilles de l'Amerique," pp. 4, 39 (*Recueil de divers Voyages faits en Afrique et en Amerique, qui n'ont point été encore publiés*, Paris, 1684); Lafitau, *Mœurs des Sauvages Ameriquains*, i. 55. On the language of the Carib women, see also Jean Baptiste du Tertre, *Histoire generale des Isles de S. Christophe, de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique et autres dans*

l'Amerique (Paris, 1654), p. 462; Labat, *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amerique* (Paris, 1713), vi. 127 sq.; J. N. Rat, "The Carib language," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898), p. 311 sq.

² See C. Sapper, "Mittelamerikanische Caraïben," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, x. (1897), p. 56 sqq.; and my article, "A suggestion as to the origin of gender in language," *Fortnightly Review*, January 1900.

³ Strabo, xi. 4. 8.

⁴ G. Grey, *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery*, ii. 232, 257.

fear of evoking the ghost, although the natural unwillingness to revive past sorrows undoubtedly operates also to draw the veil of oblivion over the names of the dead.¹ Once Mr. Oldfield so terrified a native by shouting out the name of a deceased person, that the man fairly took to his heels and did not venture to show himself again for several days. At their next meeting he bitterly reproached Mr. Oldfield for his indiscretion; "nor could I," adds Mr. Oldfield, "induce him by any means to utter the awful sound of a dead man's name, for by so doing he would have placed himself in the power of the malign spirits."² On another occasion a Watchandie woman having mentioned the name of a certain man, was informed that he had long been dead. At that she became greatly excited and spat thrice to counteract the evil effect of having taken a dead man's name into her lips. This custom of spitting thrice, as Mr. Oldfield afterwards learned, was the regular charm whereby the natives freed themselves from the power of the dangerous spirits whom they had provoked by such a rash act.³ Among the aborigines of Victoria the dead were very rarely spoken of, and then never by their names; they were referred to in a subdued voice as "the lost one" or "the poor fellow that is no more." To speak of them by name would, it was supposed, excite the malignity of Couit-gil, the spirit of the departed, which hovers on earth for a time before it departs for ever towards the setting sun.⁴ Once when a Kurnai

The writer is here speaking especially of Western Australia, but his statement applies, with certain restrictions which will be mentioned presently, to all parts of the continent. For evidence see D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* (London, 1804), p. 390; S. Gason, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 275; Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 120, ii. 297; A. L. F. Cameron, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiv. (1885), p. 363; Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 284; F. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 88, 338, ii. 195, iii. 22, 29, 139, 166, 596; J. D. Lang, *Queensland* (London, 1861), pp. 367, 387, 388; C. Lumholtz, *Among*

Cannibals (London, 1889), p. 279; *Report on the Work of the Horn Scientific Expedition to Central Australia* (London and Melbourne, 1896), pp. 137, 168. More evidence is adduced below.

¹ On this latter head, see especially the remarks of Mr. A. W. Howitt, in *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 249. Compare also C. W. Schürmann, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 247; F. Bonney, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 127.

² A. Oldfield, "The Aborigines of Australia," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., iii. (1865), p. 238.

³ A. Oldfield, *op. cit.* p. 240.

⁴ W. Stranbridge, "On the Abori-

man was spoken to about a dead friend, soon after the decease, he looked round uneasily and said, "Do not do that, he might hear you and kill me!"¹ Of the tribes on the Lower Murray River we are told that when a person dies "they carefully avoid mentioning his name; but if compelled to do so, they pronounce it in a very low whisper, so faint that they imagine the spirit cannot hear their voice."² Amongst the tribes of Central Australia no one may utter the name of the deceased during the period of mourning, unless it is absolutely necessary to do so, and then it is only done in a whisper for fear of disturbing and annoying the man's spirit which is walking about in ghostly form. If the ghost hears his name mentioned he concludes that his kinsfolk are not mourning for him properly; if their grief were genuine they could not bear to bandy his name about. Touched to the quick by their hard-hearted indifference, the indignant ghost will come and trouble them in dreams.³

The same reluctance to utter the names of the dead appears to prevail among all the Indian tribes of America from Hudson's Bay Territory to Patagonia. Among the Iroquois, for example, the name of the deceased was never mentioned after the period of mourning had expired.⁴ The same rule was rigidly observed by the Indians of California and Oregon; its transgression might be punished with a heavy fine or even with death.⁵ Thus among the Karok of California we are told that "the highest crime one can commit is the *pet-chi-l-ri*, the mere mention of the dead relative's name. It is a deadly insult to the survivors, and can be atoned for only by the same amount of blood-money paid for wilful murder. In default of that they will have the villain's blood."⁶ Amongst the Wintun, also of California, if some one in a group of merry talkers inadvertently men-

gines of Victoria," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., i. (1861), p. 299.

¹ A. W. Howitt, "On some Australian Beliefs," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 191.

² G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, i. 94.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 498.

⁴ L. H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois* (Rochester, U.S., 1851), p. 175.

⁵ A. S. Gatschett, *The Klamath Indians of South-western Oregon* (Washington, 1890), (*Contributions to North American Ethnology*, vol. ii. pt. 1), p. xli.; Chase, quoted by Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 357, note 76.

⁶ S. Powers, *Tribes of California*, p. 33, compare p. 68.

tions the name of a deceased person, "straightway there falls upon all an awful silence. No words can describe the shuddering and heart-sickening terror which seizes upon them at the utterance of that fearful word."¹ Among the Goajiros of Colombia to mention the dead before his kinsmen is a dreadful offence, which is often punished with death; for if it happen on the *rancho* of the deceased, in presence of his nephew or uncle, they will assuredly kill the offender on the spot if they can. But if he escapes, the penalty resolves itself into a heavy fine, usually of two or more oxen.² So among the Abipones of Paraguay to mention the departed by name was a serious crime, which often led to blows and bloodshed. When it was needful to refer to such an one, it was done by means of a general phrase such as "he who is no more," eked out with particulars which served to identify the person meant.³

A similar reluctance to mention the names of the dead is reported of peoples so widely separated from each other as the Samoyeds of Siberia and the Todas of Southern India, the Mongols of Tartary and the Tuaregs of the Sahara, the Ainos of Japan and the Wakamba of Central Africa, and the inhabitants of the Nicobar Islands, of Borneo, and Tasmania.⁴ In all cases, even where it is not expressly

¹ S. Powers, *op. cit.* p. 240.

² F. A. Simons, "An Exploration of the Goajira Peninsula, U.S. of Colombia," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, vii. (1885), p. 791.

³ Dobrizhoffer, *Historia de Abiponibus*, ii. 301, 498. For more evidence of the observance of this taboo among the American Indians, see W. Colquhoun Grant, "Description of Vancouver's Island," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, xxvii. (1857), p. 303 (as to Vancouver Island); Capt. Wilson, "Report on the Indian Tribes," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S. iv. (1866), p. 286 (as to Vancouver Island and neighbourhood); A. Ross, *Adventures on the Oregon or Columbia River*, p. 322; H. R. Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, iv. 226 (as to the Bonaks of California); Ch. N. Bell, "The Mosquito Terri-

tory," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, xxxii. (1862), p. 255; A. Pinart, "Les Indiens de l'Etat de Panama," *Revue d'Ethnographie*, vi. (1887), p. 56; Musters, in *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, xli. (1871), p. 68 (as to Patagonia). More evidence is adduced below.

⁴ See Pallas, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs*, iii. 76 (Samoyeds); W. E. Marshall, *Travels amongst the Todas*, p. 177; Plan de Carpin (de Plano Carpin), *Relation des Mongols ou Tartares*, ed. D'Avezac, cap. iii. § iii.; H. Duveyrier, *Exploration du Sahara, les Touaregs du Nord* (Paris, 1864), p. 415; Lieut. S. C. Holland, "The Ainos," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, iii. (1874), p. 238; J. M. Hildebrandt, "Ethnographische Notizen über Wakamba und ihre Nachbarn," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, x. (1878), p. 405; N.

stated, the fundamental reason for this avoidance is probably the fear of the ghost. That this is the real motive with the Tuaregs of the Sahara we are positively informed. They dread the return of the dead man's spirit, and do all they can to avoid it by shifting their camp after a death, ceasing for ever to pronounce the name of the departed, and eschewing everything that might be regarded as an evocation or recall of his soul. Hence they do not, like the Arabs, designate individuals by adding to their personal names the names of their fathers; they never speak of So-and-so, son of So-and-so; they give to every man a name which will live and die with him.¹ So among some of the Victorian tribes in Australia personal names were rarely perpetuated, because the natives believed that any one who adopted the name of a deceased person would not live long;² probably his ghostly namesake was supposed to come and fetch him away to the spirit-land. Among the Klallam Indians of Washington Territory no person may bear the name of his deceased father, grandfather, or any other direct ancestor in the paternal line.³ The Masai of Eastern Africa resort to a simple device which enables them to speak of the dead freely without risk of the inopportune appearance of the ghost. As soon as a man or woman dies, they change his or her name, and henceforth always speak of him or her by the new name, while the old name falls into oblivion, and to utter it in the presence of a kinsman of the deceased is an insult which calls for vengeance. They assume that the dead man will not know his new name, and so will not answer to it when he hears it pronounced.⁴ Ghosts are notoriously dull-witted; nothing is easier than to dupe them.

The same fear of the ghost, which moves people to

Fontana, "On the Nicobar Isles," *Asiatick Researches*, iii. (London, 1799), p. 154; W. H. Furness, *Folk-lore in Borneo* (Wallingford, Pennsylvania, 1899), p. 26; J. E. Calder, "Native Tribes of Tasmania," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, iii. (1874), p. 23; J. Bonwick, *Daily Life of the Tasmanians*, pp. 97, 145, 183.

¹ H. Duveyrier, *Exploration du*

Sahara, les Touaregs du Nord, p. 431.

² J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 42.

³ Myron Eels, "The Twana, Chemakum, and Klallam Indians of Washington Territory," *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1887*, Part i. p. 656.

⁴ R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, p. 182 sq.

suppress his old name, naturally leads all persons who bear a similar name to exchange it for another, lest its utterance should attract the attention of the ghost, who cannot reasonably be expected to discriminate between all the different applications of the same name. Thus we are told that in the Adelaide and Encounter Bay tribes of South Australia the repugnance to mentioning the names of persons who have died lately is carried so far, that persons who bear the same name as the deceased abandon it, and either adopt temporary names or are known by any others that happen to belong to them.¹ The same practice was observed by the aborigines of New South Wales,² and is said to be observed by the tribes of the Lower Murray River,³ and of King George's Sound in Western Australia.⁴ In some Australian tribes the change of name thus brought about is permanent; the old name is laid aside for ever, and the man is known by his new name for the rest of his life, or at least until he is obliged to change it again for a like reason.⁵ Among the North American Indians all persons, whether men or women, who bore the name of one who had just died were obliged to abandon it and to adopt other names, which was formally done at the first ceremony of mourning for the dead.⁶ In some tribes to the east of the Rocky Mountains this change of name lasted only during the season of mourning,⁷ but in other tribes on the Pacific Coast of North America it seems to have been permanent.⁸

Sometimes by an extension of the same reasoning all the near relations of the deceased change their names, whatever they may happen to be, doubtless from a fear that the

¹ W. Wyatt, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 165.

² D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* (London, 1804), p. 392.

³ P. Beveridge, "Notes on the dialects, habits, and mythology of the Lower Murray aborigines," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Victoria*, vi. 20 sq.

⁴ "Description of the natives of King George's Sound (Swan River) and adjoining country," *Journal of the R. Geograph. Society*, i. (1832), p. 46 sq.

⁵ G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, ii. 228.

⁶ Lafitau, *Mœurs des Sauvages Américains*, ii. 434.

⁷ Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 109.

⁸ S. Powers, *Tribes of California*, p. 349; Myron Eels, "The Twana, Chemakum, and Klallam Indians of Washington Territory," *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1887*, p. 656.

sound of the familiar names might lure back the vagrant spirit to its old home. Thus in some Victorian tribes the ordinary names of all the next of kin were disused during the period of mourning, and certain general terms, prescribed by custom, were substituted for them. To call a mourner by his own name was considered an insult to the departed, and often led to fighting and bloodshed.¹ Among Indian tribes of North-Western America near relations of the deceased often change their names "under an impression that spirits will be attracted back to earth if they hear familiar names often repeated."² Among the Lenguas of South America not only is a dead man's name never mentioned, but all the survivors change their names also. They say that Death has been among them and has carried off a list of the living, and that he will soon come back for more victims; hence in order to defeat his fell purpose they change their names, believing that on his return Death, though he has got them all on his list, will not be able to identify them under their new names, and will depart to pursue the search elsewhere.³

Further, when the name of the deceased happens to be that of some common object, such as an animal, or plant, or fire, or water, it is sometimes considered necessary to drop that word in ordinary speech and replace it by another. A custom of this sort, it is plain, may easily be a potent agent of change in language; for where it prevails to any considerable extent many words must constantly become obsolete and new ones spring up. And this tendency has been remarked by observers who have recorded the custom in Australia, America, and elsewhere. For example, with regard to the Australian aborigines it has been noted that "the dialects change with almost every tribe. Some tribes name their children after natural objects; and when the person so named dies, the word is never again mentioned; another word has therefore to be invented for the object

¹ J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 42.

² H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 248. Compare Baer und Helmersen, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des russischen Reiches und*

der angrenzenden Länder Asiens, i. 107 sq. (as to the Kenayens of Cook's Inlet and the neighbourhood).

³ F. de Azara, *Voyages dans l'Amérique Méridionale* (Paris, 1808), ii. 153 sq.

after which the child was called." The writer gives as an instance the case of a man whose name Karla signified "fire"; when Karla died, a new word for fire had to be introduced. "Hence," adds the writer, "the language is always changing."¹ In the Moorunde tribe the name for "teal" used to be *torpool*; but when a boy called Torpool died, a new name (*tilquaitch*) was given to the bird, and the old name dropped out altogether from the language of the tribe.² Sometimes, however, such substitutes for common words were only in vogue for a limited time after the death, and were then discarded in favour of the old words. Thus a missionary, who lived among the Victorian aborigines, remarks that "it is customary among these blacks to disuse a word when a person has died whose name was the same or even of the same sound. I find great difficulty in getting blacks to repeat such words. I believe this custom is common to all the Victorian tribes, though in course of time the word is resumed again. I have seen among the Murray blacks the dead freely spoken of when they have been dead some time."³ Again in the Encounter Bay tribe of South Australia, if a man of the name of Ngnke, which means "water," were to die, the whole tribe would be obliged to use some other word to express water for a considerable time after his decease. The writer who records this custom surmises that it may explain the presence of a number of synonyms in the language of the tribe.⁴ This conjecture is confirmed by what we know of some Victorian tribes whose speech comprised a regular set of synonyms to be used instead of the common terms by all members of a tribe in times of mourning. For instance, if a man called Waa ("crow") departed this life, during the period of mourning for him nobody might call a crow a *waa*; everybody had to speak of the bird as a *narrapart*. When a person who rejoiced in the title of Ringtail Opossum (*wecarn*) had gone the way of all flesh, his sorrowing relations and the tribe at large were bound for a time to refer to ringtail opossums by the more

¹ Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 266.

² J. Bulmer, in Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 94.

³ F. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery*, ii. 354 sq.

⁴ H. E. A. Meyer, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 199, compare p. xxix.

sonorous name of *manuungkuurt*. If the community were plunged in grief for the loss of a respected female who bore the honourable name of Turkey Bustard, the proper name for turkey bustards, which was *barrim barrim*, went out and *tillit tillitsh* came in. And so *mutatis mutandis* with the names of Black Cockatoo, Grey Duck, Gigantic Crane, Kangaroo, Eagle, Dingo, and the rest.¹

A similar custom used to be constantly transforming the language of the Abipones of Paraguay, amongst whom, however, a word once abolished seems never to have been revived. New words, says the missionary Dobrizhoffer, sprang up every year like mushrooms in a night, because all words that resembled the names of the dead were abolished by proclamation and others coined in their place. The mint of words was in the hands of the old women of the tribe, and whatever term they stamped with their approval and put in circulation was immediately accepted without a murmur by high and low alike, and spread like wildfire through every camp and settlement of the tribe. You would be astonished, says the same missionary, to see how meekly the whole nation acquiesces in the decision of a withered old hag, and how completely the old familiar words fall instantly out of use and are never repeated either through force of habit or forgetfulness. In the seven years that Dobrizhoffer spent among these Indians the native word for jaguar was changed thrice, and the words for crocodile, thorn, and the slaughter of cattle underwent similar though less varied vicissitudes. As a result of this habit, the vocabularies of the missionaries teemed with erasures, old words having constantly to be struck out as obsolete and new ones inserted in their place.²

In the Nicobar Islands a similar practice has similarly affected the speech of the natives. "A most singular custom," says Mr. de Roepstorff, "prevails among them which one would suppose must most effectually hinder the 'making of history,' or, at any rate, the transmission of

¹ J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 43. Mr. Howitt mentions the case of a native who arbitrarily substituted the name *nobler* ("spirituous liquor") for *yan* ("water") because Yan was

the name of a man who had recently died (*Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 249).

² Dobrizhoffer, *Historia de Abiponibus* (Vienna, 1784), ii. 199, 301.

historical narrative. By a strict rule, which has all the sanction of Nicobar superstition, no man's name may be mentioned after his death! To such a length is this carried that when, as very frequently happens, the man rejoiced in the name of 'Fowl,' 'Hat,' 'Fire,' 'Road,' etc., in its Nicobarese equivalent, the use of these words is carefully eschewed for the future, not only as being the personal designation of the deceased, but even as the names of the common things they represent; the words die out of the language, and either new vocables are coined to express the thing intended, or a substitute for the disused word is found in other Nicobarese dialects or in some foreign tongue. This extraordinary custom not only adds an element of instability to the language, but destroys the continuity of political life, and renders the record of past events precarious and vague, if not impossible."¹

That a superstition which suppresses the names of the dead must cut at the very root of historical tradition has been remarked by other workers in this field. "The Klamath people," observes Mr. A. S. Gatschet, "possess no historic traditions going further back in time than a century, for the simple reason that there was a strict law prohibiting the mention of the person or acts of a deceased individual by *using his name*. This law was rigidly observed among the Californians no less than among the Oregonians, and on its transgression the death penalty could be inflicted. This is certainly enough to suppress all historical knowledge within a people. How can history be written without names?"² Among some of the tribes of New South Wales the simple ditties, never more than two lines long, to which the natives dance, are never transmitted from one generation to another, because, when the rude poet dies, "all the songs of which he was author are, as it were, buried with him, inasmuch as they, in common with his very name, are studiously ignored from thenceforward, consequently they are quite forgotten in a very short space of

¹ F. A. de Roepstorff, "Tiomberombi, a Nicobar Tale," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, liii. (1884), pt. i. p. 24 sq.

² A. S. Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of South-western Oregon (Contributions to North American Ethnology, vol. ii. pt. 1)*, p. xli.

time indeed. This custom of endeavouring persistently to forget everything which had been in any way connected with the dead entirely precludes the possibility of anything of an historical nature having existence amongst them ; in fact the most vital occurrence, if only dating a single generation back, is quite forgotten, that is to say, if the recounting thereof should necessitate the mention of a defunct aboriginal's name."¹ Thus among these simple savages even a sacred bard could not avail to rescue an Australian Agamemnon from the long night of oblivion.

In many tribes, however, the power of this superstition to blot out the memory of the past is to some extent weakened and impaired by a natural tendency of the human mind. Time, which wears out the deepest impressions, inevitably dulls, if it does not wholly efface, the print left on the savage mind by the mystery and horror of death. Sooner or later, as the memory of his loved ones fades slowly away, he becomes more willing to speak of them, and thus their rude names may sometimes be rescued by the philosophic inquirer before they have vanished, like autumn leaves or winter snows, into the vast undistinguished limbo of the past. This was Sir George Grey's experience when he attempted to trace the intricate system of kinship prevalent among the natives of Western Australia. He says : " It is impossible for any person, not well acquainted with the language of the natives, and who does not possess great personal influence over them, to pursue an inquiry of this nature ; for one of the customs most rigidly observed and enforced amongst them is, never to mention the name of a deceased person, male or female. In an inquiry, therefore, which principally turns upon the names of their ancestors, this prejudice must be every moment violated, and a very great difficulty encountered in the outset. The only circumstance which at all enabled me to overcome this was, that the longer a person has been dead the less repugnance do they evince in

¹ P. Beveridge, " Of the aborigines inhabiting the great lacustrine and riverine depression of the Lower Murray," etc., *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales* for 1883, vol. xvii. p. 65. The

custom of changing common words on the death of persons who bore them as their names seems also to have been observed by the Tasmanians. See J. Bonwick, *Daily Life of the Tasmanians*, p. 145.

uttering his name. I, therefore, in the first instance, endeavoured to ascertain only the oldest names on record; and on subsequent occasions, when I found a native alone, and in a loquacious humour, I succeeded in filling up some of the blanks. Occasionally, round their fires at night, I managed to involve them in disputes regarding their ancestors, and, on these occasions, gleaned much of the information of which I was in want."¹ In some of the Victorian tribes the prohibition to mention the names of the dead remained in force only during the period of mourning;² in the Port Lincoln tribe of South Australia it lasted many years.³ Among the Chinook Indians of North America "custom forbids the mention of a dead man's name, at least till many years have elapsed after the bereavement."⁴ In the Twana, Chemakum, and Klallam tribes of Washington Territory the names of deceased members may be mentioned two or three years after their death.⁵ Among the Puyallup Indians the observance of the taboo is relaxed after several years, when the mourners have forgotten their grief; and if the deceased was a famous warrior, one of his descendants, for instance a great grandson, may be named after him. In this tribe the taboo is not much observed at any time except by the relations of the dead.⁶ Similarly the Jesuit missionary Lafitau tells us that the name of the departed and the similar names of the survivors were, so to say, buried with the corpse until, the poignancy of their grief being abated, it pleased the relations to "lift up the tree and raise the dead." By raising the dead they meant bestowing the name of the departed upon some one else, who thus became to all intents and purposes a reincarnation of the deceased, since on the principles of savage philosophy the name is a vital part, if not the soul, of the man. When Father

¹ G. Grey, *Journals of two Expeditions of Discovery*, ii. 231 sq.

² J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 42.

³ C. W. Schürmann, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 247.

⁴ Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, iii. 156.

⁵ Myron Eels, "The Twana, Chemakum, and Klallam Indians of Washington Territory," *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1887*, p. 656.

⁶ S. R. M'Caw, "Mortuary Customs of the Puyallups," *The American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal*, viii. (1886), p. 235.

Lafitau arrived at St. Louis to begin work among the Iroquois, his colleagues decided that in order to make a favourable impression on his flock the new shepherd should assume the native name of his deceased predecessor, Father Brüyas, "the celebrated missionary," who had lived many years among the Indians and enjoyed their high esteem. But Father Brüyas had been called from his earthly labours to his heavenly rest only four short months before, and it was too soon, in the phraseology of the Iroquois, to "raise up the tree." However, raised up it was in spite of them; and though some bolder spirits protested that their new pastor had wronged them by taking the name of his predecessor, "nevertheless," says Father Lafitau, "they did not fail to regard me as himself in another form (*un autre lui-même*), since I had entered into all his rights."¹ Among the Tartars in the Middle Ages the name of the dead might not be uttered till the third generation.²

In some cases the period during which the name of the deceased may not be pronounced seems to bear a close relation to the time during which his mortal remains may be supposed to still hold together. Thus, of some Indian tribes on the north-west coast of America it is said they may not speak the name of a dead person "until the bones are finally disposed of."³ Among the Narrinyeri of South Australia the name might not be uttered until the corpse had decayed.⁴ In the Encounter Bay tribe of the same country the dead body is dried over a fire, packed up in mats, and carried about for several months among the scenes which had been familiar to the deceased in his life. Next it is placed on a platform of sticks and left there till it has

¹ Lafitau, *Mœurs des Sauvages Américains*, ii. 434. On the custom of "raising up the dead" by giving their names to living persons, see *Relations des Jésuites*, 1642, pp. 53, 85 sq.; *id.*, 1644, p. 66 sq. Charlevoix merely says that the taboo on the names of the dead lasted "a certain time" (*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 109). "A good long while" is the phrase used by Captain Bourke in speaking of the same custom among the Apaches (*On the Border with*

Crook, p. 132).

² Plan de Carpin (de Plano Carpini). *Relation des Mongols ou Tartares*, ed. D'Avezac, cap. iii. § iii. The writer's statement ("*nec nomen proprium ejus usque ad tertiam generationem audet aliquis nominare*") is not very clear.

³ Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 248.

⁴ G. Taplin, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 19.

completely decayed, whereupon the next of kin takes the skull and uses it as a drinking-cup. After that the name of the departed may be uttered without offence. Were it pronounced sooner, his kinsmen would be deeply offended, and a war might be the result.¹ The rule that the name of the dead may not be spoken until his body has mouldered away seems to point to a belief that the spirit continues to exist only so long as the body does so, and that, when the material frame is dissolved, the spiritual part of the man perishes with it, or goes away, or at least becomes so feeble and incapable of mischief that his name may be bandied about with impunity.² This view is to some extent confirmed by the practice of the Arunta tribe in Central Australia. We have seen that among them no one may mention the name of the deceased during the period of mourning for fear of disturbing and annoying the ghost, who is believed to be walking about at large. Some of the relations of the dead man, it is true, such as his parents, elder brothers and sisters, paternal aunts, mother-in-law, and all his sons-in-law, whether actual or possible, are debarred all their lives from taking his name into their lips; but other people, including his wife, children, grandchildren, grandparents, younger brothers and sisters, and father-in-law, are free to name him so soon as he has ceased to walk the earth and hence to be dangerous. Some twelve or eighteen months after his death the people seem to think

¹ H. E. A. Meyer, in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 199.

² Some of the Indians of Guiana bring food and drink to their dead so long as the flesh remains on the bones; when it has mouldered away, they conclude that the man himself has departed. See A. Biet, *Voyage de la France Equinoxiale en l'Isle de Cayenne* (Paris, 1664), p. 392. The Alfoors of Central Celebes believe that the souls of the dead cannot enter the spirit-land until all the flesh has been removed from their bones; till that has been done, the gods (*lamoa*) in the other world could not bear the stench of the corpse. Accordingly at a great festival the bodies of all who have

died within a certain time are dug up and the decaying flesh scraped from the bones. See A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), pp. 26, 32 *sqq.* The Matacos Indians of the Grand Chaco believe that the soul of a dead man does not pass down into the nether world until his body is decomposed or burnt. See J. Pelleschi, *Los Indios Matacos* (Buenos Ayres, 1897), p. 102. These ideas perhaps explain the widespread custom of disinterring the dead after a certain time and disposing of their bones otherwise.

that the dead man has enjoyed his liberty long enough, and that it is time to confine his restless spirit within narrower bounds. Accordingly a grand battue or ghost-hunt brings the days of mourning to an end. The favourite haunt of the deceased is believed to be the burnt and deserted camp where he died. Here therefore on a certain day a band of men and women, the men armed with shields and spear-throwers, assemble and begin dancing round the charred and blackened remains of the camp, shouting and beating the air with their weapons and hands in order to drive away the lingering spirit from the spot he loves too well. When the dancing is over, the whole party proceed to the grave at a run, chasing the ghost before them. It is in vain that the unhappy ghost makes a last bid for freedom, and, breaking away from the beaters, doubles back towards the camp; the leader of the party is prepared for this manœuvre, and by making a long circuit adroitly cuts off the retreat of the fugitive. Finally, having run him to earth, they trample him down into the grave, dancing and stamping on the heaped-up soil, while with downward thrusts through the air they beat and force him underground. There, lying in his narrow house, flattened and prostrate under a load of earth, the poor ghost sees his widow wearing the gay feathers of the ring-neck parrot in her hair, and he knows that the time of her mourning for him is over. The loud shouts of the men and women show him that they are not to be frightened and bullied by him any more, and that he had better lie quiet. But he may still watch over his friends, and guard them from harm, and visit them in dreams.¹

When we see that in primitive society the names of mere commoners, whether alive or dead, are matters of such anxious care, we need not be surprised that great precautions should be taken to guard from harm the names of sacred kings and priests. Thus the name of the king of Dahomey is always kept secret, lest the knowledge of it should enable some evil-minded person to do him a mischief. The appellations by which the different kings of Dahomey have been known to Europeans are not their true

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 498-508.

names, but mere titles, or what the natives call "strong names" (*nyi-sese*). As a rule, these "strong names" are the first words of sentences descriptive of certain qualities. Thus Agaja, the name by which the fourth king of the dynasty was known, was part of a sentence meaning, "A spreading tree must be lopped before it can be cast into the fire"; and Tegnbesun, the name of the fifth king, formed the first word of a sentence which signified, "No one can take the cloth off the neck of a wild bull." The natives seem to think that no harm comes of such titles being known, since they are not, like the birth names, vitally connected with their owners.¹ In Siam it used to be difficult to ascertain the king's real name, since it was carefully kept secret from fear of sorcery; any one who mentioned it was clapped into gaol. The king might only be referred to under certain high-sounding titles, such as "the august," "the perfect," "the supreme," "the great emperor," "descendant of the angels," and so on.² In Burma it was accounted an impiety of the deepest dye to mention the name of the reigning sovereign; Burmese subjects, even when they were far from their country, could not be prevailed upon to do so.³ The proper name of the Emperor of China may neither be pronounced nor written by any of his subjects.⁴ Coreans are forbidden to utter the king's name, which, indeed, is seldom known.⁵ When a prince ascends the throne of Cambodia he ceases to be designated by his real name; and if that name happens to be a common word in the language, the word is often changed. Thus, for example, since the reign of King Ang Duong the word *duong*, which meant a small coin, has been replaced by *dom*.⁶ In the island of Sunda it is taboo to utter any word which coincides with the name of a prince or chief.⁷ The name of the rajah of Bolang Mongondo, a district in the west of Celebes, is never mentioned

¹ A. B. Ellis, *Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 98 sq.

² Loubere, *Du royaume de Siam* (Amsterdam, 1691), i. 306; Pallegoix, *Royaume Thai ou Siam*, i. 260.

³ J. S. Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders* (London, 1840), ii. 127, note 43.

⁴ J. Edkins, *Religion in China*²

(London, 1878), p. 35.

⁵ Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours* (London, 1898), i. 48.

⁶ E. Aymonier, *Notice sur le Cambodge* (Paris, 1875), p. 22.

⁷ K. F. Holle, "Snippers van den Regent van Galoeh," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvii. (1882), p. 101.

except in case of urgent necessity, and even then his pardon must be asked repeatedly before the liberty is taken.¹

Among the Zulus no man will mention the name of the chief of his tribe or the names of the progenitors of the chief, so far as he can remember them; nor will he utter common words which coincide with or merely resemble in sound tabooed names. "As, for instance, the Zungu tribe say *mata* for *manzi* (water), and *inkosta* for *tshanti* (grass), and *embi-gatdu* for *umkondo* (assegai), and *inyatugo* for *enhlela* (path), because their present chief is Umfan-o inhlela, his father was Manzini, his grandfather Imkondo, and one before him Tshani." In the tribe of the Dwandwes there was a chief called Langa, which means the sun; hence the name of the sun was changed from *langa* to *gala*, and so remains to this day, though Langa died more than a hundred years ago. Once more, in the Xnumayo tribe the word meaning "to herd cattle" was changed from *alusa* or *ayusa* to *kagesa*, because u-Mayusi was the name of the chief. Besides these taboos, which were observed by each tribe separately, all the Zulu tribes united in tabooing the name of the king who reigned over the whole nation. Hence, for example, when Panda was king of Zululand, the word for "a root of a tree," which is *impando*, was changed to *nxabo*. Again, the word for "lies" or "slander" was altered from *amacebo* to *amakwa*, because *amacebo* contains a syllable of the name of the famous King Cetchwayo. These substitutions are not, however, carried so far by the men as by the women, who omit every sound even remotely resembling one that occurs in a tabooed name. At the king's kraal, indeed, it is sometimes difficult to understand the speech of the royal wives, as they treat in this fashion the names not only of the king and his forefathers but even of his and their brothers back for generations. When to these tribal and national taboos we add those family taboos on the names of connections by marriage which have been already described,² we can easily understand how it comes about that in Zululand every tribe has words peculiar to itself, and that the women have a con-

¹ N. P. Wilken en J. A. Schwarz, "Allerlei over het land en volk van Bolaang Mongondou," *Mededeelingen*

van wege het Nederlandsche Zending-genootschap, xi. (1867), p. 356.

² Above, p. 413 sq.

In Madagascar a similar custom everywhere has resulted, as among the Zulus, in peculiar dialectic differences in the speech of the tribes. There are no family names in Madagascar, and a personal name is drawn from the language and signifies some common object or action or quality, such as a bird, a beast, a tree, a plant, a colour, and whenever one of these common words forms part of the name of the chief of the tribe, it may no longer be used in its ordinary sense, and the name of a tree, an insect, or what not, for the object must be invented to which it has been discarded. Often the new name is a descriptive epithet or a periphrasis. Thus when Radoa became queen in 1863 she took the name Rasoherina. Now *soherina* was the word for a moth, but having been assumed as the name of a chief it could no longer be applied to the insect, and she has been called *zany-dandy*, "offspring of a dandy," as if a chief had or took the name of an animal (*amboa*), and was known as Ramboa, the animal, and may be called by another name, probably a verb, such as "the barker" (*famovo*) or "the driver" (*droaka*), etc. In the western part of Imerina

chief called Andria-mamba; but *mamba* was one of the names of the crocodile, so the chief's subjects might not call the reptile by that name and were always scrupulous to use another. It is easy to conceive what confusion and uncertainty may thus be introduced into a language when it is spoken by many little local tribes each ruled by a petty chief with his own sacred name. Yet there are tribes and people who submit to this tyranny of words as their fathers did before them from time immemorial. The inconvenient results of the custom are especially marked on the western coast of the island, where, on account of the large number of independent chieftains, the names of things, places, and rivers have suffered so many changes that confusion often arises, for when once common words have been banned by the chiefs the natives will not acknowledge to have ever known them in their old sense.¹

The sanctity attributed to the persons of chiefs in Polynesia naturally extended also to their names, which on the primitive view are hardly separable from the personality of their owners. Hence in Polynesia we find the same systematic prohibition to utter the names of chiefs or of common words resembling them which we have already met with in Zululand and Madagascar. Thus in New Zealand the name of a chief is held so sacred that, when it happens to be a common word, it may not be used in the language, and another has to be found to replace it. For example, a chief to the southward of East Cape bore the name of Maripi, which signified a knife, hence a new word (*nekra*) for knife was introduced, and the old one became obsolete. Elsewhere the word for water (*wai*) had to be changed, because it chanced to be the name of the chief, and would have been desecrated by being applied to the vulgar fluid as well as to his sacred person. This taboo naturally produced a plentiful crop of synonyms in the Maori language, and travellers newly arrived in the country were sometimes puzzled at find-

¹ Tyerman and Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, ii. 525 sq.; J. Sibree, *The Great African Island*, p. 150 sq.; *id.*, "Curiosities of words connected with royalty and chieftainship," *Antananarivo Annual and*

Madagascar Magazine, No. xi. (Christmas 1887), p. 308 sq.; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1887), pp. 226 sqq.; A. Grandidier, "Les rites funéraires chez les Malagaches," *Revue d'Ethnographie*, v. (1886), p. 224.

native was obliged to adopt the new terms, for at to do so was punished with the greatest severity. a certain king named Tu came to the throne of T word *tu*, which means "to stand," was changed to "a star," became *fetia*; *tui*, "to strike," was turned and so on. Sometimes, as in these instances, the n were formed by merely changing or dropping some letters of the original words; in other cases the s terms were entirely different words, whether chosen similarity of meaning though not of sound, or adopted another dialect, or arbitrarily invented. But the cha introduced were only temporary; on the death of the new words fell into disuse, and the original ones were

In ancient Greece the names of the priests and high officials who had to do with the performance of Eleusinian mysteries might not be uttered in their To pronounce them was a legal offence. The p Lucian tells how he fell in with these august p haling along to the police court a ribald fellow dared to name them, though well he knew that e their consecration it was unlawful to do so, because become anonymous, having lost their old names and new and sacred titles.⁵ From two inscriptions

¹ J. S. Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders*, i. 37 sq., ² Vancouver, *Voyage of the North Pacific Ocean and*

Eleusis it appears that the names of the priests were committed to the depths of the sea;¹ probably they were engraved on tablets of bronze or lead, which were then thrown into deep water in the Gulf of Salamis. The intention doubtless was to keep the names a profound secret; and how could that be done more surely than by sinking them in the sea? what human vision could spy them glimmering far down in the dim depths of the green water? A clearer illustration of the confusion between the incorporeal and the corporeal, between the name and its material embodiment, could hardly be found than in this practice of civilised Greece. Nothing quite so primitive has met us among the superstitions cherished on the subject of names by the Zulus of Africa and the Maoris of New Zealand.

When the name is held to be a vital part of the person, it is natural to suppose that the mightier the person the more potent must be his name. Hence the names of supernatural beings, such as gods and spirits, are commonly believed to be endowed with marvellous virtues, and the mere utterance of them may work wonders and disturb the course of nature. For this reason the sacred books of the Mongols, which narrate the miraculous deeds of the divinities, are allowed to be read only in spring or summer; because at other seasons the reading of them would bring on tempests

Greek superstition was first brought to the notice of anthropologists by Mr. W. R. Paton in an interesting article, "The holy names of the Eleusinian priests," *International Folk-lore Congress, 1891, Papers and Transactions*, pp. 202-214. Compare E. Maass, *Orpheus* (Munich, 1895), p. 70.

¹ Kaibel, *Epigrammata Graeca ex lapidibus collecta*, No. 863; 'Εφηνεπὶς ἀρχαιολογικῇ, 1883, col. 79 sq. From the latter of these inscriptions we learn that the name might be made public after the priest's death. Further, a reference of Eunapius (*Vitae Sophistarum*, p. 475 of the Didot edition) shows that the name was revealed to the initiated. In the essay cited in the preceding note Mr. W. R. Paton assumes that it was the new and sacred

name which was kept secret and committed to the sea. The case is not clear, but both the evidence and the probability seem to me in favour of the view that it was rather the old everyday name of the priest or priestess which was put away at his or her consecration. If, as is not improbable, these sacred personages had to act the parts of gods and goddesses at the mysteries, it might well be deemed indecorous and even blasphemous to recall the vulgar names by which they had been known in the familiar intercourse of daily life. If our clergy, to suppose an analogous case, had to personate the most exalted beings of sacred history, it would surely be grossly irreverent to address them by their ordinary names during the performance of their solemn functions.

ployed as his guide and informant a liber of the tribe who had lived with America and seemed to be free from the superstition. "On one occasion," says Dr. Matthews, "of August, in the height of the rainy season study conversing with him. In an unguarded part, I led him into a discussion about people, and neither of us had noticed a heavy over the crest of the Zuñi mountains, close talking of Etsanatilehi, the goddess of the house was shaken by a terrific peal of thunder, once, pale and evidently agitated, and with 'Wait till Christmas ; they are angry,' he have seen many such evidences of the deep superstition on them."³ Other Indian tribes their mythic tales in winter, when the snow the ground and lakes and rivers are covered with ice ; for then the spirits underground cannot in which their names are made free with gathered round the fire.⁴

Among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia superstition about names has affected in a the social structure of the tribe. The different sets of names, one for use in winter

in summer. Their winter names are those which were given them at initiation by their guardian spirits, and as these spirits appear to their devotees only in winter, the names which they bestowed on the Indians may not be pronounced in summer. Conversely the summer names may not be used in winter. The change from summer to winter names takes place from the moment when the spirits are supposed to be present, and it involves a complete transformation of the social system; for whereas during summer the people are grouped in clans, in winter they are grouped in societies, each society consisting of all persons who have been initiated by the same spirit and have received from him the same magical powers. Thus among these Indians the fundamental constitution of society changes with the seasons: in summer it is organised on a basis of kin, in winter on a basis of spiritual affinity; for one half the year it is civil, for the other half religious.¹

Primitive man creates his gods in his own image. Xenophanes remarked long ago that the complexion of negro gods was black and their noses flat; that Thracian gods were ruddy and blue-eyed; and that if horses, oxen, and lions only believed in gods and had hands wherewith to portray them, they would doubtless fashion their deities in the form of horses, and oxen, and lions.² Hence just as the furtive savage conceals his real name because he fears that sorcerers might make an evil use of it, so he fancies that his gods must likewise keep their true names secret, lest other gods or even men should learn the mystic sounds and thus be able to conjure with them. Nowhere was this crude conception of the secrecy and magical virtue of the divine name more firmly held or more fully developed than in ancient Egypt, where the superstitions of a dateless past were embalmed in the hearts of the people hardly less effectually than the bodies of cats and crocodiles and the rest of the divine menagerie in their rock-cut tombs. The conception is well illustrated by a story which tells how the subtle Isis

¹ Fr. Boas, "The social organization and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, pp. 396, 418 *sq.*, 503, 504.

² Xenophanes, quoted by Eusebius, *Præparatio Evangelii*, xiii. 13, p. 269 *sq.*, ed. Heinichen, and by Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* vii. 4, p. 840 *sq.*, ed. Potter.

So Isis gathered up the spittle and then kneaded thereof a serpent and laid it in the great god passed every day to his doubtful heart's desire. And when he came forth, attended by all his company of gods, the serpent stung him, and the god opened his mouth and his cry went up to heaven. And the goddess said, "What aileth thee?" and the gods shouted. But he could not answer; his jaws rattled and the poison ran through his flesh as the Nile through the land. When the great god had stilled his followers, "Come to me, O my child," he said. "I am a prince, the son of a prince and a god. My father devised my name; my mother gave me my name, and it remains the same to this day, that no magician has power over me. I went out to behold the world, and lo! something stung me. What it was, I know not, whether it was fire or water? My heart is troubled, all my limbs do quake. Bring me help, O ye gods, with healing words and under your power reacheth to heaven." Then came Isis, the goddess of the gods, and they were very sorrowful. She used her craft, whose mouth is full of

created, and lo! a serpent that I saw not stung me. Is it fire? is it water? I am colder than water, I am hotter than fire, all my limbs sweat, I tremble, mine eye is not steadfast, I behold not the sky, the moisture bedeweth my face as in summer-time." Then spake Isis, "Tell me thy name, divine Father, for the man shall live who is called by his name." Then answered Ra, "I created the heavens and the earth, I ordered the mountains, I made the great and wide sea, I stretched out the two horizons like a curtain. I am he who openeth his eyes and it is light, and who shutteth them and it is dark. At his command the Nile riseth, but the gods know not his name. I am Khepera in the morning, I am Ra at noon, I am Tum at eve." But the poison was not taken away from him; it pierced deeper, and the great god could no longer walk. Then said Isis to him, "That was not thy name that thou spakest unto me. Oh tell it me, that the poison may depart; for he shall live whose name is named." Now the poison burned like fire, it was hotter than the flame of fire. The god said, "I consent that Isis shall search into me, and that my name shall pass from my breast into hers." Then the god hid himself from the gods, and his place in the ship of eternity was empty. Thus was the name of the great god taken from him, and Isis, the witch, spake, "Flow away poison, depart from Ra. It is I, even I, who overcome the poison and cast it to the earth; for the name of the great god hath been taken away from him. Let Ra live and let the poison die." Thus spake great Isis, the queen of the gods, she who knows Ra and his true name.¹

Thus we see that the real name of the god, with which his power was inextricably bound up, was supposed to be lodged, in an almost physical sense, somewhere in his breast, from which it could be extracted by a sort of surgical operation and transferred with all its supernatural powers to the breast of another. In Egypt attempts like that of Isis to

¹ A. Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, pp. 359-362; A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter*, pp. 29-32; G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, pp. 162-164; E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Dead* (London, 1895), pp.

lxxxix.-xci.; *id.*, *Egyptian Magic*, p. 136 sqq. The abridged form of the story given in the text is based on a comparison of these various versions, of which Erman's is slightly, and Maspero's much curtailed. Mr. Budge's version is reproduced by Mr. E. Clodd (*Tom Tit Tot*, p. 180 sqq.).

weakness or forgetfulness had imparted to wondrous lore, the deity had no choice humbly to the man or pay the penalty of In one papyrus we find the god Typhon th invoke thee by thy true names, in virtue of w not refuse to hear me"; and in another the ma Osiris that if the god does not do his bidding him aloud in the port of Busiris.³ In mo magician still works his old enchantment ancient means; only the name of the god by jures is different. The man who knows "name" of God can, we are told, by the mere kill the living, raise the dead, transport h wherever he pleases, and perform any other r

The belief in the magic virtue of div shared by the Romans. When they sat down the priests addressed the guardian deity of set form of prayer or incantation, inviting h the beleaguered city and come over to the would treat him as well as or better than been treated in his old home. Hence the guardian deity of Rome was kept a profound enemies of the republic might lure him aw Romans themselves had induced many gods

rats, the falling fortunes of cities that had sheltered them in happier days.¹

If the reader has had the patience to follow this long and perhaps tedious examination of the superstitions attaching to personal names, he will probably agree that the mystery in which the names of royal personages are so often shrouded is no isolated phenomenon, no arbitrary expression of courtly servility and adulation, but merely the particular application of a general law of primitive thought, which includes within its scope common folk and gods as well as kings and priests.

It would be easy to extend the list of royal and priestly taboos, but the above may suffice as specimens. To conclude this part of our subject it only remains to state summarily the general conclusions to which our inquiries have thus far conducted us. We have seen that in savage or barbarous society there are often found men to whom the superstition of their fellows ascribes a controlling influence over the general course of nature. Such men are accordingly adored and treated as gods. Whether these human divinities also hold temporal sway over the lives and fortunes of their adorers, or whether their functions are purely spiritual and supernatural, in other words, whether they are kings as well as gods or only the latter, is a distinction which hardly concerns us here. Their supposed divinity is the essential fact with which we have to deal. In virtue of it they are a pledge and guarantee to their worshippers of the continuance and orderly succession of those physical phenomena upon which mankind depends for subsistence. Naturally, therefore, the life and health of such a god-man are matters of anxious concern to the people whose welfare and even existence are bound up with his; naturally he is constrained by them to conform to such rules as the wit of early man has devised for averting the ills to which flesh is heir, includ-

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 18; Macrobius, *Saturn.* iii. 9; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 351; Plutarch, *Quæst. Rom.* 61. According to Servius (*loc.*) it was forbidden by the pontifical law to mention any Roman god by his proper name, lest it should be pro-

faned. The city of Rome itself had, we are told, a secret name which it was unlawful to divulge (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* iii. 65; Macrobius, *loc.*; Joannes Lydus, *De Mensuris*, iv. 50, p. 85, ed. Bekker).

philosophers elaborated long ago, and w
chimney corners still impart as treasure
their descendants gathered round the cot
evenings—all these antique fancies clust
webs of the brain were spun about the pa
the human god, who, immeshed in the
toils of a spider, could hardly stir a limit
custom, "light as air but strong as li
crossing and recrossing each other in an e
him fast within a network of observances
or deposition alone could release him.

Thus to students of the past the life
and priests teems with instruction. In
all that passed for wisdom when the wor
was the perfect pattern after which ev
shape his life ; a faultless model constru
accuracy upon the lines laid down by a bar
Crude and false as that philosophy may se
be unjust to deny it the merit of logical c
ing from a conception of the vital princip
or soul existing in, but distinct and se
living being, it deduces for the practical
system of rules which in general hangs
forms a fairly complete and harmonious w
and it is a fatal one—of the system lies n

be ungrateful as well as unphilosophical. We stand upon the foundation reared by the generations that have gone before, and we can but dimly realise the painful and prolonged efforts which it has cost humanity to struggle up to the point, no very exalted one after all, which we have reached. Our gratitude is due to the nameless and forgotten toilers, whose patient thought and active exertions have largely made us what we are. The amount of new knowledge which one age, certainly which one man, can add to the common store is small, and it argues stupidity or dishonesty, besides ingratitude, to ignore the heap while vaunting the few grains which it may have been our privilege to add to it. There is indeed little danger at present of undervaluing the contributions which modern times and even classical antiquity have made to the general advancement of our race. But when we pass these limits, the case is different. Contempt and ridicule or abhorrence and denunciation are too often the only recognition vouchsafed to the savage and his ways. Yet of the benefactors whom we are bound thankfully to commemorate, many, perhaps most, were savages. For when all is said and done our resemblances to the savage are still far more numerous than our differences from him; and what we have in common with him, and deliberately retain as true and useful, we owe to our savage forefathers who slowly acquired by experience and transmitted to us by inheritance those seemingly fundamental ideas which we are apt to regard as original and intuitive. We are like heirs to a fortune which has been handed down for so many ages that the memory of those who built it up is lost, and its possessors for the time being regard it as having been an original and unalterable possession of their race since the beginning of the world. But reflection and inquiry should satisfy us that to our predecessors we are indebted for much of what we thought most our own, and that their errors were not wilful extravagances or the ravings of insanity, but simply hypotheses, justifiable as such at the time when they were propounded, but which a fuller experience has proved to be inadequate. It is only by the successive testing of hypotheses and rejection of the false that truth is at last elicited. After all,

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NOTE A

TABOOS ON COMMON WORDS

IN the text I have examined some of the cases in which, from motives of superstition, personal names are not allowed to be used freely in ordinary discourse. Such cases are closely akin to the instances in which a similar taboo is laid on common words, all the more so because, as we have already seen, personal names are themselves very often common words of the language, so that an embargo laid upon them necessarily extends to many expressions current in the commerce of daily life. It may be convenient, therefore, for the sake of comparison to subjoin some examples of the widespread custom which forbids certain persons at certain times to make use of the ordinary words for common objects, and constrains them consequently either to abstain from mentioning these objects altogether, or to designate them by special terms reserved for these occasions. I shall make no attempt to subject the examples to a searching analysis or a rigid classification, but will set them down as they come in a rough geographical order. And since my native land furnishes as apt instances of the superstition as any other, we may start on our round from Scotland.

In the Atlantic Ocean, about six leagues to the west of Gallon Head in the Lewis, lies a small group of rocky islets known as the Flannan Islands. Sheep and wild fowl are now their only inhabitants, but remains of what are described as Druidical temples and the title of the Sacred Isles given them by Buchanan suggest that in days gone by piety or superstition may have found a safe retreat from the turmoil of the world in these remote solitudes, where the dashing of the waves and the strident scream of the sea-birds are almost the only sounds that break the silence. Once a year, in summer-time, the inhabitants of the adjacent lands of the Lewis, who have a right to these islands, cross over to them to fleece their sheep and kill the wild fowl for the sake both of their flesh and their feathers. They regard the islands as invested with a certain sanctity, and have been heard to say that none ever yet landed in them but found himself more disposed to devotion there than any-

before they begin fowling. On the first day the first
 as they advance towards the chapel on their knees
 said as they go round the chapel; and the third is
 by the ruins. They also pray thrice every evening,
 unlawful to kill a fowl after evening prayers, as al
 at any time with a stone. Another ancient custom f
 to carry home in the boat any suet of the sheep th
 the islands, however many they may kill. But wh
 concerns us is that so long as they stay on the i
 strictly forbidden to use certain common words, and
 substitute others for them. Thus it is absolutely
 the island of St. Kilda, which lies thirty leagues to
 by its proper Gaelic name of Hirt; they must call it
 country." They may not so much as once name the i
 they are fowling by the ordinary name of Flannan; t
 only of "the country." "There are several other thing
 be called by their proper names: *e.g.* *visk*, which i
 of the natives signifies water, they call burn; a rock
 language is *crag*, must here be called *cruey*, *i.e.* hard
 language expressed by *claddach*, must here be called *z*
 sour in their language is expressed *gort*, but must
gaire, *i.e.* sharp; slippery, which is expressed *bog*, *i*
 soft; and several other things to this purpose."¹
 fishermen are at sea, they employ a nomenclature
 occasion, and hardly anything may be mentioned by
 The substituted terms are mostly of Norwegian
 Norway men were reported to be good fishers.² For
 their lines the Shetland fishermen are bound to
 objects only by some special words or phrases. T

devil is *da auld chield*, *da sorrow*, *da ill-healt* (health), or *da black tief*; a cat is *kirser*, *fitting*, *vengla*, or *foodin*.¹ On the north-east coast of Scotland there are some villages, of which the inhabitants never pronounce certain words and family names when they are at sea; each village has its peculiar aversion to one or more of these words, among which are "minister," "kirk," "swine," "salmon," "trout," and "dog." * When a church has to be referred to, as often happens, since some of the churches serve as landmarks to the fishermen at sea, it is spoken of as the "bell-hoose" instead of the "kirk." A minister is called "the man wi' the black quyte." It is particularly unlucky to utter the word "sow" or "swine" or "pig" while the line is being baited; if any one is foolish enough to do so, the line is sure to be lost. In some villages on the coast of Fife a fisherman who hears the ill-omened word spoken will cry out "Cold iron." In the village of Buckie there are some family names, especially Ross, and in a less degree Coull, which no fisherman will pronounce. If one of these names be mentioned in the hearing of a fisherman, he spits or, as he calls it, "chiffs." Any one who bears the dreaded name is called a "chiffer-oot," and is referred to only by a circumlocution such as "The man it diz so in so," or "the laad it lives at such and such a place." During the herring-season men who are unlucky enough to inherit the tabooed names have little chance of being hired in the fishing-boats; and sometimes, if they have been hired before their names were known, they have been refused their wages at the end of the season, because the boat in which they sailed had not been successful, and the bad luck was set down to their presence in it.² Although in Scotland superstitions of this kind appear to be specially incident to the callings of fishermen and fowlers, other occupations are not exempt from them. Thus in the Outer Hebrides the fire of a kiln is not called fire (*teine*) but *aingeal*. Such a fire, it is said, is a dangerous thing, and ought not to be referred to except by a euphemism. "Evil be to him who called it fire or who named fire in the kiln. It was considered the next thing to setting it on fire."³ Again, in some districts of Scotland a brewer would have resented the use of the word "water" in reference to the work in which he was engaged. "Water be your part of it," was the common retort. It was supposed that the use of the word would spoil the brewing.⁴

Manx fishermen think it unlucky to mention a horse or a mouse on board a fishing-boat.⁵ The fishermen of Dieppe on board their

¹ Ch. Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland*, iii. 218.

² W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, pp. 199-201.

³ "Traditions, customs, and superstitions of the Lewis," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 170; Miss A. Goodrich-

Freer, "The powers of evil in the Outer Hebrides," *Folk-lore*, x. (1899), p. 265.

⁴ J. Mackenzie, *Ten Years north of the Orange River*, p. 151, note 1.

⁵ J. Rhys, "Manx folk-lore and superstitions," *Folk-lore*, iii. (1892), p. 84.

any time if you would be spared by the wolves you
 their name at this time.⁵ In Mecklenburg peo-
 they to name a wolf on one of these days the ar-
 A shepherd would rather mention the devil th-
 season; and we read of a farmer who had a bail
 did not dare to call the man by his name betw-
 Twelfth Night, referring to him instead as F-
 Monster). In Quatzow, a village of Mecklenbu-
 animals whose common names are disused a-
 replaced by others: thus a fox is called "long-
 "leg-runner" (*Boenlöper*). Any person who dis-
 has to pay a fine.⁶ In the Mark of Branden-
 between Christmas and Twelfth Night you sh-
 mice as mice but as *dinger*; otherwise the field-n-
 excessively.⁷ According to the Swedish popular l-
 tain animals which should never be spoken of by
 but must always be signified by euphemisms and
 their character. Thus, if you speak slightly of
 you must be sure not to mention her name; for
 hellish crew, and is a friend of the mountain tre-
 visits. Great caution is also needed in talking
 owl, and the magpie, for they are birds of witch-
 be called "blue-foot," or "he that goes in the for-

¹ A. Bosquet, *La Normandie roman-
 esque et merveilleuse* (Paris and Rouen,
 1845), p. 308.

² J. G. Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*,
 ii. 277.

³ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde
 des Königreichs Bayern*. ii. 202.

turn on his back
 weather. See Jan-
 son Indians of
*Memoirs of the
 Natural History*
 1900), p. 374.

⁶ W. Witzsch.

"the long-bodied," mice "the small grey," and the seal "brother Lars." Swedish herd-girls, again, believe that if the wolf and the bear be called by other than their proper and legitimate names, they will not attack the herd. Hence they give these brutes names which they fancy will not hurt their feelings. The number of endearing appellations lavished by them on the wolf is legion; they call him "golden tooth," "the silent one," "grey legs," and so on; while the bear is referred to by the respectful titles of "the old man," "grandfather," "twelve men's strength," "golden feet," and more of the same sort. Even inanimate things are not always to be called by their usual names. For instance, fire is sometimes to be called "heat" (*hetta*), not *eld* or *ell*; water for brewing must be called *lag* or *löu*, not *vatu*, else the beer would not turn out so well.¹ The Lapps fear to call the bear by his true name, lest he should ravage their herds; so they speak of him as "the old man with the coat of skin," and in cooking his flesh to furnish a meal they may not refer to the work they are engaged in as "cooking," but must designate it by a special term.² The Finns speak of the bear as "the apple of the wood," "beautiful honey-paw," "the pride of the thicket," "the old man," and so on.³ And in general a Finnish hunter thinks that he will have poor sport if he calls animals by their real names; the beasts resent it. The fox and the hare are only spoken of as "game," and the lynx is termed "the forest cat," lest it should devour the sheep.⁴ Estonian peasants are very loth to mention wild beasts by their proper names, for they believe that the creatures will not do so much harm if only they are called by other names than their own. Hence they speak of the bear as "broad foot" and the wolf as "grey coat."⁵ The Kamtchatkans reverence the whale, the bear, and the wolf from fear, and never mention their names when they meet them, believing that they understand human speech.⁶ Further, they think that mice also understand the Kamtchatkan language; so in autumn, when they rob the field-mice of the bulbs which these little creatures have laid up in their burrows as a store against winter, they call everything by names different from the ordinary ones, lest the mice should know what they were saying. Moreover, they leave odds and ends, such as old rags, broken needles, cedar-nuts, and so forth, in the burrows to make the mice think that the transaction has been not a robbery

¹ B. Thorpe, *Northern Mythology*, ii. 83 sq.; L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 251.

² C. Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae eorumque lingua, vita, et religione pristina commentatio* (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 502 sq.

³ Castren, *Vorlesungen über die finnische Mythologie*, p. 201.

⁴ Varonen, reported by Hon. J. Abercromby in *Folk-lore*, ii. (1891), p. 245 sq.

⁵ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Elsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 120.

⁶ G. W. Steller, *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, p. 276.

... says, "he is not there"; for if he were to say the lion would eat him up.² The negroes of Angol word *ngana* ("sir") in speaking of the same noble they think that he is "fetish" and would not fail for disrespect if they omitted to do so.³ Bushmen both deem it unlucky to speak of the lion by his proper name. The Bechuanas call him "the boy with the beard."⁴ A man who used to inhabit a lake in Madagascar, entertained a strong aversion to salt, so that whenever the thing was a lake in which he resided it had to be called by another name, which would all have been dissolved and lost. The person inspired had to veil their references to the obnoxious thing in the disguise of "sweet peppers."⁵

In India the animals whose names are most common are the snake and the tiger, but the same tribute of respect is paid to other beasts also. Sayids and Mussulmans of high rank in India say that you should never call a snake by its proper name, but always describe it either as a tiger (*sher*) or a striped snake (*shir*). In Telingana the euphemistic name for a snake, which is commonly employed, is worm or insect (*purugu*); if you call it by its proper name, the creature will haunt you for some time, or bite you at the first opportunity.⁷ Ignorant Bengalis never mention a snake or a thief by their proper names, but fear that one or other might appear. When they allude to a serpent, they call it "the creeping thing"; when they allude to a thief, they say "the unwelcome visitor."⁸ Other

¹ Steller, *op. cit.* p. 91; compare *Philosophical Institute*, xvi. pp. 129, 130.

² Certeux et Carnoy, *op. cit.* p. 111. ³ J. Sibree, *The*

for the snake in Northern India are "maternal uncle" and "rope." They say that if a snake bites you, you should not mention its name, but merely observe "A rope has touched me."¹ Natives of Travancore are careful not to speak disrespectfully of serpents. A cobra is called "the good lord" (*nalla tambiran*) or "the good snake" (*nalla pambu*). While the Malayalies of the Shervaray Hills are hunting the tiger, they speak of the beast only as "the dog."² The Canarese of Southern India call the tiger either "the dog" or "the jackal"; they think that if they called him by his proper name, he would be sure to carry off one of them.³ The jungle people of Northern India, who meet the tiger in his native haunts, will not pronounce his name, but speak of him as "the jackal" (*gidar*), or "the beast" (*janwar*), or use some other euphemistic term. In some places they treat the wolf and the bear in the same fashion.⁴ The Pankas of South Mirzapur will not name the tiger, bear, camel, or donkey by their proper names; the camel they call "long neck." Other tribes of the same district only scruple to mention certain animals in the morning. Thus, the Kharwars, a Dravidian tribe, will not name a pig, squirrel, hare, jackal, bear, monkey, or donkey in the morning hours; if they have to allude to these animals at that time, they call them by special names. For instance, they call the hare "the footed one" or "he that hides in the rocks"; while they speak of the bear as *jigariya*, which being interpreted means "he with the liver of compassion." If the Bhuiyars are absolutely obliged to refer to a monkey or a bear in the morning, they speak of the monkey as "the tree-climber" and the bear as "the eater of white ants." They would not mention a crocodile. Among the Pataris the matutinal title of the bear is "the hairy creature."⁵ The Kols, a Dravidian race of Northern India, will not speak of death or beasts of prey by their proper names in the morning. Their name for the tiger at that time of day is "he with the teeth," and for the elephant "he with the claws."⁶

In Annam the fear inspired by tigers, elephants, and other wild animals induces the people to address these creatures with the greatest respect as "lord" or "grandfather," lest the beasts should take umbrage and attack them.⁷ In Laos, while a man is out

¹ W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 275.

² S. Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, p. 320 sq.

³ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, v. p. 133, § 372.

⁴ W. Crooke, *op. cit.* p. 321.

⁵ W. Crooke in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 70. § 579; *id.*

Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, iii. 249; *id.*, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 218.

⁶ W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iii. 314.

⁷ Mouhot, *Travels in the Central Parts of Indo-China*, i. 263 sq.

... morning together, and during the whole of
 use of the ordinary Malay language is forbidden to
 have to speak a special language called by them
 (camphor language) or *pantang¹ kapur*. Indeed not
 searchers to employ this peculiar language, but even
 women who stay at home in the villages are obliged
 while the others are away looking for the camphor.
 that a spirit presides over the camphor-trees, and the
 pitying him they could not obtain the precious
 failed to employ the camphor language, they think it
 have great difficulty in finding the camphor-trees,
 when they did find them the camphor would not yield
 the collector. The camphor language consists in
 words which are either Malayan or of Malay origin
 contains many words which are not Malayan but are
 be remains of the original Jakun dialects now almost extinct
 districts. The words derived from Malayan are for
 cases by merely substituting a descriptive phrase for
 term. Thus instead of rice they say "grass fruit";
 they say "far sounding"; the epithet "short-legged"
 for hog; hair is referred to as "leaves," and so on
 when the Kayans of Borneo are searching for camphor
 language invented solely for their use at this time.
 itself is never mentioned by its proper name, but is referred
 to as "the thing that smells"; and all the tools employed
 in the drug receive fanciful names. Unless they can

¹ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos*, *Taal-Land-en-Volken-landsch-Indië*, xxxix. p. 113.

² *Id.*, "Les Tchames et leurs..."

rule they suppose that the camphor crystals, which are found only in the crevices of the wood, will elude them.¹ In the western states of the Malay Peninsula the chief industry is tin-mining, and odd ideas prevail among the natives as to the nature and properties of the ore. They regard it as alive and growing, sometimes in the shape of a buffalo, which makes its way from place to place underground. Ore of inferior quality is excused on the score of its tender years; it will no doubt improve as it grows older. Not only is the tin believed to be under the protection and command of certain spirits who must be propitiated, but it is even supposed to have its own special likes and dislikes for certain persons and things. Hence the Malays deem it advisable to treat tin ore with respect, to consult its convenience, nay, to conduct the business of mining in such a way that the ore may, as it were, be extracted without its own knowledge. When such are their ideas about the mineral it is no wonder that the miners scruple to employ certain words in the mines, and replace them by others which are less likely to give offence to the ore or its guardian spirits. Thus, for example, the elephant must not be called an elephant but "the tall one who turns himself about"; and in like manner special words, different from those in common use, are employed by the miners to designate the cat, the buffalo, the snake, the centipede, tin sand, metallic tin, and lemons. Lemons are particularly distasteful to the spirits; they may not be brought into the mines.² Again, the Malay wizard, who is engaged in snaring pigeons with the help of a decoy-bird and a calling-tube, must on no account call things by their common names. The tiny conical hut, in which he sits waiting for the wild pigeons to come fluttering about him, goes by the high-sounding name of the Magic Prince, perhaps with a delicate allusion to its noble inmate. The calling-tube is known as Prince Distraction, doubtless on account of the extraordinary fascination it exercises on the birds. The decoy-pigeon receives the name of the Squatting Princess, and the rod with a noose at the end of it, which serves to catch the unwary birds, is disguised under the title of Prince Invitation. Everything, in fact, is on a princely scale, so far at least as words can make it so. The very nooses destined to be slipped over the necks or legs of the little struggling prisoners are dignified by the title of King Solomon's necklaces and armlets; and the trap into which the birds are invited to walk is variously described as King Solomon's Audience Chamber, or a Palace Tower, or an Ivory Hall carpeted

¹ W. H. Furness, *Folk-lore in Borneo* (Wallingford, Pennsylvania, 1899: privately printed), p. 27. A special language is also used in the search for camphor by some of the natives of Sumatra. See Th. A. L. Heyting, "Beschrijving der onder-afdeeling

Groot-Mandeling en Batang-Natal," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, xiv. (1897), p. 276.

² W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 250, 253-260.

the spirits of the tin-mines in I
sula. Tin, ivory, and the like, may not be brought
the scene of their operations, for at the scent of
spirits of the mine would cause the gold to vanish.
reason it is forbidden to refer to certain things
names, and in speaking of them the miners must
In some cases, for example in removing the grain
deep silence must be observed; no commands or
questions asked,³ probably because the removal
metal is regarded as a theft which the spirits would
caught the thieves in the act. Certainly the Dyak
gold has a soul which seeks to avenge itself on the
precious metal. But the angry spirit is powerless
who observe certain precautions, such as never to
with their faces turned up stream, never to sit with the
and never to tie up their hair.⁴ Again, a Sumatran
there is a tiger or a crocodile in his neighbourhood,
animal by the honourable title of "grandfather" for
propitiating the creature.⁵ So long as the hunting
natives of Nias may not name the eye, the hammer
some places the sun by their true names; no smith
trade in the village, and no person may go from
another to have smith's work done for him. All
exception of the rule about not naming the eye is
done to prevent the dogs from growing stiff, and so
of running down the game.⁶ During the rice-harv

¹ W. W. Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 139 *sq.*

² W. W. Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 192 *sq.*

³ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het ani-
misme bij den Dyak."

⁴ Nieuwenhuisen

"Verslag omtrent

Verhandelingen van

reapers seldom speak to each other, and when they do so, it is only in whispers. Outside the field they must speak of everything by names different from those in common use, which gives rise to a special dialect or jargon known as "field speech." It has been observed that some of the words in this jargon resemble words in the language of the Battas of Sumatra.¹ The Alfoors of Poso, in Celebes, are forbidden by custom to speak the ordinary language when they are at work in the harvest-field. At such times they employ a secret language which is said to agree with the ordinary one only in this, that in it some things are designated by words usually applied in a different sense, or by descriptive phrases or circumlocutions. Thus instead of "run" they say "limp"; instead of "hand" they say "that with which one reaches"; instead of "foot" they say "that with which one limps"; and instead of "ear" they say "that with which one hears." Again, in the field-speech "to drink" becomes "to thrust forward the mouth"; "to pass by" is expressed by "to nod with the head"; a gun is "a fire-producer"; and wood is "that which is carried on the shoulder." The writer who reports the custom adds that the reason of it is not far to seek. It is thought, he says, that the evil spirits understand ordinary human speech, and that therefore its use in the harvest-field would attract their attention to the ripe rice, and they might wantonly destroy it. Beginning with a rule of avoiding a certain number of common words, the custom has grown among people of the Malay stock till it has produced a complete language for use in the fields. In Minahassa also this secret field-speech consists in part of phrases or circumlocutions, of which many are said to be very poetical; and here, too, it is used to keep the evil spirits in the dark as to the intentions of the speakers.² When a Bugineese or Macassar man is at sea and sailing past a place which he believes to be haunted by evil spirits, he keeps as quiet as he can; but if he is obliged to speak he designates common things and actions, such as water, wind, fire, cooking, eating, the rice-pot, etc., by peculiar terms which are neither Bugineese nor Macassar, and therefore cannot be understood by the evil spirits, whose knowledge of languages is limited to these two tongues.³ Natives of the island of Saleyer, which lies off the south coast of Celebes, will not mention the name of their island

eiland Nias," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkskunde*, xxvi. (1880), p. 275.

¹ L. N. H. A. Chatelin, "Godsdienst en bijgeloof der Niassers," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkskunde*, xxvi. (1880), p. 165; H. Sundermann, "Die Insel Nias und die Mission daselbst," *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, xi. (1884), p. 349; E.

Modigliani, *Un Viaggio a Nias*, p. 593.

² A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van zegen het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), pp. 146-148.

³ B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes*, p. 107.

at distant objects or to name them while they are sailing with a crew of Ternate men a European gave them the name of certain small islands which the man had been talkative before, but the quest to silence. "Sir," he said, "that is a great taboo; should at once have wind and tide against us, and great calamity. As soon as we come to anchor I name of the islands." The Sangi Islanders have an ordinary language, an ancient one which is only preserved by some of the people. This old language is often used at sea, as well as in popular songs and certain prayers. The reason for resorting to it on shipboard is to avoid spirits from overhearing and so frustrating the plans. In some parts of Sunda it is taboo or forbidden to call a goat; it must be called a "deer under the house." A tiger must not be spoken of as a tiger; he must be referred to as a "supple one," "the one there," "the honourable one," and so on. Neither a wild boar nor a mouse is mentioned by its proper name; a boar must be called "one" (masculine) and the mouse "the beautiful one." When the people are asked what would be the result of breaking a taboo, they generally say that they would suffer for it, either by meeting with a mishap or illness. But some say they do not so much fear a punishment as experience an indefinite feeling, half fear, half reverence, in the institution of their forefathers. Others can assign no reason for observing the taboos, and cut inquiry short by saying

¹ H. E. D. Engelhard, "Mededeelingen over de Volkskunde van de Molukken."

because it is so."¹ When small-pox invades a village of the Saka-rang Dyaks in Borneo, the people desert the place and take refuge in the jungle. In the daytime they do not dare to stir or to speak above a whisper, lest the spirits should see or hear them. They do not call the small-pox by its proper name, but speak of it as "jungle leaves" or "fruit" or "the chief," and ask the sufferer, "Has he left you?" and the question is put in a whisper lest the spirit should hear.² Natives of the Philippine Islands were formerly prohibited from naming the land when they were at sea, and from speaking of water when they were journeying by land.³

When we survey the instances of this superstition which have now been enumerated, we can hardly fail to be struck by the number of cases in which a fear of spirits, or of other beings regarded as spiritual and intelligent, is assigned as the reason for abstaining in certain circumstances from the use of certain words. The speaker imagines himself to be overheard and understood by spirits, or animals, or other beings whom his fancy endows with human intelligence; and hence he avoids certain words and substitutes others in their stead, either from a desire to soothe and propitiate these beings by speaking well of them, or from a dread that they may understand his speech and know what he is about, when he happens to be engaged in that which, if they knew of it, would excite their anger or their fear. Hence the substituted terms fall into two classes according as they are complimentary or enigmatic; and these expressions are employed, according to circumstances, for different and even opposite reasons, the complimentary because they will be understood and appreciated, and the enigmatic because they will not. We can now see why persons engaged in occupations like fishing, fowling, hunting, mining, reaping, and sailing the sea, should abstain from the use of the common language and veil their meaning in dark phrases and strange words. For they have this in common that all of them are encroaching on the domain of the elemental beings, the creatures who, whether visible or invisible, whether clothed in fur or scales or feathers, whether manifesting themselves in tree or stone or running stream or breaking wave, or hovering unseen in the air, may be thought to have the first right to those regions of earth and sea and sky into which man intrudes only to plunder and destroy. Thus deeply imbued with a sense of the all-pervading life and intelligence of nature, man at a certain stage of his intellectual development cannot but be visited with fear or compunction, whether he is killing wild fowl among the stormy

¹ K. F. Holle, "Snippers van den Regent van Galoeh," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvii. (1882), p. 101 sq.

² Ch. Brooke, *Ten Years in Sarawak*

(London, 1866), i. 208; Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 71 sq.

³ J. Mallat, *Les Philippines* (Paris, 1846), i. 64.

guarding his lips, that, though his dark ambiguous words are understood well enough by his fellows, they are wholly unknown to his victims. He pretends to be what he is not, and does something quite different from the real business in hand. For example, a fowler catching pigeons in the name of the Magic Prince or King Solomon himself¹ inviting them into his palace tower or ivory hall. Such childish pretence to cheat the guileless creatures whom the savage intends to kill, perhaps they even impose to some extent upon him. He can hardly dis sever them wholly from those forms of magic in which primitive man seeks to effect his purpose, in getting the thing he desires to produce, or even by assimilating to it. It is hard indeed for us to realise the mental state of a wizard masquerading before wild pigeons in the character of King Solomon; yet perhaps the make-believe of children and the actors where we see the players daily forgetting their real selves in the passionate impersonation of the shadowy realm of fancy give us some glimpse into the workings of that instinct of mimicry which is deeply implanted in the constitution of the human mind.

¹ The character of King Solomon appears to be a favourite one with the Malay sorcerer when he desires to ingratiate himself with or lord it over the powers of nature. Thus, for example, in addressing silver ore the sage observes:—

“ If you do not come hither at this very moment

You shall be a rebel unto me,
And a rebel unto God’s
nion.

For I am God’s Prophet

See W. W. Skeat, *Malay*

No doubt the fame of King Solomon
earned for the Hebrew
distinction among the
of the East.

ADDENDA

Pp. 31 *sq.*, 33 *sq.*—Similarly among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia, "while the men were on the war-path, the women performed dances at frequent intervals. These dances were believed to secure the success of the expedition. The dancers flourished their knives, threw long sharp-pointed sticks forward, or drew sticks with hooked ends repeatedly backward and forward. Throwing the sticks forward was symbolic of piercing or fighting off the supposed enemy, and drawing them back was symbolic of drawing their men from danger. The stick with the hooked end was the one supposed to be the best adapted for this latter purpose. The women always pointed their weapons toward the enemy's country. They painted their faces red, and sang while dancing, and supplicated the weapons of war to preserve their husbands, and help them kill many enemies. Some had eagle-down stuck on the points of their sticks. When the dance was at an end these weapons were hidden. If a woman had a husband in the war-party, and she thought she saw hair or part of a scalp on the weapon when taking it out, she knew that her husband had killed an enemy. If she thought she saw blood on the weapon, it was a sign that her husband had been wounded or killed" (James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. i. part iv. (April 1900), p. 356).

Pp. 51-53.—Among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia, "when a child lost its teeth, each one, as it fell out, was taken by the father and stuck into a piece of raw deer-flesh until out of sight. This was then given to a dog, who of course swallowed it whole" (James Teit, *op. cit.* p. 308). The writer who describes this custom was unable to ascertain the reason for it. We may conjecture that on the principles of sympathetic magic it was intended to make the child's new teeth as strong as a dog's. In West Sussex some thirty years ago a maid-servant "remonstrated strongly against the throwing away of the cast teeth of children,

to grow straight, and close, and strong. "The sun," said
"gave the lad from his own nursery-ground a tooth like
white and polished" (Rasmussen, *Addimenta ad historiam
ante Islamismum*, p. 64). Thus the reason for throwing
teeth towards the sun would seem to have been a notion
the sun sends the hail, from which it naturally follows that
you a tooth as white and smooth as a hail-stone.

P. 91.—Among the Thompson River Indian
Columbia the same power of making good or bad
attributed to twins. They are supposed to be endowed
faculty by the grisly bear, whose special protection they
James Teit, *op. cit.* p. 310 sq.

P. 256.—The rule not to fall asleep immediately
after a death has taken place in it, which
by the Aru Islanders, was observed also by the Thompson
Indians of British Columbia, and for the same reason.
After death has been announced, friends and neighbours
gathered at the house of the deceased and remained there as guests
until the burial. "During this time they must not sleep, else
they would be drawn away by the ghost of the deceased
guardian spirit" (James Teit, *op. cit.* p. 327).

P. 269 sq.—Among the Thompson River Indian
Columbia "the soul is supposed to leave the body
from the frontal fontanelle. Shamans can see it before and
after it leaves the body, but lose sight of it when it gets
toward the world of the souls. Therefore, when a person

graveyards, and almost always finds it in one of them. Sometimes he succeeds in heading off the departing soul by using a shorter trail to the land of the souls. Shamans can stay for only a very short time in that country. The shaman generally makes himself invisible when he goes to the spirit-land. He captures the soul he wants just upon its arrival, and runs away with it, carrying it in his hands. The other souls chase him; but he stamps his foot, on which he wears a rattle made of deer's hoofs. As soon as the souls hear the noise, they retreat, and he hurries on. When they overtake him once more, he stamps his foot again. Another shaman may be bolder, and ask the souls to let him have the soul he seeks. If they refuse, he takes it. Then they attack him. He clubs them, and takes the soul away by force. When, upon his return to this world, he takes off his mask, he shows his club with much blood on it. Then the people know he had a desperate struggle. When a shaman thinks he may have difficulty in recovering a soul, he increases the number of wooden pins in his mask. The shaman puts the soul, after he has obtained it, on the patient's head, thereby returning it to the body" (James Teit, *op. cit.* p. 363 *sq.*).

P. 324 *sq.*—Among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia "those who handled the dead body, and who dug the grave, were isolated for four days. They fasted until the body was buried, after which they were given food apart from the other people. They would not touch the food with their hands, but must put it into their mouths with sharp-pointed sticks. They ate off a small mat, and drank out of birch-bark cups, which, together with the mat, were thrown away at the end of the four days. The first four mouthfuls of food, as well as of water, had to be spit into the fire. During this period they bathed in a stream, and were forbidden to sleep with their wives" (James Teit, *op. cit.* p. 331).

END OF VOL. I

THE
GOLDEN BOUGH

A STUDY
IN MAGIC AND RELIGION

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CHAPTER III

KILLING THE GOD

"Sed adhuc supersunt aliae superstitiones, quarum secreta pandenda sunt, . . . ut et in istis profanis religionibus sciatis mortes esse hominum consecratas."
—FIRMICUS MATERNUS, *De errore profanarum religionum*, c. 6.

§ 1. *Killing the Divine King*

LACKING the idea of eternal duration primitive man naturally supposes the gods to be mortal like himself. The Greenlanders believed that a wind could kill their most powerful god, and that he would certainly die if he touched a dog. When they heard of the Christian God, they kept asking if he *never* died, and being informed that he did not, they were much surprised, and said that he must be a very great god indeed.¹ In answer to the inquiries of Colonel Dodge, a North American Indian stated that the world was made by the Great Spirit. Being asked which Great Spirit he meant, the good one or the bad one, "Oh, neither of *them*," replied he, "the Great Spirit that made the world is dead long ago. He could not possibly have lived as long as this."² A tribe in the Philippine Islands told the Spanish conquerors that the grave of the Creator was upon the top of Mount Cabunian.³ Heitsi-eibib, a god or divine hero of the Hottentots, died several times and came to life again. His graves are generally to be met with in narrow defiles between mountains. When the Hottentots pass one of them, they

¹ Meiners, *Geschichte der Religionen* (Hannover, 1806-1807), i. 48.

² R. I. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, p. 112.

³ F. Blumentritt, "Der Ahnencultus und die religiösen Anschauungen der Malaïen des Philippinen-Archipels," *Mittheilungen d. Wiener geogr. Gesellschaft*, 1882, p. 198.

throw a stone on it for good luck, sometimes muttering "Give us plenty of cattle."¹ The grave of Zeus, the great god of Greece, was shown to visitors in Crete as late as about the beginning of our era.² The body of Dionysus was buried at Delphi beside the golden statue of Apollo, and his tomb bore the inscription, "Here lies Dionysus dead, the son of Semele."³ According to one account, Apollo himself was buried at Delphi; for Pythagoras is said to have carved an inscription on his tomb, setting forth how the god had been killed by the python and buried under the tripod.⁴ Cronus was buried in Sicily,⁵ and the graves of Hermes, Aphrodite, and Ares were shown in Hermopolis, Cyprus, and Thrace.⁶

The great gods of Egypt themselves were not exempt from the common lot. They too grew old and died. For like men they were composed of body and soul, and like men were subject to all the passions and infirmities of the flesh. Their bodies, it is true, were fashioned of more ethereal mould, and lasted longer than ours, but they could not hold out for ever against the siege of time. Age converted their bones into silver, their flesh into gold, and their azure locks into lapis lazuli. When their time came they passed away from the cheerful world of the living to reign as dead gods over dead men in the melancholy world beyond the grave. Even their souls, like those of mankind, could only endure after death so long as their bodies held together; and hence it was as needful to preserve the corpses of the gods as the corpses of common folk, lest with the divine body the divine spirit should also come to an untimely end. At first their remains were laid to rest under the desert sands of the

¹ Sir James E. Alexander, *Expedition of Discovery into the interior of Africa*, i. 166; Lichtenstein, *Reisen in Südlichen Africa*, i. 349 sq.; W. H. I. Bleek, *Keynard the Fox in South Africa*, p. 75 sq.; Theophilus Hahn, *Tsunil-Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*, pp. 56, 69.

² Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus*, 9 sq.; Diodorus, iii. 61; Lucian, *Philopseudes*, 3; *id.*, *Jupiter Tragoedus*, 45; *id.*, *Philopatrias*, 10; Porphyry, *Vita Pythagorae*, 17; Cicero, *De natura deorum*, iii. 21, 53; Pomponius Mela, ii. 7.

112; Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 21.

³ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35; Philochorus, *Fragm.* 22, in Müller's *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* i. p. 378; Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 8, ed. Otto; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 208. Cp. Ch. Petersen, "Das Grab und die Todtenfeier des Dionysos," *Philologus*, xv. (1860), pp. 77-91.

⁴ Porphyry, *Vit. Pythag.* 16.

⁵ Philochorus, *Fr.* 184, in *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* ii. p. 414.

⁶ Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 574 sq.

mountains, that the dryness of the soil and the purity of the air might protect them from putrefaction and decay. Hence one of the oldest titles of the Egyptian gods is "they who are under the sands." But when at a later time the discovery of the art of embalming gave a new lease of life to the souls of the dead by preserving their bodies for an indefinite time from corruption, the deities were permitted to share the benefit of an invention which held out to gods as well as to men a reasonable hope of immortality. Every province then had the tomb and mummy of its dead god. The mummy of Osiris was to be seen at Mendes; Thinis boasted of the mummy of Anhour; and Heliopolis rejoiced in the possession of that of Toumou.¹ But while their bodies lay swathed and bandaged here on earth in the tomb, their souls, if we may trust the Egyptian priests, shone as bright stars in the firmament. The soul of Isis sparkled in Sirius, the soul of Horus in Orion, and the soul of Typhon in the Great Bear.² But the death of the god did not involve the extinction of his sacred stock; for he commonly had by his wife a son and heir, who on the demise of his divine parent succeeded to the full rank, power, and honours of the godhead.³ The high gods

¹ G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, pp. 108-111, 116-118.

² Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 21.

³ A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Aegypter*, p. 59 sq.; G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, pp. 104-108, 150. Hence the Egyptian deities were commonly arranged in trinities of a simple and natural type, each comprising a father, a mother, and a son. If the Christian doctrine of the Trinity took shape under Egyptian influence, the function originally assigned to the Holy Spirit may have been that of the divine mother. In the apocryphal *Gospel to the Hebrews*, as Mr. F. C. Conybeare was kind enough to point out to me, Christ spoke of the Holy Ghost as his mother. The passage is quoted by Origen (*Comment. in Joan.* II. vol. iv. col. 132, ed. Migne), and runs as follows: "My mother the Holy Spirit took me a moment ago by one of my hairs and carried me away

to the great Mount Tabor." Cp. Origen, *In Jeremiam Hom. XV. 4*, vol. iii. col. 433, ed. Migne. In the reign of Trajan a certain Alcibiades, from Apamea in Syria, appeared at Rome with a volume in which the Holy Ghost was described as a female about ninety-six miles high and broad in proportion. See Hippolytus, *Refut. omnium Haeresium*, ix. 13, p. 462, ed. Duncker and Schneidewin. The Ophites represented the Holy Spirit as "the first woman," "mother of all living," who was beloved by "the first man" and likewise by "the second man," and who conceived by one or both of them "the light, which they call Christ." See H. Usener, *Das Weihnachtsfest*, p. 116 sq., quoting Irenaeus, i. 28. Mr. Conybeare tells me that Philo Judaeus, who lived in the first half of the first century of our era, constantly defines God as a Trinity in Unity, or a Unity in Trinity, and that the speculations of this Alexandrian Jew deeply influenced the course of Christian thought on the

of Babylon also, though they appeared to their worshippers only in dreams and visions, were conceived to be human in their bodily shape, human in their passions, and human in their fate; for like men they were born into the world, and like men they loved and fought and even died.¹

One of the most famous stories of the death of a god is told by Plutarch. It runs thus. In the reign of the emperor Tiberius a certain schoolmaster named Epitherses was sailing from Greece to Italy. The ship in which he had taken his passage was a merchantman and there were many other passengers on board. At evening, when they were off the Echinadian Islands, the wind died away, and the vessel drifted close in to the island of Paxae. Most of the passengers were awake and many were still drinking wine after dinner, when suddenly a voice hailed the ship from the island, calling upon Thamus. The crew and passengers were taken by surprise, for though there was an Egyptian pilot named Thamus on board, few knew him even by name. Twice the cry was repeated, but Thamus kept silence. However at the third call he answered, and the voice from the shore, now louder than ever, said, "When you are come to Palodes, announce that the Great Pan is dead." Astonishment fell upon all, and they consulted whether it would be better to do the bidding of the voice or not. At last Thamus resolved that, if the wind held, he would pass the place in silence, but if it dropped when they were off Palodes he would give the message. Well, when they were come to Palodes, there was a great calm; so Thamus standing in the stern and looking towards the land cried out, as he had been bidden, "The Great Pan is dead." The words had hardly passed his lips when a great sound of lamentation broke on their ears, as if a multitude were mourning. This strange story, vouched for by many on board, soon got wind at Rome, and Thamus was sent for and questioned by the emperor Tiberius himself, who caused inquiries to be made about the dead god.² It has been plausibly conjectured that the god thus lamented was not

mystical nature of the deity. Thus it seems not impossible that the ancient Egyptian doctrine of the divine Trinity may have been distilled through Philo

into Christianity.

¹ L. W. King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology* (London, 1899), p. 8.

² Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 17.

Pan but Adonis, whose death, as we shall see, was annually bewailed in Greece and in the East, and whose Semitic name of Thammuz or Tammuz may have been transferred by mistake to the pilot in Plutarch's narrative.¹ However this may be, stories of the same kind found currency in Western Asia down to the Middle Ages. An Arab writer relates that in the year 1063 or 1064 A.D., in the reign of the caliph Caiem, a rumour went abroad through Bagdad, which soon spread all over the province of Irac, that some Turks out hunting in the desert had seen a black tent, where many men and women were beating their faces and uttering loud cries, as it is the custom to do in the East when some one is dead. And among the cries they distinguished these words, "The great King of the Jinn is dead, woe to this country!" In consequence of this a mysterious threat was circulated from Armenia to Chuzistan that every town which did not lament the dead King of the Jinn should utterly perish. Again, in the year 1203 or 1204 A.D. a fatal disease, which attacked the throat, raged in parts of Mosul and Irac, and it was divulged that a woman of the Jinn called Umm 'Uncūd or "Mother of the Grape-cluster" had lost her son, and that all who did not lament for him would fall victims to the epidemic. So men and women sought to save themselves from death by assembling and beating their faces, while they cried out in a lamentable voice, "O mother of the Grape-cluster, excuse us; the Grape-cluster is dead; we knew it not."²

If the high gods, who dwell remote from the fret and fever of this earthly life, are yet believed to die at last, it is not to be expected that a god who lodges in a frail tabernacle of flesh should escape the same fate. Now primitive peoples, as we have seen, sometimes believe that their safety and even that of the world is bound up with the life of one of these god-men or human incarnations of the divinity. Naturally, therefore, they take the utmost care of his life, out of a regard for their own.

¹ F. Liebrecht, *Gervasius von Tilbury*, p. 180.

² F. Liebrecht, *op. cit.* p. 180 sq.; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 412, 414. The latter writer observes with justice that "the wailing for 'Uncūd, the divine Grape-cluster, seems to be the last survival of

an old vintage piaculum." "The dread of the worshippers," he adds, "that the neglect of the usual ritual would be followed by disaster, is particularly intelligible if they regarded the necessary operations of agriculture as involving the violent extinction of a particle of divine life."

But no amount of care and precaution will prevent the man-god from growing old and feeble and at last dying. His worshippers have to lay their account with this sad necessity and to meet it as best they can. The danger is a formidable one; for if the course of nature is dependent on the man-god's life, what catastrophes may not be expected from the gradual enfeeblement of his powers and their final extinction in death? There is only one way of averting these dangers. The man-god must be killed as soon as he shows symptoms that his powers are beginning to fail, and his soul must be transferred to a vigorous successor before it has been seriously impaired by the threatened decay. The advantages of thus putting the man-god to death instead of allowing him to die of old age and disease are, to the savage, obvious enough. For if the man-god dies what we call a natural death, it means, according to the savage, that his soul has either voluntarily departed from his body and refuses to return, or more commonly that it has been extracted or at least detained in its wanderings by a demon or sorcerer.¹ In any of these cases the soul of the man-god is lost to his worshippers; and with it their prosperity is gone and their very existence endangered. Even if they could arrange to catch the soul of the dying god as it left his lips or his nostrils and so transfer it to a successor, this would not effect their purpose; for, thus dying of disease, his soul would necessarily leave his body in the last stage of weakness and exhaustion, and as such it would continue to drag out a feeble existence in the body to which it might be transferred. Whereas by killing him his worshippers could, in the first place, make sure of catching his soul as it escaped and transferring it to a suitable successor; and, in the second place, by killing him before his natural force was abated, they would secure that the world should not fall into decay with the decay of the man-god. Every purpose, therefore, was answered, and all dangers averted by thus killing the man-god and transferring his soul, while yet at its prime, to a vigorous successor.

Some of the reasons for preferring a violent death to the slow death of old age or disease are obviously as applicable

¹ See above, vol. i. p. 247 sqq.

to common men as to the man-god. Thus the Mangaians think that "the spirits of those who die a natural death are excessively feeble and weak, as their bodies were at dissolution; whereas the spirits of those who are slain in battle are strong and vigorous, their bodies not having been reduced by disease."¹ The Barongo believe that in the world beyond the grave the spirits of their dead ancestors appear with the exact form and lineaments which their bodies exhibited at the moment of dissolution. The spirits are young or old according as their bodies were young or old when they died. There are baby spirits who crawl about on all fours, and whose traces, according to legend, may be seen on the ground in the sacred grove of Matolo.² Hence, men sometimes prefer to kill themselves or to be killed before they grow feeble, in order that in the future life their souls may start fresh and vigorous as they left their bodies, instead of decrepit and worn out with age and disease. Thus in Fiji, "self-immolation is by no means rare, and they believe that as they leave this life, so they will remain ever after. This forms a powerful motive to escape from decrepitude, or from a crippled condition, by a voluntary death."³ Or, as another observer of the Fijians puts it more fully, "the custom of voluntary suicide on the part of the old men, which is among their most extraordinary usages, is also connected with their superstitions respecting a future life. They believe that persons enter upon the delights of their elysium with the same faculties, mental and physical, that they possess at the hour of death, in short, that the spiritual life commences where the corporeal existence terminates. With these views, it is natural that they should desire to pass through this change before their mental and bodily powers are so enfeebled by age as to deprive them of their capacity for enjoyment. To this motive must be added the contempt which attaches to physical weakness among a nation of warriors, and the wrongs and insults which await those who are no longer able to protect themselves. When therefore a man finds his

¹ W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, p. 163.

² H. A. Junod, *Les Barongas* (Neuchâtel, 1898), p. 381 *sq.*

³ Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition* (London, 1845), iii. 96.

strength declining with the advance of age, and feels that he will soon be unequal to discharge the duties of this life, and to partake in the pleasures of that which is to come, he calls together his relations, and tells them that he is now worn out and useless, that he sees they are all ashamed of him, and that he has determined to be buried." So on a day appointed they meet and bury him alive.¹ In Vaté, one of the New Hebrides, the aged were buried alive at their own request. It was considered a disgrace to the family of an old chief if he was not buried alive.² Of the Kamants, a Jewish tribe in Abyssinia, it is reported that "they never let a person die a natural death, but that if any of their relatives is nearly expiring, the priest of the village is called to cut his throat; if this be omitted, they believe that the departed soul has not entered the mansions of the blessed."³

But it is with the death of the god-man—the divine king or priest—that we are here especially concerned. The people of Congo believed, as we have seen, that if their pontiff the Chitomé were to die a natural death, the world would perish, and the earth, which he alone sustained by his power and merit, would immediately be annihilated. Accordingly when he fell ill and seemed likely to die, the man who was destined to be his successor entered the pontiff's house with a rope or a club and strangled or clubbed him to death.⁴ The Ethiopian kings of Meroe were worshipped as gods; but whenever the priests chose, they sent a messenger to the king, ordering him to die, and alleging an oracle of the gods as their authority for the command. This command the kings always obeyed down to the reign of Ergamenes, a contemporary of Ptolemy II., King of Egypt. Having received a Greek education which emancipated him from the superstitions of his countrymen, Ergamenes ventured to disregard the command of the priests, and, entering the Golden Temple with a body of soldiers, put the priests to

¹ *U.S. Exploring Expedition, Ethnology and Philology*, by H. Hale (Philadelphia, 1846), p. 65. Cp. Th. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 183; J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific* (London, 1853), p. 248.

² Turner, *Samoa*, p. 335.

³ Martin Flad, *A Short Description of the Falasha and Kamants in Abyssinia*, p. 19.

⁴ J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Ethiopie occidentale*, i. 260 sq.; W. Winwood Reade, *Savage Africa*, p. 362.

the sword.¹ In the kingdom of Unyoro in Central Africa, custom still requires that as soon as the king falls seriously ill or begins to break up from age, he shall be killed by his own wives; for, according to an old prophecy, the throne will pass away from the dynasty if ever the king should die a natural death.² When the king of Kibanga, on the Upper Congo, seems near his end, the sorcerers put a rope round his neck, which they draw gradually tighter till he dies.³ If the king of Gingero happens to be wounded in war, he is put to death by his comrades, or if they fail to kill him, by his kinsfolk, however hard he may beg for mercy. They say they do it that he may not die by the hands of his enemies.⁴ It appears to have been a Zulu custom to put the king to death as soon as he began to have wrinkles or gray hairs. At least this seems implied in the following passage, written by one who resided for some time at the court of the notorious Zulu tyrant Chaka, in the early part of the nineteenth century: "The extraordinary violence of the king's rage with me was mainly occasioned by that absurd nostrum, the hair oil, with the notion of which Mr. Farewell had impressed him as being a specific for removing all indications of age. From the first moment of his having heard that such a preparation was attainable, he evinced a solicitude to procure it, and on every occasion never forgot to remind us of his anxiety respecting it; more especially on our departure on the mission his injunctions were particularly directed to this object. It will be seen that it is one of the barbarous customs of the Zoolas in their choice or election of their kings that he must neither have wrinkles nor gray hairs, as they are both distinguishing marks of disqualification for becoming a monarch of a warlike people. It is also equally indispensable that their king should never exhibit those proofs of having become unfit and incompetent to reign; it is therefore important that they should conceal these indica-

¹ Diodorus Siculus, iii. 6; Strabo, xvii. 2. 3.

² *Emin Pasha in Central Africa, being a Collection of his Letters and Journals* (London, 1888), p. 91.

³ P. Guillemé, "Credenze religiose dei Negri di Kibanga nell' Alto Congo,"

Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari, vii. (1888), p. 231.

⁴ *The Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia*, collected and historically digested by F. Balthazar Tellez, of the Society of Jesus (London, 1710), p. 197.

tions so long as they possibly can. Chaka had become greatly apprehensive of the approach of gray hairs; which would at once be the signal for him to prepare to make his exit from this sublunary world, it being always followed by the death of the monarch."¹

The custom of putting kings to death as soon as they suffered from any personal defect prevailed two centuries ago in the Caffre kingdoms of Sofala, to the north of the present Zululand. These kings of Sofala, as we have seen,² were regarded as gods by their people, being entreated to give rain or sunshine, according as each might be wanted. Nevertheless a slight bodily blemish, such as the loss of a tooth, was considered a sufficient cause for putting one of these god-men to death, as we learn from the following passage of an old historian. "Contiguous to the domains of the Quiteva [the king of Sofala] are those of another prince called Sedanda. This prince becoming afflicted with leprosy, resolved on following implicitly the laws of the country, and poisoning himself, conceiving his malady to be incurable, or at least that it would render him so loathsome in the eyes of his people that they would with difficulty recognise him. In consequence he nominated his successor, holding as his opinion that sovereigns who should serve in all things as an example to their people ought to have no defect whatever, even in their persons; that when any defects may chance to befall them they cease to be worthy of life and of governing their dominions; and preferring death in compliance with this law to life, with the reproach of having been its violator. But this law was not observed with equal scrupulosity by one of the Quitevas, who, having lost a tooth and feeling no disposition to follow the practice of his predecessors, published to the people that he had lost a front tooth, in order that when they might behold, they yet might be able to recognise him; declaring at the same time that he was resolved on living and reigning as long as he could, esteeming his existence requisite for the welfare of his subjects. He at the same time loudly condemned the practice of his predecessors, whom he taxed with imprudence, nay, even with madness,

¹ Nathaniel Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa* (London, 1836), i. 295 sq., cp. pp. 232, 290 sq.

² Above, vol. i. p. 155 sq.

for having condemned themselves to death for casual accidents to their persons, confessing plainly that it would be with much regret, even when the course of nature should bring him to his end, that he should submit to die. He observed, moreover, that no reasonable being, much less a monarch, ought to anticipate the scythe of time; and, abrogating this mortal law, he ordained that all his successors, if sane, should follow the precedent he gave, and the new law established by him."¹

This King of Sofala was, therefore, a bold reformer like Ergamenes, King of Ethiopia. We may conjecture that the ground for putting the Ethiopian kings to death was, as in the case of the Zulu and Sofala kings, the appearance on their person of any bodily defect or sign of decay; and that the oracle which the priests alleged as the authority for the royal execution was to the effect that great calamities would result from the reign of a king who had any blemish on his body; just as an oracle warned Sparta against a "lame reign," that is, the reign of a lame king.² It is some confirmation of this conjecture that the kings of Ethiopia were chosen for their size, strength, and beauty long before the custom of killing them was abolished.³ To this day the Sultan of Wadai must have no obvious bodily defect, and a king of Angoy cannot be crowned if he has a single blemish, such as a broken or a filed tooth or the scar of an old wound.⁴ It is only natural, therefore, to suppose, especially with the other African examples before us, that any bodily defect or symptom of old age appearing on the

¹ Dos Santos, "History of Eastern Ethiopia" (published at Paris in 1684), in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 684.

² Xenophon, *Hellenica*, iii. 3. 3; Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 3; *id.*, *Lysander*, 22; Pausanias, iii. 8. 9.

³ Herodotus, iii. 20; Aristotle, *Politics*, iv. 4. 4; Athenaeus, xiii. p. 566. According to Nicolaus Damascenus (*Fr.* 142, in *Fragm. Historic. Græcor.* ed. C. Müller, iii. p. 463), the handsomest and bravest man was only raised to the throne when the king had no heirs, the heirs being the sons of his

sisters. But this limitation is not mentioned by the other authorities. The Alitemnian Libyans chose the fleetest runner to be their king. See Nicolaus Damascenus, *Mirab.* 38 (*Paradoxographi Græci*, ed. Westermann, p. 175); Stobæus, *Florilegium*, xlv. 41 (vol. ii. p. 187, ed. Meineke). Among the Gordioi the fattest man was chosen king; among the Syrakoi, the tallest, or the man with the longest head (Zenobius, v. 25).

⁴ G. Nachtigal, *Sahard und Südn* (Leipsic, 1889), iii. 225; Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 220.

person of the Ethiopian monarch was the signal for his execution. At a later time it is recorded that if the King of Ethiopia became maimed in any part of his body all his courtiers had to suffer the same mutilation.¹ But this rule may perhaps have been instituted at the time when the custom of killing the king for any personal defect was abolished; instead of compelling the king to die because, for example, he had lost a tooth, all his subjects would be obliged to lose a tooth, and thus the invidious superiority of the subjects over the king would be cancelled. A rule of this sort is still observed in the same region at the court of the Sultans of Darfur. When the Sultan coughs, every one makes the sound *ts ts* by striking the tongue against the root of the upper teeth; when he sneezes, the whole assembly utters a sound like the cry of the jeko; when he falls off his horse, all his followers must fall off likewise; if any one of them remains in the saddle, no matter how high his rank, he is laid on the ground and beaten.² At the court of the king of Uganda in Central Africa, when the king laughs, every one laughs; when he sneezes, every one sneezes; when he has a cold, every one pretends to have a cold; when he has his hair cut, so has everybody.³ At the court of Boni in Celebes it is a rule that whatever the king does all the courtiers must do. If he stands, they stand; if he sits, they sit; if he falls off his horse, they fall off their horses; if he bathes, they bathe, and passers-by must go into the water in the dress, good or bad, which they happen to have on.⁴ But to return to the death of the divine king. Many days' journey to the north-east of Abomey, the old capital of Dahomey, lies the kingdom of Eyeo. "The Eyeos are governed by a king, no less absolute than the king of

¹ Strabo, xvii. 2. 3; Diodorus, iii. 7.

² Mohammed Ebn-Omar El-Tounsy, *Voyage au Darfour* (Paris, 1845), p. 162 sq.; *Travels of an Arab Merchant in Soudan*, abridged from the French by Bayle St John (London, 1854), p. 78; *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris) IV^{me} Série, iv. (1852), p. 539 sq.

³ R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the Waganda Tribe of Central Africa," in *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edin-*

burgh, xiii. (1884-1886), p. 711.

⁴ *Narrative of Events in Borneo and Celebes, from the Journal of James Brooke, Esq., Rajah of Sarawak*, by Captain R. Mundy, i. 134. My friend Mr. Lorimer Finon, in a letter of August 26th, 1898, tells me that the custom of falling down whenever a chief fell was observed also in Fiji, where it had a special name, *hale murri*, "fall-follow."

Dahomy, yet subject to a regulation of state, at once humiliating and extraordinary. When the people have conceived an opinion of his ill-government, which is sometimes insidiously infused into them by the artifice of his discontented ministers, they send a deputation to him with a present of parrots' eggs, as a mark of its authenticity, to represent to him that the burden of government must have so far fatigued him that they consider it full time for him to repose from his cares and indulge himself with a little sleep. He thanks his subjects for their attention to his ease, retires to his own apartment as if to sleep, and there gives directions to his women to strangle him. This is immediately executed, and his son quietly ascends the throne upon the usual terms of holding the reins of government no longer than whilst he merits the approbation of the people." About the year 1774, a king of Eyeo, whom his ministers attempted to remove in the customary manner, positively refused to accept the proffered parrots' eggs at their hands, telling them that he had no mind to take a nap, but on the contrary was resolved to watch for the benefit of his subjects. The ministers, surprised and indignant at his recalcitrancy, raised a rebellion, but were defeated with great slaughter, and thus by his spirited conduct the king freed himself from the tyranny of his councillors and established a new precedent for the guidance of his successors.¹ The old Prussians acknowledged as their supreme lord a ruler who governed them in the name of the gods, and was known as God's Mouth (*Kirwaido*). When he felt himself weak and ill, if he wished to leave a good name behind him, he had a great heap made of thorn-bushes and straw, on which he mounted and delivered a long sermon to the people, exhorting them to serve the gods and promising to go to the gods and speak for the people. Then he took some of the perpetual fire which burned in front of the holy oak-tree, and lighting the pile with it burned himself to death.²

In the cases hitherto described, the divine king or priest is suffered by his people to retain office until some outward

¹ A. Dalzel, *History of Dahomy* (London, 1793), pp. 12-14, 156-57.

² Simon Grunau, *Preussische Chronik*, herausgegeben von Dr. M. Perlbach (Leipzig, 1876), i. p. 97.

defect, some visible symptom of failing health or advancing age, warns them that he is no longer equal to the discharge of his divine duties ; but not until such symptoms have made their appearance is he put to death. Some peoples, however, appear to have thought it unsafe to wait for even the slightest symptom of decay and have preferred to kill the king while he was still in the full vigour of life. Accordingly, they have fixed a term beyond which he might not reign, and at the close of which he must die, the term fixed upon being short enough to exclude the probability of his degenerating physically in the interval. In some parts of Southern India the period fixed was twelve years. Thus, according to an old traveller, in the province of Quilacare "there is a Gentile house of prayer, in which there is an idol which they hold in great account, and every twelve years they celebrate a great feast to it, whither all the Gentiles go as to a jubilee. This temple possesses many lands and much revenue ; it is a very great affair. This province has a king over it ; who has not more than twelve years to reign from jubilee to jubilee. His manner of living is in this wise, that is to say, when the twelve years are completed, on the day of this feast there assemble together innumerable people, and much money is spent in giving food to Bramans. The king has a wooden scaffolding made, spread over with silken hangings ; and on that day he goes to bathe at a tank with great ceremonies and sound of music, after that he comes to the idol and prays to it, and mounts on to the scaffolding, and there before all the people he takes some very sharp knives and begins to cut off his nose, and then his ears and his lips and all his members and as much flesh of himself as he can ; and he throws it away very hurriedly until so much of his blood is spilled that he begins to faint, and then he cuts his throat himself. And he performs this sacrifice to the idol ; and whoever desires to reign other twelve years, and undertake this martyrdom for love of the idol, has to be present looking on at this ; and from that place they raise him up as king."¹

Formerly the Samorin or king of Calicut, on the

¹ Barbosa, *A Description of the the beginning of the Sixteenth Century*
Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in (Hakluyt Society, 1866), p. 172 sq.

Malabar coast, had also to cut his throat in public at the end of a twelve years' reign. But towards the end of the seventeenth century the rule had been modified as follows: "A new custom is followed by the modern Samorins, that jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominions, at the end of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days, with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action, in fighting their way through 30 or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In anno 1695, one of those jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Pennany, a seaport of his, about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell in with sword and target among the guard, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperados had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly despatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow; but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and, I believe, the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."¹

"It is a singular custom in Bengal," says an old native historian of India, "that there is little of hereditary descent in succession to the sovereignty. There is a throne allotted for the king; there is, in like manner, a seat or station assigned for each of the *amirs*, *wazirs*, and *mansabdars*. It is that throne and these stations alone which engage the reverence of the people of Bengal. A set of dependents, servants, and attendants are annexed to each of these situations. When the king wishes to dismiss or appoint any person, whosoever is placed in the seat of

¹ Alex. Hamilton, "A New Account of the East Indies," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, viii. 374.

the one dismissed is immediately attended and obeyed by the whole establishment of dependents, servants, and retainers annexed to the seat which he occupies. Nay, this rule obtains even as to the royal throne itself. Whoever kills the king, and succeeds in placing himself on that throne, is immediately acknowledged as king; all the *amirs*, *wazirs*, soldiers and peasants, instantly obey and submit to him, and consider him as being as much their sovereign as they did their former prince, and obey his orders implicitly. The people of Bengal say, 'We are faithful to the throne; whoever fills the throne we are obedient and true to it.'¹ A custom of the same sort formerly prevailed in the little kingdom of Passier, on the northern coast of Sumatra. The old Portuguese historian De Barros, who informs us of it, remarks with surprise that no wise man would wish to be king of Passier, since the monarch was not allowed by his subjects to live long. From time to time a sort of fury seized the people, and they marched through the streets of the city chanting with loud voices the fatal words, "The king must die!" When the king heard that song of death he knew that his hour had come. The man who struck the fatal blow was of the royal lineage, and as soon as he had done the deed of blood and seated himself on the throne he was regarded as the legitimate king, provided that he contrived to maintain his seat peaceably for a single day. This, however, the regicide did not always succeed in doing. When Fernão Peres d'Andrade, on a voyage to China, put in at Passier for a cargo of spices, two kings were massacred, and that in the most peaceable and orderly manner, without the smallest sign of tumult or sedition in the city, where everything went on in its usual course as if the murder or execution of a king were a matter of everyday occurrence. Indeed, on one occasion three kings were raised to the dangerous elevation and followed each other on the dusty road of death in a single day. The people defended the custom, which they esteemed very laud-

¹ Sir H. M. Elliot, *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, iv. 260. I have to thank Mr. R. S. Whiteway, of Brownscombe, Shutter-

mill, Surrey, for kindly calling my attention to this and the following instance of the custom of regicide.

able and even of divine institution, by saying that God would never allow so high and mighty a being as a king, who reigned as his vicegerent on earth, to perish by violence unless for his sins he thoroughly deserved it.¹ Far away from the tropical island of Sumatra a rule of the same sort appears to have obtained among the old Slavs. When the captives Gunn and Jarmerik contrived to slay the king and queen of the Slavs and made their escape, they were pursued by the barbarians, who shouted after them that if they would only come back they would reign instead of the murdered monarch, since by a public statute of the ancients the succession to the throne fell to the king's assassin. But the flying regicides turned a deaf ear to promises which they regarded as mere baits to lure them back to destruction; they continued their flight, and the shouts and clamour of the barbarians gradually died away in the distance.²

The famous traveller Ibn Batuta, a native of Tangier, who visited the East Indies in the first half of the fourteenth century, witnessed at the court of the heathen Sultan of Java an occurrence which filled him with astonishment. He says: "During my audience with the Sultan I saw a man who held in his hand a knife like that used by a grape-gleaner. He placed it on his own neck and spoke for a long time in a language which I did not understand. After that he seized the knife with both hands at once and cut his throat. His head fell to the ground, so sharp was the blade and so great the force with which he used it. I remained dumbfounded at his behaviour, but the Sultan said to me, 'Does any one do like that in your country?' I answered, 'Never did I see such a thing.' He smiled and replied, 'These people are our slaves, and they kill themselves for love of us.' Then he commanded that they should take away him who had slain himself and should burn him. The Sultan's officers, the grandees, the troops, and the common people attended the cremation. The sovereign assigned a liberal pension to the children of the deceased, to his wife, and to his brothers; and

¹ De Barros, *Da Asia, dos feitos, que os Portuguezes fizeram no descubrimento e conquista dos mares e terras do Oriente*, Decada Terceira, Liv. V. cap. i. p. 512 sq. (Lisbon, 1777).

² Saxo Grammaticus, *Historia Danica*, viii. p. 410 sq., ed. P. E. Müller (p. 334 of Mr. Elton's English translation).

they were highly honoured because of his conduct. A person, who was present at the audience when the event I have described took place, informed me that the speech made by the man who sacrificed himself set forth his devotion to the monarch. He said that he wished to immolate himself out of affection for the sovereign, as his father had done for love of the prince's father, and as his grandfather had done out of regard for the prince's grandfather."¹ We may conjecture that formerly the sultans of Java, like the kings of Quilacare and Calicut, were bound to cut their own throats at the end of a fixed term of years, but that at a later time they deputed the painful, though glorious, duty of dying for their country to the members of a certain family, who received by way of recompense ample provision during their life and a handsome funeral at death.

There are some grounds for believing that the reign of the ancient Dorian kings was limited to eight years, or at least that at the end of every period of eight years a new consecration, a fresh outpouring of the divine grace, was regarded as necessary in order to enable them to discharge their civil and religious duties. For it was a rule of the Spartan constitution that every eighth year the ephors should choose a clear and moonless night and sitting down observe the sky in silence. If during their vigil they saw a meteor or shooting star, they inferred that the king had sinned against the deity, and suspended him from his functions until the Delphic or Olympic oracle should reinstate him in them. This custom, which has all the air of great antiquity, was not suffered to remain a dead letter even in the last period of the Spartan monarchy; for in the third century before our era a king, who had rendered himself obnoxious to the reforming party, was actually deposed on various trumped-up charges, among which the allegation that the ominous sign had been seen in the sky took a prominent place.² When we compare this custom, as K. O. Müller suggested,³ with the importance of the eight-years' cycle in early Greece, and with the Homeric reference to King Minos who reigned at Cnosus for periods of nine years

¹ *Voyage d'Ibn Batoutah*, texte Arabe, accompagné d'une traduction par C. Deffrémery et B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1853-58), iv. 246 sq.

² Plutarch, *Agis*, ii.

³ *Die Dorier*,³ ii. 96.

as the friend of Zeus,¹ we shall be disposed to concur in the opinion of the illustrious German scholar, whom I have just cited, that the quaint Spartan practice is much more than a mere antiquarian curiosity; it is the attenuated survival of an institution which may once have had great significance, and it throws an important light on the restrictions and limitations anciently imposed by religion on the Dorian kingship. What exactly was the import of a meteor in the opinion of the old Dorians we can hardly hope to determine; one thing only is clear, they regarded it as a portent of so ominous and threatening a kind that its appearance under certain circumstances justified and even required the deposition of their king. This exaggerated dread of so simple a natural phenomenon is shared by many savages at the present day; and we shall hardly err in supposing that the Spartans inherited it from their barbarous ancestors, who may have watched with consternation, on many a starry night among the woods of Germany, the flashing of a meteor through the sky. Shooting stars and meteors are viewed with apprehension by the natives of the Andaman Islands, who suppose them to be lighted faggots hurled into the air by the malignant spirit of the woods in order to ascertain the whereabouts of any unhappy wight in his vicinity. Hence if they happen to be away from their camp when the meteor is seen, they hide themselves and remain silent for a little before they venture to resume the work they were at; for example, if they are out fishing they will crouch at the bottom of the boat.² When the Baronga of South Africa see a shooting star they spit on the ground to avert the evil omen, and cry, "Go away! go away all alone!" By this they mean that the light, which is so soon to disappear, is not to take them with it, but to go and die by itself.³ The Namaquas "are greatly afraid of the meteor which is vulgarly called a falling star,

¹ τῷσι δ' ἐνὶ Κνωσὸς, μεγάλη πόλις,
ἐνθα τε Μίνως
ἐντέλειος βασίλειε Διὸς μεγάλου
βασιτεῖη.

Homer, *Odyssey*, xix. 178 sq. There is some difference of opinion as to the exact meaning to be given to ἐντέλειος

in this passage. I accept K. O. Müller's interpretation, which agrees with that of the author of the dialogue *Minos* (p. 319 D E) attributed to Plato.

² E. Man, *Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands*, p. 84 sq.

³ H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga*, p. 470.

for they consider it a sign that sickness is coming upon the cattle, and to escape it they will immediately drive them to some other parts of the country. They call out to the star how many cattle they have, and beg of it not to send sickness."¹ The Bechuanas are also much alarmed at the appearance of a meteor. If they happen to be dancing in the open air at the time, they will instantly desist and retire hastily to their huts.² When the Laughlan Islanders see a shooting star they make a great noise, for they think it is the old woman who lives in the moon coming down to earth to catch somebody who may relieve her of her duties in the moon while she goes away to the happy spirit-land.³ In Vedic India a meteor was believed to be the incarnation of a demon, and on its appearance certain hymns or incantations, supposed to possess the power of killing demons, were recited for the purpose of expiating the prodigy.⁴ The aborigines of New South Wales attributed great importance to the falling of a star.⁵ Some of the Esthonians at the present day regard shooting stars as evil spirits.⁶ By some Indians of California meteors were called "children of the moon," and whenever young women saw one of them they fell to the ground and covered their heads, fearing that, if the meteor saw them, their faces would become ugly and diseased.⁷ When a German traveller was living with the Bororos of Central Brazil, a splendid meteor fell, spreading dismay through the Indian village. It was believed to be the soul of a dead medicine-man, who suddenly appeared in this form to announce that he wanted meat, and that, as a preliminary measure, he proposed to visit somebody with an attack of dysentery. Its appearance was greeted with yells from a hundred throats; men, women, and children swarmed out of their huts like ants whose nest has been disturbed; and soon watch-fires blazed, round

¹ J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa* (London, 1815), p. 428 sq.

² *Id.*, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey* (London, 1822), ii. 204.

³ W. Tetzlaff, "Notes on the Laughlan Islands," in *Annual Report on British New Guinea, 1890-1891* (Brisbane, 1892), p. 105.

⁴ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des I'eda*, p. 267.

⁵ D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* (London, 1804), p. 383.

⁶ Holzmayer, "Osilians," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. (1872), p. 48.

⁷ Boscana, "Chinigchinich, a historical account of the origin, etc., of the Indians of St. Juan Capistrano," in A. Robinson's *Life in California* (New York, 1846), p. 299.

which at a little distance groups of dusky figures gathered, while in the middle, thrown into strong relief by the flickering light of the fire, two red-painted sorcerers reeled and staggered in a state of frantic excitement, snorting and spitting towards the quarter of the sky where the meteor had run its brief but brilliant course. Pressing his right hand to his yelling mouth, each of them held aloft in his extended left, by way of propitiating the angry star, a bundle of cigarettes! "There!" they seemed to say, "all that tobacco will we give to ward off the impending visitation. Woe to you, if you do not leave us in peace."¹

A widespread superstition associates meteors or falling stars with the souls of the dead. Often they are believed to be the spirits of the departed on their way to the other world. The Maoris imagine that at death the soul leaves the body and goes to the nether world in the form of a falling star.² One evening when Mr. Howitt was talking with an Australian black, a bright meteor was seen shooting through the sky. The native watched it and remarked, "An old blackfellow has fallen down there."³ Among the Yerrunthally tribe of Queensland the ideas on this subject were even more definite. They thought that after death they went to a place away among the stars, and that to reach it they had to climb up a rope; when they had clambered up they let go the rope, which, as it fell from heaven, appeared to people on earth as a falling star.⁴ The Wambugwe of Eastern Africa fancy that the stars are men, of whom one dies whenever a star is seen to fall.⁵ The Tinneh Indians and the Tchiglit Esquimaux of North-Western America believe that human life on earth is influenced by the stars, and they take a shooting star

¹ K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, p. 514 sq.

² Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 66. According to another account, meteors are regarded by the Maoris as betokening the presence of a god (R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, p. 147).

³ A. W. Howitt, in Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 309.

⁴ E. Palmer, "Notes on some Australian Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 292. Sometimes apparently the Australian natives regard crystals or broken glass as fallen stars, and treasure them as powerful instruments of magic. See E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, iii. 29.

⁵ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 188.

to be a sign that some one has died.¹ In classical antiquity there was a popular notion that every human being had his own star in the sky, which shone bright or dim according to his good or evil fortune, and fell in the form of a meteor when he died.² Ideas of the same sort are still commonly to be met with in Europe. Thus in some parts of Germany they say that at the birth of a man a new star is set in the sky, and that as it burns brilliantly or faintly he grows rich or poor; finally when he dies it drops from the sky in the likeness of a shooting star.³ Similarly in Brittany, Transylvania, Bohemia, the Abruzzi, and the Esthonian island of Oesel it is thought by some that every man has his own particular star in the sky, and that when it falls in the shape of a meteor he expires.⁴ In Styria they say that when a shooting star is seen a man has just died, or a poor soul been released from purgatory.⁵ The Esthonians believe that if any one sees a falling star on New Year's night he will die or be visited by a serious illness that year.⁶ In Belgium and many parts of France the people suppose that a meteor is a soul which has just quitted the body, sometimes that it is specially the soul of an unbaptized infant or of some one who has died without absolution. At sight of it they say that you should cross yourself and

¹ E. Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjé* (Paris, 1876), p. 60; *id.*, *Monographie des Esquimaux Tchiglit* (Paris, 1876), p. 24.

² Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 28.

³ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 293; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 457, § 422; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 506, §§ 379, 380.

⁴ Sébillot, *Traditions et Superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, ii. 353; J. Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Vienna, 1885), p. 300; W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Rumänen Siebenbürgens*, p. 38; E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, i. 311; Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 31, § 164; Br. Jelinek, "Material-

ien zur Vorgeschichte und Volkskunde Böhmens," *Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxi. (1891), p. 25; G. Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi*, p. 47 sq.; Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandl. der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. (1872), p. 48. The same belief is said to prevail in Armenia. See Minas Tchérax, "Notes sur la Mythologie Arménienne," *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists* (London, 1893), ii. 824. Bret Harte has employed the idea in his little poem, "Relieving Guard."

⁵ A. Schlossar, "Volksmeinung und Volksaberglaube aus der deutschen Steiermark," *Germania*, N.R., xxiv. (1891), p. 389.

⁶ Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ältesten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 73.

pray, or that if you wish for something while the star is falling you will be sure to get it.¹ Among the Vosges Mountains in the warm nights of July it is not uncommon to see whole showers of shooting stars. It is generally agreed that these stars are souls, but some difference of opinion exists as to whether they are souls just taking leave of earth, or tortured by the fires of purgatory, or on their passage from purgatory to heaven.² The downward direction of their flight might naturally suggest a different goal; and accordingly other people have seen in the transient flame of a meteor the descent of a soul from heaven to be born on earth. In the Punjaub, for example, Hindoos believe that the length of a soul's residence in the realms of bliss is exactly proportioned to the sums the man distributed in charity during his life; and that when these are exhausted his time in heaven is up, and down he comes.³ In Polynesia a shooting star was held to be the flight of a spirit, and to presage the birth of a great prince.⁴ The Mandans of North America fancied that the stars were dead people, and that when a woman was brought to bed a star fell from heaven, and entering into her was born as a child.⁵ On the Biloch frontier of the Punjaub each man is held to have his star, and he may not journey in particular directions when his star is in certain positions. If duty compels him to travel in the forbidden direction, he takes care before setting out to bury his star, or rather a figure of it cut out of cloth, so that it may not see what he is doing.⁶

Which, if any, of these superstitions moved the barbarous

¹ E. Monseur, *Le Folklore Wallon*, p. 61; A. de Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, pp. 101, 160, 223, 267, 284; B. Souché, *Croyances, presages et traditions diverses*, p. 23; P. Sébillot, *Traditions et Superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, ii. 352; J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 13; L. Pineau, *Folk-lore du Poitou* (Paris, 1892), p. 525 sq.

² L. F. Sauvé, *Le Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 196 sq. In the Abruzzi also some people think that falling stars are souls on their way from purgatory, and on seeing one they say, "God be with you." See G. Finamore,

Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi, p. 48.

³ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 102, § 673. Compare *id.* p. 47, § 356; *Indian Notes and Queries*, iv. p. 184, § 674.

⁴ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 171.

⁵ Maximilian Prinz zu Wied, *Reise in das Innere Nord-America*, ii. 152. It does not, however, appear from the writer's statement whether the descent of the soul was identified with the flight of a meteor or not.

⁶ D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Outlines of Panjab Ethnography*, p. 118, § 231.

Dorians of old to depose their kings whenever at a certain season a meteor flamed in the sky, we cannot say. Perhaps they had a vague general notion that its appearance signified the dissatisfaction of the higher powers with the state of the commonwealth; and since in primitive society the king is commonly held responsible for all untoward events, whatever their origin, the natural course was to relieve him of duties which he had proved himself incapable of discharging. But it may be that the idea in the minds of these rude barbarians was more definite. Possibly, like some people in Europe at the present day, they thought that every man had his star in the sky, and that he must die when it fell. The king would be no exception to the rule, and on a certain night of a certain year, at the end of a cycle, it might be customary to watch the sky in order to mark whether the king's star was still in the ascendant or near its setting. The appearance of a meteor on such a night—of a star precipitated from the celestial vault—might prove for the king not merely a symbol but a sentence of death. It might be the warrant for his execution.

In some places it appears that the people could not trust the king to remain in full bodily and mental vigour for more than a year; hence at the end of a year's reign he was put to death, and a new king appointed to reign in his turn a year, and suffer death at the end of it. At least this is the conclusion to which the following evidence points. According to the historian Berosus, who as a Babylonian priest spoke with ample knowledge, there was annually celebrated in Babylon a festival called the *Sacaea*. It began on the sixteenth day of the month *Lous*, and lasted for five days. During these five days masters and servants changed places, the servants giving orders and the masters obeying them. A prisoner condemned to death was dressed in the king's robes, seated on the king's throne, allowed to issue whatever commands he pleased, to eat, drink, and enjoy himself, and to lie with the king's concubines. But at the end of the five days he was stripped of his royal robes, scourged, and hanged or crucified.¹ This custom might perhaps have been

¹ Athenaeus, xiv. p. 639 c; Dio p. 76, ed. Dindorf). Dio Chrysostom Chrysostom, *Orat.* iv. p. 69 *sq.* (vol. i. does not mention his authority, but it

explained as merely a grim jest perpetrated in a season of jollity at the expense of an unhappy criminal. But one circumstance—the leave given to the mock king to enjoy the king's concubines—is decisive against this interpretation. Considering the jealous seclusion of an oriental despot's harem we may be quite certain that permission to invade it would never have been granted by the despot, least of all to a condemned criminal, except for the very gravest cause. This cause could hardly be other than that the condemned man was about to die in the king's stead, and that to make the substitution perfect it was necessary he should enjoy the full rights of royalty during his brief reign. There is nothing surprising in this substitution. The rule that the king must be put to death either on the appearance of any symptom of bodily decay or at the end of a fixed period is certainly one which, sooner or later, the kings would seek to abolish or modify. We have seen that in Ethiopia, Sofala, and Eyeo the rule was boldly set aside by enlightened monarchs; and that in Calicut the old custom of killing the king at the end of twelve years was changed into a permission granted to any one at the end of the twelve years' period to attack the king, and, in the event of killing him, to reign in his stead; though, as the king took care at these times to be surrounded by his guards, the permission was little more than a form. Another way of modifying the stern old rule is seen in the

was probably either Berosus or Ctesias. The execution of the mock king is not noticed in the passage of Berosus cited by Athenaeus, probably because the mention of it was not germane to Athenaeus's purpose, which was simply to give a list of festivals at which masters waited on their servants. That the *šurydm* was put to death is further shown by Macrobius, *Sat.* iii. 7. 6, "*Animas vero sacratorum hominum quos et zanas Graeci vocant, dis debitas aestimabant*," where for *zanas* we should probably read *šurydas* with Liebrecht, in *Philologus*, xxii. 710, and Bachofen, *Die Sage von Tanaquil*, p. 52, note 16. The reading *zanas* is, however, defended by J. Bernays (*Hermes*, ix. (1875) 127 sq.), who suggests that Macrobius may have misunderstood the

meaning of the *Zanes* at Olympia, as to which see Pausanias, v. 21. 2. The Babylonian custom, so far as appears from our authorities, does not date from before the Persian conquest of Babylon; but probably it was much older. In the passage of Dio Chrysostom *ἐκπύραρον* should perhaps be translated "crucified" (or "impaled") rather than "hanged"; at least the former seems to have been the regular sense of *κρεμάννυμι* as applied to executions. See Plutarch, *Caesar*, 2. But while crucifixion was a Roman mode of execution, it may be doubted whether it was also an Oriental one. Hanging was certainly an Oriental punishment. See Esther v. 14, vii. 9 sq.; Deuteronomy xxi. 22 sq.; Joshua viii. 29, x. 26.

Babylonian custom just described. When the time drew near for the king to be put to death (in Babylon this appears to have been at the end of a single year's reign) he abdicated for a few days, during which a temporary king reigned and suffered in his stead. At first the temporary king may have been an innocent person, possibly a member of the king's own family; but with the growth of civilisation the sacrifice of an innocent person would be revolting to the public sentiment, and accordingly a condemned criminal would be invested with the brief and fatal sovereignty. In the sequel we shall find other examples of a dying criminal representing a dying god. For we must not forget that the king is slain in his character of a god, his death and resurrection, as the only means of perpetuating the divine life unimpaired, being deemed necessary for the salvation of his people and the world.

The conclusion to which the Babylonian evidence seems to point will hardly appear extravagant or improbable when we learn that at the end of the nineteenth century there is still a kingdom in which the reign and the life of the sovereign are limited to a single day. In Ngoio, a province of the ancient kingdom of Congo in West Africa, the rule obtains that the chief who assumes the cap of sovereignty one day shall be put to death on the next. The right of succession lies with the chief of the Musurongo; but we need not wonder that he does not exercise it, and that the throne stands vacant. "No one likes to lose his life for a few hours' glory on the Ngoio throne."¹

In some places the modified form of the old custom which appears to have prevailed at Babylon has been further softened down. The king still abdicates annually for a short time and his place is filled by a more or less nominal sovereign; but at the close of his short reign the latter is no longer killed, though sometimes a mock execution still survives as a memorial of the time when he was actually put to death. To take examples. In the month of Méac

¹ R. E. Dennett, *Notes on the Folklore of the Fjort*, with an introduction by Mary H. Kingsley (London, 1898), p. xxxii. Miss Kingsley in conversation called my attention to this parti-

cular custom, and informed me that she was personally acquainted with the chief who possesses but declines to exercise the right of succession.

(February) the King of Cambodia annually abdicated for three days. During this time he performed no act of authority, he did not touch the seals, he did not even receive the revenues which fell due. In his stead there reigned a temporary king called *Sdach Méac*, that is, King February. The office of temporary king was hereditary in a family distantly connected with the royal house, the sons succeeding the fathers and the younger brothers the elder brothers, just as in the succession to the real sovereignty. On a favourable day fixed by the astrologers the temporary king was conducted by the mandarins in triumphal procession. He rode one of the royal elephants, seated in the royal palanquin, and escorted by soldiers who, dressed in appropriate costumes, represented the neighbouring peoples of Siam, Annam, Laos, and so on. In place of the golden crown he wore a peaked white cap, and his regalia, instead of being of gold encrusted with diamonds, were of rough wood. After paying homage to the real king, from whom he received the sovereignty for three days, together with all the revenues accruing during that time (though this last custom has been omitted for some time), he moved in procession round the palace and through the streets of the capital. On the third day, after the usual procession, the temporary king gave orders that the elephants should trample under foot the "mountain of rice," which was a scaffold of bamboo surrounded by sheaves of rice. The people gathered up the rice, each man taking home a little with him to secure a good harvest. Some of it was also taken to the king, who had it cooked and presented to the monks.¹

In Siam on the sixth day of the moon in the sixth month (the end of April) a temporary king is appointed, who for three days enjoys the royal prerogatives, the real king remaining shut up in his palace. This temporary king sends his numerous satellites in all directions to seize and confiscate whatever they can find in the bazaar and open shops; even the ships and junks which arrive in harbour

¹ E. Aymonier, *Notice sur le Cambodge*, p. 61; J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 327 sq. For the connection

of the temporary king's family with the royal house, see Aymonier, *op. cit.* p. 36 sq.

during the three days are forfeited to him and must be redeemed. He goes to a field in the middle of the city, whither they bring a gilded plough drawn by gaily-decked oxen. After the plough has been anointed and the oxen rubbed with incense, the mock king traces nine furrows with the plough, followed by aged dames of the palace scattering the first seed of the season. As soon as the nine furrows are drawn, the crowd of spectators rushes in and scrambles for the seed which has just been sown, believing that, mixed with the seed-rice, it will ensure a plentiful crop. Then the oxen are unyoked, and rice, maize, sesame, sago, bananas, sugar-cane, melons, and so on, are set before them; whatever they eat first will, it is thought, be dear in the year following, though some people interpret the omen in the opposite sense. During this time the temporary king stands leaning against a tree with his right foot resting on his left knee. From standing thus on one foot he is popularly known as King Hop; but his official title is Phaya Phollathep, "Lord of the Heavenly Hosts."¹ He is a sort of Minister of Agriculture; all disputes about fields, rice, and so forth, are referred to him. There is moreover another ceremony in which he personates the king. It takes place in the second month (which falls in the cold season) and lasts three days. He is conducted in procession to an open place opposite the Temple of the Brahmans, where there are a number of poles dressed like May-poles, upon which the Brahmans swing. All the while that they swing and dance, the Lord of the Heavenly Hosts has to stand on one foot upon a seat which is made of bricks plastered over, covered with a white cloth, and hung with tapestry. He is supported by a wooden frame with a gilt canopy, and two Brahmans stand one on each side of him. The dancing Brahmans carry

¹ Pallegoix, *Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam*, i. 250; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 305-309, 526-528; Turpin, *History of Siam*, in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 581 sq. Bowring (*Siam*, i. 158 sq.) copies, as usual, from Pallegoix. For a description of the ceremony as observed at the present day, see E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe* (West-

minster, 1898), p. 210 sq. The representative of the king no longer enjoys his old privilege of seizing any goods that are exposed for sale along the line of the procession. According to Mr. Young, the ceremony is generally held about the middle of May, and no one is supposed to plough or sow till it is over.

buffalo horns with which they draw water from a large copper caldron and sprinkle it on the spectators; this is supposed to bring good luck, causing the people to dwell in peace and quiet, health and prosperity. The time during which the Lord of the Heavenly Hosts has to stand on one foot is about three hours. This is thought "to prove the dispositions of the Devattas and spirits." If he lets his foot down "he is liable to forfeit his property and have his family enslaved by the king; as it is believed to be a bad omen, portending destruction to the state, and instability to the throne. But if he stand firm he is believed to have gained a victory over evil spirits, and he has moreover the privilege, ostensibly at least, of seizing any ship which may enter the harbour during these three days, and taking its contents, and also of entering any open shop in the town and carrying away what he chooses."¹

Such were the duties and privileges of the Siamese King Hop some forty or fifty years ago. Under the reign of the present enlightened monarch this quaint personage has been to some extent both shorn of the glories and relieved of the burden of his office. He still watches, as of old, the Brahmans rushing through the air in a swing suspended between two tall masts, each some ninety feet high; but he is allowed to sit instead of stand, and, although public opinion still expects him to keep his right foot on his left knee during the whole of the ceremony, he would incur no legal penalty were he, to the great chagrin of the people, to put his weary foot to the ground. Other signs, too, tell of the invasion of the East by the ideas and civilisation of the West. The thoroughfares that lead to the scene of the performance are blocked with carriages; lamp-posts and telegraph posts, to which eager spectators cling like monkeys, rise above the dense crowd; and, while a tatterdemalion band of the old style, in gaudy garb of vermilion and yellow, bangs and tootles away on drums and trumpets of an antique pattern, the procession of barefooted soldiers in brilliant uniforms steps briskly along to the lively strains

¹ Lieut.-Col. James Low, "On the Laws of Muang Thai or Siam," *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, i. (Singapore, 1847), p. 339; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 98, 314, 526 sq.

of a modern military band playing "Marching through Georgia."¹

In Upper Egypt on the first day of the solar year by Coptic reckoning, that is, on the tenth of September, when the Nile has generally reached its highest point, the regular government is suspended for three days and every town chooses its own ruler. This temporary lord wears a sort of tall fool's cap and a long flaxen beard, and is enveloped in a strange mantle. With a wand of office in his hand and attended by men disguised as scribes, executioners, and so forth, he proceeds to the Governor's house. The latter allows himself to be deposed; and the mock king, mounting the throne, holds a tribunal, to the decisions of which even the governor and his officials must bow. After three days the mock king is condemned to death; the envelope or shell in which he was encased is committed to the flames, and from its ashes the Fellah creeps forth.²

Sometimes the temporary king occupies the throne, not annually, but once for all at the beginning of each reign. Thus in the kingdom of Jambi, in Sumatra, it is the custom that at the beginning of a new reign a man of the people should occupy the throne and exercise the royal prerogatives for a single day. The origin of the custom is explained by a tradition that there were once five royal brothers, the four elder of whom all declined the throne on the ground of various bodily defects, leaving it to their youngest brother. But the eldest occupied the throne for one day, and reserved for his descendants a similar privilege at the beginning of every reign. Thus the office of temporary king is hereditary in a family akin to the royal house.³ In Bilaspur it seems to be the custom, after the death of a Rajah, for a Brahman to eat rice out of the dead Rajah's hand, and then to occupy the throne for a year. At the end of the year the Brahman receives presents and is dismissed from the

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, pp. 212-217. The writer tells us that though the Minister for Agriculture still officiates at the Ploughing Festival, he no longer presides at the Swinging Festival; a different nobleman is chosen every year to superintend the latter.

² C. B. Klunzinger, *Bilder aus Oberägypten, der Wüste und dem Rothen Meere*, p. 180 sq.

³ J. W. Boers, "Oud volksgebruik in het Rijk van Jambi," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1840, dl. i. p. 372 sqq.

territory, being forbidden apparently to return. "The idea seems to be that the spirit of the Rájá enters into the Bráhmaṇ who eats the *khitr* (rice and milk) out of his hand when he is dead, as the Brahman is apparently carefully watched during the whole year, and not allowed to go away." The same or a similar custom is believed to obtain among the hill states about Kangra.¹ At the installation of a prince of Carinthia a peasant, in whose family the office was hereditary, ascended a marble stone which stood surrounded by meadows in a spacious valley; on his right stood a black mother-cow, on his left a lean ugly mare. A rustic crowd gathered about him. Then the future prince, dressed as a peasant and carrying a shepherd's staff, drew near, attended by courtiers and magistrates. On perceiving him the peasant called out, "Who is this whom I see coming so proudly along?" The people answered, "The prince of the land." The peasant was then prevailed on to surrender the marble seat to the prince on condition of receiving sixty pence, the cow and mare, and exemption from taxes. But before yielding his place he gave the prince a light blow on the cheek.²

Some points about these temporary kings deserve to be specially noticed before we pass to the next branch of the evidence. In the first place, the Cambodian and Siamese examples show clearly that it is especially the divine or magical functions of the king which are transferred to his temporary substitute. This appears from the belief that by keeping up his foot the temporary king of Siam gained a victory over the evil spirits; whereas by letting it down he imperilled the existence of the state. Again, the Cambodian ceremony of trampling down the "mountain of rice," and the Siamese ceremony of opening the ploughing and sowing, are charms to produce a plentiful harvest, as appears from the belief that those who carry home some of the trampled rice or of the seed sown will thereby secure a good crop. Moreover, when the Siamese

¹ *Punjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 86, § 674.

² *Aeneas Sylvius, Opera* (Bäle, 1571), p. 409 sq.; J. Boemus, *Mores*,

leges, et ritus omnium gentium (Lyons, 1541), p. 244 sq.; Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, p. 253. According to Grimm, the cow and mare stood beside the prince, not the peasant.

representative of the king is guiding the plough, the people watch him anxiously, not to see whether he drives a straight furrow, but to mark the exact point on his leg to which the skirt of his silken robe reaches ; for on that is supposed to hang the state of the weather and the crops during the ensuing season. If the Lord of the Heavenly Hosts hitches up his garment above his knee, the weather will be wet and the heavy rains will spoil the harvest. If he lets it trail to his ankle a drought will be the consequence. But fine weather and heavy crops will follow if the hem of his robe hangs exactly half-way down the calf of his leg.¹ So closely is the course of nature, and with it the weal or woe of the people, dependent on the minutest act or gesture of the king's representative. But the task of making the crops grow, thus deputed to the temporary kings, is one of the magical functions regularly supposed to be discharged by kings in primitive society. The rule that the mock king must stand on one foot upon a raised seat in the rice-field was perhaps originally meant as a charm to make the crop grow high ; at least this was the object of a similar ceremony observed by the old Prussians. The tallest girl, standing on one foot upon a seat, with her lap full of cakes, a cup of brandy in her right hand and a piece of elm-bark or linden-bark in her left, prayed to the god Waizganthos that the flax might grow as high as she was standing. Then, after draining the cup, she had it refilled, and poured the brandy on the ground as an offering to Waizganthos, and threw down the cakes for his attendant sprites. If she remained steady on one foot throughout the ceremony, it was an omen that the flax crop would be good ; but if she let her foot down, it was feared that the crop might fail.² The same significance perhaps attaches to the

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 211.

² Lasicius, "De diis Samagitarum caeterorumque Sarmatarum," in *Res-publica sive Status Regni Poloniae, Lithuaniae, Prussiae, Livoniae*, etc. (Elzevir, 1627), p. 306 sq. ; *id.*, edited by W. Mannhardt in *Magazin herausgegeben von der Lettisch-Literarischen*

Gesellschaft, xiv. 91 sq. ; J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 27. There are, however, other occasions when superstition requires a person to stand on one foot. At Tokutoku, in Fiji, the grave-digger who turns the first sod has to stand on one leg, leaning on his digging stick (Rev. Lorimer Fison, in a letter to the author, dated August 26th, 1898).

swinging of the Brahmans, which the Lord of the Heavenly Hosts had formerly to witness standing on one foot. On the principles of sympathetic or imitative magic it might be thought that the higher the priests swing the higher will grow the rice. For the ceremony is described as a harvest festival,¹ and swinging is practised by the Letts of Russia with the avowed intention of influencing the growth of the crops. In the spring and early summer, between Easter and St. John's Day (the summer solstice), every Lettish peasant is said to devote his leisure hours to swinging diligently; for the higher he rises in the air the higher will his flax grow that season.² The gilded plough with which the Siamese mock king opens the ploughing may be compared with the bronze ploughs which the Etruscans employed at the ceremony of founding cities;³ in both cases the use of iron was probably forbidden on superstitious grounds.⁴

Another point to notice about these temporary kings is that in two places (Cambodia and Jambî) they come of a stock which is believed to be akin to the royal family. If the view here taken of the origin of these temporary kingships is correct, we can easily understand why the king's substitute should sometimes be of the same race as the king. When the king first succeeded in getting the life of another accepted as a sacrifice instead of his own, he would have to show that the death of that other would serve the purpose quite as well as his own would have done. Now it was as a god that the king had to die; therefore the substitute who died for him had to be invested, at least for the occasion, with the divine attributes of the king. This, as we have just seen, was certainly the case with the temporary kings of Siam and Cambodia; they were invested with the supernatural functions, which in an earlier stage of society were the special attributes of the king. But no one could so well represent the king in his divine

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 212.

² J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 25. With regard to swinging as a magical or religious rite see Note A at the end of the volume.

For other charms to make the crops grow tall by leaping, letting the hair hang loose, and so forth, see above, vol. i. p. 35 *sqq.*

³ Macrobius, *Saturni*, v. 19, 13.

⁴ See above, vol. i. p. 344 *sqq.*

character as his son, who might be supposed to share the divine afflatus of his father. No one, therefore, could so appropriately die for the king and, through him, for the whole people, as the king's son.

In ancient Greece there seems to have been at least one kingly house of great antiquity of which the eldest sons were always liable to be sacrificed in room of their royal sires. When Xerxes was marching through Thessaly at the head of his mighty host to attack the Spartans at Thermopylae, he came to the town of Alus. Here he was shown the sanctuary of Laphystian Zeus, about which his guides told him a strange tale. It ran somewhat as follows. Once upon a time the king of the country, by name Athamas, married a wife Nephele, and had by her a son called Phrixus and a daughter named Helle. Afterwards he took to himself a second wife called Ino, by whom he had two sons, Learchus and Melicertes. But his second wife was jealous of her step-children, Phrixus and Helle, and plotted their death. She went about very cunningly to compass her bad end. First of all she persuaded the women of the country to roast the seed corn secretly before it was committed to the ground. So next year no crops came up and the people died of famine. Then the king sent messengers to the oracle at Delphi to inquire the cause of the dearth. But the wicked step-mother bribed the messenger to give out as the answer of the god that the dearth would never cease till the children of Athamas by his first wife had been sacrificed to Zeus. When Athamas heard that, he sent for the children, who were with the sheep. But a ram with a fleece of gold opened his lips, and speaking with the voice of a man warned the children of their danger. So they mounted the ram and fled with him over land and sea. As they flew over the sea, the girl slipped from the animal's back, and falling into water was drowned. But her brother Phrixus was brought safe to the land of Colchis, where reigned a child of the Sun. Phrixus married the king's daughter, and she bore him a son Cytorus. And there he sacrificed the ram with the golden fleece to Zeus the God of Flight ; but some will have it that he sacrificed the animal to Laphystian Zeus.

The golden fleece itself he gave to his wife's father, who nailed it to an oak tree, guarded by a sleepless dragon in a sacred grove of Ares. Meanwhile at home an oracle had commanded that King Athamas himself should be sacrificed as an expiatory offering for the whole country. So the people decked him with garlands like a victim and led him to the altar, where they were just about to sacrifice him when he was rescued either by his grandson Cytisorus, who arrived in the nick of time from Colchis, or by Hercules, who brought tidings that the king's son Phrixus was yet alive. Thus Athamas was saved, but afterwards he went mad, and mistaking his son Learchus for a wild beast shot him dead. Next he attempted the life of his remaining son Melicertes, but the child was rescued by his mother Ino, who ran and threw herself and him from a high rock into the sea. Mother and son were changed into marine divinities, and the son received special homage in the isle of Tenedos, where babes were sacrificed to him. Thus bereft of wife and children the unhappy Athamas quitted his country, and on inquiring of the oracle where he should dwell was told to take up his abode wherever he should be entertained by wild beasts. He fell in with a pack of wolves devouring sheep, and when they saw him they fled and left him the bleeding remnants of their prey. In this way the oracle was fulfilled. But because King Athamas had not been sacrificed as a sin-offering for the whole country, it was divinely decreed that the eldest male scion of his family in each generation should be sacrificed without fail, if ever he set foot in the town-hall, where the offerings were made to Laphystian Zeus by one of the house of Athamas. Many of the family, Xerxes was informed, had fled to foreign lands to escape this doom; but some of them had returned long afterwards, and being caught by the sentinels in the act of entering the town-hall were wreathed as victims, led forth in procession, and sacrificed.¹ These

¹ Herodotus, vii. 197; Apollodorus, i. 9. 1-3; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 257; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 21, 229; Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, ii. 653; Eustathius, on Homer, *Iliad*, vii. 86, p. 667; *id.*, on

Odyssey, v. 339, p. 1543; Pausanias, i. 44. 7, ix. 34. 7; Zenobius, iv. 38; Plutarch, *De Superstitione*, 5; Hyginus, *Fab.* 1-5; *id.*, *Astronomica*, ii. 20; Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* v. 241. The story is told or alluded to by these writers

instances appear to have been notorious, if not frequent; for the writer of a dialogue attributed to Plato, after speaking of the immolation of human victims by the Carthaginians, adds that such practices were not unknown among the Greeks, and he refers with horror to the sacrifices offered on Mount Lycaeus and by the descendants of Athamas.¹

The suspicion that this barbarous custom by no means fell into disuse even in later days is strengthened by a case of human sacrifice which occurred in Plutarch's time at Orchomenus, a very ancient city of Boeotia, distant only a few miles across the plain from the historian's birthplace. Here dwelt a family of which the men went by the name of Psoloeis or "sooty," and the women by the name of Oleae or "destructive." Every year at the festival of the Agrionia the priest of Dionysus pursued these women with a drawn sword, and if he overtook one of them he had the right to slay her. In Plutarch's lifetime the right was actually exercised by a priest Zoilus. Now the family thus liable to furnish at least one human victim every year was of royal descent, for they traced their lineage to Minyas, the famous old king of Orchomenus, the monarch of fabulous wealth, whose stately treasury, as it is called, still stands in ruins at the point where the long rocky hill of Orchomenus melts into the vast level expanse of the Copaic plain. Tradition ran that the king's three daughters long despised the other women of the country for yielding to the Bacchic frenzy, and sat at home in the king's house scornfully plying the distaff and the loom, while the rest, wreathed with flowers, their dishevelled locks streaming to the wind, roamed in ecstasy the barren mountains that rise above Orchomenus, making the solitudes of the hills to echo to the wild music of cymbals and tambourines. But in time the divine fury infected even the royal damsels in their quiet chamber; they were seized with a fierce longing to partake of human

with some variations of detail. In piecing their accounts together I have chosen the features which seemed to be the most archaic. According to Phercydes, one of the oldest writers on Greek legendary history, Phrixus offered himself as a voluntary victim

when the crops were perishing (Schol. on Pindar, *Pyth.* iv. 288). On the whole subject see K. O. Müller, *Orchomenus und die Minyer*,² pp. 156, 171.

¹ Plato, *Minos*, p. 315 C.

flesh, and cast lots among themselves which should give up her child to furnish a cannibal feast. The lot fell on Leucippe, and she surrendered her son Hippasus, who was torn limb from limb by the three. From these misguided women sprang the Oleae and the Psoloeis, of whom the men were said to be so called because they wore sad-coloured raiment in token of their mourning and grief.¹

Now this practice of taking human victims from a family of royal descent at Orchomenus is all the more significant because Athamas himself is said to have reigned in the land of Orchomenus even before the time of Minyas, and because over against the city there rises Mount Laphystius, on which, as at Alus in Thessaly, there was a sanctuary of Laphystian Zeus, where, according to tradition, Athamas purposed to sacrifice his two children Phrixus and Helle.² On the whole, comparing the traditions about Athamas with the custom that obtained with regard to his descendants in historical times, we may fairly infer that in Thessaly and probably in Boeotia there reigned of old a dynasty of which the kings were liable to be sacrificed for the good of the country to the god called Laphystian Zeus, but that they contrived to shift the fatal responsibility to their offspring, of whom the eldest son was regularly destined to the altar. As time went on, the cruel custom was so far mitigated that a ram was accepted as a vicarious sacrifice in room of the royal victim, provided always that the prince abstained from setting foot in the town-hall where the sacrifices were offered to Laphystian Zeus by one of his kinsmen.³ But if he

¹ Plutarch, *Quaest. Graec.* 38; Antoninus Liberalis, *Transform.* 10; Ovid, *Metam.* iv. 1 sqq.

² Pausanias, ix. 34. 5 sqq.; Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, iii. 265 sq.; Hellanicus, cited by the Scholiast on Apollonius, i.e. Apollodorus speaks of Athamas as reigning over Boeotia (*Bibliotheca*, i. 9. 1); Tzetzes calls him king of Thebes (*Schol. on Lycophron*, 21).

³ The old Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius (*Argon.* ii. 653) tells us that down to his time it was customary for one of the descendants of Athamas to

enter the town-hall and sacrifice to Laphystian Zeus. K. O. Müller sees in this custom a mitigation of the ancient rule—instead of being themselves sacrificed, the scions of royalty were now permitted to offer sacrifice (*Orchomenus und die Minyer*,² p. 158). But this need not have been so. The obligation to serve as victims in certain circumstances lay only on the eldest male of each generation in the direct line; the sacrificers may have been younger brothers or more remote relations of the destined victims. It may be observed that in a dynasty of which the

were rash enough to enter the place of doom, to thrust himself wilfully, as it were, on the notice of the god who had good-naturedly winked at the substitution of a ram, the ancient obligation which had been suffered to lie in abeyance recovered all its force, and there was no help for it but he must die. The tradition which associated the sacrifice of the king or his children with a great dearth points clearly to the belief, so common among primitive folk, that the king is responsible for the weather and the crops, and that he may justly pay with his life for the inclemency of the one or the failure of the other. Athamas and his line, in short, appear to have united divine or magical with royal functions; and this view is strongly supported by the claims to divinity which Salmoneus, the brother of Athamas, is said to have set up. We have seen that this presumptuous mortal professed to be no other than Zeus himself, and to wield the thunder and lightning, of which he made a trumpety imitation by the help of tinkling kettles and blazing torches.¹ If we may judge from analogy, his mock thunder and lightning were no mere scenic exhibition designed to deceive and impress the beholders; they were enchantments practised by the royal magician for the purpose of bringing about the celestial phenomena which they feebly mimicked.²

Among the Semites of Western Asia the king, in a time

eldest males were regularly sacrificed, the kings, if they were not themselves the victims, must always have been younger sons.

¹ See vol. i. p. 113 sq.

² I have followed K. O. Müller (*Orchomenus und die Mynier*,² pp. 160, 166 sq.) in regarding the ram which saved Phrixus as a mythical expression for the substitution of a ram for a human victim. He points out that a ram was the proper victim to sacrifice to Trophonius (Pausanias, ix. 39. 6), whose very ancient worship was practised at Lebadea not far from Orchomenus. The principle of vicarious sacrifices was familiar enough to the Greeks, as K. O. Müller does not fail to indicate. At Potniae, near Thebes, goats were

substituted as victims instead of boys in the sacrifices offered to Dionysus (Pausanias, ix. 8. 2). Once when an oracle commanded that a girl should be sacrificed to Munychian Artemis in order to stay a plague or famine, a goat dressed up as a girl was sacrificed instead (Eustathius on Homer, *Iliad*, ii. 732, p. 331; Apostolius, vii. 10; *Paroemiogr. Graeci*, ed. Leutsch et Schneidewin, ii. 402; Suidas, s.v. *Ευβοῖος*). At Salamis in Cyprus a man was annually sacrificed to Aphrodite and afterwards to Diomedes, but in later times an ox was substituted (Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 54). At Laodicea in Syria a deer took the place of a maiden as the victim yearly offered to Athena (Porphyry, *op. cit.* ii. 56).

of national danger, sometimes gave his own son to die as a sacrifice for the people. Thus Philo of Byblus, in his work on the Jews, says: "It was an ancient custom in a crisis of great danger that the ruler of a city or nation should give his beloved son to die for the whole people, as a ransom offered to the avenging demons; and the children thus offered were slain with mystic rites. So Cronus, whom the Phoenicians call Israel, being king of the land and having an only-begotten son called Jeoud (for in the Phoenician tongue Jeoud signifies 'only-begotten'), dressed him in royal robes and sacrificed him upon an altar in a time of war, when the country was in great danger from the enemy."¹ When the king of Moab was besieged by the Israelites and hard beset, he took his eldest son, who should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall.²

But amongst the Semites the practice of sacrificing their children was not confined to kings. In times of great calamity, such as pestilence, drought, or defeat in war, the Phoenicians used to sacrifice one of their dearest to Baal. "Phoenician history," says an ancient writer, "is full of such sacrifices."³ The writer of a dialogue ascribed to Plato observes that the Carthaginians immolated human beings as if it were right and lawful to do so, and some of them, he adds, even sacrificed their own sons to Baal.⁴ When Gelo, tyrant of Syracuse, defeated the Carthaginians in the great battle of Himera he required as a condition of peace that they should sacrifice their children to Baal no longer.⁵ But the barbarous custom was too inveterate and too agreeable to Semitic modes of thought to be so easily eradicated, and the humane stipulation of the Greek despot probably remained a dead letter. At all events the history of this remarkable people, who combined in so high a degree the spirit of commercial enterprise with a blind attachment to a stern and gloomy religion, is stained in later times with instances of the same cruel superstition. When the Carthaginians were

¹ Philo of Byblus, quoted by Eusebius, *Præpar. Evang.* i. 10. 29 sq.

² 2 Kings iii. 27.

³ Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 56.

⁴ Plato, *Minos*, p. 315 C.

⁵ Plutarch, *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata*, Gelon. 1.

defeated and besieged by Agathocles, they ascribed their disasters to the wrath of Baal; for whereas in former times they had been wont to sacrifice to him their own offspring, they had latterly fallen into the habit of buying children and rearing them to be victims. So, to appease the angry god, two hundred children of the noblest families were picked out for sacrifice, and the tale of victims was swelled by not less than three hundred more who volunteered to die for the fatherland. They were sacrificed by being placed, one by one, on the sloping hands of the brazen image, from which they rolled into a pit of fire.¹ Childless people among the Carthaginians bought children from poor parents and slaughtered them, says Plutarch, as if they were lambs or chickens; and the mother had to stand by and see it done without a tear or a groan, for if she wept or moaned she lost all the credit and the child was sacrificed none the less. But all the place in front of the image was filled with a tumultuous music of fifes and drums to drown the shrieks of the victims.² Infants were publicly sacrificed by the Carthaginians down to the proconsulate of Tiberius, who crucified the priests on the trees beside their temples. Yet the practice still went on secretly in the lifetime of Tertullian.³

Among the Canaanites or aboriginal inhabitants of Palestine, whom the invading Israelites conquered but did not exterminate, the grisly custom of burning their children in honour of Baal or Moloch seems to have been regularly practised.⁴ To the best representatives of the Hebrew people, the authors of their noble literature, such rites were abhorrent, and they warned their fellow-countrymen against participating in them. "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found with thee any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth divination,

¹ Diodorus, xx. 14.

² Plutarch, *De superstitione*, 13.

³ Tertullian, *Apologeticus* 6. Compare Justin, xviii. 6. 12.

⁴ "Every abomination to the Lord,

which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods," Deuteronomy xii. 31. Here and in what follows I quote the Revised English Version.

one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee."¹ Again we read: "And thou shalt not give any of thy seed to pass through the fire to Molech."² Whatever effect these warnings may have had in the earlier days of Israelitish history, there is abundant evidence that in later times the Hebrews lapsed, or rather perhaps relapsed, into that congenial mire of superstition from which the higher spirits of the nation were ever struggling—too often in vain—to rescue them. The Psalmist laments that his erring countrymen "mingled themselves with the nations, and learned their works: and they served their idols; which became a snare unto them: yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto demons, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood."³ When the Hebrew annalist has recorded how Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, besieged Samaria for three years and took it and carried Israel away into captivity, he explains that this was a divine punishment inflicted on his people for having fallen in with the evil ways of the Canaanites. They had built high places in all their cities, and set up pillars and sacred poles (*asherim*) upon every high hill and under every green tree; and there they burnt incense after the manner of the heathen. "And they forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments."⁴ At Jerusalem in these days there was a regularly appointed place where parents burned their children, both boys and girls, in honour of Baal or Moloch. It was in the valley of Hinnom, just outside the walls of the city, and bore the name, infamous ever since, of Tophet. The practice is referred to again and

¹ Deuteronomy xviii. 9-12.

² Leviticus xviii. 21.

³ Psalms cvi. 35-38.

⁴ 2 Kings ii. 5-17.

again with sorrowful indignation by the prophets.¹ The kings of Judah set an example to their people by burning their own children at the usual place. Thus of Ahaz, who reigned sixteen years at Jerusalem, we are told that "he burnt incense in the valley of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire."² Again, King Manasseh, whose long reign covered fifty-five years, "made his children to pass through the fire in the valley of Hinnom."³ Afterwards in the reign of the good king Josiah the idolatrous excesses of the people were repressed, at least for a time, and among other measures of reform Tophet was defiled by the King's orders, "that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech."⁴ Whether the place was ever used again for the same dark purpose as before does not appear. Long afterwards, under the sway of a milder faith, there was little in the valley to recall the tragic scenes which it had so often witnessed. Jerome describes it as a pleasant and shady spot, watered by the rills of Siloam and laid out in delightful gardens.⁵

It would be interesting, though it might be fruitless, to inquire how far the Hebrew prophets and psalmists were right in their opinion that the Israelites learned these and other gloomy superstitions only through contact with the old inhabitants of the land, that the primitive purity of faith and morals which they brought with them from the free air of

¹ "And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire," Jeremiah vii. 31; "And have built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons in the fire for burnt offerings unto Baal," *id.*, xix. 5; "And they build the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech," *id.*, xxxii. 35; "Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Were thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them up, in causing them to pass through the

fire unto them?" Ezekiel xvi. 20 *sq.*; compare xx. 26, 31. A comparison of these passages shows that the expression "to cause to pass through the fire," so often employed in this connection in Scripture, meant to burn the children in the fire. Some have attempted to interpret the words in a milder sense. See J. Spencer, *De legibus Hebræorum*, p. 288 *sqq.*

² 2 Chronicles xxviii. 3. In the corresponding passage of 2 Kings (xvi. 3) it is said that Ahaz "made his son to pass through the fire."

³ 2 Chronicles xxxiii. 6; compare 2 Kings xxi. 6.

⁴ 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

⁵ Jerome on Jeremiah vii. 31, quoted in Winer's *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*,² s.v. "Thopeth."

the desert was tainted and polluted by the grossness and corruption of the heathen in the fat land of Canaan. When we remember, however, that the Israelites were of the same Semitic stock as the population they conquered and professed to despise,¹ and that the practice of human sacrifice is attested for many branches of the Semitic race, we shall, perhaps, incline to surmise that the chosen people may have brought with them into Palestine the seeds which afterwards sprang up and bore such ghastly fruit in the valley of Hinnom. It is at least significant of the prevalence of such customs among the Semites that no sooner were the child-burning Israelites carried off by King Shalmaneser to Assyria than their place was taken by Babylonian colonists who practised precisely the same rites in honour of deities who probably differed in little but name from those revered by the idolatrous Hebrews. "The Sepharvites," we are told, "burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim."² The pious Jewish historian, who saw in Israel's exile God's punishment for sin, has suggested no explanation of that mystery in the divine economy which suffered the Sepharvites to continue on the same spot the very same abominations for which the erring Hebrews had just been so signally chastised.

We have still to ask which of their children the Semites picked out for sacrifice; for that a choice was made and some principle of selection followed, may be taken for granted. A people who burned all their children indiscriminately would soon extinguish themselves, and such an excess of piety is probably rare, if not unknown. In point of fact it seems, at least among the Hebrews, to have been only the firstborn child that was doomed to the flames. The prophet Micah asks, in a familiar passage, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with

¹ The Tel El-Amarna tablets prove that "the pre-Israelitish inhabitants of Canaan were closely akin to the Hebrews, and that they spoke substantially the same language" (S. R.

Driver, in *Authority and Archaeology, Sacred and Profane*, edited by D. G. Hogarth (London, 1899), p. 76).

² 2 Kings xvii. 31.

ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" These were the questions which pious and doubting hearts were putting to themselves in the days of the prophet. The prophet's own answer is not doubtful. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"¹ It is a noble answer and one which only elect spirits in that or, perhaps, in any age have given. In Israel the vulgar answer was given on bloody altars and in the smoke and flames of Tophet, and the form in which the prophet's question is cast—"Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression?"—shows plainly on which of the children the duty of atoning for the sins of their father was supposed to fall. A passage in Ezekiel points no less clearly to the same conclusion. The prophet represents God as saying, "I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgements wherein they should not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate." That the writer was here thinking specially of the sacrifice of children is proved by his own words a little later on. "When ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, do ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, unto this day?"² Further, that by the words "to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb" he referred only to the firstborn can easily be shown by the language of Scripture in reference to that law of the consecration of firstlings which Ezekiel undoubtedly had in his mind when he wrote this passage. Thus we find that law enunciated in the following terms: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."³ Again, it is written: "Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the womb, and every firstling which thou hast that cometh of a beast; the males shall be the Lord's."⁴ Once more: "All that openeth the womb is mine; and all thy cattle that is

¹ Micah vi. 6-8.

² Ezekiel xx. 25, 26, 31.

³ Exodus xiii. 1 sq.

⁴ Exodus xiii. 12.

male, the firstlings of ox and sheep."¹ This ancient Hebrew custom of the consecration to God of all male firstlings, whether of man or beast, was merely the application to the animal kingdom of the law that all first fruits whatsoever belong to the deity and must be made over to him or his representatives. That general law is thus stated by the Hebrew legislator: "Thou shalt not delay to offer of the abundance of thy fruits, and of thy liquors. The firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with its dam; and on the eighth day thou shalt give it me."²

Thus the god of the Hebrews plainly regarded the first-born of men and the firstlings of animals as his own, and required that they should be made over to him. But how? Here a distinction was drawn between sheep, oxen, and goats on the one hand and men and asses on the other; the firstlings of the former were always sacrificed, the firstlings of the latter were generally redeemed. "The firstling of an ox, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem; they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire for a sweet savour unto the Lord." The flesh went to the Levites,³ who consumed it, no doubt, instead of the deity whom they represented. On the other hand, the ass was not sacrificed by the Israelites, probably because they did not eat the animal themselves, and hence concluded that God did not do so either. In the matter of diet the taste of gods generally presents a striking resemblance to

¹ Exodus xxxiv. 19. In the Authorised Version the passage runs thus: "All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male."

² Exodus xxii. 29 sq. The Authorised Version has "the first of thy ripe fruits" instead of "the abundance of thy fruits."

³ Numbers xviii. 17 sq. Elsewhere, however, we read: "All the firstling males that are born of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the Lord thy God: thou shalt do no work

with the firstling of thine ox, nor shear the firstling of thy flock. Thou shalt eat it before the Lord thy God year by year in the place which the Lord shall choose, thou and thy household," Deuteronomy xv. 19 sq. Compare Deuteronomy xii. 6 sq., 17 sq. To reconcile this ordinance with the other we must suppose that the flesh was divided between the Levite and the owner of the animal. But perhaps the rule in Deuteronomy may represent the old custom which obtained before the rise of the priestly caste.

that of their worshippers. Still the firstling ass, like all other firstlings, was sacred to the deity, and since it was not sacrificed to him, he had to receive an equivalent for it. In other words, the ass had to be redeemed, and the price of the redemption was a lamb which was burnt as a vicarious sacrifice instead of the ass, on the hypothesis, apparently, that roast lamb is likely to be more palatable to the Supreme Being than roast donkey. If the ass was not redeemed, it had to be killed by having its neck broken.¹ The firstlings of other unclean animals and of men were redeemed for five shekels a head, which were paid to the Levites.²

We can now readily understand why so many of the Hebrews, at least in the later days of their history, sacrificed their firstborn children, and why tender-hearted parents, whose affection for their offspring exceeded their devotion to the deity, may often have been visited with compunction, and even tormented with feelings of bitter self-reproach and shame at their carnal weakness in suffering the beloved son to live, when they saw others, with an heroic piety which they could not emulate, calmly resigning their dear ones to the fire, through which, as they firmly believed, they passed to God, to reap, perhaps, in endless bliss in heaven the reward of their sharp but transient sufferings on earth. From infancy they had been bred up in the belief that the firstborn was sacred to God, and though they knew that he had waived his right to them in consideration of the receipt of five shekels a head, they could hardly view this as anything but an act of gracious condescension, of generous liberality on the part of the divinity who had stooped to accept so trifling a sum instead of the life which really belonged to him. "Surely," they might argue, "God would be better pleased if we were to give him not the money but the life, not the poor paltry shekels, but what we value most, our first and best-loved child. If we hold that life so dear, will not he also? It is his. Why should we not give him his own?" It was in answer to anxious questions such as these, and to quiet truly conscientious scruples of this sort that the prophet Micah declared that what God required of

¹ Exodus xiii. 13, xxxiv. 20.

² Numbers xviii. 15 sq. Cp. Numbers iii. 46-51; Exodus xiii. 13, xxxiv. 20.

his true worshippers was not sacrifice but justice and mercy and humility. It is the answer of morality to religion—of the growing consciousness that man's duty is not to propitiate with vain oblations those mysterious powers of the universe of which he can know little or nothing, but to be just and merciful in his dealings with his fellows and to humbly trust, though he cannot know, that by acting thus he will best please the higher powers, whatever they may be.

But while morality ranges itself on the side of the prophet, it may be questioned whether history and precedent were not on the side of his adversaries. If the firstborn of men and cattle were alike sacred to God, and the firstborn of cattle were regularly sacrificed, while the firstborn of men were ransomed by a money payment, has not this last provision the appearance of being a later mitigation of an older and harsher custom which doomed firstborn children, like firstling lambs and calves and goats, to the altar or the fire? The suspicion is greatly strengthened by the remarkable tradition told to account for the sanctity of the firstborn. When Israel was in bondage in Egypt, so runs the tradition, God resolved to deliver them from captivity, and to lead them to the Promised Land. But the Egyptians were loth to part with their bondmen and thwarted the divine purpose by refusing to let the Israelites go. Accordingly God afflicted these cruel taskmasters with one plague after another, but all in vain, until at last he made up his mind to resort to a strong measure, which would surely have the desired effect. At dead of night he would pass through the land killing all the firstborn of the Egyptians, both man and beast; not one of them would be left alive in the morning. But the Israelites were warned of what was about to happen and told to keep indoors that night, and to put a mark on their houses, so that when he passed down the street on his errand of slaughter, God might know them at sight from the houses of the Egyptians and not turn in and massacre the wrong children and animals. The mark was to be the blood of a lamb smeared on the lintel and side posts of the door. In every house the lamb, whose red blood was to be the badge of Israel that night, as the white scarves were the badge of

the Catholics on the night of St. Bartholomew, was to be killed at evening and eaten by the household, with very peculiar rites, during the hours of darkness while the butchery was proceeding; none of the flesh was to see the morning light; whatever the family could not eat was to be burned with fire. All this was done. The massacre of Egyptian children and animals was successfully perpetrated and had the desired effect; and to commemorate this great triumph God ordained that all the firstborn of man and beast among the Israelites should be sacred to him ever afterwards in the manner already described, the edible animals to be sacrificed, and the uneatable, especially men and asses, to be ransomed by a substitute or by a pecuniary payment of so much a head. And a festival was to be celebrated every spring with rites exactly like those which were observed on the night of the great slaughter. The divine command was obeyed, and the festival thus instituted was the Passover.¹

The one thing that looms clear through the haze of this weird tradition is the memory of a great massacre of first-born. This was the origin, we are told, both of the sanctity of the firstborn and the feast of the Passover. But when we are further told that the people whose firstborn were slaughtered on that occasion were not the Hebrews but their enemies, we are at once met by serious difficulties. Why, we may ask, should the Israelites kill the firstlings of their cattle for ever because God once killed those of the Egyptians? and why should every Hebrew father have to pay God a ransom for his firstborn child because God once slew all the firstborn children of the Egyptians? In this form the tradition offers no intelligible explanation of the custom. But it at once becomes clear and intelligible when we assume that in the original version of the story it was the Hebrew firstborn that were slain; that in fact the slaughter of the firstborn children was formerly, what the slaughter of the firstborn cattle always continued to be, not an isolated

¹ Exodus xi.-xiii. 16; Numbers iii. 13, viii. 17. In Western Africa, when a pestilence or an attack of enemies is expected, it is customary to sacrifice sheep and goats and smear

their blood on the gateways of the village (Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 454, compare p. 451).

butchery but a regular custom, which with the growth of more humane sentiments was afterwards softened into the vicarious sacrifice of a lamb and the payment of a ransom for each child. Here the reader may be reminded of another Hebrew tradition in which the sacrifice of the firstborn child is indicated still more clearly. Abraham, we are informed, was commanded by God to offer up his firstborn son Isaac as a burnt sacrifice, and was on the point of obeying the divine command, when God, content with this proof of his faith and obedience, substituted for the human victim a ram, which Abraham accordingly sacrificed instead of his son.¹ Putting the two traditions together and observing how exactly they dovetail into each other and into the later Hebrew practice of actually sacrificing the firstborn children by fire to Baal or Moloch, we can hardly resist the conclusion that, before the practice of redeeming them was introduced, the Hebrews, like the other branches of the Semitic race, regularly sacrificed their firstborn children by the fire or the knife. The Passover, if this view is right, was the occasion when the awful sacrifice was offered; and the tradition of its origin has preserved in its main outlines a vivid memory of the horrors of these fearful nights. They must have been like the nights called *Evil* on the west coast of Africa, in Dahomey and Ashantee, when the people keep indoors, because the executioners are going about the streets and the heads of the human victims are falling in the king's palace. But seen in the lurid light of superstition or of legend they were no common mortals, no vulgar executioners, who did the dreadful work at the first Passover. The Angel of Death was abroad that night; into every house he entered, and a sound of lamentation followed him as he came forth with his dripping sword. The blood that bespattered the lintel and door-posts would at first be the blood of the firstborn child of the house; and when the blood of a lamb was afterwards substituted, we may suppose that it was intended not so much to appease as to cheat the ghastly visitant. Seeing the red drops in the doorway he would say to himself, "That is the blood of their child. I need not turn in there. I have many yet to slay before the

¹ Genesis xxii. 1-13.

morning breaks gray in the east." And he would pass on in haste. And the trembling parents, as they clasped their little one to their breast, might fancy that they heard his footfalls growing fainter and fainter down the street. In plain words, we may surmise that the slaughter was originally done by masked men, like the Mumbo Jumbos and similar figures of West Africa, who went from house to house and were believed by the uninitiated to be the deity or his divine messengers come in person to carry off the victims. When the leaders had decided to allow the sacrifice of animals instead of children, they would give the people a hint that if they only killed a lamb and smeared its blood on the door-posts, the bloodthirsty but near-sighted deity would never know the difference.

If this be indeed the origin of the Passover and of the sanctity of the firstborn among the Hebrews, the whole of the Semitic evidence on the subject is seen to fall into line at once. The children whom the Carthaginians, Phoenicians, Canaanites, Moabites, Sepharvites, and probably other branches of the Semitic race burnt in the fire would be their firstborn only, although in general ancient writers have failed to indicate this limitation of the custom. For the Moabites, indeed, the limitation is clearly indicated, if not expressly stated, when we read that the king of Moab offered his eldest son, who should have reigned after him, as a burnt sacrifice on the wall.¹ For the Phoenicians it comes out less distinctly in the statement of Porphyry that the Phoenicians used to sacrifice one of their dearest to Baal, and in the legend recorded by Philo of Byblus that Cronus sacrificed his only-begotten son.² We may suppose that the custom of sacrificing the firstborn both of men and animals was a very ancient Semitic institution, which many branches of the race kept up within historical times; but that the Hebrews, while they maintained the custom in regard to domestic cattle, were led by their loftier morality to discard it in respect of children, and to replace it by a merciful law that firstborn children should be ransomed instead of sacrificed.³

¹ 2 Kings iii. 27.

² See above, p. 39.

³ As to the redemption of the first-

born among modern Jews, see L. Löw, *Die Lebensalter in der jüdischen Literatur* (Szegedin, 1875), pp. 110-118.

The conclusion that the Hebrew custom of redeeming the firstborn is a modification of an older custom of sacrificing them has been mentioned by some very distinguished scholars only to be rejected on the ground, apparently, of its extreme improbability.¹ To me the converging lines of evidence which point to this conclusion seem too numerous and too distinct to be thus lightly brushed aside. And the argument from improbability can easily be rebutted by pointing to other peoples who are known to have practised or to be still practising a custom of the same sort. In some tribes of New South Wales the firstborn child of every woman was eaten by the tribe as part of a religious ceremony.² Amongst the people of Senjero in Eastern Africa we are told that many families must offer up their firstborn sons as sacrifices, because once upon a time, when summer and winter were jumbled together in a bad season, and the fruits of the earth would not ripen, the soothsayers enjoined it. At that time a great pillar of iron is said to have stood at the entrance of the capital, which in accordance with the advice of the soothsayers was broken down by order of the king, whereupon the seasons became regular again. To avert the recurrence of such a calamity the wizards commanded the king to pour human blood once a year on the base of the broken shaft of the pillar, and also upon the throne. Since then certain families have been obliged to deliver up their firstborn sons, who are sacrificed at an appointed time.³ Among some tribes of South-Eastern Africa it is a rule that when a woman's husband has been killed in battle and she marries again, the first child she gives birth to after her second marriage must be put to death, whether she has it by

¹ J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*,² p. 90; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² p. 464.

² Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 311. In the Luritcha tribe of Central Australia "young children are sometimes killed and eaten, and it is not an infrequent custom, when a child is in weak health, to kill a younger and healthy one and then to feed the weakling on its flesh,

the idea being that this will give the weak child the strength of the stronger one" (Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 475).

³ J. L. Krapf, *Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours during an eighteen years' Residence in Eastern Africa* (London, 1860), p. 69 sq. Dr. Krapf, who reports the custom at second hand, thinks that the existence of the pillar may be doubted, but that the rest of the story harmonises well enough with African superstition.

her first or her second husband. Such a child is called "the child of the assegai," and if it were not killed, death or an accident would be sure to befall the second spouse, and the woman herself would be barren. The notion is that the woman must have had some share in the misfortune that overtook her first husband, and that the only way of removing the malign influence is to slay "the child of the assegai."¹ The heathen Russians often sacrificed their firstborn to the god Perun.² The Kutonaqa Indians of British Columbia worship the sun and sacrifice their firstborn children to him. When a woman is with child she prays to the sun, saying, "I am with child. When it is born I shall offer it to you. Have pity upon us." Thus they expect to secure health and good fortune for their families.³ Among the Coast Salish Indians of the same region the first child is often sacrificed to the sun in order to ensure the health and prosperity of the whole family.⁴ The Indians of Florida sacrificed their firstborn male children.⁵ Among the Indians of North Carolina down to the early part of the eighteenth century a remarkable ceremony was performed, which seems to be most naturally interpreted as a modification of an older custom of putting the king's son to death, perhaps as a substitute for his father. It is thus described by a writer of that period: "They have a strange custom or ceremony amongst them, to call to mind the persecutions and death of the kings their ancestors slain by their enemies at certain seasons, and particularly when the savages have been at war with any nation, and return from their country without bringing home some prisoners of war, or the heads

¹ J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p. 156. In the text I have embodied some fuller explanations and particulars which my friend the Rev. Mr. Macdonald was good enough to send me in a letter dated September 16th, 1899. Among the tribes with which Mr. Macdonald is best acquainted the custom is obsolete and lives only in tradition; formerly it was universally practised.

² F. J. Mone, *Geschichte des Heidentums im nördlichen Europa*, i. 119.

³ Fr. Boas, in "Fourth Annual

Report on the North-Western tribes of Canada," *Report of the British Association for 1888*, p. 242; *id.*, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 52 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*).

⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 46 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*).

⁵ Strachey, *Historie of travaille into Virginia Britannia* (Hakluyt Society), p. 84.

of their enemies. The king causes as a perpetual remembrance of all his predecessors to beat and wound the best beloved of all his children with the same weapons wherewith they had been kill'd in former times, to the end that by renewing the wound, their death should be lamented afresh. The king and his nation being assembled on these occasions, a feast is prepared, and the Indian who is authorised to wound the king's son, runs about the house like a distracted person crying and making a most hideous noise all the time with the weapon in his hand, wherewith he wounds the king's son; this he performs three several times, during which interval he presents the king with victuals or *cassena*, and it is very strange to see the Indian that is thus struck never offers to stir till he is wounded the third time, after which he falls down backwards stretching out his arms and legs as if he had been ready to expire; then the rest of the king's sons and daughters, together with the mother and vast numbers of women and girls fall at his feet and lament and cry most bitterly. During this time the king and his retinue are feasting, yet with such profound silence for some hours, that not one word or even a whisper is to be heard amongst them. After this manner they continue till night, which ends in singing, dancing, and the greatest joy imaginable."¹ In this account the description of the frantic manner assumed by the person whose duty it was to wound the king's son reminds us of the frenzy of King Athamas when he took or attempted the lives of his children.² The same feature is said to have characterised the sacrifice of children in Peru. "When any person of note was sick and the priest said he must die, they sacrificed his son, desiring the idol to be satisfied with him and not to take away his father's life. The ceremonies used at these sacrifices were strange, for they behaved themselves like mad men. They believed that all calamities were occasioned by sin, and that sacrifices were the remedy."³ An early Spanish historian of the conquest of Peru, in

¹ J. Bricknell, *The Natural History of North Carolina* (Dublin, 1737), p. 342 sq. I have taken the liberty of altering slightly the writer's somewhat eccentric punctuation.

² See above, p. 35.

³ Herrera, *The general history of the vast continent and islands of America* (translated by Stevens), iv. 347 sq.

describing the Indians of the Peruvian valleys between San-Miguel and Caxamalca, records that "they have disgusting sacrifices and temples of idols which they hold in great veneration; they offer them their most precious possessions. Every month they sacrifice their own children and smear with the blood of the victims the face of the idols and the doors of the temples."¹ Among the ancient Italian peoples, especially of the Sabine stock, it was customary in seasons of great peril or public calamity, as when the crops had failed or a pestilence was raging, to vow that they would sacrifice to the gods every creature, whether man or beast, that should be born in the following spring. To the creatures thus devoted to sacrifice the name of "the sacred spring" was applied. "But since," says Festus, "it seemed cruel to slay innocent boys and girls, they were kept till they had grown up, then veiled and driven beyond the boundaries."² Several Italian peoples, for example the Piceni, Samnites, and Hirpini, traced their origin to a "sacred spring," that is, to the consecrated youth who had swarmed off from the parent stock in consequence of such a vow.³ When the Romans were engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Hannibal after their great defeat at the Trasimene Lake, they vowed to offer a "sacred spring" if victory should attend their arms and the commonwealth should retrieve its shattered fortunes. But the vow extended only to all the offspring of sheep, goats, oxen, and swine that should be brought forth on Italian mountains, plains, and meadows the following spring.⁴ On a later occasion, when the

¹ Fr. Xeres, *Relation véridique de la conquête du Pérou et de la Province de Cusco nommée Nouvelle-Castille* (in Ternaux-Compans's *Voyages, Relations et Mémoires*, etc., Paris, 1837), p. 53.

² Festus, *De verborum significatiane*, ed. Müller, p. 379, compare p. 158; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 796; Nonius Marcellus, s.v. "ver sacrum," p. 522 (p. 610, ed. Quicherat); Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 16. Dionysius says that many Greek and barbarian peoples had practised the same custom.

³ Strabo, v. 4. 2 and 12; Pliny, *Nat.*

Hist. iii. 110; Festus, *De signif. verb.*, ed. Müller, p. 106. It is worthy of note that the three swarms which afterwards developed into the Piceni, the Samnites, and the Hirpini were said to have been guided by a woodpecker, a bull, and a wolf respectively, of which the woodpecker (*picus*) and the wolf (*hirpus*) gave their names to the Piceni and the Hirpini. The tradition may perhaps preserve a trace of totemism, but in the absence of clearer evidence it would be rash to assume that it does so.

⁴ Livy, xxii. 9 sq.; Plutarch, *Fabius Maximus*, 4.

Romans pledged themselves again by a similar vow, it was decided that by the "sacred spring" should be meant all the cattle born between the first day of March and the last day of April.¹ Although within historical memory the Italian peoples appear to have resorted to measures of this sort only in special emergencies, it seems not impossible that at an earlier time they may, like the Hebrews and perhaps the Semites in general, have been in the habit of dedicating all the firstborn, whether of man or beast, and sacrificing them at a great festival in spring.²

With the preceding evidence before us we may safely infer that a custom of allowing a king to kill his son, as a substitute or vicarious sacrifice for himself, would be in no way exceptional or surprising, at least in Semitic lands, where indeed religion seems at one time to have recommended or enjoined every man, as a duty that he owed to his god, to take the life of his eldest son. And it would be entirely in accordance with analogy if, long after the barbarous custom had been dropped by others, it continued to be observed by kings, who remain in many respects the representatives of a vanished world, solitary pinnacles that topple over the rising waste of waters under which the past lies buried. We have seen that in Greece two families of royal descent remained liable to furnish human victims from their number down to a time when the rest of their fellow-countrymen and countrywomen ran hardly more risk of being sacrificed than passengers in Cheapside at present run of being hurried into St. Paul's or Bow Church and immolated on the altar. A final mitigation of the custom would be to substitute condemned criminals for innocent victims. Such a substitution is known to have taken place in the human sacrifices annually offered in Rhodes to Baal,³ and we have seen good grounds for believing that the criminal, who perished on the cross or the gallows at Babylon, died instead of the king in whose

¹ Livy, xxxiv. 44.

² In Vallancey's *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, vol. iii. (Dublin, 1786), p. 457, it is said that the Irish "sacrificed the first born of every species" to a deity called Crom-Cruaith, a stone capped

with gold, about which stood twelve other rough stones. The passage in which this statement occurs purports to be quoted from an ancient MS. entitled *Dún-seancas*, or the Topography of Ireland.

³ Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 54.

royal robes he had been allowed to masquerade for a few days.

The condemnation and pretended death by fire of the mock king in Egypt¹ is probably a reminiscence of a real custom of burning him. Evidence of a practice of burning divine personages will be forthcoming later on. In Bilaspur the expulsion of the Brahman who had occupied the king's throne for a year² is perhaps a substitute for putting him to death.

The explanation here given of the custom of killing divine persons assumes, or at least is readily combined with, the idea that the soul of the slain divinity is transmitted to his successor. Of this transmission I have no direct proof; and so far a link in the chain of evidence is wanting. But if I cannot prove by actual examples this succession to the soul of the slain god, it can at least be made probable that such a succession was supposed to take place. For it has been already shown that the soul of the incarnate deity is often supposed to transmigrate at death into another incarnation;³ and if this takes place when the death is a natural one, there seems no reason why it should not take place when the death has been brought about by violence. Certainly the idea that the soul of a dying person may be transmitted to his successor is perfectly familiar to primitive peoples. In Nias the eldest son usually succeeds his father in the chieftainship. But if from any bodily or mental defect the eldest son is disqualified for ruling, the father determines in his lifetime which of his sons shall succeed him. In order, however, to establish his right of succession it is necessary that the son upon whom his father's choice falls shall catch in his mouth or in a bag the last breath, and with it the soul, of the dying chief. For whoever catches his last breath is chief equally with the appointed successor. Hence the other brothers, and sometimes also strangers, crowd round the dying man to catch his soul as it passes. The houses in Nias are raised above the ground on posts, and it has happened that when the dying man lay with his face on the floor, one of the candidates has bored a hole in the floor

¹ See above, p. 30.

² See above, p. 30 *sq.*

³ See above, vol. i. p. 151 *sqq.*

and sucked in the chief's last breath through a bamboo tube. When the chief has no son, his soul is caught in a bag, which is fastened to an image made to represent the deceased; the soul is then believed to pass into the image.¹ Amongst the Takilis or Carrier Indians of North-West America, when a corpse is burned the priest pretends to catch the soul of the deceased in his hands, which he closes with many gesticulations. He then communicates the captured soul to the dead man's successor by throwing his hands towards and blowing upon him. The person to whom the soul is thus communicated takes the name and rank of the deceased. On the death of a chief the priest thus fills a responsible and influential position, for he may transmit the soul to whom he will, though doubtless he generally follows the regular line of succession.² In Guatemala, when a great man lay at the point of death, they put a precious stone between his lips to receive the parting soul, and this was afterwards kept as a precious memorial by his nearest kinsman or most intimate friend.³ Algonquin women who wished to become mothers flocked to the side of a dying person in the hope of receiving and being impregnated by the passing soul. Amongst the Seminoles of Florida when a woman died in childbed the infant was held over her face to receive her parting spirit.⁴ The Romans caught the breath of dying friends in their mouths, and so received into themselves the soul of the departed.⁵ The same custom is said to be still practised in Lancashire.⁶ On the seventh day after the death of a king of Gingiro the sorcerers bring

¹ Nieuwenhuis en Rosenberg, "Verslag omtrent het eiland Nias," *Verhandelingen van het Batav. Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxx. (1863), p. 85; Rosenberg, *Der Malayische Archipel*, p. 160; Chatelin, "Godsdienst en bijgeloof der Niassers," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvi. 142 sq.; Sundermann, "Die Insel Nias und die Mission daselbst," *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, xi. 445; E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias*, pp. 277, 479 sq.; *id.*, *L'Isola delle Donne* (Milan, 1894), p. 195.

² Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the U.S.*

Exploring Expedition (London, 1845), iv. 453; *U.S. Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, by H. Hale, p. 203.

³ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, ii. 574.

⁴ D. G. Brinton, *Myths of the New World* (New York, 1876), p. 270 sq.

⁵ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 685; Cicero, *In Verr.* ii. 5. 45; K. F. Hermann, *Griech. Privatalterthümer*, ed. Blumner, p. 362, note 1.

⁶ Harland and Wilkinson, *Lancashire Folk-lore*, p. 7 sq.

to his successor, wrapt in a piece of silk, a worm which they say comes from the nose of the dead king; and they make the new king kill the worm by squeezing its head between his teeth.¹ The ceremony seems to be intended to convey the spirit of the deceased monarch to his successor. The Danakil or Afars of Eastern Africa believe that the soul of a magician will be born again in the first male descendant of the man who was most active in attending on the dying magician in his last hours. Hence when a magician is ill he receives many attentions.² In Uganda the spirit of the king who had been the last to die manifested itself from time to time in the person of a priest, who was prepared for the discharge of this exalted function by a peculiar ceremony. When the body of the king had been embalmed and had lain for five months in the tomb, which was a house built specially for it, the head was severed from the body and laid in an ant-hill. Having been stript of flesh by the insects, the skull was washed in a particular river (the Ndyabuworu) and filled with wine. One of the late king's priests then drank the wine out of the skull, and thus became himself a vessel meet to receive the spirit of the deceased monarch. The skull was afterwards replaced in the tomb, but the lower jaw was separated from it and deposited in a jar; and this jar, being swathed in bark-cloth and decorated with beads so as to look like a man, henceforth represented the late king. A house was built for its reception in the shape of a beehive and divided into two rooms, an inner and an outer. Any person might enter the outer room, but in the inner room the spirit of the dead king was supposed to dwell. In front of the partition was set a throne covered with lion and leopard skins, and fenced off from the rest of the chamber by a rail of spears, shields, and knives, most of them made of copper and brass and beautifully worked. When the priest, who had fitted himself to receive the king's spirit, desired to converse with the people in the king's name, he went to the throne, and addressing the spirit in the inner room informed

¹ *The Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia*, collected and historically digested by F. Balthazar Tellex (London, 1710), p. 198.

² Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somali* (Berlin, 1896), p. 28.

him of the business in hand. Then he smoked one or two pipes of tobacco, and in a few minutes began to rave, which was a sign that the spirit had entered into him. In this condition he spoke with the voice and made known the wishes of the late king. When he had done so, the spirit left him and returned into the inner room, and he himself departed a mere man as before.¹ These examples at least show that provision is often made for the spiritual succession of kings and chiefs. On the whole we may therefore fairly suppose that when the divine king or priest is put to death his spirit is believed to pass into his successor.

§ 2. *Killing the Tree-spirit*

It remains to ask what light the custom of killing the divine king or priest sheds upon the subject of our inquiry. In the first chapter we saw reason to suppose that the King of the Wood was regarded as an incarnation of the tree-spirit or of the spirit of vegetation, and that as such he would be endowed, in the belief of his worshippers, with a magical power of making the trees to bear fruit, the crops to grow, and so on. His life must therefore have been held very precious by his worshippers, and was probably hedged in by a system of elaborate precautions or taboos like those by which, in so many places, the life of the man-god has been guarded against the malignant influence of demons and sorcerers. But we have seen that the very value attached to the life of the man-god necessitates his violent death as the only means of preserving it from the inevitable decay of age. The same reasoning would apply to the King of the Wood; he too had to be killed in order that the divine spirit, incarnate in him, might be transferred in unabated vigour to his successor. The rule that he held office till a stronger should slay him might be supposed to secure both the preservation of his divine life in full vigour and its transference to a suitable successor as soon as that vigour began to be impaired. For so long as he could maintain his position by the strong hand, it might be in-

¹ This account I received from my friend the Rev. J. Roscoe in a letter dated Mengo, Uganda, 27th April 1900.

ferred that his natural force was not abated ; whereas his defeat and death at the hands of another proved that his strength was beginning to fail and that it was time his divine life should be lodged in a less dilapidated tabernacle. This explanation of the rule that the King of the Wood had to be slain by his successor at least renders that rule perfectly intelligible. Moreover it is countenanced by the analogy of the Chitombé, upon whose life the existence of the world was supposed to hang, and who was therefore slain by his successor as soon as he showed signs of breaking up. Again, the terms on which in later times the King of Calicut held office are identical with those attached to the office of King of the Wood, except that whereas the former might be assailed by a candidate at any time, the King of Calicut might only be attacked once every twelve years. But as the leave granted to the King of Calicut to reign so long as he could defend himself against all comers was a mitigation of the old rule which set a fixed term to his life, so we may conjecture that the similar permission granted to the King of the Wood was a mitigation of an older custom of putting him to death at the end of a set period. In both cases the new rule gave to the god-man at least a chance for his life, which under the old rule was denied him ; and people probably reconciled themselves to the change by reflecting that so long as the god-man could maintain himself by the sword against all assaults, there was no reason to apprehend that the fatal decay had set in.

The conjecture that the King of the Wood was formerly put to death at the expiry of a set term, without being allowed a chance for his life, will be confirmed if evidence can be adduced of a custom of periodically killing his counterparts, the human representatives of the tree-spirit, in Northern Europe. Now in point of fact such a custom has left unmistakable traces of itself in the rural festivals of the peasantry. To take examples.

At Niederpörling, in Lower Bavaria, the Whitsuntide representative of the tree-spirit—the *Pfingstl* as he was called—was clad from top to toe in leaves and flowers. On his head he wore a high pointed cap, the ends of which rested on his shoulders, only two holes being left in it for

his eyes. The cap was covered with water-flowers and surmounted with a nosegay of peonies. The sleeves of his coat were also made of water-plants, and the rest of his body was enveloped in alder and hazel leaves. On each side of him marched a boy holding up one of the *Pfingstl's* arms. These two boys carried drawn swords, and so did most of the others who formed the procession. They stopped at every house where they hoped to receive a present; and the people, in hiding, soused the leaf-clad boy with water. All rejoiced when he was well drenched. Finally he waded into the brook up to his middle; whereupon one of the boys, standing on the bridge, pretended to cut off his head.¹ At Wurmlingen, in Swabia, a score of young fellows dress themselves on Whit-Monday in white shirts and white trousers, with red scarves round their waists and swords hanging from the scarves. They ride on horseback into the wood, led by two trumpeters blowing their trumpets. In the wood they cut down leafy oak branches, in which they envelop from head to foot him who was the last of their number to ride out of the village. His legs, however, are encased separately, so that he may be able to mount his horse again. Further, they give him a long artificial neck, with an artificial head and a false face on the top of it. Then a May-tree is cut, generally an aspen or beech about ten feet high; and being decked with coloured handkerchiefs and ribbons it is entrusted to a special "May-bearer." The cavalcade then returns with music and song to the village. Amongst the personages who figure in the procession are a Moorish king with a sooty face and a crown on his head, a Dr. Iron-Beard, a corporal, and an executioner. They halt on the village-green, and each of the characters makes a speech in rhyme. The executioner

¹ Fr. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 235 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 320 sq. In some villages of Lower Bavaria one of the *Pfingstl's* comrades carries "the May," which is a young birch-tree wreathed and decorated. Another name for this Whitsuntide masker, both in Lower and Upper Bavaria, is the Water-bird. Sometimes he carries a straw effigy of

a monstrous bird with a long neck and a wooden beak, which is thrown into the water instead of the bearer. The wooden beak is afterwards nailed to the ridge of a barn, which it is supposed to protect against lightning and fire for a whole year, till the next *Pfingstl* makes his appearance. See *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 375 sq., 1003 sq.

announces that the leaf-clad man has been condemned to death, and cuts off his false head. Then the riders race to the May-tree, which has been set up a little way off. The first man who succeeds in wrenching it from the ground as he gallops past keeps it with all its decorations. The ceremony is observed every second or third year.¹

In Saxony and Thüringen there is a Whitsuntide ceremony called "chasing the Wild Man out of the bush," or "fetching the Wild Man out of the wood." A young fellow is enveloped in leaves or moss and called the Wild Man. He hides in the wood and the other lads of the village go out to seek him. They find him, lead him captive out of the wood, and fire at him with blank muskets. He falls like dead to the ground, but a lad dressed as a doctor bleeds him, and he comes to life again. At this they rejoice, and, binding him fast on a waggon, take him to the village, where they tell all the people how they have caught the Wild Man. At every house they receive a gift.² In the Erzgebirge the following custom was annually observed at Shrovetide about the beginning of the seventeenth century. Two men disguised as Wild Men, the one in brushwood and moss, the other in straw, were led about the streets, and at last taken to the market-place, where they were chased up and down, shot and stabbed. Before falling they reeled about with strange gestures and spirted blood on the people from bladders which they carried. When they were down, the huntsmen placed them on boards and carried them to the ale-house, the miners marching beside them and winding blasts on their mining tools as if they had taken a noble head of game.³ A very similar Shrovetide custom is still observed near Schluckenau in Bohemia. A man dressed up as a Wild Man is chased through several streets till he comes to a narrow lane across which a cord is stretched. He stumbles over the cord and, falling to the ground, is overtaken and caught by his pursuers. The

¹ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, pp. 409-419; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 349 sq.

² E. Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und*

Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen, p. 154 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 335 sq.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 336.

executioner runs up and stabs with his sword a bladder filled with blood which the Wild Man wears round his body ; so the Wild Man dies, while a stream of blood reddens the ground. Next day a straw-man, made up to look like the Wild Man, is placed on a litter, and, accompanied by a great crowd, is taken to a pool into which it is thrown by the executioner. The ceremony is called "burying the Carnival."¹

In Semic (Bohemia) the custom of beheading the King is observed on Whit-Monday. A troop of young people disguise themselves ; each is girt with a girdle of bark and carries a wooden sword and a trumpet of willow-bark. The King wears a robe of tree-bark adorned with flowers, on his head is a crown of bark decked with flowers and branches, his feet are wound about with ferns, a mask hides his face, and for a sceptre he has a hawthorn switch in his hand. A lad leads him through the village by a rope fastened to his foot, while the rest dance about, blow their trumpets, and whistle. In every farmhouse the King is chased round the room, and one of the troop, amid much noise and outcry, strikes with his sword a blow on the King's robe of bark till it rings again. Then a gratuity is demanded.² The ceremony of decapitation, which is here somewhat slurred over, is carried out with a greater semblance of reality in other parts of Bohemia. Thus in some villages of the Königgrätz district on Whit-Monday the girls assemble under one lime-tree and the young men under another, all dressed in their best and tricked out with ribbons. The young men twine a garland for the Queen, and the girls another for the King. When they have chosen the King and Queen they all go in procession, two and two, to the ale-house, from the balcony of which the crier proclaims the names of the King and Queen. Both are then invested with the insignia of their dignity and are crowned with the garlands, while the music plays up. Then some one gets on a bench and accuses the King of various offences, such as ill-treating the cattle. The King appeals to witnesses and a trial ensues, at the close of which the judge, who carries a white wand as his

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 61 ; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 336 sq.

² Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 263 ; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 343.

badge of office, pronounces a verdict of "guilty" or "not guilty." If the verdict is "guilty," the judge breaks his wand, the King kneels on a white cloth, all heads are bared, and a soldier sets three or four hats, one above the other, on his Majesty's head. The judge then pronounces the word "guilty" thrice in a loud voice, and orders the crier to behead the King. The crier obeys by striking off the King's hats with his wooden sword.¹

But perhaps, for our purpose, the most instructive of these mimic executions is the following Bohemian one, which has been in part described already.² In some places of the Pilsen district (Bohemia) on Whit-Monday the King is dressed in bark, ornamented with flowers and ribbons; he wears a crown of gilt paper and rides a horse, which is also decked with flowers. Attended by a judge, an executioner, and other characters, and followed by a train of soldiers, all mounted, he rides to the village square, where a hut or arbour of green boughs has been erected under the May-trees, which are firs, freshly cut, peeled to the top, and dressed with flowers and ribbons. After the dames and maidens of the village have been criticised and a frog beheaded, in the way already described, the cavalcade rides to a place previously determined upon, in a straight, broad street. Here they draw up in two lines and the King takes to flight. He is given a short start and rides off at full speed, pursued by the whole troop. If they fail to catch him he remains King for another year, and his companions must pay his score at the ale-house in the evening. But if they overtake and catch him he is scourged with hazel rods or beaten with the wooden swords and compelled to dismount. Then the executioner asks, "Shall I behead this King?" The answer is given, "Behead him"; the executioner brandishes his axe, and with the words, "One, two, three, let the King headless be!" he strikes off the King's crown. Amid the loud cries of the bystanders the King sinks to the ground; then he is laid on a bier and carried to the nearest farmhouse.³

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 269 sq.

² Vol. i. p. 218 sq.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 264 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 353 sq.

In most of the personages who are thus slain in mimicry it is impossible not to recognise representatives of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation, as he is supposed to manifest himself in spring. The bark, leaves, and flowers in which the actors are dressed, and the season of the year at which they appear, show that they belong to the same class as the Grass King, King of the May, Jack-in-the-Green, and other representatives of the vernal spirit of vegetation which we examined in the first chapter. As if to remove any possible doubt on this head, we find that in two cases¹ these slain men are brought into direct connection with May-trees, which are (as we have seen) the impersonal, as the May King, Grass King, and so forth, are the personal representatives of the tree-spirit. The drenching of the *Pfingstl* with water and his wading up to the middle into the brook are, therefore, no doubt rain-charms like those which have been already described.²

But if these personages represent, as they certainly do, the spirit of vegetation in spring, the question arises, Why kill them? What is the object of slaying the spirit of vegetation at any time and above all in spring, when his services are most wanted? The only answer to this question seems to be given in the explanation already proposed of the custom of killing the divine king or priest. The divine life, incarnate in a material and mortal body, is liable to be tainted and corrupted by the weakness of the frail medium in which it is for a time enshrined; and if it is to be saved from the increasing enfeeblement which it must necessarily share with its human incarnation as he advances in years, it must be detached from him before, or at least as soon as, he exhibits signs of decay, in order to be transferred to a vigorous successor. This is done by killing the old representative of the god and conveying the divine spirit from him to a new incarnation. The killing of the god, that is, of his human incarnation, is, therefore, merely a necessary step to his revival or resurrection in a better form. Far from being an extinction of the divine spirit, it is only the beginning of a purer and stronger manifestation of it. If this explanation holds good of the custom of killing divine

¹ See pp. 61, 64.

² See p. 94 *sqq.*

kings and priests in general, it is still more obviously applicable to the custom of annually killing the representative of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation in spring. For the decay of plant life in winter is readily interpreted by primitive man as an enfeeblement of the spirit of vegetation; the spirit has (he thinks) grown old and weak and must therefore be renovated by being slain and brought to life in a younger and fresher form. Thus the killing of the representative of the tree-spirit in spring is regarded as a means to promote and quicken the growth of vegetation. For the killing of the tree-spirit is associated always (we must suppose) implicitly, and sometimes explicitly also, with a revival or resurrection of him in a more youthful and vigorous form. Thus in the Saxon and Thüringen custom, after the Wild Man has been shot he is brought to life again by a doctor;¹ and in the Wurmlingen ceremony there figures a Dr. Iron-Beard, who probably once played a similar part; certainly in another spring ceremony (to be described presently) Dr. Iron-Beard pretends to restore a dead man to life. But of this revival or resurrection of the god we shall have more to say anon.

The points of similarity between these North European personages and the subject of our inquiry—the King of the Wood or priest of Nemi—are sufficiently striking. In these northern maskers we see kings, whose dress of bark and leaves, along with the hut of green boughs and the fir-trees under which they hold their court, proclaim them unmistakably as, like their Italian counterpart, Kings of the Wood. Like him they die a violent death; but like him they may escape from it for a time by their bodily strength and agility; for in several of these northern customs the flight and pursuit of the king is a prominent part of the ceremony, and in one case at least if the king can outrun his pursuers he retains his life and his office for another year. In this last case, in fact, the king holds office on condition of running for his life once a year, just as the King of Calicut in later times held office on condition of defending his life against all comers once every twelve years, and just as the priest of Nemi held office on condition

¹ See above, p. 62.

of defending himself against any assault at any time. In all these cases the life of the god-man is prolonged on condition of showing, in a severe physical contest of fight or flight, that his bodily strength is not decayed, and that, therefore, the violent death, which sooner or later is inevitable, may for the present be postponed. With regard to flight it is noticeable that flight figured conspicuously both in the legend and in the practice of the King of the Wood. He had to be a runaway slave in memory of the flight of Orestes, the traditional founder of the worship; hence the Kings of the Wood are described by an ancient writer as "both strong of hand and fleet of foot."¹ Perhaps if we knew the ritual of the Arician grove fully we might find that the king was allowed a chance for his life by flight, like his Bohemian brother. We may conjecture that the annual flight of the priestly king at Rome (*regifugium*)² was at first a flight of the same kind; in other words, that he was originally one of those divine kings who are either put to death after a fixed period or allowed to prove by the strong hand or the fleet foot that their divinity is vigorous and unimpaired. One more point of resemblance may be noted between the Italian King of the Wood and his northern counterparts. In Saxony and Thüringen the representative of the tree-spirit, after being killed, is brought to life again by a doctor. This is exactly what legend affirmed to have happened to the first King of the Wood at Nemi, Hippolytus or Virbius, who after he had been killed by his horses was restored to life by the physician Aesculapius.³ Such a legend tallies well with the theory that the slaying of the King of the Wood was only a step to his revival or resurrection in his successor.

It has been assumed that the mock killing of the Wild Man and of the King in North European folk-custom is a modern substitute for an ancient custom of killing them in earnest. Those who best know the tenacity of life possessed by folk-custom and its tendency, with the growth of civilisation, to dwindle from solemn ritual into mere pageant and pastime, will be least likely to question the

¹ Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 271.

² Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii.² 323 sq.

³ See above, p. 6.

truth of this assumption. That human sacrifices were commonly offered by the ancestors of the civilised races of North Europe (Celts, Teutons, and Slavs) is certain.¹ It is not, therefore, surprising that the modern peasant should do in mimicry what his forefathers did in reality. We know as a matter of fact that in other parts of the world mock human sacrifices have been substituted for real ones. Thus in Minahassa, a district of Celebes, human victims used to be regularly sacrificed at certain festivals, but through Dutch influence the custom was abolished and a sham sacrifice substituted for it. The victim was seated in a chair and all the usual preparations were made for sacrificing him, but at the critical moment, when the chief priest had heaved up his flashing swords (for he wielded two of them) to deal the fatal stroke, his assistants sprang forward, their hands wrapt in cloths, to grasp and arrest the descending blades. The precaution was necessary, for the priest was wound up to such a pitch of excitement that if left alone he might have consummated the sacrifice. Afterwards an effigy, made out of the stem of a banana-tree, was substituted for the human victim; and the blood, which might not be wanting, was supplied by fowls.² Captain Bourke was informed by an old chief that the Indians of Arizona used to offer human sacrifices at the Feast of Fire when the days are shortest. The victim had his throat cut, his breast opened, and his heart taken out by one of the priests. This custom was abolished by the Mexicans, but for a long time afterwards a modified form of it was secretly observed as follows. The victim, generally a young man, had his throat cut, and blood was allowed to flow freely; but the medicine-men sprinkled "medicine" on the gash, which soon healed up, and the man recovered.³ So in the ritual of Artemis at Halae in Attica, a man's throat was cut and the blood allowed to gush out, but he was not killed.⁴ At the funeral of a chief in Nias slaves

¹ Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* vi. 16; Adam of Bremen, *Descript. Insul. Aquil.* c. 27; Olaus Magnus, iii. 6; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 35 sqq.; Nöre, *Geschichte des nordischen Heidenthums*, i. 69, 119, 120, 149, 187 sq.

² H. J. Tendeloo, "Verklaring van het zoogenaamd Oud-Alfoersch Teeken-

schrift," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxxvi. (1892), p. 338 sq.

³ J. G. Bourke, *Snake Dance of the Moquis of Arizona*, p. 196 sq.

⁴ Euripides, *Iphig. in Taur.* 1458 sqq.

are sacrificed; a little of their hair is cut off, and then they are beheaded. The victims are generally purchased for the purpose, and their number is proportioned to the wealth and power of the deceased. But if the number required is excessively great or cannot be procured, some of the chief's own slaves undergo a sham sacrifice. They are told, and believe, that they are about to be decapitated; their heads are placed on a log and their necks struck with the back of a sword. The fright drives some of them crazy.¹ When a Hindoo has killed or ill-treated an ape, a bird of prey of a certain kind, or a cobra capella, in the presence of the worshippers of Vishnu, he must expiate his offence by the pretended sacrifice and resurrection of a human being. An incision is made in the victim's arm, the blood flows, he grows faint, falls, and feigns to die. Afterwards he is brought to life by being sprinkled with blood drawn from the thigh of a worshipper of Vishnu. The crowd of spectators is fully convinced of the reality of this simulated death and resurrection.² In Samoa, where every family had its god incarnate in one or more species of animals, any disrespect shown to the worshipful animal, either by members of the kin or by a stranger in their presence, had to be atoned for by pretending to bake one of the family in a cold oven as a burnt sacrifice to appease the wrath of the offended god. For example, if a stranger staying in a household whose god was incarnate in cuttle-fish were to catch and cook one of these creatures, or if a member of the family had been present where a cuttle-fish was eaten, the family would meet in solemn conclave and choose a man or woman to go and lie down in a cold oven, where he would be covered over with leaves, just as if he were really being baked. While this mock sacrifice was being carried out the family prayed: "O bald-headed Cuttle-fish! forgive what has been done, it was all the work of a stranger." If they had not thus abased themselves before the divine cuttle-fish, he would undoubtedly have come and been the death of somebody by

¹ Nieuwenhuis en Rosenberg, "Verslag omtrent het eiland Nias," *Verhandelingen van het Batav. Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxx. 43; E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a*

Nias, p. 282 sq.

² J. A. Dubois, *Nicurs, Institutions et Cérémonies des Peuples de l'Inde*, i. 151 sq.

making a cuttle-fish to grow in his inside.¹ Sometimes, as in Minahassa, the pretended sacrifice is carried out, not on a living person, but on an effigy. At the City of the Sun in ancient Egypt three men used to be sacrificed every day, after the priests had stripped and examined them, like calves, to see whether they were without blemish and fit for the altar. But King Amasis ordered waxen images to be substituted for the human victims.² An Indian law-book, the *Calica Puran*, prescribes that when the sacrifice of lions, tigers, or human beings is required, an image of a lion, tiger, or man shall be made with butter, paste, or barley meal, and sacrificed instead.³ Some of the Gonds of India formerly offered human sacrifices; they now sacrifice straw-men, which are found to answer the purpose just as well.⁴ Colonel Dalton was told that in some of their villages the Bhagats "annually make an image of a man in wood, put clothes and ornaments on it, and present it before the altar of a Mahádeo. The person who officiates as priest on the occasion says: 'O Mahádeo, we sacrifice this man to you according to ancient customs. Give us rain in due season, and a plentiful harvest.' Then with one stroke of the axe the head of the image is struck off, and the body is removed and buried."⁵

§ 3. Carrying out Death

Thus far I have offered an explanation of the rule which required that the priest of Nemi should be slain by his successor. The explanation claims to be no more than probable; our scanty knowledge of the custom and of its history forbids it to be more. But its probability will be augmented in proportion to the extent to which the motives and modes of thought which it assumes can be proved to have operated in primitive society. Hitherto the god with whose death and resurrection we have been chiefly concerned has been the tree-god. Tree-worship may perhaps be

¹ G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 31 sq.; compare pp. 38, 58, 59, 69 sq., 72.

² Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 55, citing Manetho as his authority.

³ "The Rudhirádhyāyā, or sanguinary chapter," translated from the

Calica Puran by W. C. Blaquiére, in *Asiatick Researches*, v. 376 (8vo ed., London, 1807).

⁴ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 281.

⁵ Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 258 sq.

regarded (though this is a conjecture) as occupying an intermediate place in the history of religion, between the religion of the hunter and shepherd on the one side, whose gods are mostly animals, and the religion of the husbandman on the other hand, in whose worship the cultivated plants play an important part. If then I can show that the custom of killing the god and the belief in his resurrection originated, or at least existed, in the hunting and pastoral stage of society, when the slain god was an animal, and that it survived into the agricultural stage, when the slain god was the corn or a human being representing the corn, the probability of my explanation will have been considerably increased. This I shall attempt to do in the remainder of this chapter, in the course of which I hope to clear up some obscurities which still remain, and to answer some objections which may have suggested themselves to the reader.

We start from the point at which we left off—the spring customs of European peasantry. Besides the ceremonies already described there are two kindred sets of observances in which the simulated death of a divine or supernatural being is a conspicuous feature. In one of them the being whose death is dramatically represented is a personification of the Carnival; in the other it is Death himself. The former ceremony falls naturally at the end of the Carnival, either on the last day of that merry season, namely Shrove Tuesday, or on the first day of Lent, namely Ash Wednesday. The date of the other ceremony—the Carrying or Driving out of Death, as it is commonly called—is not so uniformly fixed. Generally it is the fourth Sunday in Lent, which hence goes by the name of Dead Sunday; but in some places the celebration falls a week earlier, in others, as among the Czechs of Bohemia, a week later, while in certain German villages of Moravia it is held on the first Sunday after Easter. Perhaps, as has been suggested, the date may originally have been variable, depending on the appearance of the first swallow or some other herald of the spring. Some writers regard the ceremony as Slavonic in its origin. Grimm thought it was a festival of the New Year with the old Slavs, who began

their year in March.¹ We shall first take examples of the mimic death of the Carnival, which always falls before the other in the calendar.

At Frosinone, in Latium, about half-way between Rome and Naples, the dull monotony of life in a provincial Italian town is agreeably broken on the last day of the Carnival by the ancient festival known as the *Radica*. About four o'clock in the afternoon the town band, playing lively tunes and followed by a great crowd, proceeds to the Piazza del Plebiscito, where is the Sub-Prefecture as well as the rest of the Government buildings. Here, in the middle of the square, the eyes of the expectant multitude are greeted by the sight of an immense car decked with many-coloured festoons and drawn by four horses. Mounted on the car is a huge chair, on which sits enthroned the majestic figure of the Carnival, a man of stucco about nine feet high with a rubicund and smiling countenance. Enormous boots, a tin helmet like those which grace the heads of officers of the Italian marine, and a coat of many colours embellished with strange devices, adorn the outward man of this stately personage. His left hand rests on the arm of the chair, while with his right he gracefully salutes the crowd, being moved to this act of civility by a string which is pulled by a man who modestly shrinks from publicity under the mercy-seat. And now the crowd, surging excitedly round the car, gives vent to its feelings in wild cries of joy, gentle and simple being mixed up together and all dancing furiously the *Saltarello*. A special feature of the festival is that every one must carry in his hand what is called a *radica* ("root"), by which is meant a huge leaf of the aloe or rather the agave. Any one who ventured into the crowd without

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 645; K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, ii. 58; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 86 sq.; *id.*, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 77 sq.; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 958 sq.; Sepp, *Die Religion der alten Deutschen* (Munich, 1890), p. 67 sq.; W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren* (Vienna and Olmutz, 1893), pp. 258, 353. The fourth Sunday in

Lent is also known as Mid-Lent, because it falls in the middle of Lent, or as *Laetare* from the first word of the liturgy for that day. In the Roman calendar it is the Sunday of the Rose (*Domenica rosae*), because on that day the Pope consecrates a golden rose, which he presents to some royal lady. In one German village of Transylvania the Carrying out of Death takes place on Ascension Day. See below, p. 93 sq.

such a leaf would be unceremoniously hustled out of it, unless indeed he bore as a substitute a large cabbage at the end of a long stick or a bunch of grass curiously plaited. When the multitude, after a short turn, has escorted the slow-moving car to the gate of the Sub-Prefecture, they halt, and the car, jolting over the uneven ground, rumbles into the courtyard. A hush now falls on the crowd, their subdued voices sounding, according to the description of one who has heard them, like the murmur of a troubled sea. All eyes are turned anxiously to the door from which the Sub-Prefect himself and the other representatives of the majesty of the law are expected to issue and pay their homage to the hero of the hour. A few moments of suspense and then a storm of cheers and hand-clapping salutes the appearance of the dignitaries, as they file out and, descending the staircase, take their place in the procession. The hymn of the Carnival is now thundered out, after which, amid a deafening roar, aloe leaves and cabbages are whirled aloft and descend impartially on the heads of the just and the unjust, who lend fresh zest to the proceedings by engaging in a free fight. When these preliminaries have been concluded to the satisfaction of all concerned, the procession gets under weigh. The rear is brought up by a cart laden with barrels of wine and policemen, the latter engaged in the congenial task of serving out wine to all who ask for it, while a most internecine struggle, accompanied by a copious discharge of yells, blows, and blasphemy, goes on among the surging crowd at the cart's tail in their anxiety not to miss the glorious opportunity of intoxicating themselves at the public expense. Finally, after the procession has paraded the principal streets in this majestic manner, the effigy of Carnival is taken to the middle of a public square, stripped of his finery, laid on a pile of wood, and burnt amid the cries of the multitude, who thundering out once more the song of the Carnival fling their so-called "roots" on the pyre and give themselves up without restraint to the pleasures of the dance.¹

¹ G. Targioni-Tozzetti, *Saggio di Novelline, Canti ed Usanze popolari della Ciociaria* (Palermo, 1891), pp. 89-95. At Palermo an effigy of the Carnival (*Naumu*) was burnt at mid-

night on Shrove Tuesday 1878. See G. Pitre, *Usi e Costumi, Credenze e Prejudizi*, i. 117-119; G. Trede, *Das Heidentum in der römischen Kirche*, iii. 11, note *.

In the Abruzzi a pasteboard figure of the Carnival is carried by four grave-diggers with pipes in their mouths and bottles of wine slung at their shoulder-belts. In front walks the wife of the Carnival, dressed in mourning and dissolved in tears. From time to time the company halts, and while the wife addresses the sympathising public, the grave-diggers refresh the inner man with a pull at the bottle. In the open square the mimic corpse is laid on a pyre, and to the roll of drums, the shrill screams of the women, and the gruffer cries of the men a light is set to it. While the figure burns, chestnuts are thrown about among the crowd. Sometimes the Carnival is represented by a straw-man at the top of a pole which is borne through the town by a troop of mummers in the course of the afternoon. When evening comes on, four of the mummers hold out a quilt or sheet by the corners, and the figure of the Carnival is made to tumble into it. The procession is then resumed, the performers weeping crocodile tears and emphasising the poignancy of their grief, by the help of saucepans and dinner bells. Sometimes, again, in the Abruzzi the dead Carnival is personified by a living man who lies in a coffin, attended by another who acts the priest and dispenses holy water in great profusion from a bathing-tub.¹

At Lerida, in Catalonia, the funeral of the Carnival was witnessed by an English traveller in 1877. On the last Sunday of the Carnival a grand procession of infantry, cavalry, and maskers of many sorts, some on horseback and some in carriages, escorted the grand car of His Grace Pau Pi, as the effigy was called, in triumph through the principal streets. For three days the revelry ran high, and then at midnight on the last day of the Carnival the same procession again wound through the streets, but under a different aspect and for a different end. The triumphal car was exchanged for a hearse, in which reposed the effigy of his dead Grace ;

¹ A. de Nino, *Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi*, ii. 198-200. The writer omits to mention the date of these celebrations. No doubt it is either Shrove Tuesday or Ash Wednesday. In some parts of Piedmont an effigy of Carnival is burnt on the evening of Shrove Tuesday ; in others they set fire to tall poplar trees,

which, stript of their branches and surmounted by banners, have been set up the day before in public places. These trees go by the name of *Scarli*. See G. di Giovanni, *Usi, Credenze e Pregiudizi del Canavese* (Palermo, 1889), pp. 161, 164 sq.

a troop of maskers, who in the first procession had played the part of Students of Folly with many a merry quip and jest, now, robed as priests and bishops, paced slowly along holding aloft huge lighted tapers and singing a dirge. All the mummers wore crape, and all the horsemen carried blazing flambeaux. Down the high street, between the lofty, many-storeyed and balconied houses, where every window, every balcony, every housetop was crammed with a dense mass of spectators, all dressed and masked in fantastic gorgeousness, the procession took its melancholy way. Over the scene flashed and played the shifting cross-lights and shadows from the moving torches; red and blue Bengal lights flared up and died out again; and above the trampling of the horses and the measured tread of the marching multitude rose the voices of the priests chanting the requiem, while the military bands struck in with the solemn roll of the muffled drums. On reaching the principal square the procession halted, a burlesque funeral oration was pronounced over the defunct Pau Pi, and the lights were extinguished. Immediately the devil and his angels darted from the crowd, seized the body and fled away with it, hotly pursued by the whole multitude, yelling, screaming, and cheering. Naturally the fiends were overtaken and dispersed; and the sham corpse, rescued from their clutches, was laid in a grave that had been made ready for its reception. Thus the Carnival of 1877 at Lerida died and was buried.¹

A ceremony of the same sort is observed in Provence on Ash Wednesday. An effigy called Caramantran, whimsically attired, is drawn in a chariot or borne on a litter, accompanied by the populace in grotesque costumes, who carry gourds full of wine and drain them with all the marks, real or affected, of intoxication. At the head of the procession are some men disguised as judges and barristers, and a tall gaunt personage who masquerades as Lent; behind them follow young people mounted on miserable hacks and attired as mourners, who pretend to bewail the fate that is in store for Caramantran. In the principal square the procession halts, the tribunal is constituted, and Caramantran placed

¹ J. S. Campion, *On Foot in Spain* (London, 1879), pp. 291-295.

at the bar. After a formal trial he is sentenced to death amid the groans of the mob; the barrister who defended him embraces his client for the last time; the officers of justice do their duty; the condemned is set with his back to a wall and hurried into eternity under a shower of stones. The sea or a river receives his mangled remains.¹ At Lussac in the department of Vienne young people, attired in long mourning robes and with woebegone countenances, carry an effigy down to the river on Ash Wednesday and throw it into the river, crying, "Carnival is dead! Carnival is dead!"² Throughout nearly the whole of the Ardennes it was and still is customary on Ash Wednesday to burn an effigy which is supposed to represent the Carnival, while appropriate verses are sung round about the blazing figure. Very often an attempt is made to fashion the effigy in the likeness of the husband who is supposed to be least faithful to his wife of any in the village. As might perhaps have been anticipated, the distinction of being selected for portraiture under these circumstances has a slight tendency to breed domestic jars, especially when the portrait is burnt in front of the house of the gay deceiver whom it represents, while a powerful chorus of caterwauls, groans, and other melodious sounds bears public testimony to the opinion which his friends and neighbours entertain of his private virtues. In some villages of the Ardennes a young man of flesh and blood, dressed up in hay and straw, used to act the part of Shrove Tuesday (*Mardi Gras*), as the personification of the Carnival is often called in France after the last day of the period which he represents. He was brought before a mock tribunal, and being condemned to death was placed with his back to a wall, like a soldier at a military execution, and fired at with blank cartridges. At Vrigne-aux-Bois one of these harmless buffoons, named Thierry, was accidentally killed by a wad that had been left in a musket of the firing-party. When poor Shrove Tuesday dropped under the fire, the applause was loud and long, he did it so naturally; but

¹ A. de Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 37 sq. The name Caramantran is thought to be compounded of *carême entrant*, "Lent entering." It is said

that the effigy of Caramantran is sometimes burnt (Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 107).

² L. Pineau, *Folk-lore du Poitou* (Paris, 1892), p. 493.

when he did not get up again, they ran to him and found him a corpse. Since then there have been no more of these mock executions in the Ardennes.¹

In Normandy on the evening of Ash Wednesday it used to be the custom to hold a celebration called the Burial of Shrove Tuesday. A squalid effigy scantily clothed in rags, a battered old hat crushed down on his dirty face, his great round paunch stuffed with straw, represented the disreputable old rake who after a long course of dissipation was now about to suffer for his sins. Hoisted on the shoulders of a sturdy fellow, who pretended to stagger under the burden, this popular personification of the Carnival promenaded the streets for the last time in a manner the reverse of triumphal. Preceded by a drummer and accompanied by a jeering rabble, among whom the urchins and all the tag-rag and bobtail of the town mustered in great force, the figure was carried about by the flickering light of torches to the discordant din of shovels and tongs, pots and pans, horns and kettles, mingled with hootings, groans, and hisses. From time to time the procession halted, and a champion of morality accused the broken-down old sinner of all the excesses he had committed and for which he was now about to be burned alive. The culprit, having nothing to urge in his own defence, was thrown on a heap of straw, a torch was put to it, and a great blaze shot up, to the delight of the children who frisked round it screaming out some old popular verses about the death of the Carnival. Sometimes the effigy was rolled down the slope of a hill before being burnt.² At Saint-Lô the ragged effigy of Shrove Tuesday was followed by his widow, a big burly lout dressed as a woman with a crape veil, who emitted sounds of lamentation and woe in a stentorian voice. After being carried about the streets on a litter attended by a crowd of maskers, the figure was thrown into the River Vire. The final scene has been graphically described by Madame Octave Feuillet as she witnessed it in her childhood some fifty years ago. "My parents invited friends to

¹ A. Meyrac, *Traditions, Légendes et Contes des Ardennes* (Charleville, 1890), p. 63. According to the writer, the custom of burning an effigy of Shrove Tuesday or the Carnival is pretty

general in France.

² J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand* (Condé-sur-Noireau, 1883-1887), ii. 148-150.

see, from the top of the tower of Jeanne Couillard, the funeral procession passing. It was there that, quaffing lemonade—the only refreshment allowed because of the fast—we witnessed at nightfall a spectacle of which I shall always preserve a lively recollection. At our feet flowed the Vire under its old stone bridge. On the middle of the bridge lay the figure of Shrove Tuesday on a litter of leaves, surrounded by scores of maskers dancing, singing, and carrying torches. Some of them in their motley costumes ran along the parapet like fiends. The rest, worn out with their revels, sat on the posts and dozed. Soon the dancing stopped, and some of the troop, seizing a torch, set fire to the effigy, after which they flung it into the river with redoubled shouts and clamour. The man of straw, soaked with resin, floated away burning down the stream of the Vire, lighting up with its funeral fires the woods on the bank and the battlements of the old castle in which Louis XI. and Francis I. had slept. When the last glimmer of the blazing phantom had vanished, like a falling star, at the end of the valley, every one withdrew, crowd and maskers alike, and we quitted the ramparts with our guests. As we returned home my father sang gaily the old popular song:—

'Shrove Tuesday is dead and his wife has got
His shabby pocket-handkerchief and his cracked old pot.
Sing high, sing low,
Shrove Tuesday will come back no more.'

'He will come back! He will come back!' we cried warmly, clapping our hands; and he did come back next year, and I think I should see him still if, after the lapse of half a century, I returned to the land of my birth."¹

In Upper Brittany the burial of Shrove Tuesday or the Carnival is sometimes performed in a ceremonious manner. Four young fellows carry a straw-man or one of their companions, and are followed by a funeral procession. A show is made of depositing the pretended corpse in the grave, after which the bystanders make believe to mourn, crying out in melancholy tones, "Ah! my poor little Shrove Tuesday!" The boy who played the part of Shrove Tuesday bears the

¹ Madame Octave Feuillet, *Quelques années de ma Vie* (Paris, 1895), pp. 59-61.

name for the whole year.¹ At Lesneven in Lower Brittany it was formerly the custom on Ash Wednesday to burn a straw-man, covered with rags, after he had been promenaded about the town. He was followed by a representative of Shrove Tuesday clothed with sardines and cods' tails.² In Saintonge and Aunis, which correspond roughly to the modern departments of Charente, children used to drown or burn a figure of the Carnival on the morning of Ash Wednesday.³ The beginning of Lent in England was formerly marked by a custom which has now fallen into disuse. A figure, made up of straw and cast-off clothes, was drawn or carried through the streets amid much noise and merriment; after which it was either burnt, shot at, or thrown down a chimney. This image went by the name of Jack o' Lent, and was by some supposed to represent Judas Iscariot.⁴

A Bohemian form of the custom of "Burying the Carnival" has been already described.⁵ The following Swabian form is obviously similar. In the neighbourhood of Tübingen on Shrove Tuesday a straw-man, called the Shrovetide Bear, is made up; he is dressed in a pair of old trousers, and a fresh black-pudding or two squirts filled with blood are inserted in his neck. After a formal condemnation he is beheaded, laid in a coffin, and on Ash Wednesday is buried in the churchyard. This is called "Burying the Carnival."⁶ Amongst some of the Saxons of Transylvania the Carnival is hung. Thus at Braller on Ash Wednesday or Shrove Tuesday two white and two chestnut horses draw a sledge on which is placed a straw-man swathed in a white cloth; beside him is a cart-wheel which is kept turning round. Two lads disguised as old men follow the sledge lamenting. The rest of the village lads, mounted on horseback and decked with ribbons, accompany the procession, which is

¹ Sébillot, *Contumes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, p. 227 sq.

² A. de Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 206.

³ J. L. M. Nogues, *Les Mœurs d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Aunis* (Saintes, 1891), p. 60. As to the trial and condemnation of the Carnival on

Ash Wednesday in France, see further Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et Survivances*, iv. 52 sq.

⁴ T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 93.

⁵ See p. 62 sq.

⁶ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 371.

headed by two girls crowned with evergreen and drawn in a waggon or sledge. A trial is held under a tree, at which lads disguised as soldiers pronounce sentence of death. The two old men try to rescue the straw-man and to fly with him, but to no purpose; he is caught by the two girls and handed over to the executioner, who hangs him on a tree. In vain the old men try to climb up the tree and take him down; they always tumble down, and at last in despair they throw themselves on the ground and weep and howl for the hanged man. An official then makes a speech in which he declares that the Carnival was condemned to death because he had done them harm, by wearing out their shoes and making them tired and sleepy.¹ At the "Burial of Carnival" in Lechrain, a man dressed as a woman in black clothes is carried on a litter or bier by four men; he is lamented over by men disguised as women in black clothes, then thrown down before the village dung-heap, drenched with water, buried in the dung-heap, and covered with straw.² Similarly in Schörzingen, near Schömberg, the "Carnival (Shrovetide) Fool" was carried all about the village on a bier, preceded by a man dressed in white, and followed by a devil who was dressed in black and carried chains, which he clanked. One of the train collected gifts. After the procession the Fool was buried under straw and dung.³ In Rottweil the "Carnival Fool" is made drunk on Ash Wednesday and buried under straw amid loud lamentation.⁴ In Wurmlingen the Fool is represented by a young fellow enveloped in straw, who is led about the village by a rope as a "Bear" on Shrove Tuesday and the preceding day. He dances to the flute. Then on Ash Wednesday a straw-man is made, placed on a trough, carried out of the village to the sound of drums and mournful music, and buried in a field.⁵ In Altdorf and Weingarten on Ash Wednesday the Fool, represented by a straw-man, is carried about and then thrown into the water to the accompaniment of melancholy music. In other

¹ J. Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Vienna, 1885), p. 284 sq.

² Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechrain*, p. 162 sqq.; Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 411.

³ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 374; cp. Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. p. 54 sq., § 71.

⁴ E. Meier, *op. cit.* p. 372.

⁵ E. Meier, *op. cit.* p. 373.

villages of Swabia the part of fool is played by a live person, who is thrown into the water after being carried about in procession.¹ At Balwe, in Westphalia, a straw-man is made on Shrove Tuesday and thrown into the river amid rejoicings. This is called, as usual, "Burying the Carnival."² At Burgebrach, in Bavaria, it used to be customary, as a public pastime, to hold a sort of court of justice on Ash Wednesday. The accused was a straw-man, on whom was laid the burden of all the notorious transgressions that had been committed in the course of the year. Twelve chosen maidens sat in judgment and pronounced sentence, and a single advocate pleaded the cause of the public scapegoat. Finally the effigy was burnt, and thus all the offences that had created a scandal in the community during the year were symbolically atoned for.³ We can hardly doubt that this custom of burning a straw-man on Ash Wednesday for the sins of a whole year is only another form of the custom, observed on the same day in so many other places, of burning an effigy which is supposed to embody and to be responsible for all the excesses committed during the license of the Carnival.

In Greece a ceremony of the same sort was witnessed at Pylos by Mr. Tilton in 1895. On the evening of the last day of the Greek Lent, which fell that year on the twenty-fifth of February, an effigy with a grotesque mask for a face was borne about the streets on a bier, preceded by a mock priest with long white beard. Other functionaries surrounded the bier and two torch-bearers walked in advance. The procession moved slowly to melancholy music played by a pipe and drum. A final halt was made in the public square, where a circular space was kept clear of the surging crowd. Here a bonfire was kindled, and round it the priest led a wild dance to the same droning music. When the frenzy was at its height, the chief performer put tow on the effigy and set fire to it, and while it blazed he resumed his mad career, brandishing torches and tearing off his venerable beard to add fuel to the flames.⁴ On the evening of Shrove Tuesday, the Esthonians make a straw figure called *metsik* or "wood-

¹ E. Meier, *op. cit.* pp. 373, 374.

² A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. p. 130, § 393.

³ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 958, note.

⁴ *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 206.

spirit"; one year it is dressed with a man's coat and hat, next year with a hood and a petticoat. This figure is stuck on a long pole, carried across the boundary of the village with loud cries of joy, and fastened to the top of a tree in the wood. The ceremony is believed to be a protection against all kinds of misfortune.¹

Sometimes at these Shrovetide or Lenten ceremonies the resurrection of the pretended dead person is enacted. Thus, in some parts of Swabia on Shrove Tuesday Dr. Iron-Beard professes to bleed a sick man, who thereupon falls as dead to the ground; but the doctor at last restores him to life by blowing air into him through a tube.² In the Harz Mountains, when Carnival is over, a man is laid on a baking-trough and carried with dirges to a grave; but in the grave a glass of brandy is buried instead of the man. A speech is delivered and then the people return to the village-green or meeting-place, where they smoke the long clay pipes which are distributed at funerals. On the morning of Shrove Tuesday in the following year the brandy is dug up and the festival begins by every one tasting the spirit which, as the phrase goes, has come to life again.³

The ceremony of "Carrying out Death" presents much the same features as "Burying the Carnival"; except that the carrying out of Death is generally followed by a ceremony, or at least accompanied by a profession, of bringing in Summer, Spring, or Life. Thus in Middle Franken, a province of Bavaria, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, the village urchins used to make a straw effigy of Death, which they carried about with burlesque pomp through the streets, and afterwards burned with loud cries beyond the bounds.⁴ In the villages near Erlangen, when the fourth Sunday in Lent came round, the peasant girls used to dress themselves in all their finery with flowers in their hair. Thus attired they repaired to the neighbouring town, carrying puppets which were adorned with leaves and covered with white cloths. These they took from house to house in pairs, stopping at every door where they expected to receive

¹ F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehesten*, p. 353.

² H. Pröhle, *Harzbilder* (Leipsic, 1855), p. 54.

³ E. Meier, *op. cit.* p. 374.

⁴ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 958.

something, and singing a few lines in which they announced that it was Mid-Lent and that they were about to throw Death into the water. When they had collected some trifling gratuities they went to the River Regnitz and flung the puppets representing Death into the stream. This was done to ensure a fruitful and prosperous year; further, it was considered a safeguard against pestilence and sudden death.¹ At Nuremberg girls of seven to eighteen years of age go through the streets bearing a little open coffin, in which is a doll hidden under a shroud. Others carry a beech branch, with an apple fastened to it for a head, in an open box. They sing, "We carry Death into the water, it is well," or "We carry Death into the water, carry him in and out again."² In other parts of Bavaria the ceremony took place on the Saturday before the fifth Sunday in Lent, and the performers were boys or girls, according to the sex of the last person who died in the village. The figure was thrown into water or buried in a secret place, for example under moss in the forest, that no one might find Death again. Then early on Sunday morning the children went from house to house singing a song in which they announced the glad tidings that Death was gone.³ In some villages of Thüringen on the fourth Sunday of Lent, the children used to carry a puppet of birchen twigs through the village, and then threw it into a pool, while they sang, "We carry the old Death out behind the herdsman's old house; we have got Summer, and Kroden's (?) power is destroyed."⁴ In one village of Thüringen (Dobschwitz near Gera), the ceremony of "Driving out Death" is still annually observed on the first of March. The young people make up a figure of straw or the like materials, dress it in old clothes, which they have begged from houses in the village, and carry it out and throw it into the river. On returning to the village they break the good news to the people, and receive eggs and other victuals as a reward. In other villages of Thüringen, in which the population was

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 958.

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 639 sq.; Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 412.

³ Sepp, *Die Religion der alten Deutschen*, p. 67.

⁴ Aug. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 193.

originally Slavonic, the carrying out of the puppet is accompanied with the singing of a song, which begins, "Now we carry Death out of the village and Spring into the village."¹ In Bohemia the children go out with a straw-man, representing Death, to the end of the village, where they burn it, singing—

"Now carry we Death out of the village,
The new Summer into the village,
Welcome, dear Summer,
Green little corn."²

At Tabor in Bohemia the figure of Death is carried out of the town and flung from a high rock into the water, while they sing—

"Death swims on the water,
Summer will soon be here,
We carried Death away for you,
We brought the Summer.
And do thou, O holy Marketa,
Give us a good year
For wheat and for rye."³

In other parts of Bohemia they carry Death to the end of the village, singing—

"We carry Death out of the village,
And the New Year into the village.
Dear Spring, we bid you welcome,
Green grass, we bid you welcome."

Behind the village they erect a pyre, on which they burn the straw figure, reviling and scoffing at it the while. Then they return, singing—

"We have carried away Death,
And brought Life back.
He has taken up his quarters in the village,
Therefore sing joyous songs."⁴

In some German villages of Moravia, as in Jassnitz and Seitendorf, the young folk assemble on the third Sunday in Lent and fashion a straw-man, who is generally adorned

¹ Witzschel, *op. cit.* p. 199.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kal-*

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. *ender aus Böhmen*, p. 90 sq.

642.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 91.

with a fur cap and a pair of old leathern hose, if such are to be had. The effigy is then hoisted on a pole and carried by the lads and lasses out into the open fields. On the way they sing a song, in which it is said that they are carrying Death away and bringing dear Summer into the house, and with Summer the May and the flowers. On reaching an appointed place they dance in a circle round the effigy with loud shouts and screams, then suddenly rush at it and tear it to pieces with their hands. Lastly, the pieces are thrown together in a heap, the pole is broken, and fire is set to the whole. While it burns the troop dances merrily round it, rejoicing at the victory won by Spring; and when the fire has nearly died out they go to the householders to beg for a present of eggs wherewith to hold a feast, taking care to give as a reason for the request that they have carried Death out and away.¹

The effigy of Death is often regarded with fear and treated with marks of hatred and contempt. In Lusatia the figure is sometimes made to look in at the window of a house, and it is believed that some one in the house will die within the year unless his life is redeemed by the payment of money.² Again, after throwing the effigy away, the bearers sometimes run home lest Death should follow them, and if one of them falls in running, it is believed that he will die within the year.³ At Chrudim, in Bohemia, the figure of Death is made out of a cross, with a head and mask stuck at the top, and a shirt stretched out on it. On the fifth Sunday in Lent the boys take this effigy to the nearest brook or pool, and standing in a line throw it into the water. Then they all plunge in after it; but as soon as it is caught no one more may enter the water. The boy who did not enter the water or entered it last will die within the year, and he is obliged to carry the Death back to the village. The effigy is then burned.⁴ On the other hand it is believed that no one will die within the year in the house

¹ W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, pp. 353-355.

² Grimm, *op. cit.* ii. 644; K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, ii. 55.

³ Grimm, *op. cit.* ii. 640, 643.

⁴ Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 294 sq.; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 90.

out of which the figure of Death has been carried ;¹ and the village out of which Death has been driven is sometimes supposed to be protected against sickness and plague.² In some villages of Austrian Silesia on the Saturday before Dead Sunday an effigy is made of old clothes, hay, and straw, for the purpose of driving Death out of the village. On Sunday the people, armed with sticks and straps, assemble before the house where the figure is lodged. Four lads then draw the effigy by cords through the village amid exultant shouts, while all the others beat it with their sticks and straps. On reaching a field which belongs to a neighbouring village they lay down the figure, cudgel it soundly, and scatter the fragments over the field. The people believe that the village from which Death has been thus carried out will be safe from any infectious disease for the whole year.³ In villages of the Wagstadt district, Austrian Silesia, girls and boys together dress up a man of straw called Death on the fifth Sunday of Lent, which hence goes by the name of Dead or Black Sunday. After arraying the effigy in their best clothes they carry it in procession on a pole to the boundary of the village, where they strip it, tear it in pieces, and burn it.⁴ In Slavonia the figure of Death is cudgelled and then rent in two.⁵ In Poland the effigy, made of hemp and straw, is flung into a pool or swamp with the words "The devil take thee."⁶

The custom of "sawing the Old Woman," which is or used to be observed in Italy, France, and Spain on the fourth Sunday in Lent, is doubtless, as Grimm supposes, merely another form of the custom of "Carrying out Death." A great hideous figure representing the oldest woman of the village was dragged out and sawn in two, amid a prodigious noise made with cow-bells, pots and pans, and so forth.⁷ In Palermo the representation used to be still more lifelike. At Mid-Lent an old woman was drawn through the streets

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 640.

² J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch, Aberglauben, Sagen und andre alte Ueberlieferungen im Voigtlande*, p. 171.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 80.

⁴ A. Peter, *Völkstümliches aus Österreichisch-Schlesien*, ii. 281.

⁵ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 211.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 210.
⁷ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 652; H. Usener, "Italische Mythen," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xxx. (1875), p. 191 sq.

on a cart, attended by two men dressed in the costume of the *Compagnia de' Bianchi*, a society or religious order whose function it was to attend and console prisoners condemned to death. A scaffold was erected in a public square; the old woman mounted it, and two mock executioners proceeded, amid a storm of huzzas and hand-clapping, to saw through her neck or rather through a bladder of blood which had been previously fitted to her neck. The blood gushed out and the old woman pretended to swoon and die. The last of these mock executions took place in 1737.¹ In Florence, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Old Woman was represented by a figure stuffed with walnuts and dried figs and fastened to the top of a ladder. At Mid-Lent this effigy was sawn through the middle under the *Loggie* of the Mercato Nuovo, and as the dried fruits tumbled out they were scrambled for by the crowd. A trace of the custom is still to be seen in the practice, observed by urchins, of secretly pinning paper ladders to the shoulders of women of the lower classes who happen to show themselves in the streets on the morning of Mid-Lent.² A similar custom is observed by urchins in Rome; and at Naples on the first of April boys cut strips of cloth into the shape of saws, smear them with gypsum, and strike passers-by with their "saws" on the back, thus imprinting the figure of a saw upon their clothes.³ At Montalto, in Calabria, boys go about at Mid-Lent with little saws made of cane and jeer at old people, who therefore generally stay indoors on that day. The Calabrian women meet together at this time and feast on figs, chestnuts, honey, and so forth; this they call "sawing the Old Woman"—a reminiscence probably of a custom like the old Florentine one.⁴ In Lombardy the Thursday of Mid-Lent is known as the Day of the Old Wives (*il giorno delle Vecchie*). The children run about crying out for the oldest woman, whom they wish to burn; and failing to possess themselves of the original, they make a puppet representing her, which, in the evening, is consumed on a

¹ G. Pitre, *Spettacoli e feste popolari siciliane* (Palermo, 1881), p. 207 sq.; *id.*, *Usi e Costumi*, i. 107 sq.

² *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, iv. (1885), p. 294 sq.

³ H. Usener, *op. cit.* p. 193.

⁴ Vincenzo Dorsa, *La tradizione greco-latina negli usi e nelle credenze popolari della Calabria citeriore* (Cosenza, 1884), p. 43 sq.

bonfire. On the Lake of Garda, the blaze of light flaring at different points on the hills produces a picturesque effect.¹

In Berry, a region of Central France, the custom of "sawing the Old Woman" at Mid-Lent used to be popular, and has probably not wholly died out even now. Here the name of "Fairs of the old Wives" was given to certain fairs held in Lent, at which children were made to believe that they would see the Old Woman of Mid-Lent split or sawn asunder. At Argenton and Cluis-Dessus, when Mid-Lent has come, children of ten or twelve years of age scour the streets with wooden swords, pursue the old crones whom they meet, and even try to break into the houses where ancient dames are known to live. Passers-by, who see the children thus engaged, say, "They are going to cut or sabre the Old Woman." Meantime, the old wives take care to keep out of sight as much as possible. When the children of Cluis-Dessus have gone their rounds, and the day draws towards evening, they repair to Cluis-Dessous, where they mould a rude figure of an old woman out of clay, hew it in pieces with their wooden swords, and throw the bits into the river. At Bourges on the same day, an effigy representing an old woman was formerly sawn in two on the crier's stone in a public square. About the middle of the nineteenth century, in the same town and on the same day, hundreds of children assembled at the Hospital "to see the old woman split or divided in two." A religious service was held in the building on this occasion, which attracted many idlers. In the streets it was not uncommon to hear cries of "Let us cleave the Old Wife! let us cleave the oldest woman of the ward!" At Tulle, on the day of Mid-Lent, the people used to inquire after the oldest woman in the town, and to tell the children that at mid-day punctually she was to be sawn in two at Puy-Saint-Clair.²

In Barcelona on the fourth Sunday in Lent boys run about the streets, some with saws, others with billets of wood, others again with cloths in which they collect gratuities. They sing a song in which it is said that they are looking

¹ E. Martinengo-Cesaresco, in *The Academy*, No. 671, March 14th, 1885, p. 188.

² Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 43 sq.

for the oldest woman of the city for the purpose of sawing her in two in honour of Mid-Lent; at last, pretending to have found her, they saw something in two and burn it. A like custom is found amongst the South Slavs. In Lent the Croats tell their children that at noon an old woman is being sawn in two outside the gates; and in Carniola also the saying is current that at Mid-Lent an old woman is taken out of the village and sawn in two. The North Slavonian expression for keeping Mid-Lent is *bábu rezati*, that is, "sawing the Old Wife."¹

Among the gypsies of South-Eastern Europe the custom of "sawing the Old Woman in two" is observed in a very graphic form, not, however, at Mid-Lent, but on the afternoon of Palm Sunday. The Old Woman, represented by a puppet of straw dressed in women's clothes, is laid across a beam in some open place and beaten with clubs by the assembled gypsies, after which it is sawn in two by a young man and a maiden, both of whom wear a disguise. While the effigy is being sawn through, the rest of the company dance round it singing songs of various sorts. The remains of the figure are finally burnt, and the ashes thrown into a stream. The ceremony is supposed by the gypsies themselves to be observed in honour of a certain Shadow Queen; hence Palm Sunday goes by the name Shadow Day among all the strolling gypsies of Eastern and Southern Europe. According to the popular belief, this Shadow Queen, of whom the gypsies of to-day have only a very vague and confused conception, vanishes underground at the appearance of spring, but comes forth again at the beginning of winter to plague mankind during that inclement season with sickness, hunger, and death. Among the vagrant gypsies of Southern Hungary the effigy is regarded as an expiatory and thank offering made to the Shadow Queen for having spared the people during the winter. In Transylvania the gypsies who live in tents clothe the puppet in the cast-off garments of the woman who has last become a widow. The widow herself gives the clothes gladly for this purpose, because she thinks that being burnt

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. *Rheinisches Museum*, N. F. xxx. (1875), 652; H. Usener, "Italische Mythen," p. 191 sq.

they will pass into the possession of her departed husband, who will thus have no excuse for returning from the spirit-land to visit her. The ashes are thrown by the Transylvanian gypsies on the first graveyard that they pass on their journey.¹ In this gypsy custom the equivalence of the effigy of the Old Woman to the effigy of Death in the customs we have just been considering comes out very clearly, thus strongly confirming the opinion of Grimm that the practice of "sawing the Old Woman" is only another form of the practice of "carrying out Death."

The same perhaps may be said of a somewhat different form which the custom assumes in parts of Spain and Italy. In Spain it is sometimes usual on Ash Wednesday to fashion an effigy of stucco or pasteboard representing a hideous old woman with seven legs, wearing a crown of sorrel and spinach, and holding a sceptre in her hand. The seven skinny legs stand for the seven weeks of the Lenten fast which begins on Ash Wednesday. This monster, proclaimed queen of Lent amid the chanting of lugubrious songs, is carried in triumph through the crowded streets and public places. On reaching the principal square the people put out their torches, cease shouting, and disperse. Their revels are now ended, and they take a vow to hold no more merry meetings until all the legs of the old woman have fallen one by one and she has been beheaded. The effigy is then deposited in some place appointed for the purpose, where the public is admitted to see it during the whole of Lent. Every week, on Saturday evening, one of the queen's legs is pulled off; and on Holy Saturday, when from every church tower the joyous clangour of the bells proclaims the glad tidings that Christ is risen, the mutilated body of the fallen queen is carried with great solemnity to the principal square and publicly beheaded.²

A custom of the same sort prevails in various parts of Italy. Thus in the Abruzzi they hang a puppet of tow, representing Lent, to a cord, which stretches across the street

¹ H. von Wlislöcki, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Zigeuner* (Münster i. W., 1891), p. 145 sq.

² E. Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 107 sq.; Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 45 sq.

from one window to another. Seven feathers are attached to the figure, and in its hand it grasps a distaff and spindle. Every Saturday in Lent one of the seven feathers is plucked out, and on Holy Saturday, while the bells are ringing, a string of chestnuts is burnt for the purpose of sending Lent and its meagre fare to the devil. In houses, too, it is usual to amuse children by cutting the figure of an old woman with seven legs out of pasteboard and sticking it beside the chimney. The old woman represents Lent, and her seven legs are the seven weeks of the fast; every Saturday one of the legs is amputated.¹ At Castellamare, to the south of Naples, an English lady observed a rude puppet dangling from a string which spanned one of the narrow streets of the old town, being fastened at either end, high overhead, to the upper part of the many-storied houses. The puppet, about a foot long, was dressed all in black, rather like a nun, and from the skirts projected five or six feathers which bore a certain resemblance to legs. A peasant being asked what these things meant, replied with Italian vagueness, "It is only Lent." Further inquiries, however, elicited the information that at the end of every week in Lent one of the feather legs was pulled off the puppet, and that the puppet was finally destroyed on the last day of Lent.²

In the preceding ceremonies the return of Spring, Summer, or Life, as a sequel to the expulsion of Death, is only implied or at most announced. In the following ceremonies it is plainly enacted. Thus in some parts of Bohemia the effigy of Death is buried at sunset; then the girls go out into the wood and cut down a young tree with a green crown, hang a doll dressed as a woman on it, deck the whole with green, red, and white ribbons, and march in procession with their *Lito* (Summer) into the village, collecting gifts and singing—

"We carried Death out of the village,
We are carrying Summer into the village."³

¹ A. de Nino, *Usi e Costumi Abruzzi*, ii. 203-205 (Florence, 1881).

² Lucy E. Broadwood, in *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893), p. 390.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 89 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 156. This custom has been already referred to. See vol. i. p. 208.

In many Silesian villages the figure of Death, after being treated with respect, is stript of its clothes and flung with curses into the water, or torn to pieces in a field. Then a fir-tree adorned with ribbons, coloured egg-shells, and motley bits of cloth, is carried through the streets by boys who collect pennies and sing—

"We have carried Death out,
We are bringing the dear Summer back,
The Summer and the May
And all the flowers gay."¹

At Eisenach on the fourth Sunday in Lent young people used to fasten a straw-man, representing Death, to a wheel, which they trundled to the top of a hill. Then setting fire to the figure they allowed it and the wheel to roll down the slope. Next they cut a tall fir-tree, tricked it out with ribbons, and set it up in the plain. The men then climbed the tree to fetch down the ribbons.² In Upper Lusatia the figure of Death, made of straw and rags, is dressed in a veil furnished by the last bride and a shirt provided by the house in which the last death took place. Thus arrayed the figure is stuck on the end of a long pole and carried at full speed by the tallest and strongest girl, while the rest pelt the effigy with sticks and stones. Whoever hits it will be sure to live through the year. In this way Death is carried out of the village and thrown into the water or over the boundary of the next village. On their way home each one breaks a green branch and carries it gaily with him till he reaches the village, when he throws it away. Sometimes the young people of the next village, upon whose land the figure has been thrown, run after them and hurl it back, not wishing to have Death among them. Hence the two parties occasionally come to blows.³

In these cases Death is represented by the puppet which is thrown away, Summer or Life by the branches or trees which are brought back. But sometimes a new potency of

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 82; Philo vom Walde, *Schlesien in Sage und Brauch* (N.D., preface dated 1883), p. 122.

² Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 192 sq.,

compare p. 297 sqq.

³ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 643 sq.; K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, ii. 54 sq.; Mannhardt, *Haumkultus*, p. 412 sq.; Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 211.

life seems to be attributed to the image of Death itself, and by a kind of resurrection it becomes the instrument of the general revival. Thus in some parts of Lusatia women alone are concerned in carrying out Death, and suffer no male to meddle with it. Attired in mourning, which they wear the whole day, they make a puppet of straw, clothe it in a white shirt, and give it a broom in one hand and a scythe in the other. Singing songs and pursued by urchins throwing stones, they carry the puppet to the village boundary, where they tear it in pieces. Then they cut down a fine tree, hang the shirt on it, and carry it home singing.¹

On the Feast of Ascension the Saxons of Braller, a village of Transylvania not far from Hermanstadt, observe the ceremony of "carrying out Death" in the following manner. After morning service all the school girls repair to the house of one of their number, and there dress up the Death. This is done by tying a threshed-out sheaf of corn into a rough semblance of a head and body, while the arms are simulated by a broomstick thrust through it horizontally. The figure is dressed in the holiday attire of a young peasant woman, with a red hood, silver brooches, and a profusion of ribbons at the arms and breast. The girls bustle at their work, for soon the bells will be ringing to vespers, and the Death must be ready in time to be placed at the open window, that all the people may see it on their way to church. When vespers are over, the longed-for moment has come for the first procession with the Death to begin; it is a privilege that belongs to the school-girls alone. Two of the older girls seize the figure by the arms and walk in front; all the rest follow two and two. Boys may take no part in the procession, but they troop after it gazing with open-mouthed admiration at the "beautiful Death." So the procession goes through all the streets of the village, the girls singing in their sweet young voices the old hymn that begins:—

*"Gott mein Vater, deine Liebe
Reicht so weit der Himmel ist,"*

to a tune that differs from the ordinary one. When the

¹ Grimm, *op. cit.* ii. 644; K. Haupt, *op. cit.* ii. 55.

procession has wound its way through every street, the girls go to another house, and having shut the door against the eager prying crowd of boys who follow at their heels, they strip the Death and pass the naked truss of straw out of the window to the boys, who pounce on it, run out of the village with it without singing, and fling the dilapidated effigy into the neighbouring brook. When this is done, the second scene of the little drama begins. While the boys were carrying away the Death out of the village, the girls remained in the house, and one of them is now dressed in all the finery which had been worn by the effigy. Thus arrayed she is led in procession through all the streets to the singing of the same hymn as before. When the procession is over they all betake themselves to the house of the girl who played the leading part. Here a feast awaits them from which also the boys are excluded. It is a popular belief that the children may safely begin to eat gooseberries and other fruit after the day on which Death has thus been carried out; for Death, which up to that time lurked especially in gooseberries, is now destroyed. Further, they may now bathe with impunity out of doors.¹ Very similar is the ceremony which down to recent years was observed in some of the German villages of Moravia. Boys and girls met on the afternoon of the first Sunday after Easter and together fashioned a puppet of straw to represent Death. Decked with bright-coloured ribbons and cloths and fastened to the top of a long pole, the effigy was then borne with singing and clamour to the nearest height, where it was stripped of its gay attire and thrown or rolled down the slope. One of the girls was next dressed in the gauds taken from the effigy of Death, and with her at its head the procession moved back to the village. In some villages the practice is to bury the effigy in the place that has the most evil reputation of all the country-side; others throw it into running water.²

In the Lusatian ceremony described above,³ the tree which

¹ J. K. Schuller, *Das Todastragen und der Muorlef, ein Beitrag zur Kunde sächsischer Sitte und Sage in Siebenbürgen* (Hermannstadt, 1861), p. 4 sq. The description of this ceremony by Miss E. Gerard (*The Land beyond the*

Forest, ii. 47-49) is plainly borrowed from Mr. Schuller's little work.

² W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren* (Vienna and Olmütz, 1893), p. 258 sq.

³ P. 93.

is brought home after the destruction of the figure of Death is plainly equivalent to the trees or branches which, in the preceding customs, were brought back as representatives of Summer or Life, after Death had been thrown away or destroyed. But the transference of the shirt worn by the effigy of Death to the tree clearly indicates that the tree is a kind of revivification, in a new form, of the destroyed effigy.¹ This comes out also in the Transylvanian and Moravian customs; the dressing of a girl in the clothes worn by the Death, and the leading her about the village to the same song which had been sung when the Death was being carried about, show that she is intended to be a kind of resuscitation of the being whose effigy has just been destroyed. These examples therefore suggest that the Death whose demolition is represented in these ceremonies cannot be regarded as the purely destructive agent which we understand by Death. If the tree which is brought back as an embodiment of the reviving vegetation of spring is clothed in the shirt worn by the Death which has been just destroyed, the object certainly cannot be to check and counteract the revival of vegetation; it can only be to foster and promote it. Therefore the being which has just been destroyed—the so-called Death—must be supposed to be endowed with a vivifying and quickening influence, which it can communicate to the vegetable and even the animal world. This ascription of a life-giving virtue to the figure of Death is put beyond a doubt by the custom, observed in some places, of taking pieces of the straw effigy of Death and placing them in the fields to make the crops grow, or in the manger to make the cattle thrive. Thus in Spachendorf, a village of Austrian Silesia, the figure of Death, made of straw, brushwood, and rags, is carried with wild songs to an open place outside the village and there burned, and while it is burning a general struggle takes place for the pieces, which are pulled out of the flames with bare hands. Each one who secures a fragment of the effigy ties it to a branch of the largest tree in his garden, or buries it in his field, in the belief that this causes the crops to grow better.²

¹ This is also the view taken of the custom by Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 419.

² Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 293 sq.

In the Troppau district of Austrian Silesia the straw figure which the boys make on the fourth Sunday in Lent is dressed by the girls in woman's clothes and hung with ribbons, necklace, and garlands. Attached to a long pole it is carried out of the village, followed by a troop of young people of both sexes, who alternately frolic, lament, and sing songs. Arrived at its destination—a field outside the village—the figure is stripped of its clothes and ornaments; then the crowd rushes at it and tears it to bits, scuffling for the fragments. Every one tries to get a wisp of the straw of which the effigy was made, because such a wisp, placed in the manger, is believed to make the cattle thrive.¹ Or the straw is put in the hens' nest, it being supposed that this prevents the hens from carrying away their eggs, and makes them brood much better.² The same attribution of a fertilising power to the figure of Death appears in the belief that if the bearers of the figure, after throwing it away, meet cattle and strike them with their sticks, this will render the cattle prolific.³ Perhaps the sticks had been previously used to beat the Death,⁴ and so had acquired the fertilising power ascribed to the effigy. In Leipsic at Mid-Lent men and women of the lowest class used to carry through all the streets a straw effigy of Death, which they exhibited to young wives, and finally threw into the river, alleging that this made young wives fruitful, cleansed the city, and averted the plague and other sickness from the inhabitants for that year.⁵

It seems hardly possible to separate from the May-trees the trees or branches which are brought into the village after the destruction of the Death. The bearers who bring them in profess to be bringing in the Summer;⁶ therefore the trees obviously represent the Summer; and the doll which is sometimes attached to the Summer-tree is a duplicate representative of the Summer, just as the May is sometimes represented at the same time by a May-tree and a May Lady.⁷ Further, the Summer-trees are adorned like May-

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 82.

² Philo vom Walde, *Schlesien in Sage und Brauch*, p. 122.

³ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,¹ ii. 640 sq.

⁴ See above, p. 86.

⁵ K. Schwenk, *Die Mythologie der Slaven*, p. 217 sq.

⁶ Above, p. 91 sq.

⁷ See vol. i. p. 207 sqq.

trees with ribbons and so on; like May-trees, when large, they are planted in the ground and climbed up; and like May-trees, when small, they are carried from door to door by boys or girls singing songs and collecting money.¹ And as if to demonstrate the identity of the two sets of customs the bearers of the Summer-tree sometimes announce that they are bringing in the Summer and the May.² The customs, therefore, of bringing in the May and bringing in the Summer are essentially the same; and the Summer-tree is merely another form of the May-tree, the only distinction (besides that of name) being in the time at which they are respectively brought in; for while the May-tree is usually fetched in on the first of May or at Whitsuntide, the Summer-tree is fetched in on the fourth Sunday in Lent. Therefore, if the explanation here adopted of the May-tree (namely, that it is an embodiment of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation) is correct, the Summer-tree must likewise be an embodiment of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. But we have seen that the Summer-tree is in some cases a revivification of the effigy of Death. It follows, therefore, that in these cases the effigy called Death must be an embodiment of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. This inference is confirmed, first, by the vivifying and fertilising influence which the fragments of the effigy of Death are believed to exercise both on vegetable and on animal life;³ for this influence, as we saw in the first chapter, is supposed to be a special attribute of the tree-spirit. It is confirmed, secondly, by observing that the effigy of Death is sometimes decked with leaves or made of twigs, branches, hemp, or a threshed-out sheaf of corn;⁴ and that sometimes it is hung on a little tree and so carried about by girls collecting money,⁵ just as is done with the May-tree and the May Lady, and with the Summer-tree and the doll attached to it. In short we are driven to regard the expulsion of Death and

¹ Above, p. 91, and Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 644; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 87 sq.

² Above, p. 92.

³ See above, p. 95 sq.

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⁴ Above, pp. 82, 83, 86, 93; and Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ ii. 643.

⁵ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 88. Sometimes the effigy of Death (without a tree) is carried round by boys who collect gratuities (Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ ii. 644).

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the bringing in of Summer as, in some cases at least, merely another form of that death and revival of the spirit of vegetation in spring which we saw enacted in the killing and resurrection of the Wild Man.¹ The burial and resurrection of the Carnival is probably another way of expressing the same idea. The interment of the representative of the Carnival under a dung-heap is natural, if he is supposed to possess a quickening and fertilising influence like that ascribed to the effigy of Death. By the Esthonians, indeed, the straw figure which is carried out of the village in the usual way on Shrove Tuesday is not called the Carnival, but the Wood-spirit (*Metsik*), and the identity of it with the wood-spirit is further shown by fixing it to the top of a tree in the wood, where it remains for a year, and is besought almost daily with prayers and offerings to protect the herds; for like a true wood-spirit the *Metsik* is a patron of cattle. Sometimes the *Metsik* is made of sheaves of corn.²

Thus we may fairly conjecture that the names Carnival, Death, and Summer are comparatively late and inadequate expressions for the beings personified or embodied in the customs with which we have been dealing. The very abstractness of the names bespeaks a modern origin; the personification of times and seasons like the Carnival and Summer, or of an abstract notion like death, is hardly primitive. But the ceremonies themselves bear the stamp of a dateless antiquity; therefore we can hardly help supposing that in their origin the ideas which they embodied were of a more simple and concrete order. The notion of a tree, perhaps of a particular kind of tree (for some savages have no word for tree in general), or even of an individual tree, is sufficiently concrete to supply a basis from which by a gradual process of generalisation the wider idea of a spirit of vegetation might be reached. But this general idea of vegetation would readily be confounded with the season in which it manifests itself; hence the substitution of Spring, Summer, or May for the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation would be easy.

¹ Above, p. 62.

² Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Esten*, p. 353; Holzmayer, "Osiliana," in *Verhand-*

lungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat, vii. Heft 2, p. 10 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultur*, p. 407 sq.

and natural. Again the concrete notion of the dying tree or dying vegetation would by a similar process of generalisation glide into a notion of death in general; so that the practice of carrying out the dying or dead vegetation in spring, as a preliminary to its revival, would in time widen out into an attempt to banish Death in general from the village or district. The view that in these spring ceremonies Death meant originally the dying or dead vegetation of winter has the high support of W. Mannhardt; and he confirms it by the analogy of the name Death as applied to the spirit of the ripe corn. Commonly the spirit of the ripe corn is conceived, not as dead, but as old, and hence it goes by the name of the Old Man or the Old Woman. But in some places the last sheaf cut at harvest, which is generally believed to be the seat of the corn spirit, is called "the Dead One"; children are warned against entering the corn-fields because Death sits in the corn; and, in a game played by Saxon children in Transylvania at the maize harvest, Death is represented by a child completely covered with maize leaves.¹

Sometimes in the popular customs of the peasantry the contrast between the dormant powers of vegetation in winter and their awakening vitality in spring takes the form of a dramatic contest between actors who play the parts respectively of Winter and Summer. Thus in the region of the middle Rhine, a representative of Summer clad in ivy combats a representative of Winter clad in straw or moss and finally gains a victory over him. The vanquished foe is thrown to the ground and stripped of his casing of straw, which is torn to pieces and scattered about, while the youthful comrades of the two champions sing a song to commemorate the defeat of Winter by Summer. Afterwards they carry about a summer garland or branch and collect gifts of eggs and bacon from house to house. Sometimes the champion who acts the part of Summer is dressed in leaves and flowers and wears a chaplet of flowers on his head. In the Palatinate this mimic conflict takes place on the fourth Sunday in Lent.² All over Bavaria the same drama used to be acted on the same day,

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 417-421.

637-639; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2,

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,¹ ii. p. 357 sq.

and it was still kept up in some places about forty years ago. While Summer appeared clad all in green, decked with fluttering ribbons, and carrying a branch in blossom or a little tree hung with apples and pears, Winter was muffled up in cap and mantle of fur and bore in his hand a snow-shovel or a flail. Accompanied by their respective retinues dressed in corresponding attire, they went through all the streets of the village, halting before the houses and singing staves of old songs, for which they received presents of bread, eggs, and fruit. Finally, after a short struggle, Winter was beaten by Summer and ducked in the village well or driven out of the village with shouts and laughter into the forest.¹ In some parts of Bavaria the boys who play the parts of Winter and Summer act their little drama in every house that they visit, and engage in a war of words before they come to blows, each of them vaunting the pleasures and benefits of the season he represents and disparaging those of the other. The dialogue is in verse. A few couplets may serve as specimens :—

SUMMER.

"Green, green are meadows wherever I pass
And the mowers are busy among the grass."

WINTER.

"White, white are the meadows wherever I go,
And the sledges glide hissing across the snow."

SUMMER.

"I'll climb up the tree where the red cherries glow,
And Winter can stand by himself down below."

WINTER.

"With you I will climb the cherry-tree tall,
Its branches will kindle the fire in the hall."

SUMMER.

"O Winter, you are most uncivil
To send old women to the devil."

WINTER.

"By that I make 'em warm and mellow,
So let them bawl and let 'em bellow."

¹ *Bavaria*, etc., i. 369 sq.

SUMMER.

"I am the Summer in white array,
I'm chasing the Winter far, far away."

WINTER.

"I am the Winter in mantle of furs,
I'm chasing the Summer o'er bushes and burs."

SUMMER.

"Just say a word more, and I'll have you bann'd
At once and for ever from Summer land."

WINTER.

"O Summer, for all your bluster and brag,
You'd not dare to carry a hen in a bag."

SUMMER.

"O Winter, your chatter no more can I stay,
I'll kick and I'll cuff you without delay."

Here ensues a scuffle between the two little boys, in which Summer gets the best of it, and turns Winter out of the house. But soon the beaten champion of Winter peeps in at the door and says with a humbled and crestfallen air:—

"O Summer, dear Summer, I'm under your ban,
For you are the master and I am the man."

To which Summer replies:—

"'Tis a capital notion, an excellent plan,
If I am the master and you are the man.
So come, my dear Winter, and give me your hand,
We'll travel together to Summer Land."¹

At Goepfritz in Lower Austria, two men personating Summer and Winter used to go from house to house on Shrove Tuesday, and were everywhere welcomed by the children with great delight. The representative of Summer was clad in white and bore a sickle; his comrade, who played the part of Winter, had a fur-cap on his head, his arms and legs were swathed in straw, and he carried a flail. In every house

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 259 sq.; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. pp. 253-256; Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechrain*, p. 167 sq. A

dialogue in verse between representatives of Winter and Summer is spoken at Hartlieb in Silesia, near Breslau. See *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893), pp. 226-228.

they sang verses alternately.¹ At Drömling in Brunswick, down to the present time, the contest between Summer and Winter is acted every year by a troop of boys and a troop of girls. The boys rush singing, shouting, and ringing bells from house to house to drive Winter away; after them come the girls singing softly and led by a May Bride, all in bright dresses and decked with flowers and garlands to represent the genial advent of spring. Formerly the part of Winter was played by a straw-man which the boys carried with them; now it is acted by a real man in disguise.² In Wachtl and Brodek, a German village and a little German town of Moravia, encompassed by Slavonic people on every side, the great change that comes over the earth in spring is still annually mimicked. The long village of Wachtl, with its trim houses and farmyards, nestles in a valley surrounded by pretty pine-woods. Here, on a day in spring, about the time of the vernal equinox, an elderly man with a long flaxen beard may be seen going from door to door. He is muffled in furs, with warm gloves on his hands and a bearskin cap on his head, and he carries a threshing flail. This is the personification of Winter. With him goes a younger beardless man dressed in white, wearing a straw hat trimmed with gay ribbons on his head, and carrying a decorated May-tree in his hands. This is Summer. At every house they receive a friendly greeting and recite a long dialogue in verse, Winter punctuating his discourse with his flail, which he brings down with rude vigour on the backs of all within reach.³ Amongst the Slavonic population near Ungarisch Brod, in Moravia, the ceremony took a somewhat different form. Girls dressed in green marched in procession round a May-tree. Then two others, one in white and one in green, stepped up to the tree and engaged in a dialogue. Finally, the girl in white was driven away, but returned afterwards clothed in green, and the festival ended with a dance.⁴ On May Day it used to be customary in almost all the large parishes of the Isle of Man to choose from among the daughters of the

¹ Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 297 sq.

² R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), p. 250.

³ W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, pp. 430-436.

⁴ W. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 259.

wealthiest farmers a young maiden to be Queen of May. She was dressed in the gayest attire and attended by about twenty others, who were called maids of honour. She had also a young man for her captain with a number of inferior officers under him. In opposition to her was the Queen of Winter, a man attired as a woman, with woollen hoods, fur tippets, and loaded with the warmest and heaviest clothes, one upon another. Her attendants were habited in like manner, and she too had a captain and troop for her defence. Thus representing respectively the beauty of spring and the deformity of winter they set forth from their different quarters, the one preceded by the dulcet music of flutes and violins, the other by the harsh clatter of cleavers and tongs. Thus they marched till they met on a common, where the trains of the two mimic sovereigns engaged in a mock battle. If the Queen of Winter's forces got the better of their adversaries and took her rival prisoner, the captive Queen of Summer was ransomed for as much as would pay the expenses of the festival. After this ceremony, Winter and her company retired and diverted themselves in a barn, while the partisans of Summer danced on the green, concluding the evening with a feast, at which the Queen and her maids sat at one table and the captain and his troop at another. In later times the person of the Queen of May was exempt from capture, but one of her slippers was substituted and, if captured, had to be ransomed to defray the expenses of the pageant. The procession of the Summer, which was subsequently composed of little girls and called the Maceboard, outlived that of its rival the Winter for some years; but both have now long been things of the past.¹

Among the central Esquimaux of North America the contest between representatives of summer and winter, which in Europe has long degenerated into a mere dramatic performance, is still kept up as a magical ceremony of which the avowed intention is to influence the weather. In autumn, when storms announce the approach of the dismal Arctic winter, the Esquimaux divide themselves into two parties

¹ J. Train, *Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man*, ii. 118-120. It has been suggested that the

name Maceboard may be a corruption of May-sports.

called respectively the ptarmigans and the ducks, the ptarmigans comprising all persons born in winter, and the ducks all persons born in summer. A long rope of sealskin is then stretched out, and each party laying hold of one end of it seeks by tugging with might and main to drag the other party over to its side. If the ptarmigans get the worst of it, then summer has won the game and fine weather may be expected to prevail through the winter.¹ In this ceremony it is clearly assumed that persons born in summer have a natural affinity with warm weather, and therefore possess a power of mitigating the rigour of winter, whereas persons born in winter are, so to say, of a cold and frosty disposition and can thereby exert a refrigerating influence on the temperature of the air. In spite of this natural antipathy between the representatives of summer and winter, we may be allowed to conjecture that in the grand tug of war the ptarmigans do not pull at the rope with the same hearty goodwill as the ducks, and that thus the genial influence of summer commonly prevails over the harsh austerity of winter. The Indians of Canada seem also to have imagined that persons are endowed with distinct natural capacities according as they are born in summer or winter, and they turned the distinction to account in much the same fashion as the Esquimaux. When they wearied of the long frosts and the deep snow which kept them prisoners in their huts and prevented them from hunting, all of them who were born in summer rushed out of their houses armed with burning brands and torches which they hurled against the One who makes Winter; and this was supposed to produce the desired effect of mitigating the cold. But those Indians who were born in winter abstained from taking part in the ceremony, for they believed that if they meddled with it the cold would increase instead of diminishing.² We may surmise that in the corresponding European ceremonies, which have just been described, it was formerly deemed necessary that the actors, who played the parts of Winter and Summer, should have been born in the seasons which they personated.

¹ Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 605.

² *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 38 (Canadian reprint).

In Russia funeral ceremonies like those of "Burying the Carnival" and "Carrying out Death" are celebrated under the names, not of death or the Carnival, but of certain mythic figures, Kostrubonko, Kostroma, Kupalo, Lada, and Yarilo. These Russian ceremonies are observed both in spring and at midsummer. Thus "in Little Russia it used to be the custom at Eastertide to celebrate the funeral of a being called Kostrubonko, the deity of the spring. A circle was formed of singers who moved slowly around a girl who lay on the ground as if dead, and as they went they sang—

'Dead, dead is our Kostrubonko!
Dead, dead is our dear one!'

until the girl suddenly sprang up, on which the chorus joyfully exclaimed—

'Come to life, come to life has our Kostrubonko!
Come to life, come to life has our dear one!'"¹

On the Eve of St. John (Midsummer Eve) a figure of Kupalo is made of straw and "is dressed in woman's clothes, with a necklace and a floral crown. Then a tree is felled, and, after being decked with ribbons, is set up on some chosen spot. Near this tree, to which they give the name of Marena [Winter or Death], the straw figure is placed, together with a table, on which stand spirits and viands. Afterwards a bonfire is lit, and the young men and maidens jump over it in couples, carrying the figure with them. On the next day they strip the tree and the figure of their ornaments, and throw them both into a stream."² On St. Peter's Day, the twenty-ninth of June, or on the following Sunday, "the Funeral of Kostroma" or of Lada or of Yarilo is celebrated in Russia. In the Governments of Penza and Simbirsk the funeral used to be represented as follows. A bonfire was kindled on the twenty-eighth of June, and on the next day the maidens chose one of their number to play the part of Kostroma. Her companions saluted her with deep obeisances, placed her on a board, and carried her to the bank of a stream. There they bathed her in the water, while the oldest girl made a basket

¹ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 221.

² Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 241.

of lime-tree bark and beat it like a drum. Then they returned to the village and ended the day with processions, games, and dances.¹ In the Murom district, Kostroma was represented by a straw figure dressed in woman's clothes and flowers. This was laid in a trough and carried with songs to the bank of a lake or river. Here the crowd divided into two sides of which the one attacked and the other defended the figure. At last the assailants gained the day, stripped the figure of its dress and ornaments, tore it in pieces, trod the straw of which it was made under foot, and flung it into the stream; while the defenders of the figure hid their faces in their hands and pretended to bewail the death of Kostroma.² In the district of Kostroma the burial of Yarilo was celebrated on the twenty-ninth or thirtieth of June. The people chose an old man and gave him a small coffin containing a Priapus-like figure representing Yarilo. This he carried out of the town, followed by women chanting dirges and expressing by their gestures grief and despair. In the open fields a grave was dug, and into it the figure was lowered amid weeping and wailing, after which games and dances were begun, "calling to mind the funeral games celebrated in old times by the pagan Slavonians."³ In Little Russia the figure of Yarilo was laid in a coffin and carried through the streets after sunset surrounded by drunken women, who kept repeating mournfully, "He is dead! he is dead!" The men lifted and shook the figure as if they were trying to recall the dead man to life. Then they said to the women, "Women, weep not. I know what is sweeter than honey." But the women continued to lament and chant, as they do at funerals. "Of what was he guilty? He was so good. He will arise no more. O how shall we part from thee? What is life without thee? Arise, if only for a brief hour. But he rises not, he rises not." At last the Yarilo was buried in a grave.⁴

These Russian customs are plainly of the same nature as those which in Austria and Germany are known as "Carrying

¹ Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 243 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 414.

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 414 sq.; Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 244.

³ Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 245; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 416.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *l.c.*; Ralston, *l.c.*

out Death." Therefore if the interpretation here adopted of the latter is right, the Russian Kostroma, Yarilo, and the rest must also have been originally embodiments of the spirit of vegetation, and their death must have been regarded as a necessary preliminary to their revival. The revival as a sequel to the death is enacted in the first of the ceremonies described, the death and resurrection of Kostrubonko. The reason why in some of these Russian ceremonies the death of the spirit of vegetation is celebrated at midsummer may be that the decline of summer is dated from Midsummer Day, after which the days begin to shorten, and the sun sets out on his downward journey—

"To the darksome hollows
Where the frosts of winter lie."

Such a turning-point of the year, when vegetation might be thought to share the incipient though still almost imperceptible decay of summer, might very well be chosen by primitive man as a fit moment for resorting to those magic ceremonies by which he hopes to stay the decline, or at least to ensure the revival, of plant life.

But while the death of vegetation appears to have been represented in all, and its revival in some, of these spring and midsummer ceremonies, there are features in some of them which can hardly be explained on this hypothesis alone. The solemn funeral, the lamentations, and the mourning attire, which often characterise these ceremonies, are indeed appropriate at the death of the beneficent spirit of vegetation. But what shall we say of the glee with which the effigy is often carried out, of the sticks and stones with which it is assailed, and the taunts and curses which are hurled at it? What shall we say of the dread of the effigy evinced by the haste with which the bearers scamper home as soon as they have thrown it away, and by the belief that some one must soon die in any house into which it has looked? This dread might perhaps be explained by a belief that there is a certain infectiousness in the dead spirit of vegetation which renders its approach dangerous. But this explanation, besides being rather strained, does not cover the rejoicings which often attend

the carrying out of Death. We must therefore recognise two distinct and seemingly opposite features in these ceremonies: on the one hand, sorrow for the death, and affection and respect for the dead; on the other hand, fear and hatred of the dead, and rejoicings at his death. How the former of these features is to be explained I have attempted to show; how the latter came to be so closely associated with the former is a question which I shall try to answer in the sequel.

Before we quit these European customs to go farther afield, it will be well to notice that occasionally the expulsion of Death or of a mythic being is conducted without any visible representative of the personage expelled. Thus at Königshain, near Görlitz in Silesia, all the villagers, young and old, used to go out with straw torches to the top of a neighbouring hill, called *Todtenstein* (Death-stone), where they lit their torches, and so returned home singing, "We have driven out Death, we are bringing back Summer."¹ In Albania young people light torches of resinous wood on Easter Eve, and march in procession through the village brandishing them. At last they throw the torches into the river, saying, "Ha, Kore, we fling you into the river, like these torches, that you may return no more." Some say that the intention of the ceremony is to drive out winter; but Kore is conceived as a malignant being who devours children.²

In the Kanagra district of India there is a custom observed by young girls in spring which closely resembles some of the European spring ceremonies just described. It is called the *Rali Ka melā*, or fair of Rali, the *Rali* being a small painted earthen image of Siva or Pārvatī. The custom is in vogue all over the Kanagra district, and its celebration, which is entirely confined to young girls, lasts through most of Chet (March-April) up to the Sankrānt of Baisākh (April). On a morning in March all the young girls of the village take small baskets of *dūb* grass and flowers to an appointed place, where they throw them in a heap. Round this heap they stand in a circle and sing. This goes on every day for ten days, till the heap of grass and flowers has

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 644.

² J. G. von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, i. 160.

reached a fair height. Then they cut in the jungle two branches, each with three prongs at one end, and place them, prongs downwards, over the heap of flowers, so as to make two tripods or pyramids. On the single uppermost points of these branches they get an image-maker to construct two clay images, one to represent Siva, and the other Pârvatî. The girls then divide themselves into two parties, one for Siva and one for Pârvatî, and marry the images in the usual way, leaving out no part of the ceremony. After the marriage they have a feast, the cost of which is defrayed by contributions solicited from their parents. Then at the next Sankrânt (Baisâkh) they all go together to the riverside, throw the images into a deep pool, and weep over the place, as though they were performing funeral obsequies. The boys of the neighbourhood often tease them by diving after the images, bringing them up, and waving them about while the girls are crying over them. The object of the fair is said to be to secure a good husband.¹

That in this Indian ceremony the deities Siva and Pârvatî are conceived as spirits of vegetation seems to be proved by the placing of their images on branches over a heap of grass and flowers. Here, as often in European folk-custom, the divinities of vegetation are represented in duplicate, by plants and by puppets. The marriage of these Indian deities in spring corresponds to the European ceremonies in which the marriage of the vernal spirits of vegetation is represented by the King and Queen of May, the May Bride, Bridegroom of the May, and so forth.² The throwing of the images into the water, and the mourning for them, are the equivalents of the European customs of throwing the dead spirit of vegetation under the name of Death, Yarilo, Kostroma, and the rest, into the water and lamenting over it. Again, in India, as often in Europe, the rite is performed exclusively by females. The notion that the ceremony helps to procure husbands for the girls can be explained by the quickening and fertilising influence which the spirit of vegetation is believed to exert upon the life of man as well as of plants.³

¹ R. C. Temple, in *Indian Antiquary*, xi. (1882), p. 297 sq.

² See vol. i. p. 220 sqq.

³ See vol. i. p. 192 sqq.

The general explanation which we have been led to adopt of these and many similar ceremonies is that they are, or were in their origin, magical rites intended to ensure the revival of nature in spring. The means by which they were supposed to effect this end were imitation and sympathy. Led astray by his ignorance of the true causes of things, primitive man believed that in order to produce the great phenomena of nature on which his life depended he had only to imitate them, and that immediately by a secret sympathy or mystic influence the little drama which he acted in forest glade or mountain dell, on desert plain or wind-swept shore, would be taken up and repeated by mightier actors on a vaster stage. He fancied that by masquerading in leaves and flowers, he helped the bare earth to clothe herself with verdure, and that by playing the death and burial of winter he drove that gloomy season away, and made smooth the path for the footsteps of returning spring. If we find it hard to throw ourselves even in fancy into a mental condition in which such things seem possible, we can more easily picture to ourselves the anxiety which the savage, when he first began to lift his thoughts above the satisfaction of his merely animal wants, and to meditate on the causes of things, may have felt as to the continued operation of what we now call the laws of nature. To us, familiarised with the conception of the uniformity and regularity with which the great cosmic phenomena succeed each other, there seems little ground for apprehension that the causes which produce these effects will cease to operate, at least within the near future. But this confidence in the stability of nature is bred only by the experience which comes of wide observation and long tradition; and the savage, with his narrow sphere of observation and his short-lived tradition, lacks the very elements of that experience which alone could set his mind at rest in face of the ever-changing and often menacing aspects of nature. No wonder, therefore, that he is thrown into a panic by an eclipse, and thinks that the sun or the moon would surely perish, if he did not raise a clamour and shoot his puny shafts into the air to defend the luminaries from the monster who threatens to devour them. No

wonder he is terrified when in the darkness of night a streak of sky is suddenly illumined by the flash of a meteor, or the whole expanse of the celestial arch glows with the fitful light of the Northern Streamers.¹ Even phenomena which recur at fixed and uniform intervals may be viewed by him with apprehension, before he has come to recognise the orderliness of their recurrence. The speed or slowness of his recognition of such periodic or cyclic changes in nature will depend largely on the length of the particular cycle. The cycle, for example, of day and night is everywhere, except in the polar regions, so short and hence so frequent that men probably soon ceased to discompose themselves seriously as to the chance of its failing to recur, though the ancient Egyptians, as we have seen, daily wrought enchantments to bring back to the east in the morning the fiery orb which had sunk at evening in the crimson west. But it was far otherwise with the annual cycle of the seasons. To any man a year is a considerable period, seeing that the number of our years is but few at the best. To the primitive savage, with his short memory and imperfect means of marking the flight of time, a year may well have been so long that he failed to recognise it as a cycle at all, and watched the changing aspects of earth and heaven with a perpetual wonder, alternately delighted and alarmed, elated and cast down according as the vicissitudes of light and heat, of plant and animal life, ministered to his comfort or threatened his existence. In autumn when the yellow leaves were whirled about the forest by the nipping blast, and he looked up at the bare boughs, could he feel sure that they would ever be green again? As day by day the sun sank lower and lower in the sky, could he be certain that the luminary would ever retrace his heavenly road? Even the waning moon, whose pale sickle rose thinner and thinner every night over the rim of the eastern horizon, may have excited in his mind a fear lest, when it had wholly vanished, there should be moons no more. These and a

¹ When the Kurnai of Victoria saw the Aurora Australis, which corresponds to the Northern Streamers of Europe, they swung the severed hand of a dead man towards it, shouting,

"Send it away! send it away! do not let it burn us up!" See A. W. Howitt, "On some Australian beliefs," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 189.

thousand such misgivings may have thronged the fancy and troubled the peace of the man who first began to reflect on the mysteries of the world he lived in, and to take thought for a more distant future than the morrow. It was natural, therefore, that with such thoughts and fears he should have done all that in him lay to bring back the faded blossom to the bough, to swing the low sun of winter up to his old place in the summer sky, and to restore its orb'd fulness to the silver lamp of the waning moon. We may smile at his vain endeavours if we please, but it was only by making a long series of experiments, of which some were almost inevitably doomed to failure, that man learned from experience the futility of some of his attempted methods and the fruitfulness of others. After all, magical ceremonies are nothing but experiments which have failed and which continue to be repeated merely because, for reasons which have already been indicated,¹ the operator is unaware of their failure. With the advance of knowledge these ceremonies either cease to be performed altogether or are kept up from force of habit long after the intention with which they were instituted has been forgotten. Thus fallen from their high estate, no longer regarded as solemn rites on the punctual performance of which the welfare and even the life of the community depended, they sink gradually to the level of simple pageants, mummeries, and pastimes, till in the final stage of degeneration they are wholly abandoned by older people, and, from having once been the most serious occupation of the sage, become at last the idle sport of children. It is in this final stage of decay that most of the old magical rites of our European forefathers linger on at the present day, and even from this their last retreat they are fast being swept away by the rising tide of those multitudinous forces, moral, intellectual, and social, which are bearing mankind onward to a new and unknown goal. We may feel some natural regret at the disappearance of quaint customs and picturesque ceremonies, which have preserved to an age often deemed dull and prosaic something of the flavour and freshness of the olden time, some breath of the springtime of the world; yet our regret will be lessened when we remember

¹ See vol. i. p. 78 *sqq.*

that these pretty pageants, these now innocent diversions had their origin in ignorance and superstition ; that if they are a record of human endeavour, they are also a monument of fruitless ingenuity, of wasted labour, and of blighted hopes ; and that for all their gay trappings—their flowers, their ribbons, and their music—they partake far more of tragedy than of farce.

The interpretation which, following in the footsteps of W. Mannhardt, I have attempted to give of these ceremonies has been not a little confirmed by the discovery, made since this book was first written, that the natives of Central Australia regularly practise magical ceremonies for the purpose of awakening the dormant energies of nature at the approach of what may be called the Australian spring. In the hot and arid region which is the home of these rude savages the seasons are limited, so far as concerns the flowering of plants and the breeding of animals, to two, namely, a dry one of uncertain and often great length, and a rainy one of short duration and often irregular occurrence. The latter is followed by an increase in animal life and an exuberance of vegetable growth which, almost suddenly, transforms what may have been a sterile waste into a land rich in a variety of animal species, none of which have been seen for perhaps many months before, and gay with the blossoms of endless flowering plants. It is difficult, we are told, to realise the contrast between the steppes of Australia in the dry and in the rainy season. In the dry season the landscape presents a scene of desolation. The sun shines down hotly on stony plains or yellow sandy ground, on which grow wiry shrubs and small tussocks of grass, not set closely together, as in moister lands, but straggling separately, so that in any patch the number of plants can be counted. The sharp, thin shadows of the wiry scrub fall on the yellow ground, which betrays no sign of animal life save for the little ant-hills, thousands of whose inmates are seen rushing about in apparently hopeless confusion, or piling leaves and seeds in regular order around the entrance to their burrows. A desert oak, as it is called, or an acacia tree may here and there afford a scanty shade, but for weeks together there are no clouds to hide the brightness of the sun by day or of the stars by night.

All this is changed when heavy rains have fallen and torrents rush down the lately dry beds of the rivers, sweeping along uprooted trees and great masses of tangled wrack on their impetuous current, and flooding far and wide the flat lands on either bank. Then what has been for months an arid wilderness is suddenly changed into a vast sheet of water. Soon, however, the rain ceases to fall and the flood subsides rapidly. For a few days the streams run, then dry up, and only the deeper holes here and there retain the water. The sun once more shines down hotly, and in the damp ground seeds which have lain dormant for months sprout, and, as if by magic, the desert becomes covered with luxuriant herbage. Birds, frogs, lizards, and insects of all sorts may be seen and heard where lately everything was parched and silent. Plants and animals alike make the most of the brief time in which they can grow and multiply; the struggle for existence is all the keener because it is so short. If a young plant can strike its roots deep enough to reach the cool soil below the heated surface, it may live; if not, it must perish. If a young animal grows fast enough to be able to burrow while the banks of the water-hole in which it lives are still damp, it, too, stands a chance of surviving.¹

Now it is just when there is promise of the approach of a good season that the natives of Central Australia are wont especially to perform those magical ceremonies of which the avowed intention is to multiply the plants and animals which they use as food.² These ceremonies, therefore, present a close analogy to the spring customs of our European peasantry not only in the time of their celebration, but also in their aim; for we can hardly doubt that in instituting rites designed to assist the revival of plant life in spring our primitive forefathers were moved, not by any sentimental wish to smell at early violets, or pluck the rather primrose, or watch yellow daffodils dancing in the breeze, but by the very

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 4 sq., 170. I have reproduced the graphic description of the writers almost verbally.

² Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* ch. vi. "Intichiuma Ceremonies," pp. 167-211. Although these ceremonies agree with the European customs we have

been discussing in their general intention and the principle on which they proceed, which is that of imitation and sympathy, they differ too widely from them in details for a comparison to be instructive. Some of them have been briefly described already (vol. i. p. 23 sq.).

practical consideration, certainly not formulated in abstract terms, that the life of man is inextricably bound up with that of plants, and that if they were to perish he could not survive. And as the faith of the Australian savage in the efficacy of his magic rites is confirmed by observing that their performance is invariably followed, sooner or later, by that increase of vegetable and animal life which it is their object to produce, so, we may suppose, it was with European savages in the olden time. The sight of the fresh green in brake and thicket, of vernal flowers blowing on mossy banks, of swallows arriving from the south, and of the sun mounting daily higher in the sky, would be welcomed by them as so many visible signs that their enchantments were indeed taking effect, and would inspire them with a cheerful confidence that all was well with a world which they could thus mould to suit their wishes. Only in autumn days, as summer slowly faded, would their confidence again be dashed by doubts and misgivings at sight of symptoms of decay, which told how vain were all their efforts to stave off for ever the approach of winter and of death.

§ 4. *Adonis*

But it is in Egypt and Western Asia that the death and resurrection of vegetation appear to have been most widely celebrated with ceremonies like those of modern Europe. Under the names of Osiris, Adonis, Tammuz, Attis, and Dionysus, the Egyptians, Syrians, Babylonians, Phrygians, and Greeks represented the decay and revival of vegetation with rites which, as the ancients themselves recognised, were substantially the same, and which find their parallels in the spring and midsummer customs of our European peasantry. The nature and worship of these deities have been discussed at length by many learned writers; all that I propose to do is to sketch those salient features in their ritual and legends which seem to establish the view here taken of their nature. We begin with Adonis or Tammuz.

The worship of Adonis was practised by the Semitic peoples of Syria, from whom it was borrowed by the Greeks as early at least as the fifth century before Christ. The

name Adonis is the Phoenician *Adon*, "lord."¹ He was said to have been a fair youth, beloved by Aphrodite (the Semitic Astarte), but slain by a boar in his youthful prime. His death was annually lamented with a bitter wailing, chiefly by women; images of him, dressed to resemble corpses, were carried out as to burial and then thrown into the sea or into springs;² and in some places his revival was celebrated on the following day.³ But the ceremonies varied somewhat both in the manner and the season of their celebration in different places. At Alexandria images of Adonis and Aphrodite were displayed on two couches; beside them were set ripe fruits of all kinds, cakes, plants growing in flower-pots, and green bowers twined with anise. The marriage of the lovers was celebrated one day, and on the next the image of Adonis was borne by women attired as mourners, with streaming hair and bared breasts, to the sea-shore and committed to the waves.⁴ The date at which this Alexandrian ceremony was observed is not expressly stated; but from the mention of the ripe fruits it has been inferred that it took place in late summer.⁵ At Byblus the death of Adonis was annually mourned with weeping, wailing, and beating of the breast; but next day he was believed to come to life again and ascend up to heaven in the presence of his worshippers.⁶ This celebration appears to have taken place in spring; for its date was determined by the discoloration of the River Adonis, and this has been observed by modern travellers to occur in spring. At that season the red earth washed down from the mountains by the rain tinges the water of the river and even the sea for a great way with a blood-red hue, and the crimson stain was believed to be the blood of Adonis, annually wounded to death by the boar on Mount Lebanon.⁷ Again, the red anemone was said to

¹ Baudissin, *Studien zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, i. 299; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 274.

² Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 18; Zenobius, *Centur.* i. 49; Theocritus, xv. 132 sq.; Eustathius on Homer, *Od.* xi. 590.

³ Besides Lucian (cited below) see Jerome, *Comment. in Ezechiel.* viii. 14: "in qua (solemnitate) plangitur quasi mortuus, et postea reviviscens,

canitur atque laudatur . . . interfectionem et resurrectionem Adonis planctu et gaudio prosequens."

⁴ Theocritus, xv.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 277.

⁶ Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 6. The words *ἐς τὸν ἥρα νέμονται* imply that the ascension was supposed to take place in the presence, if not before the eyes, of the worshipping crowds.

⁷ Lucian, *op. cit.* 8. The discol-

have sprung from the blood of Adonis;¹ and as the anemone blooms in Syria about Easter, this is a fresh proof that the festival of Adonis, or at least one of his festivals, was celebrated in spring. The name of the flower is probably derived from Naaman ("darling"), which seems to have been an epithet of Adonis. The Arabs still call the anemone "wounds of the Naaman."²

The resemblance of these ceremonies to the Indian and European ceremonies previously described is obvious. In particular, apart from the somewhat doubtful date of its celebration, the Alexandrian ceremony is almost identical with the Indian. In both of them the marriage of two divine beings, whose affinity with vegetation seems indicated by the fresh plants with which they are surrounded, is celebrated in effigy, and the effigies are afterwards mourned over and thrown into the water.³ From the similarity of these customs to each other and to the spring and mid-summer customs of modern Europe we should naturally expect that they all admit of a common explanation. Hence, if the explanation here adopted of the latter is correct, the ceremony of the death and resurrection of Adonis must also have been a representation of the decay and revival of plant life. The inference thus based on the similarity of the customs is confirmed by the following features in the legend and ritual of Adonis. His affinity with vegetation comes out at once in the common story of his birth. He was said to have been born from a myrrh-tree, the bark of which bursting, after a ten months' gestation, allowed the lovely infant to come forth. According to some, a boar rent the bark with his tusk and so opened a passage for the babe. A faint rationalistic colour was given to the legend

oration of the river and the sea was observed by Maundrell on 17th March 1835. See his "Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem," in Bohn's *Early Travels in Palestine*, edited by Thomas Wright, p. 411. Renan observed the discoloration at the beginning of February; Baudissin, *Studien*, i. 298 (referring to Renan, *Mission de Phénicie*, p. 283). Milton's lines will occur to most readers.

¹ Ovid, *Metam.* x. 735, compared with Bion i. 66. The latter, however,

makes the anemone spring from the tears, as the rose from the blood of Adonis.

² W. Robertson Smith, "C'esias and the Semiramis legend," in *English Historical Review*, April 1887, following Lagarde.

³ In the Alexandrian ceremony, however, it appears to have been the image of Adonis only which was thrown into the sea.

by saying that his mother was a woman named Myrrh, who had been turned into a myrrh-tree soon after she had conceived the child.¹ Again the story that Adonis spent half, or according to others a third, of the year in the lower world and the rest of it in the upper world,² is explained most simply and naturally by supposing that he represented vegetation, especially the corn, which lies buried in the earth half the year and reappears above ground the other half. Certainly of the annual phenomena of nature there is none which suggests so obviously the idea of a yearly death and resurrection as the disappearance and reappearance of vegetation in autumn and spring. Adonis has been taken for the sun; but there is nothing in the sun's annual course within the temperate and tropical zones to suggest that he is dead for half or a third of the year and alive for the other half or two-thirds. He might, indeed, be conceived as weakened in winter, but dead he could not be thought to be; his daily reappearance contradicts the supposition. Within the Arctic Circle, where the sun annually disappears for a continuous period which varies from twenty-four hours to six months according to the latitude, his annual death and resurrection would certainly be an obvious idea; but no one has suggested that the Adonis worship came from the Arctic regions. On the other hand, the annual death and revival of vegetation is a conception which readily presents itself to men in every stage of savagery and civilisation; and the vastness of the scale on which this yearly decay and regeneration takes place, together with man's intimate dependence on it for subsistence, combine to render it the most striking annual phenomenon in nature, at least within the temperate zones. It is no wonder that a phenomenon so important, so striking, and so universal should, by suggesting similar ideas, have given rise to similar

¹ Apollodorus, *Biblioth.* iii. 14. 4; Schol. on Theocritus, i. 109; Antoninus Liberalis, *Transform.* 34; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 829; Ovid, *Metam.* x. 489 sqq.; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* v. 72, and on *Bucol.* x. 18; Hyginus, *Fab.* 58, 164; Fulgentius, iii. 8. The word Myrrha or Smyrna is borrowed from the Phoenician (Liddell and Scott, *Greek*

Lexicon, s.v. *μύρρα*). Hence the mother's name, as well as the son's, was taken directly from the Semites.

² Schol. on Theocritus, iii. 48; Hyginus, *Astronom.* ii. 7; Lucian, *Dialog. deor.* xi. 1; Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 28, p. 163 sq. ed. Osannus; Apollodorus, iii. 14. 4.

rites in many lands. We may, therefore, accept as probable an explanation of the Adonis worship which accords so well with the facts of nature and with the analogy of similar rites in other lands, and which besides is countenanced by a considerable body of opinion amongst the ancients themselves.¹

The character of Tammuz or Adonis as a corn-spirit comes out plainly in an account of his festival given by an Arabic writer of the tenth century. In describing the rites and sacrifices observed at the different seasons of the year by the heathen Syrians of Harran, he says:—"Tammuz (July). In the middle of this month is the festival of el-Bûgât, that is, of the weeping women, and this is the Tâ-uz festival, which is celebrated in honour of the god Tâ-uz. The women bewail him, because his lord slew him so cruelly, ground his bones in a mill, and then scattered them to the wind. The women (during this festival) eat nothing which has been ground in a mill, but limit their diet to steeped wheat, sweet vetches, dates, raisins, and the like."² Tâ-uz, who is no other than Tammuz, is here like Burns's John Barleycorn—

"They wasted o'er a scorching flame
The marrow of his bones ;
But a miller us'd him worst of all—
For he crush'd him between two stones."³

But perhaps the best proof that Adonis was a deity of vegetation is furnished by the gardens of Adonis, as they

¹ Schol. on Theocritus, iii. 48, ὁ Ἄδωνις, ἥγων ὁ σῖτος ὁ σπειρόμενος, ἐξ μῆρας ἐν τῇ γῇ ποιεῖ ἀπὸ τῆς σπορᾶς καὶ ἐξ μῆρας ἔχει αὐτὸν ἡ Ἀφροδίτη, τούτῳστιν ἡ εὐκρασία τοῦ ἀέρος. καὶ ἐκτότε λαμβάνουσι αὐτὸν οἱ ἄνθρωποι. Jerome on Ezech. c. viii. 14: "Eadem gentilitas hujusmodi fabulas poetarum, quae habent turpitudinem, interpretatur subtiliter interfectionem et resurrectionem Adonidis planctu et gaudio prosequens: quorum alterum in seminibus, quae moriuntur in terra, alterum in segetibus, quibus mortua semina renascuntur, ostendi putat." Ammianus Marcellinus, xix. 1. 11: "in sollemnibus Adonidis sacris, quod simulacrum aliquod esse frugum adiutrarum religiones mysticae docent." Id., xxii. 9. 15: "amato l'eneris,

ut fabulae fingunt, apri dente ferali deleta, quod in adulto flore sectarum est indicium frugum." Clemens Alexandr. Hom. 6. 11 (quoted by W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 281): λαμβάνουσι δὲ καὶ Ἄδωνι εἰς ὤραλοις καρποῖς. Etymolog. Magn. s. r. "Ἄδωνις κύριον δύναται καὶ ὁ καρπὸς εἶναι ἄδωνις· ὅλον ἀδώνιος καρπὸς, ἀρσικων. Eusebius, *Praepar. Evang.* iii. 11. 9: Ἄδωνις τῆς τῶν τελείων καρπῶν ἐκτομῆς σύμβολον.

² D. Chwolson, *Die Stabier und der Stabismus*, ii. 27; id., *Ueber Tammuz und die Menschenverehrung bei den alten Babyloniern*, p. 38.

³ The comparison is due to Felix Liebrecht (*Zur Volkskunde*, p. 259).

were called. These were baskets or pots filled with earth, in which wheat, barley, lettuces, fennel, and various kinds of flowers were sown and tended for eight days, chiefly or exclusively by women. Fostered by the sun's heat, the plants shot up rapidly, but having no root withered as rapidly away, and at the end of eight days were carried out with the images of the dead Adonis, and flung with them into the sea or into springs.¹ At Athens these ceremonies were observed at midsummer. For we know that the fleet which Athens fitted out against Syracuse, and by the destruction of which her power was permanently crippled, sailed at midsummer, and by an ominous coincidence the sombre rites of Adonis were being celebrated at the very time. As the troops marched down to the harbour to embark, the streets through which they passed were lined with coffins and corpse-like effigies, and the air was rent with the noise of women wailing for the dead Adonis. The circumstance cast a gloom over the sailing of the most splendid armament that Athens ever sent to sea.²

These gardens of Adonis are most naturally interpreted as representatives of Adonis or manifestations of his power; they represented him, true to his original nature, in vegetable form, while the images of him, with which they were carried out and cast into the water, represented him in his later human form. All these Adonis ceremonies, if I am right, were originally intended as charms to promote the growth and revival of vegetation; and the principle by which they were supposed to produce this effect was imitative or sympathetic magic. As I explained in the first chapter, primitive people suppose that by representing or mimicking

¹ For the authorities see Raoul Rochette, "Mémoire sur les jardins d'Adonis," *Revue Archéologique*, viii. (1851), pp. 97-123; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 279, note 2, and p. 280, note 2. To the authorities cited by Mannhardt add Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* vi. 7. 3; *id.*, *De Causis Plant.* i. 12. 2; Gregorius Cyprius, i. 7; Macarius, i. 63; Apostolius, i. 34; Diogenianus, i. 14; Plutarch, *De sera num. vind.* 17. Women only are mentioned as planting the gardens of Adonis by Plutarch,

l.c.; Julian, *Convivium*, p. 329 ed. Spanheim (p. 423 ed. Hertlein); Eustathius on Homer, *Od.* xi. 590. On the other hand, Apostolius and Diogenianus (*ll.cc.*) say *φύρεσθαι καὶ φρεσθῆναι*. The procession at the festival of Adonis is mentioned in an Attic description of 302 or 301 B.C. (Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, No. 427).

² Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 18; *id.*, *Nicias*, 13. The date of the sailing of the fleet is given by Thucydides, vi. 30, *θέρου μεσούτου μην.*

the effect which they desire to produce they actually help to produce it; thus by sprinkling water they make rain, by lighting a fire they make sunshine, and so on. Similarly, by mimicking the growth of crops they hope to ensure a good harvest. The rapid growth of the wheat and barley in the gardens of Adonis was intended to make the corn shoot up; and the throwing of the gardens and of the images into the water was a charm to secure a due supply of fertilising rain.¹ The same, I take it, was the object of throwing the effigies of Death and the Carnival into water in the corresponding ceremonies of modern Europe. We have seen that the custom of drenching with water a leaf-clad person, who undoubtedly personifies vegetation, is still resorted to in Europe for the express purpose of producing rain.² Similarly the custom of throwing water on the last corn cut at harvest, or on the person who brings it home (a custom observed in Germany and France, and till quite lately in England and Scotland), is in some places practised with the avowed intent to procure rain for the next year's crops. Thus in Wallachia and amongst the Roumanians of Transylvania, when a girl is bringing home a crown made of the last ears of corn cut at harvest, all who meet her hasten to throw water on her, and two farm-servants are placed at the door for the purpose; for they believe that if this were not done, the crops next year would perish from drought.³ So amongst the Saxons of Transylvania, the person who wears the wreath made of the last corn cut (sometimes the reaper who cut the last corn also wears the wreath) is drenched with water to the skin; for the wetter he is the

¹ In hot southern countries like Egypt and the Semitic regions of Western Asia, where vegetation depends chiefly or entirely upon irrigation, the purpose of the charm is doubtless to secure a plentiful flow of water in the streams. But as the ultimate object and the charms for securing it are the same in both cases, it has not been thought necessary always to point out the distinction.

² See vol. i. p. 94 sqq.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 214; W. Schmidt, *Das Jahr und seine*

Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Rumänen Siebenbürgens, p. 18 sq. The custom of throwing water on the last waggon-load of corn returning from the harvest-field has been practised within living memory in Wigtownshire, and at Orwell in Cambridgeshire. See *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), pp. 50, 51. (In the first of these passages the Orwell at which the custom used to be observed is said to be in Kent; this was a mistake of mine, which my informant, the Rev. E. B. Birks, formerly Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, afterwards corrected.)

better will be next year's harvest, and the more grain there will be threshed out.¹ In Northern Euboea, when the corn-sheaves have been piled in a stack, the farmer's wife brings a pitcher of water and offers it to each of the labourers that he may wash his hands. Every man, after he has washed his hands, sprinkles water on the corn and on the threshing-floor, expressing at the same time a wish that the corn may last long. Lastly, the farmer's wife holds the pitcher slantingly and runs at full speed round the stack without spilling a drop, while she utters a wish that the stack may endure as long as the circle she has just described.² At the spring ploughing in Prussia, when the ploughmen and sowers returned in the evening from their work in the fields, the farmer's wife and the servants used to splash water over them. The ploughmen and sowers retorted by seizing every one, throwing them into the pond, and ducking them under the water. The farmer's wife might claim exemption on payment of a forfeit; but every one else had to be ducked. By observing this custom they hoped to ensure a due supply of rain for the seed.³ Also after harvest in Prussia, the person who wore a wreath made of the last corn cut was drenched with water, while a prayer was uttered that "as the corn had sprung up and multiplied through the water, so it might spring up and multiply in the barn and granary."⁴ At Schlanow, in Brandenburg, when the sowers return home from the first sowing they are drenched with water "in order that the corn may grow."⁵ In Anhalt on the same occasion the farmer is still often sprinkled with water by his family; and his men and horses and even the plough receive the same treatment. The object of the custom, as people at Arensdorf explained it, is "to wish fertility to the fields for the whole year."⁶

¹ G. A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens* (Hermanstadt, 1880), p. 24; Wislocki, *Sitten und Brauch der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Hamburg, 1888), p. 32.

² G. Drosinis, *Land und Leute in Nord-Euböa* (Leipzig, 1884), p. 53.

³ Matthäus Praetorius, *Deliciae Prusicar*, p. 55; W. Mannhardt, *Baum-*

kultus, p. 214 sq., note.

⁴ Praetorius, *op. cit.* p. 60; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 215, note.

⁵ H. Prahm, "Glaube und Brauch in der Mark Brandenburg," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, i. (1891), p. 186.

⁶ O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 150.

So in Hesse, when the ploughmen return with the plough from the field for the first time, the women and girls lie in wait for them and slyly drench them with water.¹ Near Naaburg, in Bavaria, the man who first comes back from sowing or ploughing has a vessel of water thrown over him by some one in hiding.² Before the Tusayan Indians of North America go out to plant their fields, the women sometimes pour water on them; the reason for doing so is that "as the water is poured on the men, so may water fall on the planted fields."³ A Babylonian legend, preserved in a cuneiform inscription, relates how the goddess Ishtar (Astarte, Aphrodite) went down "to the land from which there is no returning, to the house of darkness, where dust lies on door and bolt," to fetch the water of life wherewith to restore to life the dead Tammuz, and it appears that the water was thrown over him at a great mourning ceremony, at which men and women stood round the funeral pyre of Tammuz lamenting.⁴ This legend, as Mannhardt points out, is probably a mythical explanation of a Babylonian festival resembling the Syrian festival of Adonis. At the festival, which doubtless took place in the month Tammuz (June-July)⁵ and there-

¹ W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*, p. 51.

² *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 297.

³ J. Walter Fewkes, "The Tusayan New Fire Ceremony," *Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History*, xxvi. (1895), p. 446.

⁴ F. Lenormant, "Il mito di Adone-Tammuz nei documenti cuneiformi," *Atti del IV. Congresso Internazionale degli Orientalisti* (Florence, 1880), i. 157 sqq.; A. H. Sayce, *Religion of the ancient Babylonians* (Hibbert Lectures, 1887), p. 221 sqq.; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 275; A. Jeremias, *Die Babylonisch-Assyrischen Vorstellungen vom Leben nach dem Tode* (Leipzig, 1887), p. 4 sqq.; *id.*, in Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythol.*, s.v. "Nergal," iii. 257 sqq.; Maspero, *Histoire Ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, pp. 693-696; M. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p.

563 sqq.

⁵ According to Jerome (on Ezechiel, viii. 14), Tammuz was June; but according to modern scholars the month corresponded rather to July, or to part of June and part of July. See Movers, *Die Phoenizier*, i. 210; F. Lenormant, *op. cit.* p. 144 sq.; Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 275. My friend W. Robertson Smith informed me that owing to the variations of the local Syrian calendars the month Tammuz fell in different places at different times, from midsummer to autumn, or from June to September. It is mentioned in a letter of a king of Babylon to Amenophis IV., king of Egypt, which forms part of the celebrated correspondence found at Tell-el-Amarna in Egypt some years ago. See M. J. Halevy, in *Journal Asiatique*, 8me Série, xvi. (1890), p. 311; *The Tell El-Amarna Tablets in the British Museum* (London, 1892), p. xxix. According to Mr. M. Jastrow, the annual

fore about midsummer, the dead Tammuz was probably represented in effigy, water was poured over him, and he came to life again. This Babylonian legend is, therefore, of importance, since it confirms the view that the purpose for which the images and gardens of Adonis were thrown into the water was to effect the resurrection of the god, that is, to secure the revival of vegetation. The connection of Tammuz with vegetation is proved by a fragment of a Babylonian hymn, in which Tammuz is described as dwelling in the midst of a great tree at the centre of the earth.¹

The opinion that the gardens of Adonis are essentially charms to promote the growth of vegetation, especially of the crops, and that they belong to the same class of customs as those spring and midsummer folk-customs of modern Europe which have been described, does not rest for its evidence merely on the intrinsic probability of the case. Fortunately, we are able to show that gardens of Adonis (if we may use the expression in a general sense) are still planted, first, by a primitive race at their sowing season, and, second, by European peasants at midsummer. Amongst the Oraons and Mundas of Bengal, when the time comes for planting out the rice which has been grown in seed-beds, a party of young people of both sexes go to the forest and cut a young Karma-tree, or the branch of one. Bearing it in triumph they return dancing, singing, and beating drums, and plant it in the middle of the village dancing-ground. A sacrifice is offered to the tree; and next morning the youth of both sexes, linked arm-in-arm, dance in a great circle round the Karma-tree, which is decked with strips of coloured cloth and sham bracelets and necklets of plaited straw. As a preparation for the festival, the daughters of the head-man of the village cultivate blades of barley in a peculiar way. The seed is sown in moist, sandy soil, mixed with turmeric, and the blades sprout and unfold of a pale yellow or prim-

¹ mourning for Tammuz at Babylon was maintained to a very late period, and regularly fell just before the summer solstice (*Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 547).

¹ A. H. Sayce, *op. cit.* p. 238. Jensen remarks of the Babylonian Du'ûzu or Tammuz that "there can

be no doubt that he is originally the spring vegetation, which dies in his month Tammuz or Du'ûzu" (*Kosmologie der Babylonier* (Strasburg, 1890), p. 480). Similarly Jastrow affirms that Tammuz is "the god of spring vegetation" (*The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 588).

rose colour. On the day of the festival the girls take up these blades and carry them in baskets to the dancing-ground, where, prostrating themselves reverentially, they place some of the plants before the Karma-tree. Finally, the Karma-tree is taken away and thrown into a stream or tank.¹ The meaning of planting these barley blades and then presenting them to the Karma-tree is hardly open to question. We have seen that trees are supposed to exercise a quickening influence upon the growth of crops, and that amongst the very people in question—the Mundas or Mundaris—"the grove deities are held responsible for the crops."² Therefore, when at the season for planting out the rice the Mundas bring in a tree and treat it with so much respect, their object can only be to foster thereby the growth of the rice which is about to be planted out; and the custom of causing barley blades to sprout rapidly and then presenting them to the tree must be intended to subserve the same purpose, perhaps by reminding the tree-spirit of his duty towards the crops, and stimulating his activity by this visible example of rapid vegetable growth. The throwing of the Karma-tree into the water is to be interpreted as a rain-charm. Whether the barley blades are also thrown into the water is not said; but if my interpretation of the custom is right, probably they are so. A distinction between this Bengal custom and the Greek rites of Adonis is that in the former the tree-spirit appears in his original form as a tree; whereas in the Adonis worship he appears in human form, represented as a dead man, though his vegetable nature is indicated by the gardens of Adonis, which are, so to say, a secondary manifestation of his original power as a tree-spirit. Gardens of Adonis are also cultivated by the Hindoos of Northern India, though their motive for doing so appears to be unknown. A few days before the festival of Salonan, which falls in August, women and girls plant some grains of barley in a basket or other vessel which contains a little earth; and the grain sprouts to the height of a few inches by the time of the festival. On that day the women and girls carry these young barley-plants, or *bhoojarias*, as they are called, to a river or tank

¹ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 259.

² Vol. i. p. 189.

and throw them into the water.¹ In some parts of Bavaria it is customary to sow flax in a pot on the three last days of the Carnival ; from the seed which grows best an omen is drawn as to whether the early, the middle, or the late sowing will produce the best crop.²

In Sardinia the gardens of Adonis are still planted in connection with the great midsummer festival which bears the name of St. John. At the end of March or on the first of April a young man of the village presents himself to a girl and asks her to be his *comare* (gossip or sweetheart), offering to be her *compare*. The invitation is considered as an honour by the girl's family, and is gladly accepted. At the end of May the girl makes a pot of the bark of the cork-tree, fills it with earth, and sows a handful of wheat and barley in it. The pot being placed in the sun and often watered, the corn sprouts rapidly and has a good head by Midsummer Eve (St. John's Eve, the twenty-third of June). The pot is then called *Erme* or *Nenneri*. On St. John's Day the young man and the girl, dressed in their best, accompanied by a long retinue and preceded by children gambolling and frolicking, move in procession to a church outside the village. Here they break the pot by throwing it against the door of the church. Then they sit down in a ring on the grass and eat eggs and herbs to the music of flutes. Wine is mixed in a cup and passed round, each one drinking as it passes. Then they join hands and sing "Sweethearts of St. John" (*Compare e comare di San Giovanni*) over and over again, the flutes playing the while. When they tire of singing they stand up and dance gaily in a ring till evening. This is the general Sardinian custom. As practised at Ozieri it has some special features. In May the pots are made of cork-bark and planted with corn, as already described. Then on the Eve of St. John the window-sills are draped with rich cloths, on which the pots are placed, adorned with crimson and blue silk and ribbons of various colours. On each of the pots they used formerly to place a statuette or cloth doll dressed as a woman, or a Priapus-like figure made of paste ;

¹ Baboo Ishuree Dass, *Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos of Northern India* (Benares, 1860), p.

111 sq.

² Bavaria, *Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 298.

but this custom, rigorously forbidden by the Church, has fallen into disuse. The village swains go about in a troop to look at the pots and their decorations and to wait for the girls, who assemble on the public square to celebrate the festival. Here a great bonfire is kindled, round which they dance and make merry. Those who wish to be "Sweet-hearts of St. John" act as follows. The young man stands on one side of the bonfire and the girl on the other, and they, in a manner, join hands by each grasping one end of a long stick, which they pass three times backwards and forwards across the fire, thus thrusting their hands thrice rapidly into the flames. This seals their relationship to each other. Dancing and music go on till late at night.¹ The correspondence of these Sardinian pots of grain to the gardens of Adonis seems complete, and the images formerly placed in them answer to the images of Adonis which accompanied his gardens.

This Sardinian usage is one of those midsummer customs, once celebrated in many parts of Europe, a chief feature of which is the great bonfire round which people dance and over which they leap. Examples of these customs have already been cited from Sweden and Bohemia.² These examples sufficiently prove the connection of the midsummer bonfire with vegetation; for both in Sweden and Bohemia an essential part of the festival is the raising of a May-pole or Midsummer-tree, which in Bohemia is burned in the bonfire. Again, in the Russian midsummer ceremony cited above,³ the straw figure of Kupalo, the representative of vegetation, is placed beside a May-pole or Midsummer-tree and then carried to and fro across a bonfire. Kupalo is here represented in duplicate, in tree-form by the Midsummer-tree, and in human form by the straw effigy, just as Adonis was represented both by an image and a garden of Adonis; and the duplicate representatives of Kupalo, like those of

¹ Antonio Bresciani, *Dei costumi dell'isola di Sardegna comparati cogli antichissimi popoli orientali* (Rome and Turin, 1866), p. 427 sq.; R. Tennant, *Sardinia and its Resources* (Rome and London, 1885), p. 187; S. Gabriele, "Usi dei contadini della

Sardegna," *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, vii. (1888), p. 469 sq. Tennant says that the pots are kept in a dark warm place, and that the children leap across the fire.

² Vol. i. p. 202 sq.

³ P. 103.

Adonis, are finally cast into water. In the Sardinian custom the Gossips or Sweethearts of St. John probably correspond to the Lord and Lady or King and Queen of May. In the Swedish province of Blekinge part of the midsummer festival is the election of a Midsummer Bride, who chooses her bridegroom; a collection is made for the pair, who for the time being are looked upon as man and wife.¹ Such Midsummer pairs are probably, like the May pairs, representatives of the spirit of vegetation in its reproductive capacity; they represent in flesh and blood what the images of Siva and Párvatī in the Indian ceremony, and the images of Adonis and Aphrodite in the Alexandrian ceremony, represented in effigy.

The reason why ceremonies whose aim is to foster the growth of vegetation should thus be associated with bonfires; why in particular the representative of vegetation should be burned in tree form or passed across the fire in effigy or in the form of a living couple, will be explained later on. Here it is enough to have proved the fact of such association and therefore to have obviated the objection which might have been raised to my interpretation of the Sardinian custom, on the ground that the bonfires have nothing to do with vegetation. One more piece of evidence may here be given to prove the contrary. In some parts of Germany young men and girls leap over midsummer bonfires for the express purpose of making the hemp or flax grow tall.² We may, therefore, assume that in the Sardinian custom the blades of wheat and barley which are forced on in pots for the midsummer festival, and which correspond so closely to the gardens of Adonis, form one of those widely-spread midsummer ceremonies, the original object of which was to promote the growth of vegetation, and especially of the crops. But as, by an easy extension of ideas, the spirit of vegetation was believed to exercise a beneficent and fertilising influence on human as well as animal life, the gardens of Adonis would be supposed, like the May-trees or May-boughs, to bring good luck to the family or to the person who planted them;

¹ L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 257.

464; Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechrain*, p. 183. More evidence of customs and beliefs of this sort will be adduced in the last chapter of this work.

² W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p.

and even after the idea had been abandoned that they operated actively to bring prosperity, omens might still be drawn from them as to the good or bad fortune of families or individuals. It is thus that magic dwindles into divination. Accordingly we find modes of divination practised at midsummer which resemble more or less closely the gardens of Adonis. Thus an anonymous Italian writer of the sixteenth century has recorded that it was customary to sow barley and wheat a few days before the festival of St. John (Midsummer Day) and also before that of St. Vitus; and it was believed that the person for whom they were sown would be fortunate and get a good husband or a good wife, if the grain sprouted well; but if it sprouted ill, he or she would be unlucky.¹ In various parts of Italy and all over Sicily it is still customary to put plants in water or in earth on the Eve of St. John, and from the manner in which they are found to be blooming or fading on St. John's Day omens are drawn, especially as to fortune in love. Amongst the plants used for this purpose are *Ciuri di S. Giovanni* (St. John's wort?) and nettles.² In Prussia two hundred years ago the farmers used to send out their servants, especially their maids, to gather St. John's wort on Midsummer Eve or Midsummer Day (St. John's Day). When they had fetched it, the farmer took as many plants as there were persons and stuck them in the wall or between the beams; and it was thought that the person whose plant did not bloom would soon fall sick or die. The rest of the plants were tied in a bundle, fastened to the end of a pole, and set up at the gate or wherever the corn would be brought in at the next harvest. This bundle was called *Kupole*; the ceremony was known as Kupole's festival; and at it the farmer prayed for a good crop of hay, and so forth.³ This Prussian custom is particularly notable, inasmuch as it strongly confirms the opinion expressed above that Kupalo

¹ G. Pitre, *Spettacoli e feste popolari siciliane*, p. 296 sq.

² G. Pitre, *op. cit.* p. 302 sq.; Antonio de Nino, *Usi Abruzzesi*, i. 55 sq.; Gubernatis, *Usi Nuziali*, p. 39 sq. Cp. *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, i. 135. At Smyrna a blossom of the *Agnus castus* is used on

St. John's Day for a similar purpose, but the mode in which the omens are drawn is somewhat different (*Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, vii. (1888), p. 128 sq.).

³ Matthäus Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae*, herausgegeben von Dr. W. Pierson (Berlin, 1871), p. 56.

(doubtless identical with Kupole) was originally a deity of vegetation.¹ For here Kupalo is represented by a bundle of plants specially associated with midsummer in folk-custom; and her influence over vegetation is plainly signified by placing her vegetable emblem over the place where the harvest is brought in, as well as by the prayers for a good crop which are uttered on the occasion. This furnishes a fresh argument in support of the view that the Death, whose analogy to Kupalo, Yarilo, and the rest has been shown, originally personified vegetation, more especially the dying or dead vegetation of winter. Further, my interpretation of the gardens of Adonis is confirmed by finding that in this Prussian custom the very same kind of plants is used to form the gardens of Adonis (as we may call them) and the image of the deity. Nothing could set in a stronger light the truth of the theory that the gardens of Adonis are merely another manifestation of the god himself.

The last example of the gardens of Adonis which I shall cite is reported from Sicily. At the approach of Easter, Sicilian women sow wheat, lentils, and canary-seed in plates, which are kept in the dark and watered every two days. The plants soon shoot up; the stalks are tied together with red ribbons, and the plates containing them are placed on the sepulchres which, with effigies of the dead Christ, are made up in Roman Catholic and Greek churches on Good Friday,² just as the gardens of Adonis were placed on the grave of the dead Adonis.³ The whole custom—sepulchres as well as plates of sprouting grain—is probably nothing but a continuation, under a different name, of the Adonis worship.

§ 5. *Attis*

The next of those gods, whose supposed death and resurrection struck such deep roots into the religious faith and ritual of Western Asia, is Attis. He was to Phrygia what Adonis was to Syria. Like Adonis, he appears to

¹ See p. 107 sq.

² G. Pitre, *Spettacoli e feste popolari siciliane*, p. 211. A similar custom is observed at Cosenza in Calabria (Vincenzo Dorsa, *La tradizione greco-latina*, etc., p. 50). For the Easter

ceremonies in the Greek Church, see R. A. Arnold, *From the Levant* (London, 1868), i. 251 sqq.

³ κήπους ὡς τοὺς ἐπιταφίους Ἀδωνίδι, Eustathius on Homer, *Od.* xi. 590.

have been a god of vegetation, and his death and resurrection were annually mourned and rejoiced over at a festival in spring. The legends and rites of the two gods were so much alike that the ancients themselves sometimes identified them.¹ Attis was said to have been a fair youth who was beloved by the great Phrygian goddess Cybele. Two different accounts of his death were current. According to the one, he was killed by a boar, like Adonis. According to the other, he mutilated himself under a pine-tree, and died from the effusion of blood. The latter is said to have been the local story told by the people of Pessinus, a great centre of Cybele worship, and the whole legend of which it forms a part is stamped with a character of rudeness and savagery that speaks strongly for its antiquity.² But the other story seems also to have been firmly believed, for his worshippers, especially the people of Pessinus, abstained from eating swine.³ After his death Attis is said to have been changed into a pine-tree.⁴ The ceremonies observed at his festival are not very fully known, but their general order appears to have been as follows.⁵ At the spring equinox (the twenty-second of March) a pine-tree was cut in the woods and brought into the sanctuary of Cybele, where it was treated as a divinity. It was adorned with woollen bands and wreaths of violets, for violets were said to have sprung from the blood of Attis, as anemones from the blood of Adonis; and the effigy of a young man was attached to the middle of the tree.⁶ On the second day of the festival (the twenty-

¹ Hippolytus, *Refut. omni. haeres.* v. 9, p. 168, ed. Duncker and Schneidewin; Socrates, *Hist. Eccles.* iii. 23, §§ 51 sqq. p. 204.

² That Attis was killed by a boar was stated by Hermesianax, an elegiac poet of the fourth century B.C. (Pausanias, vii. 17); cp. Schol. on Nicander, *Alex.* 8. The other story is told by Arnobius (*Adversus nationes*, v. 5 sqq.), on the authority of Timotheus, an otherwise unknown writer, who professed to derive it "*ex reconditis antiquitatum libris et ex intimis mysteriis*." It is obviously identical with the account which Pausanias mentions (*l.c.*) as the story current in Pessinus.

³ Pausanias, vii. 17; Julian, *Orat.* v. 177 B, p. 229, ed. Hertlein.

⁴ Ovid, *Metam.* x. 103 sqq.

⁵ On the festival see especially Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii. 370 sqq.; Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines*, i. col. 1685 sq. (article "Cybèle"); W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 291 sqq.; *id.*, *Raumkultur*, p. 572 sqq.

⁶ Julian, *Orat.* v. 168 C; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 41; Arnobius, *Advers. nationes*, v. 7 and 16 sq.; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profan. relig.* 27.

third of March) the chief ceremony seems to have been a blowing of trumpets.¹ The third day (the twenty-fourth of March) was known as the Day of Blood: the high priest drew blood from his arms and presented it as an offering.² It was perhaps on this day or night that the mourning for Attis took place over an effigy, which was afterwards solemnly buried.³ The fourth day (the twenty-fifth of March) was the Festival of Joy (*Hilaria*), at which the resurrection of Attis was probably celebrated—at least the celebration of his resurrection seems to have followed closely upon that of his death.⁴ The Roman festival closed on the twenty-seventh of March with a procession to the brook Almo, in which the bullock-cart of the goddess, her image, and other sacred objects were bathed. But this bath of the goddess is known to have also formed part of the festival in her Asiatic home. On returning from the water the cart and oxen were strewn with fresh spring flowers.⁵

The original character of Attis as a tree-spirit is brought out plainly by the part which the pine-tree plays in his legend and ritual. The story that he was a human being transformed into a pine-tree is only one of those

¹ Julian, *l.c.* and 169 c.

² Trebellius Pollio, *Claudius*, 4; Tertullian, *Apolog.* 25. For other authorities see Marquardt, *l.c.*

³ Diodorus, iii. 59; Firmicus Maternus, *De err. profan. relig.* 3; Arnobius, *Advers. nat.* v. 16; Schol. on Nicander, *Alex.* 8; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* ix. 116; Arrian, *Tactica*, 33. The ceremony described in Firmicus Maternus, ch. 22 ("nocte quadam simulacrum in lectica supinum ponitur et per numeros digestis fletibus plangitur. . . . *Idolum sepelis. Idolum plangis*," etc.), may very well be the mourning and funeral rites of Attis, to which he had more briefly referred in ch. 3.

⁴ On the *Hilaria* see Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 21. 10; Julian, *Orat.* v. 168 D, 169 D; Damascius, *Vita Isidori*, in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 345 A 5 sqq. ed. Bekker. On the resurrection, see Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profan. relig.* 3: "reginae suae amorem [*Phryges*] cum luctibus annuis

consecrarunt, et ut satis iratae mulieri facerent aut ut poenitenti solacium quaererent, quem paulo ante sepelierant revixisse iactarunt. . . . Mortem ipsius [*i.e.* of Attis] dicunt, quod semina collecta conduntur, vitam rursus quod jacta semina annuis vicibus + reconduntur" [*renascuntur*, C. Halm]. Again compare *id.*, 22: "*Idolum sepelis. Idolum plangis, idolum de sepultura proferis, et miser cum haec feceris gaudes*"; and Damascius, *l.c.* τὴν τῶν Ἰσίδου καλουμένην ἐορτήν· ὅπερ ἐδήλου τὴν ἐξ ἔδου γεγονυῖαν ἡμῶν σωτηρίαν. This last passage, compared with the formula in Firmicus Maternus, *op. cit.* 22.

θαρρεῖτε μὲντοι τοῦ θεοῦ σεσωμένων· ἵσταται γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐκ πόνου σωτηρία,

makes it probable that the ceremony described by Firmicus in this passage is the resurrection of Attis.

⁵ Ovid, *Fast.* iv. 337 sqq.; Ammianus Marcellinus, xxiii. 3. For other references see Marquardt and Mannhardt, *ll. cc.*

transparent attempts at rationalising old beliefs which meet us so frequently in mythology. His tree origin is further attested by the story that he was born of a virgin, who conceived by putting in her bosom a ripe almond or pomegranate.¹ The bringing in of the pine-tree from the wood, decked with violets and woollen bands, is like bringing in the May-tree or Summer-tree in modern folk-custom; and the effigy which was attached to the pine-tree was only a duplicate representative of the tree-spirit or Attis. At what point of the ceremonies the violets and the effigy were attached to the tree is not said, but we should assume this to be done after the mimic death and burial of Attis. The fastening of his effigy to the tree would then be a representation of his coming to life again in tree-form, just as the placing of the shirt worn by the effigy of Death upon a tree represents the revival of the spirit of vegetation in a new form.² After being attached to the tree, the effigy was kept for a year and then burned.³ We have seen that this was apparently sometimes done with the May-pole;⁴ and we shall see presently that the effigy of the corn-spirit, made at harvest, is often preserved till it is replaced by a new effigy at next year's harvest. The original intention of thus keeping the effigy for a year and then replacing it by a new one was doubtless to maintain the spirit of vegetation in fresh and vigorous life. The bathing of the image of Cybele was probably a rain-charm, like the throwing of the effigies of Death and of Adonis into the water. Like tree-spirits in general, Attis appears to have been conceived as exercising power over the growth of corn, or even to have been identified with the corn. One of his epithets was "very fruitful"; he was addressed as the "reaped green (or yellow) ear of corn," and the story of his sufferings, death, and resurrection was interpreted as the ripe grain wounded by the reaper, buried in the granary, and coming to life again when sown in the ground.⁵ His worshippers abstained from eating seeds and the roots of vegetables,⁶ just as at the Adonis ceremonies

¹ Pausanias, vii. 17; Arnobius, *Adv. nationes*, v. 6; compare Hippolytus, *Refut. omn. haeres.* v. 9, pp. 166, 168.

² See above, p. 93.

³ Firmicus Maternus, *De errore prof.*

relig. 27. ⁴ Vol. i. p. 205 sq.

⁵ Hippolytus, *Ref. omn. haeres.* v. 8 and 9, pp. 162, 168; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore prof. relig.* 3.

⁶ Julian, *Orat.* v. 174 A B.

women abstained from eating corn ground in a mill. Such acts would probably have been deemed a sacrilegious partaking of the life or of the bruised and broken body of the god.

From inscriptions it appears that both at Pessinus and Rome the high priest of Cybele was regularly called Attis.¹ It is therefore a reasonable conjecture that the high priest played the part of the legendary Attis at the annual festival.² We have seen that on the Day of Blood he drew blood from his arms, and this may have been an imitation of the self-inflicted death of Attis under the pine-tree. It is not inconsistent with this supposition that Attis was also represented at these ceremonies by an effigy; for we have already met with instances in which the divine being is first represented by a living person and afterwards by an effigy, which is then burned or otherwise destroyed.³ Perhaps we may go a step farther and conjecture that this mimic killing of the priest, accompanied by a real effusion of his blood, was in Phrygia, as it has been elsewhere, a substitute for a human sacrifice which in earlier times was actually offered. Professor W. M. Ramsay, whose authority on all questions relating to Phrygia no one will dispute, is of opinion that at these Phrygian ceremonies "the representative of the god was probably slain each year by a cruel death, just as the god himself died."⁴ We know from Strabo⁵ that the priests of Pessinus were at one time potentates as well as priests; they may, therefore, have belonged to that class of divine kings or popes whose duty it was to die each year for their people and the world. The name of Attis, it is true, does not occur among the names of the old kings of Phrygia, who seem to have borne the names of Midas and Gordias in alternate generations; but a very ancient inscription carved

¹ Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums*,⁶ i. 456, note 4; Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon d. griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, i. col. 724. Cp. Polybius, xii. 20 (18). In two letters of Eumenes and Attalus, preserved in inscriptions at Sivrihissar, the priest at Pessinus is addressed as Attis. See A. von Domaskewski, "Briefe der Attaliden an den Priester von Pessinus,"

Archaeologische-epigraphische Mittheilungen aus Oesterreich-Ungarn, viii. (1884), pp. 96, 98.

² The conjecture is that of Henzen in *Annal. d. Inst.* 1856, p. 110, referred to in Roscher, *l.c.*

³ Vol. i. p. 209, vol. ii. pp. 30, 62 sq.

⁴ Article "Phrygia" in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed. xviii. 853.

⁵ xii. 5. 3.

in the rock above a famous Phrygian monument, which is known as the Tomb of Midas, records that the monument was made for, or dedicated to, King Midas by a certain Ates, whose name is doubtless identical with Attis, and who, if not a king himself, may have been one of the royal family.¹ It is worthy of note also that the name Atys, which again appears to be only another form of Attis, is recorded as that of an early king of Lydia;² and that a son of Croesus, king of Lydia, not only bore the name Atys but was said to have been killed, while he was hunting a boar, by a member of the royal Phrygian family, who traced his lineage to King Midas and had fled to the court of Croesus because he had unwittingly slain his own brother.³ Scholars have recognised in this story of the death of Atys, son of Croesus, a mere double of the myth of Attis;⁴ but in view of the facts which have come before us in the present inquiry⁵ it is a curious coincidence, if it is nothing more, that the myth of a slain god should be told of a king's son. May we conjecture that the Phrygian priests who bore the name of Attis and represented the god of that name were themselves members, perhaps the eldest sons, of the royal house, to whom their fathers, uncles, brothers, or other kinsmen deputed the honour of dying a violent death in the character of gods, while they reserved to themselves the duty of living, as long as nature allowed them, in the humbler character of kings? If this were so, the Phrygian dynasty of Midas may have presented a close parallel to the Greek dynasty of Athamas, in which the eldest sons seem to have been regularly destined to the altar.⁶ But it is also possible that the divine priests who bore the name of Attis may have belonged to that indigenous race which the Phrygians, on their irruption into Asia from Europe,

¹ W. M. Ramsay, in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, ix. (1888), p. 379 sqq.; *id.*, in *Journ. Hellen. Stud.* x. (1889), p. 156 sqq.; Perrot et Chipiez, *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité*, v. 82 sqq.

² Herodotus, i. 94. According to Prof. W. M. Ramsay, the conquering and ruling caste in Lydia belonged to the Phrygian stock (*Journ. of Hellen. Stud.* ix. (1888), p. 351).

³ Herodotus, i. 34-45. The tradition that Croesus would allow no iron

weapon to come near Atys suggests that a similar taboo may have been imposed on the Phrygian priests named Attis. For taboos of this sort, see vol. i. p. 344 sqq.

⁴ Stein on Herodotus, i. 43; Ed. Meyer, s.v. "Atys," in *Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, herausgeg. von G. Wissowa, ii. 2, col. 2262.

⁵ See above, p. 33 sqq.

⁶ See above, p. 34 sqq.

appear to have found and conquered in the land afterwards known as Phrygia.¹ On the latter hypothesis the priests may have represented an older and higher civilisation than that of their barbarous conquerors. However this may be, the god they personated was a deity of vegetation whose divine life manifested itself especially in the pine-tree and the violets of spring; and when they died in the character of that divinity they corresponded to the mummers who are still slain in mimicry by European peasants in spring, and to the priest who was slain long ago in grim earnest on the wooded shore of the Lake of Nemi.

Another of these embodiments of the flowery spring may have been the fair youth Hyacinth, who was said to have been slain unwittingly by Apollo, and whose annual festival was celebrated on a great scale by the Spartans at Amyclae. The festival fell in spring, and the mourning for the death of Hyacinth was followed by rejoicings, probably at the supposed resurrection of the god. Dancing, singing, and feasting went on throughout the day; and the capital was almost emptied of its inhabitants, who poured out in their thousands to witness and share the festivities of the happy day. The hyacinth—"that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe"—sprang from the blood of the slain divinity, as the scarlet anemone grew from the blood of Adonis and the purple violet from the blood of Attis; like these vernal flowers it heralded the advent of another spring and gladdened the hearts of men with the promise of a joyful resurrection.² One spring, when the hyacinths were in bloom, it happened that the red-coated Spartan regiments lay encamped under the walls of Corinth. Their commander gave the Amyclaeon battalion leave to go home and celebrate as usual the festival of Hyacinth in their native town. But the sad flower was to be to these men an omen of death; for they had not gone

¹ See W. M. Ramsay, *s.v.* "Phrygia" in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed. xviii. 849 sq.; *id.*, in *Journ. of Hellen. Stud.* ix. (1888), p. 350 sq.

² Herodotus, ix. 7; Lucian, *De saltatione*, 45; Pausanias, iii. 19. 3, 4, 5; Hesychius, *s.v.* Ἑκατόμβη; Athenæus, iv. p. 139, D-F; Ovid,

Metam. x. 161-219; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxi. 66; Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*,² ii. 457 sq.; S. Wide, *Lakonische Kulte* (Leipsic, 1893), pp. 285-293. As to the date of the festival, see G. F. Unger, in *Philologus*, xxxvii. (1877), pp. 13-33, according to whom the celebration took place at the beginning of May.

far before they were enveloped by clouds of light-armed foes and cut to pieces.¹

§ 6. *Osiris*

There seem to be some grounds for believing that Osiris, the great god of ancient Egypt, was one of those personifications of vegetation, whose annual death and resurrection have been celebrated in so many lands. But as the chief of the gods he appears to have absorbed the attributes of other deities, so that his character and rites present a complex of heterogeneous elements which, with the scanty evidence at our disposal, it is hardly possible to sort out. It may be worth while, however, to put together some of the facts which lend support to the view that Osiris, or at least one of the deities out of whom he was compounded, was a god of vegetation, analogous to Adonis and Attis.

The outline of his myth is as follows.² Osiris was the son of the earth-god Qeb (or Seb, as the name is sometimes transliterated).³ Reigning as a king on earth, he reclaimed the Egyptians from savagery, gave them laws, and taught them to worship the gods. Before his time the Egyptians had been cannibals. But Isis, the sister and wife of Osiris, discovered wheat and barley growing wild, and Osiris introduced the cultivation of these grains amongst his people, who forthwith abandoned cannibalism and took kindly to a corn diet.⁴ Afterwards Osiris travelled over the world diffusing the blessings of civilisation wherever he went. But on his return his brother Set (whom the Greeks called Typhon) with seventy-two others plotted against him. Having taken the measure of his good brother's body by stealth, the bad brother Typhon fashioned a beautiful and highly decorated coffer of the same size, and once when

¹ Xenophon, *Hellenica*, iv. 5. 7-17; Pausanias, iii. 10. 1.

² The myth, in a connected form, is only known from Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 13-19. Some additional details, recovered from Egyptian sources, will be found in the work of Adolf Erman, *Aegypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 365 sqq. Compare A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten*

Aegypter, p. 112 sqq.; G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, p. 172 sqq.

³ Le Page Renouf, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1879, p. 110; Brugsch, *Religion und Mythologie der alten Aegypter*, p. 614; Ad. Erman, l.c.; Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, i. § 56 sq.

⁴ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 13; Diodorus, i. 14; Tibullus, i. 7. 29 sqq.

they were all drinking and making merry he brought in the coffer and promised jestingly to give it to the one whom it should fit exactly. Well, they all tried one after the other, but it fitted none of them. Last of all Osiris stepped into it and lay down. On that the conspirators ran and slammed the lid down on him, nailed it fast, soldered it with molten lead, and flung the coffer into the Nile. This happened on the seventeenth day of the month Athyr, when the sun is in the sign of the Scorpion, and in the eight-and-twentieth year of the reign or the life of Osiris. When Isis heard of it she sheared off one of the locks of her hair, put on mourning attire and wandered disconsolately up and down, seeking the body. Meantime the coffer had floated down the river and away out to sea, till at last it drifted ashore at Byblus on the coast of Syria. Here a fine erica-tree shot up suddenly and enclosed the chest in its trunk. The king of the country, admiring the growth of the tree, had it cut down and made into a pillar of his house; but he did not know that the coffer with the dead Osiris was in it. Word of this came to Isis and she journeyed to Byblus, and sat down by the well, in humble guise, her face wet with tears. To none would she speak till the king's handmaidens came, and then she greeted kindly and braided their hair and breathed on them from her own divine body a wondrous perfume. But when the queen beheld the braids of her handmaidens' hair and smelt the sweet smell that emanated from them, she sent for the stranger woman and took her into her house and made her the nurse of her child. But Isis gave the babe her finger instead of her breast to suck, and at night she began to burn all that was mortal of him away, while she herself in the likeness of a swallow fluttered round the pillar that contained her dead brother, twittering mournfully. But the queen spied what she was doing and shrieked out when she saw her child in flames, and thereby she hindered him from becoming immortal. Then the goddess revealed herself and begged for the pillar of the roof, and they gave it her, and she cut the coffer out of it, and fell upon it and embraced it and lamented so loud that the younger of the king's children died of fright on the spot. But the trunk of the tree she wrapped in fine linen and poured ointment on it and gave it

to the king and queen, and the wood stands in a temple of Isis and is worshipped by the people of Byblus to this day. And Isis put the coffer in a boat and took the eldest of the king's children with her and sailed away. As soon as they were alone, she opened the chest, and laying her face on the face of her brother she kissed him and wept. But the child came behind her softly and saw what she was about, and she turned and looked at him in anger, and the child could not bear her look and died; but some say that it was not so, but that he fell into the sea and was drowned. It is he whom the Egyptians sing of at their banquets under the name of Maneros. But Isis put the coffer by and went to see her son Horus at Butus, and Typhon found it as he was hunting a boar one night by the light of a full moon.¹ And he knew the body, and rent it into fourteen pieces, and scattered them abroad. But Isis sailed up and down the marshes in a shallop made of papyrus, looking for the pieces; and that is why when people sail in shallops made of papyrus, the crocodiles do not hurt them, for they fear or respect the goddess. And that is the reason, too, why there are many graves of Osiris in Egypt, for she buried each limb as she found it. But others will have it that she buried an image of him in every city pretending it was his body, in order that Osiris might be worshipped in many places, and that if Typhon searched for the real grave he might not be able to find it. However, one of the members of Osiris had been eaten by the fishes, so Isis made an image of it instead, and the image is used by the Egyptians at their festivals to this day.

Such is the myth of Osiris as told by Plutarch. A long inscription in the temple at Denderah has preserved a list of the graves of Osiris, and other texts mention the parts of his body which were treasured as holy relics in each of the sanctuaries. Thus his heart was at Athribis, his neck at Letopolis, and his head at Memphis. As often happens in such cases, some of his divine limbs were miraculously multiplied. His head, for instance, was at Abydos as well as at Memphis, and his legs, which were remarkably numerous, would have sufficed for several ordinary mortals.²

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 8, 18.

² A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter*, p. 115.

Of the annual rites with which his death and burial were celebrated in the month Athyr¹ we unfortunately know very little. The mourning lasted five days,² from the eighth to the twelfth of the month Athyr.³ The ceremonies began with the "earth-ploughing," that is, with the opening of the field labours, when the waters of the Nile are sinking. The other rites included the search for the mangled body of Osiris, the rejoicings at its discovery, and its solemn burial. The burial took place on the eleventh of November, and was accompanied by the recitation of laments from the liturgical books. These laments, of which several copies have been discovered in modern times, were put in the mouth of Isis and Nephthys, sisters of Osiris. "In form and substance," says Brugsch, "they vividly recall the dirges chanted at the Adonis' rites over the dead god."⁴ Next day was the joyous festival of Sokari, that being the name under which the hawk-headed Osiris of Memphis was invoked. The solemn processions of priests which on this day wound round the temples with all the pomp of banners, images, and sacred emblems, were amongst the most stately pageants that ancient Egypt could show. The whole festival ended on the sixteenth of November with a special rite called the erection of the *Tatu, Tat*, or

¹ Most Egyptian texts place the death of the god and the mourning for him at the end of the month Choiak, about the time of the winter solstice, when the days are shortest; and of the ceremony which represented his death and resurrection at this time we possess a full and detailed account in the inscription at Denderah. But apparently this transference of the date is due to a later identification of Osiris with the sun. See A. Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Aegyptier*, pp. 112 sq., 115. According to Pausanias (x. 32. 18), Isis mourned for Osiris at the time that the Nile begins to rise, and the Egyptians attributed the rise of the water to the tears of the goddess.

² So Brugsch, *op. cit.* p. 617. Plutarch, *op. cit.* 39, says four days beginning with the 17th of the month Athyr.

³ In the Alexandrian year the month Athyr corresponded to November. But as the old Egyptian year was

vague, that is, made no use of intercalation, the astronomical date of each festival varied from year to year, till it had passed through the whole cycle of the astronomical year. From the fact, therefore, that when the calendar became fixed, Athyr fell in November, no inference can be drawn as to the date at which the death of Osiris was originally celebrated. It is thus perfectly possible that it may have been originally a harvest festival, though the Egyptian harvest falls, not in November, but in April. Compare Selden, *De diis Syris*, p. 335 sq.; Parthey on Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 39.

⁴ Brugsch, *l.c.* For a specimen of these lamentations see Brugsch, *op. cit.* p. 631 sq.; *Records of the Past*, ii. 119 sqq. For the annual ceremonies of finding and burying Osiris, see also Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profanarum religionum*, 2, § 3; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 609.

Ded pillar.¹ This pillar appears from the monuments to have been a column with cross bars at the top, like the yards of a mast, or more exactly like the superposed capitals of a pillar.² On a Theban tomb the king himself, assisted by his relations and a priest, is represented hauling at the ropes by which the pillar is being raised. The pillar was interpreted, at least in later Egyptian theology, as the backbone of Osiris. It might very well be a conventional way of representing a tree stripped of its leaves; and if Osiris was a tree-spirit, the bare trunk and branches of a tree might naturally be described as his backbone. The setting up of the column would thus, as Erman supposes, shadow forth the resurrection of the god, which, as we learn from Plutarch, appears to have been celebrated at his mysteries.³ Perhaps a ceremony which, according to Plutarch, took place on the third day of the festival (the nineteenth day of the month Athyr) may also have referred to the resurrection. He says that on that day the priests carried the sacred ark down to the sea. Within the ark was a golden casket, into which drinking-water was poured. A shout then went up that Osiris was found. Next the priests took some vegetable mould and having kneaded it with water into a paste they fashioned therewith a crescent-shaped figure, which they afterwards dressed in robes and adorned.⁴

The general similarity of the myth and ritual of Osiris to those of Adonis and Attis is obvious. In all three cases we see a god whose untimely and violent death is mourned by a loving goddess and annually celebrated by his worshippers. The character of Osiris as a deity of vegetation is brought out by the legend that he was the first to teach men the use of corn, and by the custom of beginning his annual festival with the tillage of the ground. He is said also to have introduced the cultivation of the vine.⁵ In one

¹ Brugsch, *Religion und Mythologie der alten Ägypter*, p. 617 sq.; Erman, *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 377 sq.

² Erman, *l.c.*; Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (London, 1878), iii. 68, 82; Tiele, *History of the Egyptian Religion*, p. 46;

Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines*, p. 130.

³ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35: ὁμο-λογεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ τιτανικά καὶ νῦν τέλει τοῖς λεγομένοις Ὀσίριδος διασπασμοῖς καὶ ταῖς ἀναβιώσεσι καὶ παλιγγενεσίαις, ὁμοῦ δὲ καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς ταφάς.

⁴ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 39.

⁵ Tibullus, i. 7. 33 sqq.

of the chambers dedicated to Osiris in the great temple of Isis at Philae the dead body of Osiris is represented with stalks of corn springing from it, and a priest is depicted watering the stalks from a pitcher which he holds in his hand. The accompanying legend sets forth that "this is the form of him whom one may not name, Osiris of the mysteries, who springs from the returning waters."¹ It would seem impossible to devise a more graphic way of depicting Osiris as a personification of the corn; while the inscription attached to the picture proves that this personification was the kernel of the mysteries of the god, the innermost secret that was only revealed to the initiated. In estimating the mythical character of Osiris very great weight must be given to this monument. The story that his mangled remains were scattered up and down the land may be a mythical way of expressing either the sowing or the winnowing of the grain. The latter interpretation is supported by the tale that Isis placed the severed limbs of Osiris on a corn-sieve.² Or the legend may be a reminiscence of the custom of slaying a human victim as a representative of the corn-spirit and distributing his flesh or scattering his ashes over the fields to fertilise them. We have already seen that in modern Europe the figure of Death is sometimes torn in pieces, and that the fragments are then buried in the fields to make the crops grow well.³ Later on we shall meet with examples of human victims treated in the same way. With regard to the ancient Egyptians, we have it on the authority of Manetho that they used to burn red-haired men and scatter their ashes with winnowing-fans.⁴ This custom was not, as might perhaps be supposed, a mere way of wreaking their spite on foreigners, amongst whom red hair would probably be commoner than amongst the native Egyptians; for the oxen which were sacrificed had also to be red, a single black or white hair found on a beast would have disqualified it for the sacrifice.⁵ The red hair of the human victims was thus probably essential; the circumstance

¹ Brugsch, *Religion und Mythologie der alten Aegypter*, p. 621.

² Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* i. 166.

³ Above, p. 95.

⁴ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 73, cp. 33; Diodorus, i. 88.

⁵ Plutarch, *op. cit.* 31; Herodotus, ii. 38.

that they were generally foreigners may have been only accidental. If, as I conjecture, these human sacrifices were intended to promote the growth of the crops—and the winnowing of their ashes seems to support this view—red-haired victims were perhaps selected as best fitted to personate the spirit of the golden grain. For when a god is represented by a living person, it is natural that the human representative should be chosen on the ground of his supposed resemblance to the god. Hence the ancient Mexicans, conceiving the maize as a personal being who went through the whole course of life between seed-time and harvest, sacrificed new-born babes when the maize was sown, older children when it had sprouted, and so on till it was fully ripe, when they sacrificed old men.¹ A name for Osiris was the "crop" or "harvest";² and the ancients sometimes explained him as a personification of the corn.³

But Osiris was more than a spirit of the corn; he was also a tree-spirit, and this may well have been his original character, since the worship of trees is naturally older in the history of religion than the worship of the cereals. His character as a tree-spirit was represented very graphically in a ceremony described by Firmicus Maternus.⁴ A pine-tree having been cut down, the centre was hollowed out, and with the wood thus excavated an image of Osiris was made, which

¹ Herrera, quoted by Bastian, *Culturländer des alten Amerika*, ii. 639; *id.*, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, ii. 379 sq., trans. by Stevens (whose version of the passage is inadequate). Compare Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, i. 327, iii. 535. For more instances of the assimilation of the human victim to the corn, see below, pp. 247 sq., 255.

² Lefébure, *Le mythe Osirien* (Paris, 1874-75), p. 188.

³ Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profanarum religionum*, 2, § 6: "defensores eorum volunt addere physicam rationem, frugum semina Osirim dicentes esse; Isim terram, Typhonem calorem: et quia maturatae fruges calore ad vitam hominum colliguntur

et divisae a terrae consortio separantur et rursus ad propinquante hieme seminantur, hanc volunt esse mortem Osiridis, cum fruges recondunt, inventionem vero, cum fruges genitali terrae somento concepit annua rursus coeperint procreatione generari." Eusebius, *Praepar. Evang.* iii. 11, 31: ὁ δὲ Ὅσιρις παρ' Ἀγυπτίους τὴν κάρσιμον παρσσησι δύνανται, ἢ θρήνοι ἀπομειλίσσονται εἰς γῆν ἀφανισμένην ἐν τῷ σπόρῳ, καὶ ὑφ' ἡμῶν καταναλισκόμενην εἰς τὰς τροφάς. Athenagoras, *Supplicatio pro Christianis*, 22, pp. 112, 114, ed. Otto: τὰ δὲ στοιχεία καὶ τὰ μέρη αὐτῶν θεοποιούσιν, ἄλλοτε ἄλλα ὀνόματα αὐτοῖς τιθέμενοι, τὴν μὲν τοῦ σίτου σπορὰν Ὅσιριν (ὅθεν φασὶν μυστικῶς ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνευρέσει τῶν μελῶν ἢ τῶν καρπῶν ἐπιλεχθῆναι τῇ ἰαδί. Εὐρήκαμεν, σιγχαίρομεν!).

⁴ *Op. cit.* 27, § 1.

was then "buried" in the hollow of the tree. Here, again, it is hard to imagine how the conception of a tree as tenanted by a personal being could be more plainly expressed. The image of Osiris thus made was kept for a year and then burned, exactly as was done with the image of Attis which was attached to the pine-tree. The ceremony of cutting the tree, as described by Firmicus Maternus, appears to be alluded to by Plutarch.¹ It was probably the ritual counterpart of the mythical discovery of the body of Osiris enclosed in the erica-tree. We may conjecture that the erection of the *Tatu* pillar at the close of the annual festival of Osiris² was identical with the ceremony described by Firmicus; it is to be noted that in the myth the erica-tree formed a pillar in the king's house. Like the similar custom of cutting a pine-tree and fastening an image to it in the rites of Attis, the ceremony perhaps belonged to that class of customs of which the bringing in the May-pole is among the most familiar. As to the pine-tree in particular, at Denderah the tree of Osiris is a conifer, and the coffer containing the body of Osiris is here depicted as enclosed within the tree.³ A pine-cone often appears on the monuments as an offering presented to Osiris, and a manuscript of the Louvre speaks of the cedar as sprung from him.⁴ The sycamore and the tamarisk are also his trees. In inscriptions he is spoken of as residing in them;⁵ and his mother Nut is frequently portrayed in a sycamore.⁶ In a sepulchre at How (Diospolis Parva) a tamarisk is depicted overshadowing the coffer of Osiris; and in the series of sculptures which illustrate the mystic history of Osiris in the great temple of Isis at Philae, a tamarisk is figured with two men pouring water on it. The inscription on this last monument leaves no doubt, says Brugsch, that the verdure of the earth was believed to be connected with the verdure of the tree, and that the sculpture

¹ *Isis et Osiris*, 21, αὐτῷ δὲ τομὴν ξύλου καὶ σχίσιν λίθου καὶ χοὰς χεομένης, διὰ τὸ πολλὰ τῶν μυστικῶν ἀναμειχθαι τοῖς τοῖς. Again, *ibid.* 42, τὸ δὲ ξύλον ἐν ταῖς λεγόμεναις Ὀσίριδος ταφαῖς τέμνοντες κατασκευάζουσι λάρνακα μνηοειδῆ.

² See above, p. 140 sq.

³ Lefébure, *Le mythe Osirien*, pp.

194, 198, referring to Mariette, *Denderah*, iv. 66 and 72.

⁴ Lefébure, *op. cit.* pp. 195, 197.

⁵ Birch, in Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (London, 1878), iii. 84.

⁶ Wilkinson, *op. cit.* iii. 63 sq.; Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, i. § 56, 60.

refers to the grave of Osiris at Philae, of which Plutarch tells us that it was overshadowed by a *methide* plant, taller than any olive-tree. This sculpture, it may be observed, occurs in the same chamber in which the god is depicted as a corpse with ears of corn sprouting from him.¹ In inscriptions he is referred to as "the one in the tree," "the solitary one in the acacia," and so forth.² On the monuments he sometimes appears as a mummy covered with a tree or with plants.³ It accords with the character of Osiris as a tree-spirit that his worshippers were forbidden to injure fruit-trees, and with his character as a god of vegetation in general that they were not allowed to stop up wells of water, which are so important for the irrigation of hot southern lands.⁴

The original meaning of the goddess Isis is still more difficult to determine than that of her brother and husband Osiris. Her attributes and epithets were so numerous that in the hieroglyphics she is called "the many-named," "the thousand-named," and in Greek inscriptions "the myriad-named."⁵ Professor Tiele confesses candidly that "it is now impossible to tell precisely to what natural phenomena the character of Isis at first referred."⁶ There are at least some grounds for seeing in her a goddess of corn. If we may trust Diodorus, whose authority appears to have been the Egyptian historian Manetho, the discovery of wheat and barley was attributed to Isis, and at her festivals stalks of these grains were carried in procession to commemorate the boon she had conferred on men. Further, at harvest-time, when the Egyptian reapers had cut the first stalks, they laid them down and beat their breasts, lamenting and calling

¹ Wilkinson, *op. cit.* iii. 349 sq.; Brugsch, *Religion und Mythologie der alten Ägypter*, p. 621; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 20. In this passage of Plutarch it has been proposed by Parthey to read *μυπλαγ* for *μυθιδη*, and the conjecture appears to be accepted by Wilkinson, *loc. cit.*

² Lefébure, *Le mythe Osirien*, p. 191.

³ Lefébure, *op. cit.* p. 188.

⁴ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35. One of the points in which the myths of Isis and Demeter agree, is that both goddesses in their search for the loved

and lost one are said to have sat down, sad at heart and weary, on the edge of a well. Hence those who had been initiated at Eleusis were forbidden to sit on a well. See Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 15; Homer, *Hymn to Demeter*, 98 sq.; Pausanias, i. 39. 1; Apollodorus, i. 5. 1; Nicander, *Theriaca*, 486; Clemens Alex., *Protrept.* ii. 20.

⁵ Brugsch, *Religion und Mythologie der alten Ägypter*, p. 645.

⁶ C. P. Tiele, *History of Egyptian Religion*, p. 57.

upon Isis.¹ Amongst the epithets by which she is designated in the inscriptions are "creatress of the green crop," "the green one, whose greenness is like the greenness of the earth," and "mistress of bread."² According to Brugsch she is "not only the creatress of the fresh verdure of vegetation which covers the earth, but is actually the green corn-field itself, which is personified as a goddess."³ This is confirmed by her epithet *Sokhit* or *Sochet*, meaning "a corn-field," a sense which the word still retains in Coptic.⁴ It is in this character of a corn-goddess that the Greeks conceived Isis, for they identified her with Demeter.⁵ In a Greek epigram she is described as "she who has given birth to the fruits of the earth," and "the mother of the ears of corn,"⁶ and in a hymn composed in her honour she speaks of herself as "queen of the wheat-field," and is described as "charged with the care of the fruitful furrow's wheat-rich path."⁷

Osiris has been sometimes interpreted as the sun-god; and in modern times this view has been held by so many distinguished writers that it deserves a brief examination. If we inquire on what evidence Osiris has been identified with the sun or the sun-god, it will be found on analysis to be minute in quantity and dubious, where it is not absolutely worthless, in quality. The diligent Jablonski, the first modern scholar to collect and sift the testimony of classical writers on Egyptian religion, says that it can be shown in many ways that Osiris is the sun, and that he could produce a cloud of witnesses to prove it, but that it is needless to do so, since no learned man is ignorant of the fact.⁸ Of the writers whom he condescends to quote, the only two who expressly identify Osiris with the sun are Diodorus and Macrobius. The passage in Diodorus runs

¹ Diodorus, i. 14. Eusebius (*Præparat. Evangel.* iii. 3) quotes from Diodorus (i. 11-13) a long passage on the early religion of Egypt, prefacing the quotation (ch. 2) with the remark γράφει δὲ καὶ τὰ περὶ τούτων πλεονέκτων μὲν ὁ Μανέθιος, ἐπετετμημένους δὲ ὁ Διόδωρος, which seems to imply that Diodorus epitomised Manetho.

² Brugsch, *op. cit.* p. 647.

³ Brugsch, *op. cit.* p. 649.

⁴ Brugsch, *l.c.*

⁵ Herodotus, ii. 59, 156; Diodorus, i. 13, 25, 96; Apollodorus, ii. 1. 3; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 212.

⁶ *Antholog. Planud.* cclxiv. 1.

⁷ *Orphica*, ed. Abel, p. 295 sqq.

⁸ Jablonski, *Pantheon Aegyptiorum* (Frankfort, 1750), i. 125 sq.

thus: ¹ "It is said that the aboriginal inhabitants of Egypt, looking up to the sky, and smitten with awe and wonder at the nature of the universe, supposed that there were two gods, eternal and primeval, the sun and the moon, of whom they named the sun Osiris and the moon Isis." Even if Diodorus's authority for this statement is Manetho, as there is some ground for believing,² little or no weight can be attached to it. For it is plainly a philosophical, and therefore a late, explanation of the first beginnings of Egyptian religion, reminding us of Kant's familiar saying about the starry heavens and the moral law rather than of the rude traditions of a primitive people. Jablonski's second authority, Macrobius, is no better but rather worse. For Macrobius was the father of that large family of mythologists who resolve all or most gods into the sun. According to him Mercury was the sun, Mars was the sun, Janus was the sun, Saturn was the sun, so was Jupiter, also Nemesis, likewise Pan, and so on through a great part of the pantheon.³ It was natural, therefore, that he should identify Osiris with the sun,⁴ but his reasons for doing so are exceedingly slight. He refers to the ceremonies of alternate lamentation and joy as if they reflected the vicissitudes of the great luminary in his course through the sky. Further, he argues that Osiris must be the sun because an eye was one of his symbols. The premise is correct,⁵ but what exactly it has to do with the conclusion is not clear. The opinion that Osiris was the sun is also mentioned, but not accepted, by Plutarch,⁶ and it is referred to by Firmicus Maternus.⁷

Amongst modern scholars, Lepsius, in identifying Osiris with the sun, appears to rely mainly on the passage of Diodorus already quoted. But the monuments, he adds, also show "that down to a late time Osiris was sometimes conceived as *Ra*. In this quality he is named *Osiris-Ra* even in the 'Book of the Dead,' and Isis is often called 'the royal consort of Ra.'"⁸ That *Ra* was both the physical sun

¹ *Bibl. Hist.* i. 11.

² See p. 146, note 1.

³ See Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, bk. i.

⁴ *Saturn.* i. 21. 11.

⁵ Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs*

of the Ancient Egyptians (London, 1878), iii. 353.

⁶ *Isis et Osiris*, 52.

⁷ *De errore profan. religionum*, 8.

⁸ Lepsius, "Ueber den ersten

and the sun-god is undisputed ; but with every deference for the authority of so great a scholar as Lepsius, it may be doubted whether the identification of Osiris with Ra can be accepted as proof that Osiris was originally the sun. For the religion of ancient Egypt¹ may be described as a confederacy of local cults which, while maintaining against each other a certain measure of jealous and even hostile independence, were yet constantly subjected to the fusing and amalgamating influence of political centralisation and philosophic thought. The history of the religion appears to have largely consisted of a struggle between these opposite forces or tendencies. On the one side there was the conservative tendency to preserve the local cults with all their distinctive features, fresh, sharp, and crisp as they had been handed down from an immemorial past. On the other side there was the progressive tendency, favoured by the gradual fusion of the people under a powerful central government, first to dull the edge of these provincial distinctions, and finally to break them down completely and merge them in a single national religion. The conservative party probably mustered in its ranks the great bulk of the people, their prejudices and affections being warmly enlisted in favour of the local deity, with whose temple and rites they had been familiar from childhood ; and the popular dislike of change, based on the endearing effect of old association, must have been strongly reinforced by the less disinterested opposition of the local clergy, whose material interests would necessarily suffer with any decay of their shrines. On the other hand the kings, whose power and glory rose with the political and ecclesiastical consolidation of the realm, were the natural champions of religious unity ; and their efforts would be seconded by the refined and thoughtful minority, who could hardly fail to be shocked by the many barbarous and revolting elements in the local rites. As usually happens in such cases, the process of religious unification appears to have been largely effected

ägyptischen Götterkreis und seine geschichtlich - mythologische Entstehung," in *Abhandlungen der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1851, p. 194 sq.

¹ The view here taken of the history of Egyptian religion is based on the sketch in Ad. Erman's *Ägypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 351 sqq.

by discovering points of similarity, real or imaginary, between various local gods, which were thereupon declared to be only different names or manifestations of the same god.

Of the deities who thus acted as centres of attraction, absorbing in themselves a multitude of minor divinities, by far the most important was the sun-god Ra. There appear to have been few gods in Egypt who were not at one time or other identified with him. Ammon of Thebes, Horus of the East, Horus of Edfu, Chnum of Elephantine, Atum of Heliopolis, all were regarded as one god, the sun. Even the water-god Sobk, in spite of his crocodile shape, did not escape the same fate. Indeed one king, Amenophis IV., undertook to sweep away all the old gods at a stroke and replace them by a single god, the "great living disc of the sun."¹ In the hymns composed in his honour, this deity is referred to as "the living disc of the sun, besides whom there is none other." He is said to have made "the far heaven" and "men, beasts, and birds; he strengtheneth the eyes with his beams, and when he showeth himself, all flowers live and grow, the meadows flourish at his upgoing and are drunken at his sight, all cattle skip on their feet, and the birds that are in the marsh flutter for joy." It is he "who bringeth the years, createth the months, maketh the days, calculateth the hours, the lord of time, by whom men reckon." In his zeal for the unity of god, the king commanded to erase the names of all other gods from the monuments, and to destroy their images. His rage was particularly directed against the god Ammon, whose name and likeness were effaced wherever they were found; even the sanctity of the tomb was violated in order to destroy the memorials of the hated deity. In some of the halls of the great temples at Carnac, Luxor, and other places, all the names of the gods, with a few chance exceptions, were scratched out. In no inscription cut in this king's reign was any god mentioned save the sun. The monarch even changed his own name, Amenophis, because it was compounded of

¹ On this attempted revolution in religion see Lepsius in *Verhandl. d. königl. Akad. d. Wissensch. zu Berlin*, 1851, pp. 196-201; Erman, *op. cit.* p. 355 sqq.; Wiedemann, *Die Religion*

der alten Ägypter, pp. 20-22. The tomb and mummy of the heretic king were found at Tell-el-Amarna in 1890. See A. H. Sayce, in *American Journal of Archaeology*, vi. (1890), p. 163.

Ammon, and took instead the name of Chuen-'eten, "gleam of the sun's disc." His death was followed by a violent reaction. The old gods were reinstated in their rank and privileges; their names and images were restored; and new temples were built. But all the shrines and palaces reared by the late king were thrown down; even the sculptures that referred to him and to his god in rock-tombs and on the sides of hills were erased or filled up with stucco; his name appears on no later monument, and was carefully omitted from all official lists.

This attempt of King Amenophis IV. is only an extreme example of a tendency which appears to have been at work on the religion of Egypt as far back as we can trace it. Therefore, to come back to our point, in attempting to discover the original character of any Egyptian god, no weight can be given to the identification of him with other gods, least of all with the sun-god Ra. Far from helping to follow up the trail, these identifications only cross and confuse it. The best evidence for the original character of the Egyptian gods is to be found in their ritual and myths, so far as these are known, and in the manner in which they are portrayed on the monuments. It is mainly on evidence drawn from these sources that I rest my interpretation of Osiris as a deity of the fruits of the earth.

The ground upon which some recent writers seem chiefly to rely for the identification of Osiris with the sun is that the story of his death fits better with the solar phenomena than with any other in nature. It may readily be admitted that the daily appearance and disappearance of the sun might very naturally be expressed by a myth of his death and resurrection; and writers who regard Osiris as the sun are careful to indicate that it is the diurnal, and not the annual, course of the sun to which they understand the myth to apply. Thus Renouf, who identified Osiris with the sun, admitted that the Egyptian sun could not with any show of reason be described as dead in winter.¹ But if his daily death was the theme of the legend, why was it celebrated by an annual ceremony? This fact alone seems fatal to the

¹ *Hibbert Lectures*, 1879, p. 113. Compare Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, i. §§ 55, 57.

interpretation of the myth as descriptive of sunset and sunrise. Again, though the sun may be said to die daily, in what sense can he be said to be torn in pieces?¹

In the course of our inquiry, it has, I trust, been made clear that there is another natural phenomenon to which the conception of death and resurrection is as applicable as to sunset and sunrise, and which, as a matter of fact, has been so conceived and represented in folk-custom. This phenomenon is the annual growth and decay of vegetation. A strong reason for interpreting the death of Osiris as the decay of vegetation rather than as the sunset is to be found in the general, though not unanimous, voice of antiquity, which classed together the worship and myths of Osiris, Adonis, Attis, Dionysus, and Demeter, as religions of essentially the same type.² The consensus of ancient opinion on this subject seems too great to be rejected as a mere fancy. So closely did the rites of Osiris resemble those of Adonis at Byblus that some of the people of Byblus themselves maintained that it was Osiris and not Adonis whose death was mourned by them.³ Such a view could certainly not have been held if the rituals of the two gods had not been so alike as to be almost indistinguishable. Again, Herodotus found the similarity between the rites of Osiris and Dionysus so great, that he thought it impossible the latter could have arisen independently; they must, he thought, have been recently borrowed, with slight alterations, by the Greeks from the Egyptians.⁴ Again, Plutarch, a very

¹ I am pleased to observe that Professor C. P. Tiele, who formerly interpreted Osiris as a sun-god (*History of Egyptian Religion*, p. 43 sqq.), has now adopted a view of his nature which approaches more nearly to the one advocated in this book. See his *Geschiedenis van den Godsdienst in de Oudheid*, i. 33 sq. (Amsterdam, 1893). Professor Maspero has also abandoned the theory that Osiris was the sun; he now supposes that the deity originally personified the Nile. See his *Histoire ancienne*⁴ (Paris, 1886), p. 35; and his *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique: les origines* (Paris, 1895), p. 130.

² Herodotus, ii. 42, 49, 59, 144,

156; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 13, 35; *id.*, *Quaest. Conviv.* iv. 5. 3; Diodorus, i. 13, 25, 96, iv. 1; *Orphica*, Hymn 42; Eusebius, *Præpar. Evang.* iii. 11. 31; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 287; *id.*, on *Georg.* i. 166; Hippolytus, *Refut. omn. hæres.* v. 9, p. 168; Socrates, *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 23, p. 204; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lyophron*, 212; *Demetrius*, xxii. 2, in *Mythographi Graeci*, ed. Westermann, p. 368; Nonnus, *Dionys.* iv. 269 sq.; Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 28; Clemens Alexandr. *Protrept.* ii. 19; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profan. relig.* 7.

³ Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 7.

⁴ Herodotus, ii. 49.

keen student of comparative religion, insists upon the detailed resemblance of the rites of Osiris to those of Dionysus.¹ We cannot reject the evidence of such intelligent and trustworthy witnesses on plain matters of fact which fell under their own cognisance. Their explanations of the worships it is indeed possible to reject, for the meaning of religious cults is often open to question; but resemblances of ritual are matters of observation. Therefore, those who explain Osiris as the sun are driven to the alternative of either dismissing as mistaken the testimony of antiquity to the similarity of the rites of Osiris, Adonis, Attis, Dionysus, and Demeter, or of interpreting all these rites as sun-worship. No modern scholar has fairly faced and accepted either side of this alternative. To accept the former would be to affirm that we know the rites of these deities better than the men who practised, or at least who witnessed them. To accept the latter would involve a wrenching, clipping, mangling, and distorting of myth and ritual from which even Macrobius shrank.² On the other hand, the view that the essence of all these rites was the mimic death and revival of vegetation, explains them separately and collectively in an easy and natural way, and harmonises with the general testimony borne by antiquity to their substantial similarity. The evidence for thus explaining Adonis, Attis, and Osiris has now been laid before the reader; it remains to do the same for Dionysus and Demeter.

Before, however, we pass from Egyptian to Greek mythology it will be worth while to consider an ancient explanation of Osiris, which deserves more attention than it has received in modern times. We are told by Plutarch that among the philosophers who saw in the gods of Egypt personifications of natural objects and forces, there were some who interpreted Osiris as the moon and his enemy Typhon as the sun, "because the moon, with her humid and generative light, is favourable to the propagation of animals and the growth of plants; while the sun with his fierce fire scorches and burns up all growing things, renders the greater part of

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35.

² Osiris, Attis, Adonis, and Dionysus were all resolved by him into the sun;

but he spared Demeter (Ceres), whom, however, he interpreted as the moon. See the *Saturnalia*, bk. i.

the earth uninhabitable by reason of his blaze, and often overpowers the moon herself."¹ Whatever may be thought of the physical qualities here attributed to the moon, the arguments adduced by the ancients to prove the identity of Osiris with that luminary carry with them a weight which has at least not been lightened by the results of modern research. An examination of them and of other evidence pointing in the same direction will, perhaps, help to set the original character of the Egyptian deity in a clearer light.

1. Osiris was said to have lived or reigned twenty-eight years. This might fairly be taken as a mythical expression for a lunar month.²

2. His body was reported to have been rent into fourteen pieces. This might be interpreted of the waning moon, which appears to lose a portion of itself on each of the fourteen days that make up the second half of a lunar month.³ It is expressly said that his enemy Typhon found the body of Osiris at the full moon;⁴ thus the dismemberment of the god would begin with the waning of the moon. To primitive man it seems manifest that the waning moon is actually dwindling, and he naturally enough explains its diminution by supposing that the planet is being rent or broken in pieces or eaten away. The Klamath Indians of Oregon speak of the moon as "the one broken to pieces" with reference to its changing aspect; they never apply such a term to the sun,⁵ whose apparent change of bulk at different seasons of the year is far too insignificant to attract the attention of the savage, or at least to be described by him in such forcible language. The Dacotas believe that when the moon is full, a great many little mice begin to nibble at one side of it and do not cease till they have eaten it all up, after which a new moon is born and grows to maturity, only to share the fate of all its countless predecessors.⁶

3. At the new moon of the month Phanemoth, which was the beginning of spring, the Egyptians celebrated what they called "the entry of Osiris into the moon."⁷

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 41.

² *Ibid.* 13, 42.

³ *Ibid.* 18, 42.

⁴ *Ibid.* 8.

⁵ A. S. Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of South-Western Oregon*

(Washington, 1890), p. lxxxix.

⁶ S. R. Riggs, *Dakota Grammar, Texts, and Ethnography* (Washington, 1893), p. 165.

⁷ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 43.

4. At the ceremony called "the burial of Osiris" the Egyptians made a crescent-shaped chest "because the moon, when it approaches the sun, assumes the form of a crescent and vanishes."¹

5. The bull Apis, held to be an image of the soul of Osiris,² was born of a cow which was believed to have been impregnated, not in the vulgar way by a bull, but by a divine influence emanating from the moon.³

6. Once a year, at the full moon, pigs were sacrificed simultaneously to the moon and Osiris.⁴ The relation of pigs to the god will be considered later on.

7. In a hymn supposed to be addressed by Isis to Osiris, it is said that Thoth—

Placeth thy soul in the bark Ma-at,
In that name which is thine, of GOD MOON.

And again :—

Thou *who comest to us as a child each month*,
We do not cease to contemplate thee
Thine emanation heightens the brilliancy
Of the stars of Orion in the firmament, etc.⁵

Here then Osiris is identified with the moon in set terms. If in the same hymn he is said to "illuminate us like Ra" (the sun), this is obviously no reason for identifying him with the sun, but quite the contrary. For though the moon may reasonably be compared to the sun, neither the sun nor anything else can reasonably be compared to itself.

Now if Osiris was originally, as I suppose, a deity of vegetation, we can easily enough understand why in a later and more philosophic age he should come to be thus identified or confounded with the moon. For as soon as he begins to meditate upon the causes of things, the early philosopher is led by certain obvious, though fallacious, appearances to regard the moon as the ultimate cause of the growth of plants. In the first place he associates its apparent growth and decay with the growth and decay of sublunary things,

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 43.

² *Ibid.* 20, 29.

³ *Ibid.* 43.

⁴ Herodotus, ii. 47; Plutarch, *Isis*

et Osiris, 8.

⁵ *Records of the Past*, i. 121 sq.;

Brugsch, *Religion und Mythologie der alten Ägypter*, p. 629 sq.

and imagines that in virtue of a secret sympathy the celestial phenomena really produce those terrestrial changes which in point of fact they merely resemble. Thus Pliny says that the moon may fairly be considered the planet of breath, "because it saturates the earth and by its approach fills bodies, while by its departure it empties them. Hence it is," he goes on, "that shellfish increase with the increase of the moon and that bloodless creatures especially feel breath at that time; even the blood of men grows and diminishes with the light of the moon, and leaves and herbage also feel the same influence, since the lunar energy penetrates all things."¹ "There is no doubt," writes Macrobius, "that the moon is the author and framer of mortal bodies, so much so that some things expand or shrink as it waxes or wanes."² Again Aulus Gellius puts in the mouth of a friend the remark that "the same things which grow with the waxing, do dwindle with the waning moon," and he quotes from a commentary of Plutarch's on Hesiod a statement, that the onion is the only vegetable which violates this great law of nature by sprouting in the wane and withering in the increase of the moon.³ Scottish Highlanders allege that in the increase of the moon everything has a tendency to grow or stick together.⁴

From this supposed influence of the moon on the life of plants and animals, men in ancient and modern times have deduced a whole code of rules for the guidance of the husbandman, the shepherd, and others in the conduct of their affairs. Thus, an ancient writer on agriculture lays it down as a maxim, that whatever is to be sown should be sown while the moon is waxing, and that whatever is to be cut or gathered should be cut or gathered while it is waning.⁵ A modern treatise on superstition describes how the super-

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 221.

² Macrobius, *Comment. in somnium Scipionis*, i. 11. 7.

³ Aulus Gellius, xx. 8. For the opinions of the ancients on this subject, see further, W. H. Roscher, *Über Selene und Verwandtes* (Leipsic, 1890), p. 61 sqq.

⁴ John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth*

Century, edited by A. Allardyce, ii. 449.

⁵ Palladius, *De re rustica*, i. 34. 8. Cp. *id.*, i. 6. 12; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 321: "omnia quæ caduntur, carpuntur, tenduntur innocentius decrescente luna quam crescente fiunt." *Geoponica*, i. 6. 8: τὰς δοκιμάζουσι μὲν φθινοῦσης τῆς σελήνης ἀλλὰ αὐξανόμενης φτείνειν.

stitious man regulates all his conduct by the moon: "Whatever he would have to grow, he sets about it when she is in her increase; but for what he would have less he chooses her wane."¹ In Germany the phases of the moon are observed by superstitious people at all the more or even less important actions of life, such as tilling the fields, building or changing houses, marriages, hair-cutting, bleeding, cupping, and so forth. The particular rules vary in different places, but the principle generally followed is that whatever is done to increase anything should be done while the moon is waxing; whatever is done to diminish anything should be done while the moon is waning. For example, sowing, planting, and grafting should be done in the first half of the moon, but the felling of timber and mowing should be done in the second half.² In various parts of Europe it is believed that plants, nails, hair, and corns, cut while the moon is on the increase will grow again fast, but that if cut while it is on the decrease they will grow slowly or waste away.³ Hence persons who wish their hair to grow thick and long should cut it in the first half of the moon;⁴ those who wish to be spared the trouble of cutting it often should

¹ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 144, quoting Werenfels, *Dissertation upon Superstition* (London, 1748), p. 6.

² Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 65. Cp. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 595; Montanus, *Die deutsche Volksfeste, Volksbräuche und deutscher Volksglaube*, p. 128; Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae*, p. 18; *Am Urquell*, v. (1894), p. 173. The rule that the grafting of trees should be done at the waxing of the moon is laid down by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xvii. 108). At Deutsch-Zepling in Transylvania, by an inversion of the usual custom, seed is generally sown at the waning of the moon (A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens*, p. 7). In the Abruzzi also sowing and grafting are commonly done when the moon is on the wane; timber that is to be durable must be cut in January during the moon's decrease (G. Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi*, p. 43).

³ Sébillot, *Traditions et Superstitions*

de la Haute-Bretagne, ii. 355; Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 5; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 150; Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. (1872), p. 47.

⁴ The rule is mentioned by Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum*, i. 37 (where we should probably read "*ne decrescente tendens calvos fiam*," and refer istaec to the former member of the preceding sentence); Montanus, *op. cit.* p. 128; Sébillot, *l.c.*; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 511, § 421; Tettau und Temme, *Volksagen Ostpreussens, Lithauens und Westpreussens*, p. 283; A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 386, § 92; L. Schandelin, in *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2, p. 402; F. S. Krauss, *Volks-glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 15. The reason assigned in the text was probably the original one in all cases, though it is not always the one alleged now.

cut it in the second half.¹ On the same principle sheep are shorn when the moon is waxing, because it is supposed that the wool will then be longest and most enduring.² The Highlanders of Scotland used to expect better crops of grain by sowing their seed in the moon's increase.³ But in this matter of sowing and planting a refined distinction is sometimes drawn by French, German, and Esthonian peasants; plants which bear fruit above ground are sown by them when the moon is waxing, but plants which are cultivated for the sake of their roots, such as potatoes and turnips, are sown when the moon is waning.⁴ The reason for this distinction seems to be a vague idea that the waxing moon is coming up and the waning moon going down, and that accordingly fruits which grow upwards should be sown in the former period, and fruits which grow downwards in the latter. Before beginning to plant their cacao the Pipiles of Central America exposed the finest seeds for four nights to the moonlight,⁵ but whether they did so at the waxing or waning of the moon is not said.

Again, the waning of the moon has been commonly recommended both in ancient and modern times as the proper time for felling trees,⁶ apparently because it was

¹ The rule is mentioned by Wuttke and Sauvé, *l.c.* The reason assigned in the text is conjectural.

² Krauss, *op. cit.* p. 16; Montanus, *l.c.*; Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum*, i. 37 (see above, p. 156, note 4). However, the opposite rule is observed in the Upper Vosges, where it is thought that if the sheep are shorn at the new moon the quantity of wool will be much less than if they were shorn in the waning of the moon (Sauvé, *l.c.*). In Normandy, also, wool is clipped during the waning of the moon; otherwise moths would get into it (Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 12).

³ S. Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (Baltimore, 1810), p. 183.

⁴ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*, § 65; J. Lecœur, *loc. cit.*; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 511, § 422; Th. Siebs, "Das Saterland," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893), p.

278; Holzmayer, *op. cit.* p. 47.

⁵ Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 719 sq.

⁶ Cato, *De agri cultura*, 37. 4; Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum*, i. 37; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 190; Palladius, *De re rustica*, ii. 22, xii. 15; Plutarch, *Quæst. Conviv.* iii. 10. 3; Macrobius, *Saturn.* vii. 16; Wuttke, *l.c.*; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2, p. 402; W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*, p. 58; Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 5; Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 630. Pliny, while he says that the period from the twentieth to the thirtieth day of the lunar month was the season generally recommended, adds that the best time of all, according to universal opinion, was the interlunar day, between the old and the new moon, when the planet is invisible through being in conjunction with the sun.

thought fit and natural that the operation of cutting down should be performed on earth at the time when the lunar orb was, so to say, being cut down in the sky. In France before the Revolution the forestry laws enjoined that trees should only be felled after the moon had passed the full; and in French bills announcing the sale of timber you may still read a notice that the wood was cut in the waning of the moon.¹ But sometimes the opposite rule is adopted, and equally forcible arguments are urged in its defence. Thus, when the Wabondei of Eastern Africa are about to build a house, they take care to cut the posts for it when the moon is on the increase; for they say that posts cut when the moon is wasting away would soon rot, whereas posts cut while the moon is waxing are very durable.² The same rule is observed for the same reason in some parts of Germany.³ But the partisans of the ordinarily received opinion have sometimes supported it by another reason, which introduces us to the second of those fallacious appearances by which men have been led to regard the moon as the cause of growth in plants. From observing rightly that dew falls most thickly on cloudless nights, they inferred wrongly that it was caused by the moon, a theory which the poet Alcman expressed in mythical form by saying that dew was a daughter of Zeus and the moon.⁴ Hence the ancients concluded that the moon is the great source of moisture, as the sun is the great source of heat.⁵ And as the humid power of the moon was assumed to be greater when the planet was waxing than when it was waning, they thought that timber cut during the increase of the luminary would be saturated with moisture, whereas timber cut in the wane would be comparatively dry. Hence we are told that in antiquity carpenters would reject timber felled when the moon was growing or full, because they believed that such timber teemed with sap;⁶ and in the Vosges at the present

¹ J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 11 sq.

² O. Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete* (Berlin, 1891), p. 125.

³ Montanus, *Die deutsche Volksfeste, Volksbräuche und deutscher Volksglaube*, p. 128.

⁴ Plutarch, *Quæst. Conviv.* iii. 10.

⁵ Macrobius, *Saturn.* vii. 16. See further, W. H. Roscher, *Über Selene und Verwandtes* (Leipzig, 1890), p. 49 sqq.

⁶ Plutarch and Macrobius, *ll. cc.*; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 223, xx. 1; Aristotle, *Problemata*, xxiv. 14, p. 937 B, 3 sq.

⁷ Macrobius and Plutarch, *ll. cc.*

day people allege that wood cut at the new moon does not dry.¹ In the Hebrides peasants give the same reason for cutting their peats when the moon is on the wane; "for they observe that if they are cut in the increase, they continue still moist and never burn clear, nor are they without smoke, but the contrary is daily observed of peats cut in the decrease."²

Thus misled by a double fallacy primitive philosophy comes to view the moon as the great cause of vegetable growth, first, because the planet seems itself to grow, and second, because it is supposed to be the source of dew and moisture. It is no wonder, therefore, that agricultural peoples should adore the planet which they believe to influence so profoundly the crops on which they depend for subsistence. Accordingly we find that in the hotter regions of America, where maize is cultivated and manioc is the staple food, the moon was recognised as the principal object of worship, and plantations of manioc were assigned to it as a return for the service it rendered in the production of the crops. The worship of the moon in preference to the sun was general among the Caribs, and, perhaps, also among most of the other Indian tribes who cultivated maize in the tropical forests to the east of the Andes; and the same thing has been observed, under the same physical conditions, among the aborigines of the hottest region of Peru, the northern valleys of Yuncapata. Here the Indians of Pacasmayu and the neighbouring valleys revered the moon as their principal divinity. The "house of the moon" at Pacasmayu was the chief temple of the district; and the same sacrifices of maize-flour, of wine, and of children which were offered by the mountaineers of the Andes to the Sun-god, were offered by the lowlanders to the Moon-god in order that he might cause their crops to thrive.³ In ancient

¹ Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 5.

² Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Travels and Travels*, xvi. 630.

³ E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 495. In his remarks on the origin of moon-worship (p. 493 *sqq.*) this learned and

philosophical historian has indicated the true causes which lead primitive man to trace the growth of plants to the influence of the moon. Compare E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,² i. 130. Mr. Payne suggests that the custom of naming the months after the principal natural products that ripen in them may have contributed to the

Babylonia, where the population was essentially agricultural, the moon-god took precedence of the sun-god and was indeed reckoned his father.¹

Thus it would be no matter for surprise if, after worshipping the crops which furnished them with the means of subsistence, the ancient Egyptians should in later times have identified the spirit of the corn with the moon, which a pseudo-philosophy had taught them to regard as the ultimate cause of the growth of vegetation. In this way we can understand why in their more recent forms the myth and ritual of Osiris, the old god of trees and corn, should bear many traces of efforts made to bring them into a superficial conformity with the new doctrine of his lunar affinity.²

§ 7. Dionysus

The Greek god Dionysus or Bacchus³ is best known as the god of the vine, but he was also a god of trees in general. Thus we are told that almost all the Greeks sacrificed to "Dionysus of the tree."⁴ In Boeotia one of his titles was "Dionysus in the tree."⁵ His image was often merely an upright post, without arms, but draped in a mantle, with a bearded mask to represent the head, and with leafy boughs projecting from the head or body to show the nature of the deity.⁶ On a vase his rude effigy is depicted appearing out

same result. The custom is certainly very common among savages, as I hope to show elsewhere, but whether it has contributed to foster the fallacy in question seems doubtful.

¹ E. A. Budge, *Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, on recently-discovered inscriptions of this King*, p. 5 sq.; A. H. Sayce, *Religion of the Ancient Babylonians*, p. 155; M. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria* (Boston, U.S., 1898), pp. 68 sq., 75 sq.; L. W. King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology* (London, 1899), p. 17 sq. The Ahts of Vancouver's Island, a tribe of fishers and hunters, view the moon as the husband of the sun and as a more powerful deity than her (Sproat, *Scenes and Studies of Savage Life*, p. 206).

² For more examples of the supposed

influence of the moon on human affairs see Note B, "The doctrine of lunar sympathy," at the end of the volume.

³ On Dionysus in general see Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*,³ i. 544 sqq.; Fr. Lenormant, article "Bacchus" in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines*, i. 591 sqq.; Voigt and Thraemer's article "Dionysus" in Roscher's *Ausführliches Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, i. col. 1029 sqq.

⁴ Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* v. 3: Διονύσω δὲ δένδρεσσι πάρεστι, ὡς ἔπος εἰπείν, Ἕλληνες θύουσιν.

⁵ Hesychius, s.v. "Ἐνδένδρον.

⁶ See the pictures of his images, taken from ancient vases, in Bötticher, *Baumkultus der Hellenen*, plates 42, 43, 43 A, 43 B, 44; Daremberg et Saglio, *op. cit.* i. 361, 626.

of a low tree or bush.¹ He was the patron of cultivated trees;² prayers were offered to him that he would make the trees grow;³ and he was especially honoured by husbandmen, chiefly fruit-growers, who set up an image of him, in the shape of a natural tree-stump, in their orchards.⁴ He was said to have discovered all tree-fruits, amongst which apples and figs are particularly mentioned;⁵ and he was himself spoken of as doing a husbandman's work.⁶ He was referred to as "well-fruited," "he of the green fruit," and "making the fruit to grow."⁷ One of his titles was "teeming" or "bursting" (as of sap or blossoms);⁸ and there was a Flowery Dionysus in Attica and at Patrae in Achaia.⁹ The Athenians sacrificed to him for the prosperity of the fruits of the earth.¹⁰ Amongst the trees particularly sacred to him, in addition to the vine, was the pine-tree.¹¹ The Delphic oracle commanded the Corinthians to worship a particular pine-tree "equally with the god," so they made two images of Dionysus out of it, with red faces and gilt bodies.¹² In art a wand, tipped with a pine-cone, is commonly carried by the god or his worshippers.¹³ Again, the ivy and the fig-tree were especially associated with him. In the Attic township of Acharnae there was a Dionysus Ivy;¹⁴ at Lacedaemon there was a Fig Dionysus; and in Naxos, where figs were called *meilicha*, there was a Dionysus Meilichios, the face of whose image was made of fig-wood.¹⁵

Like the other gods of vegetation whom we have been considering, Dionysus was believed to have died a violent death,

¹ Daremberg et Saglio, *op. cit.* i. 626.

² Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 30.

³ Pindar, quoted by Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35.

⁴ Maximus Tyrius, *Dissertationes* viii. 1.

⁵ Athenaeus, iii. pp. 78 c, 82 d.

⁶ Himerius, *Orationes* i. 10, *Διόνυσος γεωργεῖ*.

⁷ Orphica, Hymn l. 4, liii. 8.

⁸ Aelian, *Var. Hist.* iii. 41: Hesychius, s.v. Φλω[is]. Cp. Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* v. 8. 3.

⁹ Pausanias, i. 31. 4; *id.* vii. 21. 6.

¹⁰ Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, No. 382.

¹¹ Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* v. 3.

¹² Pausanias, ii. 2. 6 sq. Pausanias does not mention the kind of tree; but from Euripides, *Bacchae*, 1064 sqq., and Philostratus, *Imag.* i. 17 (18), we may infer that it was a pine, though Theocritus (xxvi. 11) speaks of it as a mastich-tree.

¹³ Müller-Wieseler, *Denkmäler der alten Kunst*, ii. pl. xxxii. sqq.; Baumeister, *Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums*, i. figures 489, 491, 492, 495. Cp. Lenormant in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dict. des Antiquités*, i. 623; Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 700.

¹⁴ Pausanias, i. 31. 6.

¹⁵ Athenaeus, iii. p. 78 c.

but to have been brought to life again; and his sufferings, death, and resurrection were enacted in his sacred rites. The Cretan myth, as related by Firmicus, ran thus. He was said to have been the bastard son of Jupiter, a Cretan king. Going abroad, Jupiter transferred the throne and sceptre to the youthful Dionysus, but, knowing that his wife Juno cherished a jealous dislike of the child, he entrusted Dionysus to the care of guards upon whose fidelity he believed he could rely. Juno, however, bribed the guards, and amusing the child with toys and a cunningly-wrought looking-glass lured him into an ambush, where her satellites, the Titans, rushed upon him, cut him limb from limb, boiled his body with various herbs and ate it. But his sister Minerva, who had shared in the deed, kept his heart and gave it to Jupiter on his return, revealing to him the whole history of the crime. In his rage, Jupiter put the Titans to death by torture, and, to soothe his grief for the loss of his son, made an image in which he enclosed the child's heart, and then built a temple in his honour.¹ In this version a Euhemeristic turn has been given to the myth by representing Jupiter and Juno (Zeus and Hera) as a king and queen of Crete. The guards referred to are the mythical Curetes who danced a war-dance round the infant Dionysus, as they are said to have done round the infant Zeus.² Pomegranates were supposed to have sprung from the blood of Dionysus,³ as anemones from the blood of Adonis and violets from the blood of Attis. According to some, the severed limbs of Dionysus were pieced together, at the command of Zeus, by Apollo, who buried them on Parnassus.⁴ The grave of Dionysus was shown in the Delphic temple beside a golden statue of Apollo.⁵ Thus far the resurrection of

¹ Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profanarum religionum*, 6.

² Clemens Alexandr. *Protrept.* ii. 17. Cp. Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 1111 sqq.

³ Clemens Alexandr. *Protrept.* ii. 19.

⁴ Clemens Alexandr. *Protrept.* ii. 18; Proclus on Plato's *Timaeus*, iii. 1. 200D, quoted by Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 562, and by Abel, *Orphica*, p. 234. Others said that the mangled body was

pieced together, not by Apollo but by Rhea (Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 30).

⁵ Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 572 sqq. For a conjectural restoration of the temple, based on ancient authorities and an examination of the scanty remains, see an article by J. H. Middleton, in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. ix. p. 282 sqq. The ruins of the temple have now been completely excavated by the French.

the slain god is not mentioned, but in other versions of the myth it is variously related. According to one version, which represented Dionysus as a son of Demeter, his mother pieced together his mangled limbs and made him young again.¹ In others it is simply said that shortly after his burial he rose from the dead and ascended up to heaven;² or that Zeus raised him up as he lay mortally wounded;³ or that Zeus swallowed the heart of Dionysus and then begat him afresh by Semele,⁴ who in the common legend figures as mother of Dionysus. Or, again, the heart was pounded up and given in a potion to Semele, who thereby conceived him.⁵

Turning from the myth to the ritual, we find that the Cretans celebrated a biennial⁶ festival at which the sufferings and death of Dionysus were represented in every detail.⁷ Where the resurrection formed part of the myth, it also was acted at the rites,⁸ and it even appears that a general doctrine of resurrection, or at least of immortality, was inculcated on the worshippers; for Plutarch, writing to console his wife on the death of their infant daughter, comforts her with the thought of the immortality of the soul as taught by tradition and revealed in the mysteries of Dionysus.⁹ A different form of the myth of the death and resurrection of Dionysus is that he descended into Hades to bring up his mother Semele from the dead.¹⁰ The local Argive tradition was that he went down through the Alcyonian

¹ Diodorus, iii. 62.

² Macrobius, *Comment. in Somn. Scip.* i. 12. 12; *Scriptores rerum mythicarum Latini tres Romae nuper reperti* (commonly referred to as *Mythographi Vaticani*), ed. G. H. Bode (Cellis, 1834), iii. 12. 5, p. 246; Origen, *c. Cels.* iv. 171, quoted by Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 713.

³ Himerius, *Orat.* ix. 4.

⁴ Proclus, *Hymn to Minerva*, in Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 561; *Orphica*, ed. Abel, p. 235.

⁵ Hyginus, *Fab.* 167.

⁶ The festivals of Dionysus were biennial in many places. See Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*,³ ii. 500 sqq. (The terms for the festival were *τριετηρίς*, *τριετηρίς*, both terms of

the series being included in the numeration, in accordance with the ancient mode of reckoning.) Probably the festivals were formerly annual and the period was afterwards lengthened, as has happened with other festivals. See W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 172, 175, 491, 533 sq., 598. Some of the festivals of Dionysus, however, were annual.

⁷ Firmicus Maternus, *De err. prof. relig.* 6.

⁸ *Mythogr. Vatic.* ed. Bode, l.c.

⁹ Plutarch, *Consol. ad uxor.* 10. Compare *id.*, *Isis et Osiris*, 35; *id.*, *De Delphico*, 9; *id.*, *De esu carnum*, i. 7.

¹⁰ Pausanias, ii. 31. 2 and 37. 5; Apollodorus, iii. 5. 3.

lake; and his return from the lower world, in other words his resurrection, was annually celebrated on the spot by the Argives, who summoned him from the water by trumpet blasts, while they threw a lamb into the lake as an offering to the warder of the dead.¹ Whether this was a spring festival does not appear, but the Lydians certainly celebrated the advent of Dionysus in spring; the god was supposed to bring the season with him.² Deities of vegetation, who are supposed to pass a certain portion of each year underground, naturally come to be regarded as gods of the lower world or of the dead. Both Dionysus and Osiris were so conceived.³

A feature in the mythical character of Dionysus, which at first sight appears inconsistent with his nature as a deity of vegetation, is that he was often conceived and represented in animal shape, especially in the form, or at least with the horns, of a bull. Thus he is spoken of as "cow-born," "bull," "bull-shaped," "bull-faced," "bull-browed," "bull-horned," "horn-bearing," "two-horned," "horned."⁴ He was believed to appear, at least occasionally, as a bull.⁵ His images were often, as at Cyzicus, made in bull shape,⁶ or with bull horns;⁷ and he was painted with horns.⁸ Types of the horned Dionysus are found amongst the surviving monuments of antiquity.⁹ On one statuette he appears clad in a bull's hide, the head, horns, and hoofs hanging down

¹ Pausanias, ii. 37. 5 sq.; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35; *id.*, *Quaest. Conviv.* iv. 6. 2.

² Himerius, *Orat.* iii. 6, xiv. 7.

³ For Dionysus, see Lenormant in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dict. des Antiquités*, i. 632. For Osiris, see Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (London, 1878), iii. 65.

⁴ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35; *id.*, *Quaest. Graec.* 36; Athenaeus, xi. p. 476 A; Clemens Alexandr. *Protrept.* ii. 16; *Orphica*, Hymn xxx. vv. 3. 4, xlv. 1, lii. 2, liii. 8; Euripides, *Bacchae*, 99; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 357; Nicander, *Alexipharmaca*, 31; Lucian, *Bacchus*, 2. The title *Eipα-φώρης* applied to Dionysus (*Homeric Hymns*, xxxiv. 2; Porphyry, *De*

abstinentia, iii. 17; Dionysius, *Perieg.* 576; *Etymolog. Magnum*, p. 371. 57) is etymologically equivalent to the Sanscrit *varsabha* "a bull," as I am informed by my friend Mr. R. A. Neil.

⁵ Euripides, *Bacchae*, 920 sqq., 1017.

⁶ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 35; Athenaeus, *l.c.*

⁷ Diodorus, iii. 64. 2, iv. 4. 2; Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 30.

⁸ Diodorus, *l.c.*; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 209; Philostratus, *Imagines*, i. 14 (15).

⁹ Müller-Wieseler, *Denkmäler der alten Kunst*, ii. pl. xxxiii.; Daremberg et Saglio, *Dict. des Antiquités*, i. 619 sq., 631; Roscher, *Ausführl. Lexikon*, i. col. 1149 sqq.

behind.¹ Again, he is represented as a child with clusters of grapes round his brow, and a calf's head, with sprouting horns, attached to the back of his head.² On a red-figured vase the god is portrayed as a calf-headed child seated on a woman's lap.³ At his festivals Dionysus was believed to appear in bull form. The women of Elis hailed him as a bull, and prayed him to come with his bull's foot. They sang, "Come hither, Dionysus, to thy holy temple by the sea; come with the Graces to thy temple, rushing with thy bull's foot, O goodly bull, O goodly bull!"⁴ According to the myth, it was in the shape of a bull that he was torn to pieces by the Titans;⁵ and the Cretans, when they acted the sufferings and death of Dionysus, tore a live bull to pieces with their teeth.⁶ Indeed, the rending and devouring of live bulls and calves appear to have been a regular feature of the Dionysiac rites.⁷ When we consider the practice of portraying the god as a bull or with some of the features of the animal, the belief that he appeared in bull form to his worshippers at the sacred rites, and the legend that it was in bull form that he had been torn in pieces, we cannot doubt that in rending and devouring a live bull at his festival the worshippers of Dionysus believed that they were killing the god, eating his flesh, and drinking his blood.

Another animal whose form Dionysus assumed was the goat. One of his names was "Kid."⁸ At Athens and at Hermion he was worshipped under the title of "the one of the Black Goatskin," and a legend ran that on a certain occasion he had appeared clad in the skin from which he took the title.⁹ In the wine-growing district of Phlius, where in autumn the plain is still thickly mantled with the red and

¹ Welcker, *Alte Denkmäler*, v. taf. 2.
² *Archaeologische Zeitung*, ix. (1851), pl. xxxiii., with Gerhard's remarks, pp. 371-373.

³ *Gazette Archéologique*, v. (1879), pl. 3.

⁴ Plutarch, *Quaest. Graec.* 36: *id.*, *Isis et Osiris*, 35.

⁵ Nonnus, *Dionys.* vi. 205.

⁶ Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profan. religionum*, 6.

⁷ Euripides, *Bacchae*, 735 sqq.; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 357.

⁸ Hesychius, s.v. Ἐριφος ὁ Διόνυσος, on which there is a marginal gloss ὁ μικρὸς αἰγ., ὁ ἐν τῷ ἐλαφύρῳ φανόμενος, ἤγονε ὁ πρώϊμος; Stephanus Byzant. s.v. Ἀκρώρεια.

⁹ Pausanias, ii. 35. 1; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 146; *Etymolog. Magn.* s.v. Ἀπατοῖρια, p. 118. 54 sqq.; Suidas, s.v. Ἀπατοῖρια and μελαυαγίδα Διόνυσος; Nonnus, *Dionys.* xxvii. 302. Compare Conon, *Narrat.* 39, where for Μελαυαγίδα we should perhaps read Μελαυαγίδι.

golden foliage of the fading vines, there stood of old a bronze image of a goat, which the husbandmen plastered with gold-leaf as a means of protecting their vines against blight.¹ The image probably represented the vine-god himself. To save him from the wrath of Hera, his father Zeus changed the youthful Dionysus into a kid;² and when the gods fled to Egypt to escape the fury of Typhon, Dionysus was turned into a goat.³ Hence when his worshippers rent in pieces a live goat and devoured it raw,⁴ they must have believed that they were eating the body and blood of the god.

This custom of killing a god in animal form, which we shall examine more in detail presently, belongs to a very early stage of human culture, and is apt in later times to be misunderstood. The advance of thought tends to strip the old animal and plant gods of their bestial and vegetable husk, and to leave their human attributes (which are always the kernel of the conception) as the final and sole residuum. In other words, animal and plant gods tend to become purely anthropomorphic. When they have become wholly or nearly so, the animals and plants which were at first the deities themselves, still retain a vague and ill-understood connection with the anthropomorphic gods which have been developed out of them. The origin of the relationship between the deity and the animal or plant having been forgotten, various stories are invented to explain it. These explanations may follow one of two lines according as they are based on the habitual or on the exceptional treatment of the sacred animal or plant. The sacred animal was habitually spared, and only exceptionally slain; and accordingly the myth might be devised to explain either why it was spared or why it was killed. Devised for the former

¹ Pausanias, ii. 13. 6. On their return from Troy the Greeks are said to have found goats and an image of Dionysus in a cave of Euboea (Pausanias, i. 23. 1).

² Apollodorus, iii. 4. 3.

³ Ovid, *Metam.* v. 329; Antoninus Liberalis, 28; *Mythogr. Vatic.* ed. Bode, i. 86, p. 29.

⁴ Arnobius, *Adv. nationes*, v. 19. Cp. Suidas, s.v. ἀγρίον. As fawns

appear to have been also torn in pieces at the rites of Dionysus (Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. νεβρίσιον; Harpocration, s.v. νεβρίσιον), it is probable that the fawn was another of the god's embodiments. But of this there seems no direct evidence. Fawn-skins were worn both by the god and his worshippers (Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 30). Similarly the female Bacchantes wore goat-skins (Hesychius, s.v. τραχηφόροι).

purpose, the myth would tell of some service rendered to the deity by the animal; devised for the latter purpose, the myth would tell of some injury inflicted by the animal on the god. The reason given for sacrificing goats to Dionysus is an example of a myth of the latter sort. They were sacrificed to him, it was said, because they injured the vine.¹ Now the goat, as we have seen, was originally an embodiment of the god himself. But when the god had divested himself of his animal character and had become essentially anthropomorphic, the killing of the goat in his worship came to be regarded no longer as a slaying of the god himself, but as a sacrifice offered to him; and since some reason had to be assigned why the goat in particular should be sacrificed, it was alleged that this was a punishment inflicted on the goat for injuring the vine, the object of the god's especial care. Thus we have the strange spectacle of a god sacrificed to himself on the ground that he is his own enemy. And as the god is supposed to partake of the victim offered to him, it follows that, when the victim is the god's old self, the god eats of his own flesh. Hence the goat-god Dionysus is represented as eating raw goat's blood;² and the bull-god Dionysus is called "eater of bulls."³ On the analogy of these instances we may conjecture that wherever a god is described as the eater of a particular animal, the animal in question was originally nothing but the god himself.⁴

All this, however, does not explain why a deity of vegetation should appear in animal form. But the con-

¹ Varro, *De re rustica*, i. 2. 19; Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 380, and Servius, *ad. l.*, and on *Aen.* iii. 118; Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 353 sqq.; *id.*, *Metam.* xv. 114 sq.; Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 30.

² Euripides, *Bacchae*, 138 sq.: ἀγρεύων αἷμα τραγοκτόνον, ὠμοφάγον χάριν.

³ Schol. on Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 357.

⁴ Hera αἰγοφάγος at Sparta, Pausanias, iii. 15. 9; Hesychius, s.v. αἰγοφάγος (cp. the representation of Hera clad in a goat's skin, with the animal's head and horns over her head. Müller-Wieseler, *Denkmäler der alten Kunst*, i. No. 299 n); Zeus αἰγοφάγος, *Etymolog. Magnum*, s.v. αἰγοφάγος,

p. 27. 52 (cp. Schol. on Oppianus, *Halieut.* iii. 10; L. Stephan, in *Compte-Rendu de la Commission Impériale Archéologique pour l'année 1869* (St. Petersburg, 1870), pp. 16-18); Apollo θβοφάγος at Elis, Athenaeus, viii. p. 346 B; Artemis κερροφάγος in Samos, Hesychius, s.v. κερροφάγος; cp. *idem*, s.v. κροφάγος. Divine titles derived from killing animals are probably to be similarly explained, as Dionysus αἰγόβολος (Pausanias, ix. 8. 2); Rhea or Hecate κινσοφαγή (Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 77); Apollo λυκοκτόνος (Sophocles, *Electra*, 6); Apollo σαρκοκτόνος (P'liny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxiv. 70).

sideration of this point had better be deferred till we have discussed the character and attributes of Demeter. Meantime it remains to point out that in some places, instead of an animal, a human being was torn in pieces at the rites of Dionysus. This was the custom in Chios and Tenedos;¹ and at Potniae in Boeotia the tradition ran that it had been formerly the custom to sacrifice to the goat-smiting Dionysus a child, for whom a goat was afterwards substituted.² At Orchomenus, as we have seen, the human victim was taken from the women of an old royal family.³ As the slain bull or goat represented the slain god, so, we may suppose, the human victim also represented him. It is possible, however, that a legend of human sacrifice may sometimes have been a mere misinterpretation of a sacrificial ritual in which an animal victim was treated as a human being. For example, at Tenedos the new-born calf sacrificed to Dionysus was shod in buskins, and the mother cow was tended like a woman in child-bed.⁴ At Rome a she-goat was sacrificed to Vedijovis as if it were a human victim.⁵

§ 8. *Demeter and Proserpine*

The Greek myth of Demeter and Proserpine is substantially identical with the Syrian myth of Aphrodite (Astarte) and Adonis, the Phrygian myth of Cybele and Attis, and the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris. In the Greek myth, as in its Asiatic and Egyptian counterparts, a goddess—Demeter—mourns the loss of a loved one—Proserpine—who personifies the vegetation, more especially the corn, which dies in summer to revive in spring. But in the Greek myth the loved and lost one is the daughter instead of the husband or lover of the goddess; and the mother as well as the daughter is a goddess of the corn.⁶

¹ Porphyry, *De abst.* ii. 55.

² Pausanias, ix. 8. 2.

³ See above, p. 36 sq.

⁴ Aelian, *Nat. An.* xii. 34. Cp. W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² p. 300 sqq.

⁵ Aulus Gellius, v. 12. 12.

⁶ On Demeter as a corn-goddess see Mannhardt, *Mythologische Forschungen*,

p. 224 sqq.; on Proserpine in the same character see Cornutus, *De nat. d'or.* 28; Varro in Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, vii. 20; Hesychius, s.v. *Περσεφόνη*; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore prof. relig.* 17. In his careful account of Demeter as a corn-goddess Mannhardt appears to have overlooked the very important statement of Hippolytus

Thus, as modern scholars have recognised,¹ Demeter and Proserpine are merely a mythical reduplication of the same natural phenomenon. Proserpine, so ran the Greek myth,² was gathering flowers when the earth gaped, and Pluto, lord of the Dead, issuing from the abyss, carried her off on his golden car to be his bride in the gloomy subterranean world. Her sorrowing mother Demeter sought her over land and sea, and learning from the Sun her daughter's fate, she suffered not the seed to grow, but kept it hidden in the ground, so that the whole race of men would have died of hunger if Zeus had not sent and fetched Proserpine from the nether world. Finally it was agreed that Proserpine should spend a third, or according to others a half,³ of each year with Pluto underground, but should come forth in spring to dwell with her mother and the gods in the upper world. Her annual death and resurrection, that is, her annual descent into the under world and her ascension from it, appear to have been represented in her rites.⁴

With regard to the name Demeter, it has been plausibly argued by Mannhardt⁵ that the first part of the word is derived from *dēai*, a Cretan word for "barley";⁶ and that thus Demeter means the Barley-mother or the Corn-mother;

(*Refut. omn. haeres.* v. 8, p. 162, ed. Duncker and Schneidewin) that at the initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries (the most famous of all the rites of Demeter) the central mystery revealed to the initiated was a reaped ear of corn.

¹ Welcker, *Griechische Götterlehre*, ii. 532; Preller, in Pauly's *Real-Encyclopädie für class. Alterthumswiss.* vi. 107; Lenormant in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines*, i. pt. ii. 1047 sqq.; Comjare Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, No. 370, note 13.

² Homer, *Hymn to Demeter*; Apollodorus, i. 5; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 425 sqq.; *id.*, *Metam.* v. 385 sqq.

³ A third, according to Homer, *H. to Demeter*, 399, and Apollodorus, i. 5. 3; a half, according to Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 614; *id.*, *Metam.* v. 567; Hyginus, *fab.* 146.

⁴ Schömann, *Griech. Alterthümer*,³ ii. 393; Preller, *Griech. Mythologie*,³ i. 628 sq., 644 sq., 650 sq. The evidence of the ancients on this head, though not full and definite, seems sufficient. See Diodorus, v. 4; Firmicus Maternus, *De err. prof. relig.* 7, 27; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 69; Apuleius, *Met.* vi. 2; Clemens Alex. *Protrept.* ii. 88 12, 17; Hesychius, s.v. *κορυστήρ*; S. Reinach, *Traité d'Épigraphie Grecque* (Paris, 1885), p. 141 sqq.; W. Immerwahr, *Die Kulte und Mythen Arkadiens* (Leipzig, 1891), p. 100 sqq. (inscriptions found at Mantinea). In a Greek calendar of Asia Minor "the ascent of the goddess" is dated the seventh day of the month Dios, and the "descent of the goddess" the fourth day of the month Hephaestius (W. Froelner, *Les Inscriptions Grecques du Louvre*, No. 33, p. 50 sq.).

⁵ *Mythol. Forschungen*, p. 292 sqq.

⁶ *Etymol. Magnum*, p. 264. 12 sq.

for the root of the word seems to have been applied to different kinds of grain by different branches of the Aryans, and even of the Greeks themselves.¹ As Crete appears to have been one of the most ancient seats of the worship of Demeter,² it is not surprising that her name should be of Cretan origin. This explanation of the name Demeter is supported by a host of analogies which the diligence of Mannhardt has collected from modern European folk-lore, and of which the following are specimens. In Germany the corn is very commonly personified under the name of the Corn-mother. Thus in spring, when the corn waves in the wind, the peasants say, "There comes the Corn-mother," or "The Corn-mother is running over the field," or "The Corn-mother is going through the corn."³ When children wish to go into the fields to pull the blue corn-flowers or the red poppies, they are told not to do so, because the Corn-mother is sitting in the corn and will catch them.⁴ Or again she is called, according to the crop, the Rye-mother or the Pea-mother, and children are warned against straying in the rye or among the peas by threats of the Rye-mother or the Pea-mother. In Norway also the Pea-mother is said to sit among the peas.⁵ Similar expressions are current among the Slavs. The Poles and Czechs warn children against the Corn-mother who sits in the corn. Or they call her the old Corn-woman, and say that she sits in the corn and strangles the children who tread it down.⁶ The Lithuanians say, "The Old Rye-woman sits in the corn."⁷ Again the Corn-mother is believed to make the crop grow. Thus in the neighbourhood of Magdeburg it is sometimes said, "It will be a good year for flax; the Flax-mother has been seen." At Dinkelsbühl, in Bavaria, down

¹ O. Schrader, *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte*² (Jena, 1890), pp. 409, 422; V. Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen und Haustiere in ihrem Uebergang aus Asien*,⁴ p. 65. *Δναι* is doubtless equivalent etymologically to *festal*, which is often taken to be spelt, but this seems uncertain.

² Hesiod, *Theog.* 971; Lenormant in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dict. des Antiquités*, i. pt. ii. p. 1029.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.*

p. 296. Cp. O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 150.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 297.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 297 sq.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 299. Compare R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 281.

⁷ W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 300.

to twenty-five or thirty years ago, people believed that when the crops on a particular farm compared unfavourably with those of the neighbourhood, the reason was that the Corn-mother had punished the farmer for his sins.¹ In a village of Styria it is said that the Corn-mother, in the shape of a female puppet made out of the last sheaf of corn and dressed in white, may be seen at midnight in the corn-fields, which she fertilises by passing through them; but if she is angry with a farmer, she withers up all his corn.²

Further, the Corn-mother plays an important part in harvest customs. She is believed to be present in the handful of corn which is left standing last on the field; and with the cutting of this last handful she is caught, or driven away, or killed. In the first of these cases, the last sheaf is carried joyfully home and honoured as a divine being. It is placed in the barn, and at threshing the corn-spirit appears again.³ In the Hanoverian district of Hadeln the reapers stand round the last sheaf and beat it with sticks in order to drive the Corn-mother out of it. They call to each other, "There she is! hit her! Take care she doesn't catch you!" The beating goes on till the grain is completely threshed out; then the Corn-mother is believed to be driven away.⁴ In the neighbourhood of Danzig the person who cuts the last ears of corn makes them into a doll, which is called the Corn-mother or the Old Woman and is brought home on the last waggon.⁵ In some parts of Holstein the last sheaf is dressed in woman's clothes and called the Corn-mother. It is carried home on the last waggon, and then thoroughly drenched with water. The drenching with water is doubtless a rain-charm.⁶ In the district of Bruck in Styria the last sheaf, called the Corn-mother, is made up into the shape of a woman by the oldest married woman in the village, of an age from fifty to fifty-five years. - The finest ears are plucked out of it and made into a wreath, which, twined with flowers, is carried on her head by the prettiest girl of the village to the farmer or

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.*
p. 310.

² *Ibid.* p. 310 sq. Compare O.
Hartung, *l.c.*

³ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 316.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 316.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 316 sq.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 317. As to such rain-charms, see above, p. 121 sqq.

squire, while the Corn-mother is laid down in the barn to keep off the mice.¹ In other villages of the same district the Corn-mother, at the close of harvest, is carried by two lads at the top of a pole. They march behind the girl who wears the wreath to the squire's house, and while he receives the wreath and hangs it up in the hall, the Corn-mother is placed on the top of a pile of wood, where she is the centre of the harvest supper and dance. Afterwards she is hung up in the barn and remains there till the threshing is over. The man who gives the last stroke at threshing is called the son of the Corn-mother; he is tied up in the Corn-mother, beaten, and carried through the village. The wreath is dedicated in church on the following Sunday; and on Easter Eve the grain is rubbed out of it by a seven years' old girl and scattered amongst the young corn. At Christmas the straw of the wreath is placed in the manger to make the cattle thrive.² Here the fertilising power of the Corn-mother is plainly brought out by scattering the seed taken from her body (for the wreath is made out of the Corn-mother) among the new corn; and her influence over animal life is indicated by placing the straw in the manger. At Westerhüsen, in Saxony, the last corn cut is made in the shape of a woman decked with ribbons and cloth. It is fastened to a pole and brought home on the last waggon. One of the people in the waggon keeps waving the pole, so that the figure moves as if alive. It is placed on the threshing-floor, and stays there till the threshing is done.³ Amongst the Slavs also the last sheaf is known as the Rye-mother, the Wheat-mother, the Oats-mother, the Barley-mother, and so on, according to the crop. In the district of Tarnow, Galicia, the wreath made out of the last stalks is called the Wheat-mother, Rye-mother, or Pea-mother. It is placed on a girl's head and kept till spring, when some of the grain is mixed with the seed-corn.⁴ Here again the fertilising power of the Corn-mother is indicated. In France, also, in the neighbourhood of Auxerre, the last sheaf goes by the name of the Mother of the Wheat, Mother of the Barley, Mother of the Rye, or Mother of the Oats.

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 317.

² *Ibid.* p. 317 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 318.

⁴ *Ibid.*

They leave it standing in the field till the last waggon is about to wend homewards. Then they make a puppet out of it, dress it with clothes belonging to the farmer, and adorn it with a crown and a blue or white scarf. A branch of a tree is stuck in the breast of the puppet, which is now called the Ceres. At the dance in the evening the Ceres is set in the middle of the floor, and the reaper who reaped fastest dances round it with the prettiest girl for his partner. After the dance a pyre is made. All the girls, each wearing a wreath, strip the puppet, pull it to pieces, and place it on the pyre, along with the flowers with which it was adorned. Then the girl who was the first to finish reaping sets fire to the pile, and all pray that Ceres may give a fruitful year. Here, as Mannhardt observes, the old custom has remained intact, though the name Ceres is a bit of schoolmaster's learning.¹ In Upper Brittany the last sheaf is always made into human shape; but if the farmer is a married man, it is made double and consists of a little corn-puppet placed inside of a large one. This is called the Mother-sheaf. It is delivered to the farmer's wife, who unties it and gives drink-money in return.²

Sometimes the last sheaf is called, not the Corn-mother, but the Harvest-mother or the Great Mother. In the province of Osnabrück, Hanover, it is called the Harvest-mother; it is made up in female form, and then the reapers dance about with it. In some part of Westphalia the last sheaf at the rye-harvest is made especially heavy by fastening stones in it. They bring it home on the last waggon and call it the Great Mother, though they do not fashion it into any special shape. In the district of Erfurt a very heavy sheaf, not necessarily the last, is called the Great Mother, and is carried on the last waggon to the barn, where all hands lift it down amid a fire of jokes.³

Sometimes again the last sheaf is called the Grandmother, and is adorned with flowers, ribbons, and a woman's apron. In East Prussia, at the rye or wheat harvest, the reapers call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You are getting the Old Grandmother." In the neigh-

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 318 *sq.*

² Sébillot, *Coutumes populaires de la Haute-Frétagne*, p. 306.

³ W. Mannhardt, *M.F.* p. 319.

bourhood of Magdeburg the men and women servants strive who shall get the last sheaf, called the Grandmother. Whoever gets it will be married in the next year, but his or her spouse will be old; if a girl gets it, she will marry a widower; if a man gets it, he will marry an old crone. In Silesia the Grandmother—a huge bundle made up of three or four sheaves by the person who tied the last sheaf—was formerly fashioned into a rude likeness of the human form.¹ In the neighbourhood of Belfast the last sheaf sometimes goes by the name of the Granny. It is not cut in the usual way, but all the reapers throw their sickles at it and try to bring it down. It is plaited and kept till the (next?) autumn. Whoever gets it will marry in the course of the year.²

Oftener the last sheaf is called the Old Woman or the Old Man. In Germany it is frequently shaped and dressed as a woman, and the person who cuts it or binds it is said to "get the Old Woman."³ At Altisheim, in Swabia, when all the corn of a farm has been cut except a single strip, all the reapers stand in a row before the strip; each cuts his share rapidly, and he who gives the last cut "has the Old Woman."⁴ When the sheaves are being set up in heaps, the person who gets hold of the Old Woman, which is the largest and thickest of all the sheaves, is jeered at by the rest, who sing out to him, "He has the Old Woman and must keep her."⁵ The woman who binds the last sheaf is sometimes herself called the Old Woman, and it is said that she will be married in the next year.⁶ In Neusaass, West Prussia, both the last sheaf—which is dressed up in jacket, hat, and ribbons—and the woman who binds it are called the Old Woman. Together they are brought home on the last waggon and are drenched with water.⁷ At Hornkampe, near Tiegenhof (West Prussia), when a man or woman lags behind the rest in binding the corn, the other reapers dress up the last sheaf in the form of a man or woman, and this figure goes by the laggard's name, as "the old Michael," "the idle Trine." It is brought home on the

¹ W. Mannhardt, *M. F.* p. 320.

² *Ibid.* p. 321.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 321, 323, 325 sq.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 323; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 219, § 403.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 325.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 323. ⁷ *Ibid.*

last waggon, and, as it nears the house, the bystanders call out to the laggard, "You have got the Old Woman and must keep her."¹ In Brandenburg the young folks on the harvest-field race towards a sheaf and jump over it. The last to jump over it has to carry a straw puppet, adorned with ribbons, to the farmer and deliver it to him while he recites some verses. Of the person who thus carries the puppet it is said that "he has the Old Man." Probably the puppet is or used to be made out of the last corn cut.² In many districts of Saxony the last sheaf used to be adorned with ribbons and set upright so as to look like a man. It was then known as "the Old Man," and the young women brought it back in procession to the farm, singing as they went, "Now we are bringing the Old Man."³

In these customs, as Mannhardt has remarked, the person who is called by the same name as the last sheaf and sits beside it on the last waggon is obviously identified with it; he or she represents the corn-spirit which has been caught in the last sheaf; in other words, the corn-spirit is represented in duplicate, by a human being and by a sheaf.⁴ The identification of the person with the sheaf is made still clearer by the custom of wrapping up in the last sheaf the person who cuts or binds it. Thus at Hermsdorf in Silesia it used to be the regular custom to tie up in the last sheaf the woman who had bound it.⁵ At Weiden, in Bavaria, it is the cutter, not the binder, of the last sheaf who is tied up in it.⁶ Here the person wrapt up in the corn represents the corn-spirit, exactly as a person wrapt in branches or leaves represents the tree-spirit.⁷

The last sheaf, designated as the Old Woman, is often distinguished from the other sheaves by its size and weight. Thus in some villages of West Prussia the Old Woman is made twice as long and thick as a common sheaf, and a stone is fastened in the middle of it. Sometimes it is made

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 323 sq.

² H. Frahn, "Glaube und Brauch in der Mark Brandenburg," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, i. (1891), p. 186 sq.

³ K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, i. p. 233, No. 277 note.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 324.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 320.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 325.

⁷ See vol. i. p. 209 sqq.

so heavy that a man can barely lift it.¹ At Alt-Pillau, in Samland, eight or nine sheaves are often tied together to make the Old Woman, and the man who sets it up grumbles at its weight.² At Itzgrund, in Saxe-Coburg, the last sheaf, called the Old Woman, is made large with the express intention of thereby securing a good crop next year.³ Thus the custom of making the last sheaf unusually large or heavy is a charm, working by sympathetic magic, to ensure a large and heavy crop at the following harvest.

In Denmark also the last sheaf is made larger than the others, and is called the Old Rye-woman or the Old Barley-woman. No one likes to bind it, because whoever does so will be sure, they think, to marry an old man or an old woman. Sometimes the last wheat-sheaf, called the Old Wheat-woman, is made up in human shape, with head, arms, and legs, and being dressed in clothes is carried home on the last waggon, while the harvesters sit beside it drinking and huzzaing.⁴ Of the person who binds the last sheaf it is said, "She or he is the Old Rye-woman."⁵

In Scotland, when the last corn was cut after Hallowmas, the female figure made out of it was sometimes called the Carlin or Carline, that is, the Old Woman. But if cut before Hallowmas, it was called the Maiden; if cut after sunset, it was called the Witch, being supposed to bring bad luck.⁶ Among the Highlanders of Scotland the last corn cut at harvest is known either as the Old Wife (*Cailleach*) or as the Maiden; on the whole the former name seems to prevail in the western and the latter in the central and eastern districts. Of the Maiden we shall speak presently; here we are dealing with the Old Wife. In Bernera, on the west of Lewis, the harvest rejoicing goes by the name of the Old Wife (*Cailleach*) from the last sheaf cut, whether in a township, farm, or croft. Where there are a number of

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 324.

² *Ibid.* p. 324 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 325. The author of *Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie* mentions (p. 891) the German superstition that the last sheaf should be made large in order that all the sheaves next year may be of the same size; but he says

nothing as to the shape or name of the sheaf.

⁴ Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 327.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 328.

⁶ Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Maiden"; W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forschungen*, p. 326.

crofts beside each other, there is always great rivalry as to who shall first finish reaping, and so have the Old Wife before his neighbours. Some people even go out on a clear night to reap their fields after their neighbours have retired to rest, in order that they may have the Old Wife first. More neighbourly habits, however, usually prevail, and as each finishes his own fields he goes to the help of another, till the whole crop is cut. The reaping is still done with the sickle. When the corn has been cut on all the crofts, the last sheaf is dressed up to look as like an old woman as possible. She wears a white cap, a dress, an apron, and a little shawl over the shoulders fastened with a sprig of heather. The apron is tucked up to form a pocket, which is stuffed with bread and cheese. A sickle, stuck in the string of the apron at the back, completes her equipment. This costume and outfit mean that the Old Wife is ready to bear a hand in the work of harvesting. At the feast which follows, the Old Wife is placed at the head of the table, and as the whisky goes round each of the company drinks to her, saying, "Here's to the one that has helped us with the harvest." When the table has been cleared away and dancing begins, one of the lads leads out the Old Wife and dances with her; and if the night is fine the party will sometimes go out and march in a body to a considerable distance, singing harvest-songs, while one of them carries the Old Wife on his back. When the Harvest-Home is over, the Old Wife is shorn of her gear and used for ordinary purposes.¹ In the island of Islay the last corn cut also goes by the name of the Old Wife (*Cailleach*), and when she has done her duty at harvest she is hung up on the wall and stays there till the time comes to plough the fields for the next year's crop. Then she is taken down, and on the first day the men go to plough she is divided among them by the mistress of the house. They take her in their pockets and give her to the horses to eat when they reach the field. This is supposed to secure good luck for the next harvest, and is understood to be the proper end of the Old Wife.² In Kintyre also the name of the Old Wife is given to the last

¹ R. C. Maclagan, "Notes on folk-lore objects collected in Argyleshire,"

Folk-lore, vi. (1895), p. 149 sq.

² R. C. Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

corn cut.¹ On the shores of the beautiful Loch Awe, a long sheet of water, winding among soft green hills, above which the giant Ben Cruachan towers bold and rugged on the north, the harvest custom is somewhat different. The name of the Old Wife (*Cailleach*) is here bestowed, not on the last corn cut, but on the reaper who is the last to finish. He bears it as a term of reproach, and is not privileged to reap the last ears left standing. On the contrary these are cut by the reaper who was the first to finish his *spagh* or strip (literally "claw"), and out of them is fashioned the Maiden, which is afterwards hung up, according to one statement, "for the purpose of preventing the death of horses in spring."² In Caithness the person who cuts the last sheaf is called Winter and retains the name till the next harvest.³ In North Pembrokeshire a tuft of the last corn cut, from six to twelve inches long, is plaited and goes by the name of the Hag (*wrach*); and quaint old customs used to be practised with it within the memory of many persons still alive. Great was the excitement among the reapers when the last patch of standing corn was reached. All in turn threw their sickles at it, and the one who succeeded in cutting it received a jug of home-brewed ale. The Hag (*wrach*) was then hurriedly made and taken to a neighbouring farm, where the reapers were still busy at their work. This was generally done by the ploughman; but he had to be very careful not to be observed by his neighbours, for if they saw him coming and had the least suspicion of his errand they would soon make him retrace his steps. Creeping stealthily up behind a fence he waited till the foreman of his neighbour's reapers was just opposite him and within easy reach. Then he suddenly threw the Hag over the fence and, if possible, upon the foreman's sickle, crying out

*"Eoren y codais I,
Hwyr y delynais I,
Ar ei gwar hi."*

On that he took to his heels and made off as fast as he could run, and he was a lucky man if he escaped without

¹ R. C. Maclagan, *op. cit.* p. 149.

² J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*,

³ *Ibid.* p. 151 sq.

p. 141.

being caught or cut by the flying sickles which the infuriated reapers hurled after him. In other cases the Hag was brought home to the farm-house by one of the reapers. He did his best to bring it home dry and without being observed; but he was apt to be roughly handled by the people of the house, if they suspected his errand. Sometimes they stripped him of most of his clothes, sometimes they would drench him with water which had been carefully stored in buckets and pans for the purpose. If, however, he succeeded in bringing the Hag in dry and unobserved, the master of the house had to pay him a small fine; or sometimes a jug of beer "from the cask next to the wall," which seems to have commonly held the best beer, would be demanded by the bearer. The Hag was then carefully hung on a nail in the hall or elsewhere and kept there all the year. The custom of bringing in the Hag (*wrach*) into the house and hanging it up still exists at some farms in North Pembrokeshire, but the ancient ceremonies which have just been described are now discontinued.¹ In County Antrim, down to a few years ago, when the sickle was finally expelled by the reaping machine, the few stalks of corn left standing last on the field were plaited together; then the reapers, blindfolded, threw their sickles at the plaited corn, and whoever happened to cut it through took it home with him and put it over his door. This bunch of corn was called the Carley²—probably the same word as Carlin.

Similar customs are observed by Slavonic peoples. Thus in Poland the last sheaf is commonly called the Baba, that is, the Old Woman. "In the last sheaf," it is said, "sits the Baba." The sheaf itself is also called the Baba, and is sometimes composed of twelve smaller sheaves lashed together.³ In some parts of Bohemia the Baba, made out of the last sheaf, has the figure of a woman with a great straw hat. It is carried home on the last harvest-waggon and delivered, along with a garland, to the farmer by two girls. In binding the sheaves the women strive not to be last, for

¹ D. Jenkyn Evans, in an article entitled "The Harvest Customs of Pembrokeshire," *Pembroke County Guardian*, 7th December 1895.

² Communicated by my friend Prof. W. Ridgeway.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 328.

she who binds the last sheaf will have a child next year.¹ The last sheaf is tied up with others into a large bundle, and a green branch is stuck on the top of it.² Sometimes the harvesters call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "She has the Baba," or "She is the Baba." She has then to make a puppet, sometimes in female, sometimes in male form, out of the corn; the puppet is occasionally dressed with clothes, often with flowers and ribbons only. The cutter of the last stalks, as well as the binder of the last sheaf, was also called Baba; and a doll, called the Harvest-woman, was made out of the last sheaf and adorned with ribbons. The oldest reaper had to dance, first with this doll, and then with the farmer's wife.³ In the district of Cracow, when a man binds the last sheaf, they say, "The Grandfather is sitting in it"; when a woman binds it, they say, "The Baba is sitting in it," and the woman herself is wrapt up in the sheaf, so that only her head projects out of it. Thus encased in the sheaf, she is carried on the last harvest-waggon to the house, where she is drenched with water by the whole family. She remains in the sheaf till the dance is over, and for a year she retains the name of Baba.⁴

In Lithuania the name for the last sheaf is Boba (Old Woman), answering to the Polish name Baba. The Boba is said to sit in the corn which is left standing last.⁵ The person who binds the last sheaf or digs the last potato is the subject of much banter, and receives and long retains the name of the Old Rye-woman or the Old Potato-woman.⁶ The last sheaf—the Boba—is made into the form of a woman, carried solemnly through the village on the last harvest-waggon, and drenched with water at the farmer's house; then every one dances with it.⁷

In Russia also the last sheaf is often shaped and dressed as a woman, and carried with dance and song to the farmhouse. Out of the last sheaf the Bulgarians make a doll which they call the Corn-queen or Corn-mother; it is dressed in a woman's shirt, carried round the village, and then thrown into the river in order to secure plenty of rain and dew for

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 328.

² *Ibid.* p. 328 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 329.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 330.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 331.

⁷ *Ibid.*

the next year's crop. Or it is burned and the ashes strewn on the fields, doubtless to fertilise them.¹ The name Queen, as applied to the last sheaf, has its analogies in Northern Europe. Thus Brand quotes from Hutchinson's *History of Northumberland* the following: "I have seen, in some places, an image apparelled in great finery, crowned with flowers, a sheaf of corn placed under her arm, and a scyde in her hand, carried out of the village in the morning of the conclusive reaping day, with music and much clamour of the reapers, into the field, where it stands fixed on a pole all day, and when the reaping is done, is brought home in like manner. This they call the Harvest Queen, and it represents the Roman Ceres."² From Cambridge also Dr. E. D. Clarke reported that "at the Hawkie [harvest-home], as it is called, I have seen a clown dressed in woman's clothes, having his face painted, his head decorated with ears of corn, and bearing about him other symbols of Ceres, carried in a waggon, with great pomp and loud shouts, through the streets, the horses being covered with white sheets: and when I inquired the meaning of the ceremony, was answered by the people, that they were drawing the Harvest Queen."³

Often customs of this sort are practised, not on the harvest-field, but on the threshing-floor. The spirit of the corn, fleeing before the reapers as they cut down the ripe grain, quits the reaped corn and takes refuge in the barn, where it appears in the last sheaf threshed, either to perish under the blows of the flail or to flee thence to the still unthreshed corn of a neighbouring farm.⁴ Thus the last corn to be threshed is called the Mother-Corn or the Old Woman. Sometimes the person who gives the last stroke with the flail is called the Old Woman, and is wrapt in the straw of the last sheaf, or has a bundle of straw fastened on his back. Whether wrapt in the straw or carrying it on his back, he is carted through the village amid general laughter. In some districts of Bavaria, Thüringen, etc., the man who threshes the last sheaf is said to have the Old Woman or the Old

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 332.

² Hutchinson, *History of Northumberland*, ii. *ad finem*, 17, quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 20,

Bohn's ed.

³ Quoted by Brand, *op. cit.* ii. 22.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 333 sq.

Corn-woman ; he is tied up in straw, carried or carted about the village, and set down at last on the dunghill, or taken to the threshing-floor of a neighbouring farmer who has not finished his threshing.¹ Sometimes in Upper and Middle Franken a dumpling, baked in the shape of an old woman, is set before him ; he is thus said to get the Old Woman.² In Poland the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is called Baba (Old Woman) ; he is wrapt in corn and wheeled through the village.³ Sometimes in Lithuania the last sheaf is not threshed, but is fashioned into female shape and carried to the barn of a neighbour who has not finished his threshing.⁴ In some parts of Sweden, when a stranger woman appears on the threshing-floor, a flail is put round her body, stalks of corn are wound round her neck, a crown of ears is placed on her head, and the threshers call out, "Behold the Corn-woman." Here the stranger woman, thus suddenly appearing, is taken to be the corn-spirit who has just been expelled by the flails from the corn-stalks.⁵ In other cases the farmer's wife represents the corn-spirit. Thus in the Commune of Saligné, Canton de Poiret (Vendée), the farmer's wife, along with the last sheaf, is tied up in a sheet, placed on a litter, and carried to the threshing machine, under which she is shoved. Then the woman is drawn out and the sheaf is threshed by itself, but the woman is tossed in the sheet, as if she were being winnowed.⁶ It would be impossible to express more clearly the identification of the woman with the corn than by this graphic imitation of threshing and winnowing her.

In these customs the spirit of the ripe corn is regarded as old, or at least as of mature age. Hence the names of Mother, Grandmother, Old Woman, and so forth. But in other cases the corn-spirit is conceived as young, sometimes as a child who is separated from its mother by the stroke of the sickle. This last view appears in the Polish custom of calling out to the man who cuts the last handful of corn, "You have cut the navel-string."⁷ In some districts of West

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 334.

² *Ravaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 344, 969.

³ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 334.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 336.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 336.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 336 ; *Baumkultus*, p. 612.

⁷ W. Mannhardt, *Die Korndämonen*, p. 28.

Prussia the figure made out of the last sheaf is called the Bastard, and a boy is wrapt up in it. The woman who binds the last sheaf and represents the Corn-mother is told that she is about to be brought to bed; she cries like a woman in travail, and an old woman in the character of grandmother acts as midwife. At last a cry is raised that the child is born; whereupon the boy who is tied up in the sheaf whimpers and squalls like an infant. The grandmother wraps a sack, in imitation of swaddling bands, round the pretended baby, who is carried joyfully to the barn, lest he catch cold in the open air.¹ In other parts of North Germany the last sheaf, or the puppet made out of it, is called the Child, the Harvest-Child, and so on. In the North of England the last handful of corn was cut by the prettiest girl and dressed up as the Kern-Baby or Harvest-Doll; it was brought home to music, set up in a conspicuous place at the harvest-supper, and generally kept in the parlour for the rest of the year. The girl who cut it was the Harvest-Queen.² In the North Riding of Yorkshire the last sheaf gathered in is called the Mell-sheaf, and the expression "We've gotten wer mell" is as much as to say "The harvest is finished." Formerly a Mell-doll was made out of a sheaf of corn, decked with flowers, arrayed in the costume of a reaper, and carried with music and dancing to the scene of the harvest-supper, which also went by the name of the Mell.³

¹ W. Mannhardt, *l.c.*

² *Ibid.*; Henderson, *Folk-lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 87; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 20, Bohn's ed.; Chambers's *Book of Days*, ii. 377 sq. Cp. "Notes on Harvest Customs," *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 50. Dr. Murray of the *New English Dictionary* kindly informs me that the popular etymology which identifies "kern" or "kirn" in this sense with "corn" is entirely mistaken; and that "baby" or "babbie" in the same phrase means only "doll," not "infant." He writes: "*Kirn-babbie* does not mean 'corn-baby,' but merely *Kirn-doll*, *harvest-home doll*. *Bab*, *babbie* was even in my youth the regular name for 'doll' in the district, as it was formerly in England; the

only woman who sold dolls in Hawick early in the century, and whose toy-shop all bairns knew, was known as 'Betty o' the Babs,' Betty of the dolls."

³ M. C. F. Morris, *Yorkshire Folk-talk*, pp. 212-214; W. Henderson, *Folk-lore of the Northern Counties of England*, p. 88 sq.; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 27 sqq. The sheaf out of which the Mell-doll was made was no doubt the Mell-sheaf, though this is not expressly said. Dr. Joseph Wright, editor of the *English Dialect Dictionary*, kindly informs me that the word *mell* is well known in these senses in all the northern counties of England down to Cheshire. He tells me that the proposals to connect *mell* with "meal" or with "maiden" (through a form like the German *Mädel*) are

In Kent the Ivy Girl is, or used to be, "a figure composed of some of the best corn the field produces, and made as well as they can into a human shape; this is afterwards curiously dressed by the women, and adorned with paper trimmings, cut to resemble a cap, ruffles, handkerchief, etc., of the finest lace. It is brought home with the last load of corn from the field upon the waggon, and they suppose entitles them to a supper at the expense of the employer."¹ In the neighbourhood of Balquhider, Perthshire, the last handful of corn is cut by the youngest girl on the field, and is made into the rude form of a female doll, clad in a paper dress, and decked with ribbons. It is called the Maiden, and is kept in the farmhouse, generally above the chimney, for a good while, sometimes till the Maiden of the next year is brought in. The writer of this book witnessed the ceremony of cutting the Maiden at Balquhider in September 1888.² A lady friend³ informs me that as a young girl she cut the Maiden several times at the request of the reapers in the neighbourhood of Perth. The name of the Maiden was given to the last handful of standing corn; a reaper held the top of the bunch while she cut it. Afterwards the bunch was plaited, decked with ribbons, and hung up in a conspicuous place on the wall of the kitchen till the next Maiden was brought in. The harvest-supper in this neighbourhood was also called the Maiden; the reapers danced at it. In the Highland district of Lochaber dancing and merry-making on the last night of harvest used to be universal and are still generally observed. Here, we are told, the festivity without the Maiden would be like a wedding without the bride. The Maiden is carried home with tumultuous rejoicing, and after being suitably decorated is hung up in the barn, where the dancing usually takes place. When supper is over, one

inadmissible. When he wrote to me (7th November 1899) his materials on this subject were not yet sifted, but he added: "When I come to weigh all the evidence connected with *mell*, I shall probably find that the first meaning of the word is 'the last sheaf cut at harvest,' and that it was put up in the form of a *mell* to be thrown at for a prize, and that *mell* originally means a mallet; throughout all the north a

mallet is always called a mell."

¹ Brand, *op. cit.* ii. 21 sq.

² *Folk-lore Journal*, vi. (1888), p. 268 sq.

³ Mrs. Macalister, wife of Professor Alexander Macalister, Cambridge. Her recollections refer especially to the neighbourhood of Glen Farg, some ten or twelve miles to the south of Perth.

of the company, generally the oldest man present, drinks a glass of whisky, after turning to the suspended sheaf and saying, "Here's to the Maiden." The company follow his example, each in turn drinking to the Maiden. Then the dancing begins.¹ On some farms on the Gareloch, in Dumbartonshire, about seventy years ago the last handful of standing corn was called the Maiden. It was divided in two, plaited, and then cut with the sickle by a girl, who, it was thought, would be lucky and would soon be married. When it was cut the reapers gathered together and threw their sickles in the air. The Maiden was dressed with ribbons and hung in the kitchen near the roof, where it was kept for several years with the date attached. Sometimes five or six Maidens might be seen hanging at once on hooks. The harvest-supper was called the Kirn.² In other farms on the Gareloch the last handful of corn was called the Maidenhead or the Head; it was neatly plaited, sometimes decked with ribbons, and hung in the kitchen for a year, when the grain was given to the poultry.³ In the island of Mull and some parts of the mainland of Argyshire the last handful of corn cut is called the Maiden (*Maighdean-Bhuana*). Near Ardri-shaig, in Argyshire, the Maiden is made up in a fanciful three-cornered shape, decorated with ribbons, and hung from a nail on the wall.⁴ In the North of Scotland the Maiden is kept till Christmas morning, and then divided among the cattle "to make them thrive all the year round."⁵ In Aberdeenshire also the last sheaf (called the clyack sheaf) was formerly cut, as it is still cut at Balquhiddy, by the youngest girl on the field; then it was dressed in woman's clothes, carried home in triumph, and kept till Christmas or New Year's morning, when it was given to a mare in foal, or, failing such, to the oldest cow.⁶ According to another account of the Aberdeenshire custom the sheaf in question is

¹ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 141 sq.

² From information supplied by Archie Leitch, late gardener at Rowmore, Garelochhead. The Kirn was the name of the harvest festivity in the south of Scotland also. See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, ii. 184 (first edition); *Early Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, ed.

Norton, ii. 325 sq.

³ Communicated by Mr. Macfarlane of Faslane, Gareloch.

⁴ R. C. MacLagan, in *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), pp. 149, 151.

⁵ Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Maiden."

⁶ W. Gregor, in *Revue des Traditions populaires*, iii. (1888), p. 533 (485 B);

kept in the house until the first mare foals. It is then taken down and presented to the mare as its first food. "The neglect of this would have untoward effects upon the foal, and disastrous consequences upon farm operations generally for the season."¹ In Fifeshire the last handful of corn, known as the Maiden, is cut by a young girl and made into the rude figure of a doll, tied with ribbons, by which it is hung on the wall of the farm-kitchen till the next spring.²

A somewhat maturer but still youthful age is assigned to the corn-spirit by the appellations of Bride, Oats-bride, and Wheat-bride, which in Germany and Scotland are sometimes bestowed both on the last sheaf and on the woman who binds it.³ At wheat-harvest near Müglitz, in Moravia, a small portion of the wheat is left standing after all the rest has been cut. This remnant is then cut, amid the rejoicing of the reapers, by a young girl who wears a wreath of wheaten ears on her head and goes by the name of the Wheat-bride. It is supposed that she will be a real bride that same year.⁴ In the upland valley of Alpach, in North Tyrol, the person who brings the last sheaf into the granary is said to have the Wheat-bride or the Rye-bride according to the crop, and is received with great demonstrations of respect and rejoicing. The people of the farm go out to meet him, bells are rung, and refreshments offered to him on a tray.⁵ Sometimes the idea implied in these names is worked out more fully by representing the productive powers of vegetation as bride and bridegroom. Thus in some parts of Germany a man and woman dressed in straw and called the Oats-wife and the Oats-man, or the Oats-bride and the Oats-bridegroom, dance at the harvest festival; then the corn-stalks are plucked from their bodies till they stand as bare as a stubble field.

id., *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 182. An old Scottish name for the Maiden (*autumnalis nymphula*) was *Rapegyrne*. See Fordun, *Scotichron.* ii. 418, quoted in Jamieson's *Dict. of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Rapegyrne."

¹ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 140 sq.

² *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 51; *The Quarterly Review*, clxxii. (1891), p. 195.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Die Korndämonen*, p. 30; *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 50.

⁴ W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 327.

⁵ J. E. Waldfreund, "Volksgebräuche und Aberglaube in Tirol und dem Salzburger Gebirg," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. (1855), p. 340.

In Silesia, the woman who binds the last sheaf is called the Wheat-bride or the Oats-bride. With the harvest crown on her head, a bridegroom by her side, and attended by bridesmaids, she is brought to the farmhouse with all the solemnity of a wedding procession.¹

In these last instances the corn-spirit is personified in double form as male and female. But sometimes the spirit appears in a double female form as both old and young, corresponding exactly to the Greek Demeter and Proserpine, if my interpretation of these goddesses is right. We have seen that in Scotland, especially among the Gaelic-speaking population, the last corn cut is sometimes called the Old Wife and sometimes the Maiden. Now there are parts of Scotland in which both an Old Wife (*Cailleach*) and a Maiden are cut at harvest. As the accounts of this custom are not quite clear and consistent, it may be well to give them first in the words of Dr. R. C. Maclagan, who has collected them. "Nicholson in his *Gaelic Proverbs*, p. 415, says that one account he got made it a competition between the reapers of two rigs, the first done getting the Maiden, the last the Old Wife. The better version, he says, made it a competition between neighbouring crofters, and the man who had his harvest done first sent a handful of corn, called the *Cailleach*, to his neighbour, who passed it on till it landed with him who was last. That man's penalty was to provide for the dearth of the township, *gort a' bhaile*, in the ensuing season. Nicholson then describes the Maiden as the last handful cut on a farm or croft, and says it was given as a '*Sainnseal*' (Hansel) to the horses first day of ploughing.' It was meant as a symbol that the harvest had been secured, and to ward off the fairies, representatives of the ethereal and unsubstantial, till the time came to provide for a new crop."² Again, the Rev. Mr. Campbell of Kilchrenan, on Loch Awe, furnished Dr. Maclagan with the following account of the Highland customs at harvest. The recollections of Mrs. MacCorquodale, who now resides at Kilchrenan, refer to the customs practised

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Die Kordämonen*, p. 30; Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen*, p. 160 sq.

² R. C. Maclagan, "Notes on folklore objects collected in Argyleshire," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 152.

more than fifty years ago in the wild and gloomy valley of Glencoe, infamous in history for the treacherous massacre perpetrated there by the Government troops in 1692. "Mrs. MacCorquodale says that the rivalry was for the Maiden, and for the privilege she gave of sending the Cailleach to the next neighbour. The Maiden was represented by the last stalks reaped; the Cailleach by a handful taken at random from the field, perhaps the last rig of the reaper last to finish. The Cailleach was not dressed but carried after binding to the neighbour's field. The Maiden was cut in the following manner. All the reapers gathered round her and kept a short distance from her. They then threw their hooks [sickles] at her. The person successful in cutting her down in this manner was the man whose possession she became. Mrs. MacCorquodale understood that the man of a township who got the Cailleach finally was supposed to be doomed to poverty for his want of energy. (Gaelic: *treubhantas*—valour.)

"A sample of the toast to the Cailleach at the harvest entertainment was as follows: 'The Cailleach is with . . . and is now with (me) since I was the last. I drink to her health. Since she assisted me in harvest, it is likely that it is with me she will abide during the winter.' In explaining the above toast Mr. Campbell says that it signifies that the Cailleach is always with agriculturists. 'She has been with others before and is now with me (the proposer of the toast). Though I did my best to avoid her I welcome her as my assistant, and am prepared to entertain her during the winter.' Another form of the toast was as follows: 'To your health, good wife, who for harvest has come to help us, and if I live I'll try to support you when winter comes.'

"John MacCorquodale, Kilchrenan, says that at Crianlarich in Strath Fillan they make a Cailleach of sticks and a turnip, old clothes and a pipe. In this case the effigy passed in succession to seven farms, which he mentioned, and finally settled with an innkeeper. The list suggested that the upper farms stood a bad chance, and perhaps that a prosperous innkeeper could more easily bear up against the reproach and loss (?) of supporting the Cailleach. Duncan MacIntyre, Kilchrenan, says that in one case where the last

field to be reaped was the most fertile land on the farm, the corn first cut on it, which was taken near the edge, was reserved to make a Cailleach, should the owner be so happy as to be able to pass her on to his neighbour. The last blades cut were generally in the middle or best part of the field. These in any event became the Maiden." Lastly, Dr. MacLagan observes that "having directed the attention of Miss Kerr, Port Charlotte, Islay, to the practice of having two different bunches on the mainland of Argyle, she informs me that in Islay and Kintyre the last handful is the Cailleach, and they have no Maiden. The same is the custom in Bernara and other parts of the Western Isles, while in Mull the last handful is the Maiden, and they have no Cailleach. In North Uist the habit still prevails of putting the Cailleach over-night among the standing corn of lazy crofters."¹

The general rule to which these various accounts point seems to be that, where both a Maiden and an Old Wife are fashioned out of the reaped corn at harvest, the Maiden is always made out of the last stalks left standing and is kept by the farmer on whose land it was cut; while the Old Wife is made out of other stalks, sometimes out of the first stalks cut, and is regularly passed on to a laggard farmer who happens to be still reaping after his brisker neighbour has cut all his corn. Thus while each farmer keeps his own Maiden, as the embodiment of the young and fruitful spirit of the corn, he passes on the Old Wife as soon as he can to a neighbour, and so the old lady may make the round of all the farms in the district before she finds a place to lay her venerable head. The farmer with whom she finally takes up her abode is of course the one who has been the last of all the countryside to finish reaping his crops, and thus the distinction of entertaining her is rather an invidious one. Similarly we saw that in Pembrokeshire, where the last corn cut is called not the Maiden but the Hag, she is passed on hastily to a neighbour who is still at work in his fields and who receives his aged visitor with anything but a transport of joy. If the Old Wife represents the corn-spirit of the past year, as she probably does wherever she is contrasted

¹ R. C. MacLagan, "Corn-maiden in Argyleshire," *Folk-lore*, vii. (1896), p. 78 *sq.*

with and opposed to a Maiden, it is natural enough that her faded charms should have less attractions for the husbandman than the buxom form of her daughter, who may be expected to become in her turn the mother of the golden grain when the revolving year has brought round another autumn.

The harvest customs just described are strikingly analogous to the spring customs which we reviewed in the first chapter. (1) As in the spring customs the tree-spirit is represented both by a tree and by a person,¹ so in the harvest customs the corn-spirit is represented both by the last sheaf and by the person who cuts or binds or threshes it. The equivalence of the person to the sheaf is shown by giving him or her the same name as the sheaf; by wrapping him or her in it; and by the rule observed in some places, that when the sheaf is called the Mother, it must be made up into human shape by the oldest married woman, but that when it is called the Maiden, it must be cut by the youngest girl.² Here the age of the personal representative of the corn-spirit corresponds with that of the supposed age of the corn-spirit, just as the human victims offered by the Mexicans to promote the growth of the maize varied with the age of the maize.³ For in the Mexican, as in the European, custom the human beings were probably representatives of the corn-spirit rather than victims offered to it. (2) Again, the same fertilising influence which the tree-spirit is supposed to exert over vegetation, cattle, and even women⁴ is ascribed to the corn-spirit. Thus, its supposed influence on vegetation is shown by the practice of taking some of the grain of the last sheaf (in which the corn-spirit is regularly supposed to be present), and scattering it among the young corn in spring.⁵ Its influence on animals is shown by giving the last sheaf to the first mare that foals, to horses at the first ploughing, or to cattle at Christmas to make them thrive.⁶ Lastly, its influence on women is indicated by the custom of delivering the Mother-sheaf, made into the likeness of a pregnant woman, to the farmer's wife;⁷ by the belief that the woman who binds the last sheaf

¹ See vol. i. p. 207 *sqq.*

² Above, pp. 171, 174, 175, 176, 180, 181, 182, 184, 185, 186.

³ Above, p. 143.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 188 *sqq.*

⁵ Above, p. 172.

⁶ Above, pp. 172, 177 (cp. 178), 185 *sq.*

⁷ See above, p. 173.

will have a child next year ;¹ perhaps, too, by the idea that the person who gets it will soon be married.²

Plainly, therefore, these spring and harvest customs are based on the same ancient modes of thought, and form parts of the same primitive heathendom, which was doubtless practised by our forefathers long before the dawn of history, as it is practised to this day by many of their descendants. Amongst the marks of a primitive ritual we may note the following :—

1. No special class of persons is set apart for the performance of the rites ; in other words, there are no priests. The rites may be performed by any one, as occasion demands.

2. No special places are set apart for the performance of the rites ; in other words, there are no temples. The rites may be performed anywhere, as occasion demands.

3. Spirits, not gods, are recognised. (a) As distinguished from gods, spirits are restricted in their operations to definite departments of nature. Their names are general, not proper. Their attributes are generic, rather than individual ; in other words, there is an indefinite number of spirits of each class, and the individuals of a class are all much alike ; they have no definitely marked individuality ; no accepted traditions are current as to their origin, life, adventures, and character. (b) On the other hand gods, as distinguished from spirits, are not restricted to definite departments of nature. It is true that there is generally some one department over which they preside as their special province ; but they are not rigorously confined to it ; they can exert their power for good or evil in many other spheres of nature and life. Again, they bear individual or proper names, such as Ceres, Proserpine, Bacchus ; and their individual characters and histories are fixed by current myths and the representations of art.

4. The rites are magical rather than propitiatory. In other words, the desired objects are attained, not by propitiating the favour of divine beings through sacrifice, prayer, and praise, but by ceremonies which, as has been explained,³ are believed to influence the course of nature

¹ Above, p. 179 sq. ; cp. Kuhn, *Westfälische Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen*, ii. p. 185, § 516.

² Above, pp. 174, 176, 185, 186.

³ Vol. i. p. 9 sqq.

directly through a physical sympathy or resemblance between the rite and the effect which it is the intention of the rite to produce.

Judged by these tests, the spring and harvest customs of our European peasantry deserve to rank as primitive. For no special class of persons and no special places are set exclusively apart for their performance; they may be performed by any one, master or man, mistress or maid, boy or girl; they are practised, not in temples or churches, but in the woods and meadows, beside brooks, in barns, on harvest fields and cottage floors. The supernatural beings whose existence is taken for granted in them are spirits rather than deities; their functions are limited to certain well-defined departments of nature; their names are general, like the Barley-mother, the Old Woman, the Maiden, not proper names like Ceres, Proserpine, Bacchus. Their generic attributes are known, but their individual histories and characters are not the subject of myths. For they exist in classes rather than as individuals, and the members of each class are indistinguishable. For example, every farm has its Corn-mother, or its Old Woman, or its Maiden; but every Corn-mother is much like every other Corn-mother, and so with the Old Women and Maidens. Lastly, in these harvest, as in the spring, customs, the ritual is magical rather than propitiatory. This is shown by throwing the Corn-mother into the river in order to secure rain and dew for the crops;¹ by making the Old Woman heavy in order to get a heavy crop next year;² by strewing grain from the last sheaf amongst the young crops in spring;³ and giving the last sheaf to the cattle to make them thrive.⁴

Further, the custom of keeping the puppet—the representative of the corn-spirit—till next harvest, is a charm to maintain the corn-spirit in life and activity throughout the year.⁵ This is proved by a similar custom observed by the

¹ Above, p. 180 *sq.*

² Above, p. 175 *sq.*

³ Above, p. 172.

⁴ Above, pp. 172, 185 *sq.*

⁵ Above, pp. 174, 179, 183, 184.

185; W. Mannhardt, *Korndämonen*, pp. 7, 26. Amongst the Wends the last sheaf, made into a puppet and called the Old Man, is hung in the hall till next year's Old Man is brought in (W. von Schulenburg, *Wendisches Volksthum*, p. 147).

ancient Peruvians, and thus described by the old Spanish historian Acosta. "They take a certain portion of the most fruitfull of the Mays [*i.e.* maize] that growes in their farmes, the which they put in a certaine granary which they doe call *Pirua*, with certaine ceremonies, watching three nightes; they put this Mays in the richest garments they have, and beeing thus wrapped and dressed, they worship this *Pirua*, and hold it in great veneration, saying it is the mother of the mays of their inheritances, and that by this means the mays augments and is preserved. In this moneth [the sixth month, answering to May] they make a particular sacrifice, and the witches demand of this *Pirua*, if it hath strength sufficient to continue untill the next yeare; and if it answers no, then they carry this Mays to the farme to burne, whence they brought it, according to every man's power; then they make another *Pirua*, with the same ceremonies, saying that they renew it, to the end the seede of Mays may not perish, and if it answers that it hath force sufficient to last longer, they leave it untill the next yeare. This foolish vanity continueth to this day, and it is very common amongst the Indians to have these *Piruas*." ¹ There seems to be some error in this description of the custom. Probably it was the dressed-up bunch of maize, not the granary (*Pirua*), which was worshipped by the Peruvians and regarded as the Mother of the Maize. This is confirmed by what we know of the Peruvian custom from another source. The Peruvians, we are told, believed all useful plants to be animated by a divine being who causes their growth. According to the particular plant, these divine beings were called the Maize-mother (*Zaramama*), the Quinoa-mother (*Quinoa-mama*), the Cocoa-mother (*Coca-mama*), and the Potato-mother (*Axo-mama*). Figures of these divine mothers were made respectively of ears of maize and leaves of the quinoa and cocoa plants; they were dressed in women's clothes and worshipped. Thus the

In Inverness and Sutherland the Maiden is kept till the next harvest (*Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), pp. 50, 53 sq.). Cp. Kuhn, *Westfälische Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen*, ii. pp. 181, 185, §§ 501, 517.

Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, bk. v. ch. 28, vol. ii. p. 374 (Hakluyt Society, 1880). The original Spanish text of Acosta's work was reprinted in a convenient form at Madrid in 1894. See vol. ii. p. 117 of that edition.

Maize-mother was represented by a puppet made of stalks of maize, dressed in full female attire; and the Indians believed that "as mother, it had the power of producing and giving birth to much maize."¹ Probably, therefore, Acosta misunderstood his informant, and the Mother of the Maize which he describes was not the granary (*Pirua*) but the bunch of maize dressed in rich vestments. The Peruvian Mother of the Maize, like the harvest-Maiden at Balquhidder, was kept for a year in order that by her means the corn might grow and multiply. But lest her strength might not suffice to last till the next harvest, she was asked in the course of the year how she felt, and if she answered that she felt weak, she was burned and a fresh Mother of the Maize made, "to the end the seede of Mays may not perish." Here, it may be observed, we have a strong confirmation of the explanation already given of the custom of killing the god, both periodically and occasionally. The Mother of the Maize was allowed, as a rule, to live through a year, that being the period during which her strength might reasonably be supposed to last unimpaired; but on any symptom of her strength failing she was put to death and a fresh and vigorous Mother of the Maize took her place, lest the maize which depended on her for its existence should languish and decay.

Hardly less clearly does the same train of thought come out in the harvest customs formerly observed by the Zapotecs of Mexico. At harvest the priests, attended by the nobles and people, went in procession to the maize fields, where they picked out the largest and finest sheaf. This they took with great ceremony to the town or village, and placed it in the temple upon an altar adorned with wild flowers. After sacrificing to the harvest god, the priests carefully wrapped up the sheaf in fine linen and kept it till seed-time. Then the priests and nobles met again at the temple, one of them bringing the skin of a wild beast, elaborately ornamented, in which the linen cloth containing the sheaf was enveloped.

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 342 sq. Mannhardt's authority is a Spanish tract (*Carta pastoral de exortacion e instruccion contra las idolatrias de los Indios del arzobispado de Lima*) by Pedro de Villagomez, Archbishop of

Lima, published in Lima in 1649, and communicated to Mannhardt by J. J. v. Tschudi. Compare E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 414 sq.

The sheaf was then carried once more in procession to the field from which it had been taken. Here a small cavity or subterranean chamber had been prepared, in which the precious sheaf was deposited, wrapt in its various envelopes. After sacrifice had been offered to the gods of the fields for an abundant crop the chamber was closed and covered over with earth. Immediately thereafter the sowing began. Finally, when the time of harvest drew near, the buried sheaf was solemnly disinterred by the priests, who distributed the grain to all who asked for it. The packets of grain so distributed were carefully preserved as talismans till the harvest.¹ In these ceremonies, which continued to be annually celebrated long after the Spanish conquest, the intention of keeping the finest sheaf buried in the maize field from seed-time to harvest was undoubtedly to quicken the growth of the maize.

In the Punjab, to the east of the Jumna, when the cotton boles begin to burst, it is usual to select the largest plant in the field, sprinkle it with butter-milk and rice-water, and then bind to it pieces of cotton taken from the other plants of the field. This selected plant is called Sirdar or *Bhogaldat*, that is "mother-cotton," from *bhogla*, a name sometimes given to a large cotton-pod, and *dat* (for *daiya*), "a mother," and after it has been saluted, prayers are offered that the other plants may resemble it in the richness of their produce.² The conception of the corn-spirit as a bride seems to come out clearly in a ceremony still practised by the Berbers near Tangier, in Morocco. When the women assemble in the fields to weed the green barley or reap the crops, they take with them a straw figure dressed like a woman, and set it up among the corn. Suddenly a group of horsemen from a neighbouring village gallop up and carry off the straw puppet amid the screams and cries of the women. However, the ravished effigy is rescued by another band of mounted men, and after a struggle remains, more or less dishevelled, in the hands of the women. That this pretended

¹ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale*, iii. 40 sqq. Compare *id.*, iii. 505 sq.; E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called*

America, i. 419 sq.

² H. M. Elliot, *Supplemental Glossary of Terms used in the North-Western Provinces*, edited by J. Beames, i. 254.

abduction is a mimic marriage appears from a Berber custom in accordance with which, at a real wedding, the bridegroom carries off his seemingly unwilling bride on horseback, while she screams and pretends to summon her friends to her rescue. No fixed date is appointed for the simulated abduction of the straw woman from the barley-field, the time depends upon the state of the crops, but the day and hour are made public before the event. Each village used to practise this mimic contest for possession of the straw woman, who probably represents the Barley Bride, but nowadays the custom is growing obsolete.¹

If the reader still feels any doubts as to the original meaning of the harvest customs practised by our peasantry, these doubts may be dispelled by comparing the customs observed at the rice-harvest by the Malays and Dyaks of the East Indies. At harvest the Dyaks of Northern Borneo have a special feast, the object of which is "to secure the soul of the rice, which if not so detained, the produce of their farms would speedily rot and decay." The mode of securing the soul of the rice varies in different tribes. In the Quop district the ceremony is performed by the chief priest alone, first in the long broad verandah of the common house and afterwards in each separate family apartment. As a preparation for the ceremony a bamboo altar, decorated with green boughs and red and white streamers, is erected in the verandah, and presents a very gay appearance. Here the people, old and young, assemble, the priestesses dressed in gorgeous array and the elder men wearing bright-coloured jackets and trousers of purple, yellow, or scarlet hue, while the young men and lads beat gongs and drums. When the priest, with a bundle of charms in either hand, is observed to be gazing earnestly in the air at something invisible to common eyes, the band strikes up with redoubled energy, and the elderly men in the gay breeches begin to shriek and revolve round the altar in the dance. Suddenly the priest starts up and makes a rush at the invisible object; men run to him with white cloths, and as he shakes his charms over the cloths a few grains of rice fall into them. These grains are

¹ W. B. Harris, "The Berbers of Morocco," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898), p. 68.

the soul of the rice; they are carefully folded up in the cloths and laid at the foot of the altar. The same performance is afterwards repeated in every family apartment. In some tribes the soul of the rice is secured at midnight. Outside the village a lofty altar is erected in an open space surrounded by the stately forms of the tropical palms. Huge bonfires cast a ruddy glow over the scene and light up the dusky but picturesque forms of the Dyaks as they move in slow and solemn dance round the altar, some bearing lighted tapers in their hands, others brass salvers with offerings of rice, others covered baskets, of which the contents are hidden from all but the initiated. The corner-posts of the altar are lofty bamboos, whose leafy tops are yet green and rustle in the wind; and from one of them a long narrow streamer of white cloth hangs down. Suddenly elders and priests rush at this streamer, seize the end of it, and amid the crashing music of drums and gongs and the yells of the spectators begin dancing and swaying themselves backwards and forwards, and to and fro. A priest or elder leaps on the altar and shakes the tall bamboos violently with shouts of triumph, which are responded to by the swaying bodies of the men below; and in the midst of this excitement small stones, bunches of hair, and grains of rice fall at the feet of the dancers, and are carefully picked up by watchful attendants. These grains of rice are the soul of the crop. At sowing-time some of this soul of the rice is planted with the other seeds, "and is thus propagated and communicated."¹

The same need of securing the soul of the rice, if the crop is to thrive, is keenly felt by the Karens of Burma. When a rice-field does not flourish, they suppose that the soul (*kelah*) of the rice is in some way detained from the rice. If the soul cannot be called back, the crop will fail. The following formula is used in recalling the *kelah* (soul) of the rice: "O come, rice-*kelah*, come! Come to the field. Come to the rice. With seed of each gender, come. Come from the river Kho, come from the river Kaw; from the place

¹ Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 187, 192 sqq.; W. Chalmers, quoted in H.

Ling Roth's *Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 412-414.

where they meet, come. Come from the West, come from the East. From the throat of the bird, from the maw of the ape, from the throat of the elephant. Come from the sources of rivers and their mouths. Come from the country of the Shan and Burman. From the distant kingdoms come. From all granaries come. O rice-*kelah*, come to the rice."¹

The Corn-mother of our European peasants has her match in the Rice-mother of the Minangkabauers of Sumatra. The Minangkabauers definitely attribute a soul to rice, and will sometimes assert that rice pounded in the usual way tastes better than rice ground in a mill, because in the mill the body of the rice was so bruised and battered that the soul has fled from it. Like the Javanese they think that the rice is under the special guardianship of a female spirit called Saning Sari, who is conceived as so closely knit up with the plant that the rice often goes by her name, as with the Romans the corn might be called Ceres. In particular Saning Sari is represented by certain stalks or grains called *indoea padi*, that is, literally, "Mother of Rice," a name that is often given to the guardian spirit herself. This so-called Mother of Rice is the occasion of a number of ceremonies observed at the planting and harvesting of the rice as well as during its preservation in the barn. When the seed of the rice is about to be sown in the nursery or bedding-out ground, where under the wet system of cultivation it is regularly allowed to sprout before being transplanted to the fields, the best grains are picked out to form the Rice-mother. These are then sown in the middle of the bed, and the common seed is planted round about them. The state of the Rice-mother is supposed to exert the greatest influence on the growth of the rice; if she droops or pines away, the harvest will be bad in consequence. The woman who sows the Rice-mother in the nursery lets her hair hang loose and afterwards bathes, as a means of ensuring an abundant harvest. When the time comes to transplant the rice from the nursery to the field, the Rice-mother receives a special place either in the middle or in a corner of the field, and a prayer or charm is uttered as

¹ E. B. Cross, "On the Karens," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, iv. (1854), p. 309.

follows: "Saning Sari, may a measure of rice come from a stalk of rice and a basketful from a root; may you be frightened neither by lightning nor by passers-by! Sunshine make you glad; with the storm may you be at peace; and may rain serve to wash your face!" While the rice is growing, the particular plant which was thus treated as the Rice-mother is lost sight of; but before harvest another Rice-mother is found. When the crop is ripe for cutting, the oldest woman of the family or a sorcerer goes out to look for her. The first stalks seen to bend under a passing breeze are the Rice-mother, and they are tied together but not cut until the first-fruits of the field have been carried home to serve as a festal meal for the family and their friends, nay even for the domestic animals; since it is Saning Sari's pleasure that the beasts also should partake of her good gifts. After the meal has been eaten, the Rice-mother is fetched home by persons in gay attire, who carry her very carefully under an umbrella in a neatly worked bag to the barn, where a place in the middle is assigned to her. Every one believes that she takes care of the rice in the barn and even multiplies it not uncommonly.¹

Again, just as in Scotland the old and the young spirit of the corn are represented as an Old Wife or Carline and a Maiden respectively, so in the Malay Peninsula we find both the Rice-mother and her child represented by different sheaves or bundles of ears on the harvest-field. The following directions for obtaining both are translated from a native Malay work on the cultivation of rice: "When the rice is ripe all over, one must first take the 'soul' out of all the

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagnsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), pp. 63-65. In the charm recited at sowing the Rice-mother in the bed, I have translated the Dutch word *stoel* as "root," but I am not sure of its precise meaning in this connection. For harvest-rites of the same general character observed in the Mandeling and Batang-natal districts of Sumatra, on the north coast of Ceram, and among the Alfoors of Central Celebes, see Th. A.

L. Heyting, "Beschrijving der onderafdeeling Groot-mandeling en Batang-natal," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, xiv. (1897), p. 290 sq.; J. Boot, "Korte schets der noordkust van Ceram," *Tijdschrift van het Nederl. Aardrijks. Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 671 sq.; A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zending-genootschap*, xxxix. (1895), p. 145 sq.

plots of one's field. You choose the spot where the rice is best and where it is 'female' (that is to say, where the bunch of stalks is big) and where there are seven joints in the stalk. You begin with a bunch of this kind and clip seven stems to be the 'soul of the rice'; and then you clip yet another handful to be the 'mother-seed' for the following year. The 'soul' is wrapped in a white cloth tied with a cord of *terap* bark, and made into the shape of a little child in swaddling clothes, and put into the small basket. The 'mother-seed' is put into another basket, and both are fumigated with benzoin, and then the two baskets are piled the one on the other and taken home, and put into the *kepuk* (the receptacle in which rice is stored).¹ The ceremony of cutting and bringing home the Soul of the Rice was witnessed by Mr. W. W. Skeat at Chodoi in Selangor on the twenty-eighth of January 1897. The particular bunch or sheaf which was to serve as the Mother of the Rice-soul had previously been sought and identified by means of the markings or shape of the ears. From this sheaf an aged sorceress, with much solemnity, cut a little bundle of seven ears, anointed them with oil, tied them round with parti-coloured thread, fumigated them with incense, and having wrapt them in a white cloth deposited them in a little oval-shaped basket. These seven ears were the infant Soul of the Rice and the little basket was its cradle. It was carried home to the farmer's house by another woman, who held up an umbrella to screen the tender infant from the hot rays of the sun. Arrived at the house the Rice-child was welcomed by the women of the family, and laid, cradle and all, on a new sleeping-mat with pillows at the head. After that the farmer's wife was instructed to observe certain rules of taboo for three days, the rules being in many respects identical with those which have to be observed for three days after the birth of a real child. For example, perfect quiet must be observed, as in a house where a baby has just been born; a light was placed near the head of the Rice-child's bed and might not go out at night, while the fire on the hearth had to be kept up both day and night till the three days were over; hair

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 225 sq.

might not be cut; and money, rice, salt, oil, and so forth were forbidden to go out of the house, though of course these valuable articles were quite free to come in. Something of the same tender care which is thus bestowed on the newly-born Rice-child is naturally extended also to its parent, the sheaf from whose body it was taken. This sheaf, which remains standing in the field after the Rice-soul has been carried home and put to bed, is treated as a newly-made mother; that is to say, young shoots of trees are pounded together and scattered broadcast every evening for three successive days, and when the three days are up you take the pulp of a cocoa-nut and what are called "goat-flowers," mix them up, eat them with a little sugar, and spit some of the mixture out among the rice. So after a real birth the young shoots of the jack-fruit, the rose-apple, certain kinds of banana, and the thin pulp of young cocoa-nuts are mixed with dried fish, salt, acid, prawn-condiment, and the like dainties to form a sort of salad, which is administered to mother and child for three successive days. The last sheaf is reaped by the farmer's wife, who carries it back to the house, where it is threshed and mixed with the Rice-soul. The farmer then takes the Rice-soul and its basket and deposits it, together with the product of the last sheaf, in the big circular rice-bin used by the Malays. Some of the grain from the Rice-soul are mixed with the seed which is to be sown in the following year.¹ In this Rice-mother and Rice-child of the Malay Peninsula we may see the counterpart and in a sense the prototype of the Demeter and Proserpine of ancient Greece.

Once more, the European custom of representing the corn-spirit in the double form of bride and bridegroom² has its parallel in a ceremony observed at the rice-harvest in Java. Before the reapers begin to cut the rice, the priest or sorcerer picks out a number of ears of rice, which are tied together, smeared with ointment, and adorned with flowers. Thus decked out, the ears are called the *padi-pèngantèn*, that is, the Rice-bride and the Rice-bridegroom; their wedding feast is celebrated, and the cutting of the rice begins im-

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 235-249.

² See above, p. 186 sq.

mediately afterwards. Later on, when the rice is being got in, a bridal chamber is partitioned off in the barn, and furnished with a new mat, a lamp, and all kinds of toilet articles. Sheaves of rice, to represent the wedding guests, are placed beside the Rice-bride and the Rice-bridegroom. Not till this has been done may the whole harvest be housed in the barn. And for the first forty days after the rice has been housed, no one may enter the barn, for fear of disturbing the newly-wedded pair.¹

Thus the theory which recognises in the European Corn-mother, Corn-maiden, and so forth, the embodiment in vegetable form of the animating spirit of the crops is amply confirmed by the evidence of peoples in other parts of the world, who, because they have lagged behind the European races in mental development, retain for that very reason a keener sense of the original motives for observing those rustic rites which among ourselves have sunk to the level of meaningless survivals. The reader may, however, remember that according to Mannhardt, whose theory I am expounding, the spirit of the corn manifests itself not merely in vegetable but also in human form; the person who cuts the last sheaf or gives the last stroke at threshing passes for a temporary embodiment of the corn-spirit, just as much as the bunch of corn which he reaps or threshes. Now in the parallels which have been hitherto adduced from the customs of peoples outside Europe the spirit of the crops appears only in vegetable form. It remains, therefore, to prove that other races besides our European peasantry have conceived the spirit of the crops as incorporate in or represented by living men and women.

¹ Veth, *Java*, i. 524-526. The ceremony has also been described by Miss Augusta de Wit (*Facts and Fancies about Java*, Singapore, 1898, pp. 229-241), who lays stress on the extreme importance of the rice-harvest for the Javanese. The whole island of Java, she tells us, "is one vast rice-field. Rice on the swampy plains, rice on the rising ground, rice on the slopes, rice on the very summits of the hills. From the sod under one's feet to the verge of the horizon, everything has one and the same colour, the bluish-green of the

young, or the gold of the ripened rice. The natives are all, without exception, tillers of the soil, who reckon their lives by seasons of planting and reaping, whose happiness or misery is synonymous with the abundance or the dearth of the precious grain. And the great national feast is the harvest home, with its crowning ceremony of the Wedding of the Rice" (*op. cit.* p. 229 sq.). I have to thank my friend Prof. A. C. Haddon for directing my attention to Miss de Wit's book.

Such a proof, I may remind the reader, is germane to the theme of this book ; for the more instances we discover of human beings representing in themselves the life or animating spirit of plants, the less difficulty will be felt at classing amongst them the King of the Wood at Aricia.

The Mandans and Minnitarees of North America used to hold a festival in spring which they called the corn-medicine festival of the women. They thought that a certain Old Woman who Never Dies made the crops to grow, and that, living somewhere in the south, she sent the migratory waterfowl in spring as her tokens and representatives. Each sort of bird represented a special kind of crop cultivated by the Indians : the wild goose stood for the maize, the wild swan for the gourds, and the wild duck for the beans. So when the feathered messengers of the Old Woman began to arrive in spring the Indians celebrated the corn-medicine festival of the women. Scaffolds were set up, on which the people hung dried meat and other things by way of offerings to the Old Woman ; and on a certain day the old women of the tribe, as representatives of the Old Woman who Never Dies, assembled at the scaffolds each bearing in her hand an ear of maize fastened to a stick. They first planted these sticks in the ground, then danced round the scaffolds, and finally took up the sticks again in their arms. Meanwhile old men beat drums and shook rattles as a musical accompaniment to the performance of the old women. Further, young women came and put dried flesh into the mouths of the old women, for which they received in return a grain of the consecrated maize to eat. Three or four grains of the holy corn were also placed in the dishes of the young women, to be afterwards carefully mixed with the seed-corn, which they were supposed to fertilise. The dried flesh hung on the scaffold belonged to the old women, because they represented the Old Woman who Never Dies. A similar corn-medicine festival was held in autumn for the purpose of attracting the herds of buffaloes and securing a supply of meat. At that time every woman carried in her arms an uprooted plant of maize. They gave the name of the Old Woman who Never Dies both to the maize and to those birds which they regarded as symbols of the fruits of the

earth, and they prayed to them in autumn saying, "Mother, have pity on us! send us not the bitter cold too soon, lest we have not meat enough! let not all the game depart, that we may have something for the winter!" In autumn, when the birds were flying south, the Indians thought that they were going home to the Old Woman and taking to her the offerings that had been hung up on the scaffolds, especially the dried meat, which she ate.¹ Here then we have the spirit or divinity of the corn conceived as an Old Woman and represented in bodily form by old women, who in their capacity of representatives receive some at least of the offerings which are intended for her.

Again, we have seen that in some parts of Germany the spirit of the crops is represented simultaneously in male and female form by a man and a woman cased in straw at harvest, just as the spirit of trees or of vegetation in general is represented by a Lord and Lady of the May dressed in leaves and flowers in spring. Such personifications of the powers of vegetation occur naturally to primitive man, who is apt to conceive that plants, like animals, propagate their kind through the intercourse of the sexes. The conception is far from being wholly erroneous, but an entirely false extension is given to it by the savage who fancies that the process of procreation is not merely similar but identical in plants and animals, so that, on the one hand, men and animals can be fertilised by trees, and on the other hand the earth can be quickened and crops made to grow by the intercourse of the human sexes. In the first chapter examples were given of the fertilising influence supposed to be exerted by trees on women and cattle; here I propose to illustrate the converse process, by which men think they can promote or retard the growth of plants. How far in acting thus they consciously personate the powers of vegetation is a question which we can hardly in every case decide; a belief in the efficacy of sympathetic magic, which is the base of all these ceremonies, seems sufficient to account for some at least of the following customs without resorting to the hypothesis that the persons who practise them deliberately masquerade as spirits of vegetation.

¹ Maximilian, Prinz zu Wied, *Reise in das innere Nord-America*, ii. 182 sq.

For four days before they committed the seed to the earth the Pipiles of Central America kept apart from their wives "in order that on the night before planting they might indulge their passions to the fullest extent ; certain persons are even said to have been appointed to perform the sexual act at the very moment when the first seeds were deposited in the ground." The use of their wives at that time was indeed enjoined upon the people by the priests as a religious duty, in default of which it was not lawful to sow the seed.¹ The only possible explanation of this custom seems to be that the Indians confused the process by which human beings reproduce their kind with the process by which plants discharge the same function, and fancied that by resorting to the former they were simultaneously forwarding the latter. The same confusion has been made by other races of men. In some parts of Java, at the season when the bloom will soon be on the rice, the husbandman and his wife visit their fields by night and there engage in sexual intercourse for the purpose of promoting the growth of the crop.² In the Leti, Sarmata, and some other groups of islands which lie between the western end of New Guinea and the northern part of Australia, the heathen population regard the sun as the male principle by whom the earth or female principle is fertilised. They call him Upu-lera or Mr. Sun, and represent him under the form of a lamp made of cocoa-nut leaves, which may be seen hanging everywhere in their houses and in the sacred fig-tree. Once a year, at the beginning of the rainy season, Mr. Sun comes down into the holy fig-tree to fertilise the earth, and to facilitate his descent a ladder with seven rungs is considerably placed at his disposal. It is set up under the tree and is adorned with carved figures of the birds whose shrill clarion heralds the approach of the sun in the East. On this occasion pigs and dogs are sacrificed in profusion ; men and women alike indulge in a saturnalia ; and the mystic union of the sun and the earth is dramatically represented in public,

¹ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale*, ii. 565 ; Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 719 sq., iii. 507 ; O. Stoll, *Die Ethno-*

logie der Indianerstämme von Guatemala, p. 47.

² G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 958.

amid song and dance, by the real union of the sexes under the tree. In the Babar Islands a special flag is hoisted at this festival as a symbol of the creative energy of the sun; it is of white cotton, about nine feet high, and consists of the figure of a man in an appropriate attitude.¹ It would be unjust to treat these orgies as a mere outburst of unbridled passion; no doubt they are deliberately and solemnly organised as essential to the fertility of the earth and the welfare of man. The same means which are thus adopted to stimulate the growth of the crops are naturally employed to ensure the fruitfulness of trees. The ancient work which bore the title of *The Agriculture of the Nabataeans*, but which seems to have been written at Babylon and to describe Babylonian usages, contained apparently a direction that the grafting of a tree upon another tree of a different sort should be done by a damsel, who at the very moment of inserting the graft in the bough should herself be subjected to treatment which can only be regarded as a direct copy of the operation she was performing on the tree.² In some parts of Amboyna, when the state of the clove plantation indicates that the crop is likely to be scanty, the men go naked to the plantations by night, and there seek to fertilise the trees precisely as they would women, while at the same time they call out for "More cloves!" This is supposed to make the trees bear fruit more abundantly.³ In Java when a palm tree is to be tapped for wine, the man who proposes to relieve the tree of its superfluous juices deems it necessary

¹ G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoëvell, in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1898), pp. 204 sq., 206 sq.; *id.*, in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 134. In the island of Timor the marriage of the Sun-god with Mother Earth is deemed the source of all fertility and growth. See J. S. G. Gramberg, "Eene maand in de Binnenlanden van Timor," *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxxvi. 206 sq.; H. Sondervan, "Timor en de Timoreezen," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, dl. v. (1888), Afdeeling, meer

uitgebreide artikelen, p. 397.

² Maimonides, translated by Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 475. It is not quite clear whether the direction, which Maimonides here attributes to the Sabaeans, is taken by him from the beginning of *The Agriculture of the Nabataeans*, which he had referred to a few lines before. The first part of that work appears to be lost, though other parts of it exist in manuscript at Paris, Oxford, and elsewhere. See Chwolson, *op. cit.* i. 697 sqq.

³ G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoëvell, *Ambon en meer bepaaldelijk de Oeliasers* (Dordrecht, 1875), p. 62 sq.

to approach the palm in the character of a lover and a husband, as well as of a son. When he comes upon a palm which he thinks suitable, he will not begin cutting at the trunk until he has intimated as delicately as he can the reasons which lead him to perform that surgical operation, and the ardent affection which he cherishes for the tree. For this purpose he holds a dialogue with the palm, in which he naturally speaks in the character of the tree as well as in his own. "O mother *endang-reni*!" he begins, "for the sake of you I have let myself be drenched by the rain and scorched by the sun; long have I sought you! Now at last have I found you. How ardently have I longed for you! Often before have you given me the breast. Yet I still thirst. Therefore now I ask for four potfuls more." "Well, fair youth," replies the tree, "I have always been here. What is the reason that you have sought me?" "The reason I have sought you is that I have heard you suffer from *incontinentia urinae*." "So I do," says the tree. "Will you marry me?" says the man. "That I will," says the tree, "but first you must plight your troth and recite the usual confession of faith." On that the man takes a rattan leaf and wraps it round the palm as a pledge of betrothal, after which he says the creed: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." The maidenly and orthodox scruples of the tree having thus been satisfied, he embraces it as his bride. At first he attaches only a small dish to the trunk to receive the juices which exude from the cut in the bark; a large dish might frighten the tree. In fastening the dish to the palm he says, "*Bok-endang-reni*! your child is languishing away for thirst. He asks you for a drink." The tree replies, "Let him slake his thirst! Mother's breasts are full to overflowing."¹ We have already seen that in some parts of Northern India a mock marriage between two actors is performed in honour of a newly-planted orchard,² no doubt for the purpose of making it bear fruit. In the Nicobar

¹ J. Kreemer, "Tiang-déris," *Mededeelingen van voege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxvi. (1882), pp. 128-132. This and the preceding custom have been already quoted by G. A. Wilken ("Het animisme bij de

volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 962 sq.; and *Handleiding voor de vorgetij-kende Volkenkunde* (Leyden, 1893), p. 550).

² Vol. I. p. 177.

Islands a pregnant woman is taken into the gardens in order to impart the blessing of fertility to the plants.¹ In various parts of Europe customs have prevailed both at spring and harvest which are clearly based on the same primitive notion that the relation of the human sexes to each other can be so used as to quicken the growth of plants. For example, in the Ukraine on St. George's Day (the twenty-third of April) the priest in his robes, attended by his acolytes, goes out to the fields of the village, where the crops are beginning to show green above the ground, and blesses them. After that the young married people lie down in couples on the sown fields and roll several times over on them, in the belief that this will promote the growth of the crops. In some parts of Russia the priest himself is rolled by women over the sprouting crop, and that without regard to the mud and holes which he may encounter in his beneficent progress. If the shepherd resists or remonstrates, his flock murmurs, "Little Father, you do not really wish us well, you do not wish us to have corn, although you do wish to live on our corn."² In England it used to be customary for young couples to roll down a slope together on May Day; on Greenwich-hill the custom was practised at Easter and Whitsuntide, as it still is, or was within the present generation, practised near Dublin at Whitsuntide. When we consider how closely these seasons, especially May Day and Whitsuntide, are associated with ceremonies for the revival of plant life in spring, we shall scarcely doubt that the custom of rolling in couples at such times had originally the same significance which it still has in Russia; and when further we compare this particular custom with the practice of representing the vernal powers of vegetation by a bridal pair, and remember the traditions which even in our own country attach to May-Day,³ we shall probably do no injustice to our forefathers if we conclude that they once celebrated the return of spring with grosser

¹ W. Svoboda, "Die Bewohner des Nikobaren-Archipels," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, v. (1892), p. 193 sq. For other examples of a fruitful woman making trees fruitful, see vol. i. p. 38 sq.

² Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 480 sq.; *id.*, *Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 341.

³ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 213, quoting Stubbs, *Anatomic of Abuses* (1585), p. 94.

rites, of which the customs I have referred to are only a stunted survival. Indeed, these rites in their grossest form are said to be still observed in various parts of Holland at Whitsuntide.¹ In some parts of Germany at harvest the men and women, who have reaped the corn, roll together on the field.² This again is probably a mitigation of an older and ruder custom designed to impart fertility to the fields by methods like those resorted to by the Pipiles of Central America long ago, and by the cultivators of rice in Java at the present time. In Poso, when the rice-crop is not thriving, the farmer's wife sets bowls of rice and betel in various parts of the field; then she lies down, draws her petticoat over her head, and pretends to fall asleep. But one of her children thereupon mimics the crowing of a cock, and at the sound she gets up, "because a new day has dawned." The intention of this ceremony, which the natives could not or would not explain to the Dutch missionary who reports it, may be to place the woman at the disposal of the god of the field. We are expressly told that there is a special god of the rice-fields named Puwe-wai, and that the ceremony in question is performed in his honour.³

To the student who cares to track the devious course of the human mind in its gropings after truth, it is of some interest to observe that the same theoretical belief in the sympathetic influence of the sexes on vegetation, which has led some peoples to indulge their passions as a means of fertilising the earth, has led others to seek the same end by directly opposite means. From the moment that they sowed the maize till the time that they reaped it, the Indians of Nicaragua lived chastely, keeping apart from their wives and

¹ G. W. W. C. Baron van Hoëvell, in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 134 note. The custom seems to go by the name of *dauwtropfen* or "dew-treading." As districts or places in which the practice is still kept up the writer names South Holland, Dordrecht, and Rotterdam.

² L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg* (Oldenburg, 1867), ii. p. 78, § 361:

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Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 481: *id.*, *Mytholog. Forschungen*, p. 340. Compare Th. Siebs, "Das Saterland," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893), p. 277.

³ A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), p. 138, *ibid.* xl. (1896), p. 16 sq.

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sleeping in a separate place. They ate no salt, and drank neither cocoa nor *chicha*, the fermented liquor made from maize; in short the season was for them, as the Spanish historian observes, a time of abstinence.¹ To this day some of the Indian tribes of Central America practise continence for the purpose of thereby promoting the growth of the crops. Thus we are told that before sowing the maize the Kekchi Indians sleep apart from their wives, and eat no flesh for five days, while among the Lanquineros and Cajaboneros the period of abstinence from these carnal pleasures extends to thirteen days.² So amongst some of the Germans of Transylvania it is a rule that no man may sleep with his wife during the whole of the time that he is engaged in sowing his fields.³ In some of the Melanesian islands, when the yam vines are being trained, the men sleep near the gardens and never approach their wives; should they enter the garden after breaking this rule of continence the fruits of the garden would be spoilt.⁴ In the Motu tribe of New Guinea, when rain has fallen plentifully and there is promise of a good crop of bananas, one of the chief men becomes holy or taboo, and must live apart from his wife and eat only certain kinds of food. He bids the young men beat the drum and dance, "in order that by so doing there may be a large harvest. If the dancing is not given, there will be an end to the good growth; but if it is continued, all will go well. People come in from other villages to assist, and will dance all night."⁵ In the incense-growing region of Arabia in antiquity there were three families charged with the special care of the incense-trees. They were called sacred, and at the time when they cut the trees or gathered the incense

¹ G. F. Oviedo y Valdes, *Histoire du Nicaragua* (published in Ternaux-Compans' *Voyages, Relations et Mémoires originaux*, etc.), Paris, 1840, p. 228 sq.; Herrera, *General History of the vast continent and islands called America* (Stevens' trans.), iii. 298.

² C. Sapper, "Die Gebräuche und religiösen Anschauungen der Kekchi-Indianer," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 203. Abstinence from women for several days is also practised before the sowing

of beans and of chilis, but only by Indians who do a large business in these commodities (*ibid.* p. 205).

³ A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt, 1880), p. 7.

⁴ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 134.

⁵ J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 181. The word which I have taken to mean "holy or taboo" is *kelaga*. Mr. Chalmers does not translate or explain it.

they were forbidden to pollute themselves with women or with the contact of the dead ; the observance of these rules of ceremonial purity was believed to increase the supply of incense.¹ With ancient Greek husbandmen it was a maxim that olives should always be planted and gathered by pure boys and virgins ; the uncommon fruitfulness of the olive trees at Anazarbus in Cilicia was attributed to their being tended by young and innocent children. In default of such workers, the olive-gatherer had to swear that he had been faithful to his own wife ; for his fidelity was believed to ensure an abundant crop of fruit the following year.² The same rule of chastity which is thus believed to contribute to the fertility of the earth and of trees is also applied, oddly enough, for the purpose of multiplying the animals which the savage uses as food. At Mowat, in New Guinea, the men are reported to have no relations with women during the season when the turtles are coupling, although considerable laxity of morals prevails at other times.³ The reason for this sudden access of virtue is no doubt nothing more than a fear on the part of the untutored savage that the commerce of the sexes would in some way interfere with the coupling of the turtles and so diminish his supply of food. The same rule of continence is observed by unmarried people in Mabuiag at the same season, which lasts during parts of October and November ; for they believe that if the rule were broken they would catch no turtle ; whenever the canoe approached the pair, the male would separate from the female, and the two would dive down into deep water in different directions.⁴

Again, the sympathetic relation supposed to exist between the commerce of the sexes and the fertility of the earth manifests itself in the belief that illicit love tends, directly or indirectly, to mar that fertility and to blight the crops. Such a belief prevails, for example, among the Karens of Burma. They imagine that adultery or fornication has a powerful influence to injure the harvest. Hence if the crops have been bad for a year or two, and no rain

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii. 54 ; Solinus, xxxiii. 6 sq., p. 166 ed. Mommsen (first edition).

² Palladius, *De re rustica*, i. 6. 14 ; *Geoponica*, ix. 3. 5 sq.

³ A. C. Haddon, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 467.

⁴ *Id.*, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), p. 397.

falls, the villagers set down the dearth to secret sins of this kind, and say that the God of heaven and earth is angry with them on that account; and they all unite in making an offering to appease him. Further, whenever adultery or fornication is detected, the elders decide that the sinners must buy a hog and kill it. Then the woman takes one foot of the hog, and the man takes another, and they scrape out furrows in the ground with each foot, and fill the furrows with the blood of the hog. Next they scratch the ground with their hands and pray: "God of heaven and earth, God of the mountains and hills, I have destroyed the productiveness of the country. Do not be angry with me, do not hate me; but have mercy on me, and compassionate me. Now I repair the mountains, now I heal the hills, and the streams and the lands. May there be no failure of crops, may there be no unsuccessful labours, or unfortunate efforts in my country. Let them be dissipated to the foot of the horizon. Make thy paddy fruitful, thy rice abundant. Make the vegetables to flourish. If we cultivate but little, still grant that we may obtain a little." After each has prayed thus, they return to the house and say they have repaired the earth.¹ The Battas of Sumatra think that if an unmarried woman is big with child, it is necessary to give her in marriage at once, even to a man of lower rank; for otherwise the people will be infested by tigers, and the crops in the field will not yield an abundant return. The crime of incest, in their opinion, would blast the whole harvest if the wrong were not speedily repaired.² When the rain pours down steadily day after day and week after week, and the crops are rotting in the fields, the Dyaks of Borneo come to the conclusion that some one has been indulging in fleshly lusts; so the elders lay their heads together and adjudicate on all cases of incest and bigamy, and purify the earth with the blood of pigs, which appears to possess in a high degree the valuable property of atoning

¹ F. Mason, "On dwellings, works of art, laws, etc., of the Karens," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, xxxvii. (1868), Part ii. p. 147 sq.

² J. B. Neumann, "Het Pane- en

Bila-stroomgebied op het eiland Sumatra," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, dl. iii. Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 3 (1886), p. 514 sq.

for moral guilt. For three days the villages are tabooed and all labour discontinued; the inhabitants remain at home, and no strangers are admitted. Not long ago the offenders, whose lewdness had thus brought the whole country into danger, would have been punished with death or at least slavery. A Dyak may not marry his first cousin unless he first performs a special ceremony called *bergaput* to avert evil consequences from the land. The couple repair to the water-side, fill a small pitcher with their personal ornaments, and sink it in the river; or instead of a jar they fling a chopper and a plate into the water. A pig is then sacrificed on the bank, and its carcass, drained of blood, is thrown in after the jar. Next the pair are pushed into the water by their friends and ordered to bathe together. Lastly, a joint of bamboo is filled with pig's blood, and the couple perambulate the country and the villages round about, sprinkling the blood on the ground. After that they are free to marry. This is done, we are told, for the sake of the whole country, in order that the rice may not be blasted.¹ When it rains in torrents, the Galelareese say that brother and sister, or father and daughter, or in short some near relations are having illicit relations with each other, and that every human being must be informed of it, for then only will the rain cease to descend. The superstition has repeatedly caused blood relations to be accused, rightfully or wrongfully, of incest. The people also regard other alarming natural phenomena, for instance a violent earthquake or the eruption of a volcano, as consequences of crimes of the same sort. Persons accused of the crime are brought to Ternate; it is said that formerly they were often drowned

¹ H. Ling Roth, "Low's natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), pp. 113 sq., 133, xxii. (1893), p. 24; *id.*, *Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 401. Compare J. Perham, "Petara or Sea Dyak Gods," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 8, December 1881, p. 150; H. Ling Roth, *Natives of Sarawak*, etc., i. 180. According to Archdeacon Perham, "Every district traversed by an adulterer is believed

to be accursed of the gods until the proper sacrifice has been offered." In respectable Dyak families, when an unmarried girl is found with child and the father is unknown, they sacrifice a pig and sprinkle the doors with its blood to wash away the sin (Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 64). In Ceram a person convicted of unchastity has to expiate his guilt by smearing every house in the village with the blood of a pig and a fowl (A. Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 144).

on the way or, on being haled thither, were condemned to be thrown into the volcano.¹ In Loango the negroes think that drought and dearth result from the intercourse of a man with an immature girl, unless the offender repairs to court, and there in the presence of the king and a large audience expiates his guilt by dances and other ceremonies, in return for which he receives absolution from the king.²

When we observe how widely diffused is the belief in the sympathetic influence of human conduct, and especially of the relations of the sexes, on the fruits of the earth, we may perhaps be allowed to conjecture that the Lenten fast, with the rule of continence which is still, I understand, enjoined on strict Catholics during that season, was in its origin intended, not so much to commemorate the sufferings of a dying God, as to foster the growth of the seed, which in the bleak days of early spring the husbandman commits, with anxious care and misgiving, to the bosom of the naked earth. But to this topic we shall recur later on.

If we ask why it is that similar beliefs should logically lead, among different peoples, to such opposite modes of conduct as strict chastity and more or less open debauchery, the reason, as it presents itself to the primitive mind, is perhaps not very far to seek. If rude man identifies himself, in a manner, with nature; if he fails to distinguish the impulses and processes in himself from the methods which nature adopts to ensure the reproduction of plants and animals, he may jump to one of two conclusions. Either he may infer that by yielding to his appetites he will thereby assist in the multiplication of plants and animals; or he may imagine that the vigour which he refuses to expend in reproducing his own kind, will form as it were a store of energy whereby other creatures, whether vegetable or animal, will somehow benefit in propagating their species. Thus from the

¹ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 514. In the Banggai Archipelago, to the east of Celebes, earthquakes are ex-

plained as punishments inflicted by evil spirits for indulgence in illicit love (F. S. A. de Clercq, *Bijdragen tot de kennis der Residentie Ternate* (Leyden, 1890), p. 132).

² Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 326.

same crude philosophy, the same primitive notions of nature and life, the savage may derive by different channels a rule either of profligacy or of asceticism.

To readers bred in a religion which is saturated with the ascetic idealism of the East, the explanation which I have given of the rule of continence observed under certain circumstances by rude or savage peoples may seem far-fetched and improbable. They may think that the idea of moral purity, which is so intimately associated in their minds with the observance of such a rule, furnishes a sufficient explanation of it; they may hold with Milton¹ that chastity in itself is a noble virtue, and that the restraint which it imposes on one of the strongest impulses of our animal nature marks out those who can submit to it as men raised above the common herd, and therefore worthy to receive the seal of the divine approbation. However natural this mode of thought may seem to us, it is utterly foreign and indeed incomprehensible to the savage. If he resists on occasion the sexual instinct, it is from no high idealism, no ethereal aspiration after moral purity, but for the sake of some ulterior yet perfectly definite and concrete object, to gain which he is prepared to sacrifice the immediate gratification of his senses. That this is or may be so, the examples I have cited are amply sufficient to establish. They show that where the instinct of self-preservation, which manifests itself chiefly in the search for food, conflicts or appears to conflict with the instinct which conduces to the propagation of the species, the former instinct, as the primary and more fundamental, is capable of overmastering the latter. In other words, primitive man is willing to restrain his sexual propensity for the sake of food. Another object for the sake of which the savage consents to exercise the same self-restraint

¹ "Next (for hear me out now, readers) that I may tell ye whither my younger feet wandered; I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the

expense of his best blood, or of his life, if it so befell him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron; from whence even then I learned what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies, by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn" (Milton, *Apology for Smectymnus*).

is victory in war. In an earlier part of this work¹ we saw that not only the warrior in the field but his friends at home will often bridle their sensual appetites from a belief that by so doing they will the more easily overcome their enemies. The fallacy of such a belief, like the belief that the chastity of the sower conduces to the growth of the seed, is plain enough to us; yet perhaps the self-restraint which these and the like beliefs, vain and false as they are, have imposed on mankind, has not been without its utility in bracing and strengthening the breed. For strength of character in the race as in the individual consists mainly in the power of sacrificing the present to the future, of disregarding the immediate temptations of ephemeral pleasure for more distant and lasting sources of satisfaction. The more the power is exercised the higher and stronger becomes the character; till the height of heroism is reached in men who sacrifice the pleasures of life and even life itself for the sake of keeping or winning for others, perhaps in distant ages, the blessings of freedom and truth.

Compared with the Corn-mother of Germany and the harvest-Maiden of Scotland, the Demeter and Proserpine of Greece are late products of religious growth. But, as Aryans, the Greeks must at one time or another have observed harvest customs like those which are still practised by Celts, Teutons, and Slavs, and which, far beyond the limits of the Aryan world, have been practised by the Incas of Peru, the Dyaks of Borneo, and the Malays of Java, of Sumatra, and of the Peninsula—a sufficient proof that the ideas on which these customs rest are not confined to any one race, but naturally suggest themselves to all untutored peoples engaged in agriculture. It is probable, therefore, that Demeter and Proserpine, those stately and beautiful figures of Greek mythology, grew out of the same simple beliefs and practices which still prevail among our modern peasantry, and that they were represented by rude dolls made out of the yellow sheaves on many a harvest-field long before their breathing images were wrought in bronze and marble by the master hands of Phidias and

¹ Vol. i. pp. 29, 31 *sq.*, 328.

Praxiteles. A reminiscence of that olden time—a scent, so to say, of the harvest-field—lingered to the last in the title of the Maiden (*Kore*) by which Proserpine was commonly known. Thus if the prototype of Demeter is the Corn-mother of Germany, the prototype of Proserpine is the harvest-Maiden, which, autumn after autumn, is still made from the last sheaf on the Braes of Balquhidder. Indeed if we knew more about the peasant-farmers of ancient Greece we should probably find that even in classical times they continued annually to fashion their Corn-mothers (Demeters) and Maidens (Proserpines) out of the ripe corn on the harvest-fields.¹ But unfortunately the Demeter and Proserpine whom we know are the denizens of towns, the majestic inhabitants of lordly temples; it was for such divinities alone that the refined writers of antiquity had eyes; the uncouth rites performed by rustics amongst the corn were beneath their notice. Even if they noticed them, they probably never dreamed of any connection between the puppet of corn-stalks on the sunny stubble-field and the marble divinity in the shady coolness of the temple. Still the writings even of these town-bred and cultured persons afford us an occasional glimpse of a Demeter as rude as the rudest that a remote German village can show. Thus the story that Iasion begat a child Plutus ("wealth," "abundance") by Demeter on a thrice-ploughed field,² may be compared with the West Prussian custom of the mock birth of a child on the harvest-field.³ In this Prussian custom the pretended mother represents the Corn-mother (*Żytniamatka*); the pretended child represents the Corn-baby, and the whole ceremony is a charm to ensure a crop next year.⁴ The custom and the legend alike point to an

¹ In Theocritus (vii. 155 *sqq.*) mention is made of a Demeter of the Threshing-floor with a heap of corn beside her and sheaves and poppies in her hands. Mr. W. H. D. Rouse suggested to me that this description perhaps applied to a Corn-mother or Corn-maiden of the kind referred to in the text. In modern times an image of Demeter at her old sanctuary of Eleusis was regarded by the peasants as essential to the prosperity of the crops;

it stood in the middle of a threshing-floor, and after it had been removed by Dr. Clarke in 1802 the people lamented that their abundant harvests had disappeared with it. See E. Dodwell, *Tour through Greece*, i. 583; compare R. Chandler, *Travels in Greece*, p. 191.

² Homer, *Od.* v. 125 *sqq.*; Hesiod, *Theog.* 969 *sqq.*

³ See above, p. 182 *sq.*

⁴ It is possible that a ceremony per-

older practice of performing, among the sprouting crops in spring or the stubble in autumn, one of those real or mimic acts of procreation by which, as we have seen, primitive man often seeks to infuse his own vigorous life into the languid or decaying energies of nature. Another glimpse of the savage under the civilised Demeter will be afforded farther on, when we come to deal with another aspect of these agricultural divinities.

The reader may have observed that in modern folk-customs the corn-spirit is generally represented either by a Corn-mother (Old Woman, etc.) or by a Maiden (Harvest-child, etc.), not both by a Corn-mother and by a Maiden. Why then did the Greeks represent the corn both as a mother and a daughter?

In the Breton custom the mother-sheaf—a large figure made out of the last sheaf with a small corn-doll inside of it—clearly represents both the Corn-mother and the Corn-daughter, the latter still unborn.¹ Again, in the Prussian custom just referred to, the woman who plays the part of Corn-mother represents the ripe grain; the child appears to represent next year's corn, which may be regarded, naturally enough, as the child of this year's corn, since it is from the seed of this year's harvest that next year's crop will spring. Further, we have seen that among the Malays of the Peninsula and sometimes among the Highlanders of Scotland the spirit of the grain is represented in double female form, both as old and young, by means of ears taken alike from the ripe crop: in Scotland the old spirit of the corn appears as the Carline or Cailleach, the young spirit as the Maiden; while among the Malays of the Peninsula the two spirits of the rice are

formed in a Cyprian worship of Ariadne may have been of this nature. See Plutarch, *Theseus*, 20: ἐν δὲ τῇ θυσίᾳ τοῦ Γορπιαίου μηρὶς ἱσταμένου δευτέρᾳ κατακλιόμενον τινα τῶν νεαρῶν φθιγγεσθαι καὶ ποιεῖν ἅπερ ὠδινούσαι γυναῖκες. We have already seen grounds for regarding Ariadne as a goddess or spirit of vegetation (vol. i. p. 229). If, however, the reference is to the Syro-Macedonian calendar, in which Gorpiaeus corresponds to September (Daremberg et Saglio, *Dict. des Antiquités*, i. 831), the

ceremony could not have been a harvest celebration, but may have been a vintage one. Amongst the Minnitarees in North America, the Prince of Neuwied saw a tall strong woman pretend to bring up a stalk of maize out of her stomach; the object of the ceremony was to secure a good crop of maize in the following year. See Maximilian, Prinz zu Wied, *Reise in das innere Nord-America*, ii. 269.

¹ See above, p. 173.

definitely related to each other as mother and child.¹ Judged by these analogies Demeter would be the ripe crop of this year; Proserpine would be the seed-corn taken from it and sown in autumn, to reappear in spring. The descent of Proserpine into the lower world² would thus be a mythical expression for the sowing of the seed; her reappearance in spring³ would signify the sprouting of the young corn. In this way the Proserpine of one year becomes the Demeter of the next, and this may very well have been the original form of the myth. But when with the advance of religious thought the corn came to be personified, no longer as a being that went through the whole cycle of birth, growth, reproduction, and death within a year, but as an immortal goddess, consistency requires that one of the two personifications, the mother or the daughter, should be sacrificed. However, the double conception of the corn as mother and daughter may have been too old and too deeply rooted in the popular mind to be eradicated by logic, and so room had to be found in the reformed myth both for mother and daughter. This was done by assigning to Proserpine the character of the corn sown in autumn and sprouting in spring, while Demeter was left to play the somewhat vague part of the heavy mother of the corn, who laments its annual disappearance underground, and rejoices over its reappearance in spring. Thus instead of a regular succession of divine beings, each living a year and then giving birth to her successor, the reformed myth exhibits the conception of two divine and immortal beings, one of whom annually disappears into and reappears from the ground, while the other has little to do but to weep and rejoice at the appropriate seasons.

This theory of the double personification of the corn in Greek myth assumes that both personifications (Demeter and Proserpine) are original. But if we suppose that the Greek myth started with a single personification, the after-

¹ See above, pp. 187 *sqq.*, 199 *sqq.*

² Cp. Preller, *Griech. Mythol.* i. 763, note 3. In Greece the annual descent of Proserpine appears to have taken place at the Great Eleusinian Mysteries and at the Thesmophoria, that is, about the time of the autumn

sowing. But in Sicily her descent seems to have been celebrated when the corn was fully ripe (Diodorus, v. 4), that is, in summer.

³ Homer, *Hymn to Demeter*, 401 *sqq.*; Preller, *l.c.*

growth of a second personification may perhaps be explained as follows. On looking over the harvest customs which have been passed under review, it may be noticed that they involve two distinct conceptions of the corn-spirit. For whereas in some of the customs the corn-spirit is treated as immanent in the corn, in others it is regarded as external to it. Thus when a particular sheaf is called by the name of the corn-spirit, and is dressed in clothes and handled with reverence,¹ the spirit is clearly regarded as immanent in the corn. But when the spirit is said to make the crops grow by passing through them, or to blight the grain of those against whom she has a grudge,² she is apparently conceived as distinct from, though exercising power over, the corn. Conceived in the latter way the corn-spirit is in a fair way to become a deity of the corn, if she has not become so already. Of these two conceptions, that of the corn-spirit as immanent in the corn is doubtless the older, since the view of nature as animated by indwelling spirits appears to have generally preceded the view of it as controlled by external deities; to put it shortly, animism precedes deism. In the harvest customs of our European peasantry the corn-spirit appears to be conceived now as immanent in the corn and now as external to it. In Greek mythology, on the other hand, Demeter is viewed rather as the deity of the corn than as the spirit immanent in it.³ The process of thought which leads to the change from the one mode of conception to the other is anthropomorphism, or the gradual investment of the immanent spirits with more and more of the attributes of humanity. As men emerge from savagery the tendency to humanise their divinities gains strength; and the more human these become the wider is the breach which severs them from the natural objects of which they were at first merely the animating spirits or souls. But in the progress

¹ In some places it was customary to kneel down before the last sheaf, in others to kiss it. See W. Mannhardt, *Korndämonen*, p. 26; *id.*, *Mytholog. Forschungen*, p. 339. The custom of kneeling and bowing before the last corn is said to have been observed, at least occasionally, in England. See *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1888), p. 270.

The Malay sorceress who cut the seven ears of rice to form the Rice-child kissed the ears after she had cut them (W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 241).

² Above, p. 170 sq.

³ In the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, she is represented as controlling the growth of the corn. See above, p. 169.

upwards from savagery, men of the same generation do not march abreast; and though the new anthropomorphic gods may satisfy the religious wants of the more developed intelligences, the backward members of the community will cling by preference to the old animistic notions. Now when the spirit of any natural object such as the corn has been invested with human qualities, detached from the object, and converted into a deity controlling it, the object itself is, by the withdrawal of its spirit, left inanimate; it becomes, so to say, a spiritual vacuum. But the popular fancy, intolerant of such a vacuum, in other words, unable to conceive anything as inanimate, immediately creates a fresh mythical being, with which it peoples the vacant object. Thus the same natural object comes to be represented in mythology by two distinct beings; first, by the old spirit now separated from it and raised to the rank of a deity; second, by the new spirit, freshly created by the popular fancy to supply the place vacated by the old spirit on its elevation to a higher sphere. The problem for mythology now is, having got two distinct personifications of the same object, what to do with them? How are their relations to each other to be adjusted, and room found for both in the mythological system? When the old spirit or new deity is conceived as creating or producing the object in question, the problem is easily solved. Since the object is believed to be produced by the old spirit, and animated by the new one, the latter, as the soul of the object, must also owe its existence to the former; thus the old spirit will stand to the new one as producer to produced, that is, in mythology, as parent to child, and if both spirits are conceived as female, their relation will be that of mother and daughter. In this way, starting from a single personification of the corn as female, mythic fancy might in time reach a double personification of it as mother and daughter. It would be very rash to affirm that this was the way in which the myth of Demeter and Proserpine actually took shape; but it seems a legitimate conjecture that the reduplication of deities, of which Demeter and Proserpine furnish an example, may sometimes have arisen in the way indicated. For example, among the pairs of deities whom we have been considering, it has been shown that there

are grounds for regarding both Isis and her companion god Osiris as personifications of the corn.¹ On the hypothesis just suggested, Isis would be the old corn-spirit, and Osiris would be the newer one, whose relationship to the old spirit was variously explained as that of brother, husband, and son;² for of course mythology would always be free to account for the coexistence of the two divinities in more ways than one. Further, this hypothesis offers at least a possible explanation of the relation of Virbius to the Arician Diana. The latter, as we have seen,³ was a tree-goddess; and if, as I have conjectured, the Flamen Virbialis was no other than the priest of Nemi himself, that is, the King of the Wood, Virbius must also have been a tree-spirit. On the present hypothesis he was the newer tree-spirit, whose relation to the old tree-spirit (Diana) was explained by representing him as her favourite or lover. It must not, however, be forgotten that this proposed explanation of such pairs of deities as Demeter and Proserpine, Isis and Osiris, Diana and Virbius, is purely conjectural, and is only given for what it is worth.

§ 9. *Lityrses*

In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to show that in the Corn-mother and harvest-Maiden of Northern Europe we have the prototypes of Demeter and Proserpine. But an essential feature is still wanting to complete the resemblance. A leading incident in the Greek myth is the death and resurrection of Proserpine; it is this incident which, coupled with the nature of the goddess as a deity of vegetation, links the myth with the cults of Adonis, Attis, Osiris, and Dionysus; and it is in virtue of this incident that the myth is considered in this chapter. It remains, therefore, to see whether the conception of the annual death and resurrection of a god, which figures so prominently in these great Greek and Oriental worships, has not also its origin in the rustic rites observed by reapers and vine-dressers amongst the corn-shocks and the vines.

¹ See above, pp. 141 sqq., 145 sq.

² Pauly, *Real-Encyclopädie der class. Alterthumswissenschaft*, v. 1011.

³ Vol. i. p. 230 sq.

Our general ignorance of the popular superstitions and customs of the ancients has already been confessed. But the obscurity which thus hangs over the first beginnings of ancient religion is fortunately dissipated to some extent in the present case. The worships of Osiris, Adonis, and Attis had their respective seats, as we have seen, in Egypt, Syria, and Phrygia; and in each of these countries certain harvest and vintage customs are known to have been observed, the resemblance of which to each other and to the national rites struck the ancients themselves, and, compared with the harvest customs of modern peasants and barbarians, seems to throw some light on the origin of the rites in question.

It has been already mentioned, on the authority of Diodorus, that in ancient Egypt the reapers were wont to lament over the first sheaf cut, invoking Isis as the goddess to whom they owed the discovery of corn.¹ To the plaintive song or cry sung or uttered by Egyptian reapers the Greeks gave the name of Maneros, and explained the name by a story that Maneros, the only son of the first Egyptian king, invented agriculture, and, dying an untimely death, was thus lamented by the people.² It appears, however, that the name Maneros is due to the misunderstanding of the formula *mdâ-ne-hra*, "come thou back," which has been discovered in various Egyptian writings, for example in the dirge of Isis in the Book of the Dead.³ Hence we may suppose that the cry *mdâ-ne-hra* was chanted by the reapers over the cut corn as a dirge for the death of the corn-spirit (Isis or Osiris) and a prayer for its return. As the cry was raised over the first ears reaped, it would seem that the corn-spirit was believed by the Egyptians to be present in the first corn cut and to die under the sickle. We have seen that in the Malay Peninsula and Java the first ears of rice are taken to represent either the Soul of the Rice or the Rice-bride and the

¹ Diodorus, i. 14, ἐτι γὰρ καὶ νῦν κατὰ τὸν θρασυὸν τοῖς πρώτοις ἀμειβόμενοι σάχυνθις θέντας τοὺς ἀνθρώπους κύντεςθαι πλησίον τοῦ δράματος καὶ τῇ Ἰσὶ ἀνακαλεῖσθαι κ.τ.λ. For θέντας we should perhaps read σύνθεντας, which is supported by the following δράματος.

² Herodotus, ii. 79; Pollux, iv. 54; Pausanias, ix. 29. 7; Athenaeus, xiv. p.

620 A.

³ Brugsch, *Adonisklage und Linoslied*, p. 24. According to another interpretation, however, Maneros is the Egyptian *manurosh*, "Let us be merry." See Lauth, "Ueber den ägyptischen Maneros," *Sitzungsberichte der königl. bayer. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München*, 1869, ii. 163-194.

Rice-bridegroom.¹ In parts of Russia the first sheaf is treated much in the same way that the last sheaf is treated elsewhere. It is reaped by the mistress herself, taken home and set in the place of honour near the holy pictures; afterwards it is threshed separately, and some of its grain is mixed with the next year's seed-corn.²

In Phoenicia and Western Asia a plaintive song, like that chanted by the Egyptian corn-reapers, was sung at the vintage and probably (to judge by analogy) also at harvest. This Phoenician song was called by the Greeks Linus or Ailinus and explained, like Maneros, as a lament for the death of a youth named Linus.³ According to one story Linus was brought up by a shepherd, but torn to pieces by his dogs.⁴ But, like Maneros, the name Linus or Ailinus appears to have originated in a verbal misunderstanding, and to be nothing more than the cry *ai lanu*, that is "woe to us," which the Phoenicians probably uttered in mourning for Adonis;⁵ at least Sappho seems to have regarded Adonis and Linus as equivalent.⁶

In Bithynia a like mournful ditty, called Bormus or Borimus, was chanted by Mariandynian reapers. Bormus was said to have been a handsome youth, the son of King Upias or of a wealthy and distinguished man. One summer day, watching the reapers at work in his fields, he went to fetch them a drink of water and was never heard of more. So the reapers sought for him, calling him in plaintive strains, which they continued to chant at harvest ever afterwards.⁷

In Phrygia the corresponding song, sung by harvesters both at reaping and at threshing, was called Lityerses. According to one story, Lityerses was a bastard son of Midas, King of Phrygia. He used to reap the corn, and had an enormous appetite. When a stranger happened to enter the corn-field or to pass by it, Lityerses gave him plenty to eat and drink, then took him to the corn-fields on the banks of

¹ Above, pp. 199 sq., 201 sq.

² Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 249 sq.

³ Homer, *Il.* xviii. 570; Herodotus, ii. 79; Pausanias, ix. 29; Conon, *Narrat.* 19. For the form Ailinus see Suidas, s.v.; Euripides, *Orestes*, 1395; Sophocles, *Ajax*, 627. Cp. Moschus,

Idyl. iii. 1; Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo*, 20.

⁴ Conon, *l.c.*

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 281.

⁶ Pausanias, *l.c.*

⁷ Pollux, iv. 54; Athenaeus, xiv. pp. 619 F-620 A; Hesychius, s.v. Βάρμωρ and Μαρμαδωρὸς θήνηος.

the Maeander and compelled him to reap along with him. Lastly, he used to wrap the stranger in a sheaf, cut off his head with a sickle, and carry away his body, wrapt in the corn stalks. But at last he was himself slain by Hercules, who threw his body into the river.¹ As Hercules was probably reported to have slain Lityerses in the same way that Lityerses slew others (as Theseus treated Sinis and Sciron), we may infer that Lityerses used to throw the bodies of his victims into the river. According to another version of the story, Lityerses, a son of Midas, used to challenge people to a reaping match with him, and if he vanquished them he used to thrash them; but one day he met with a stronger reaper, who slew him.²

There are some grounds for supposing that in these stories of Lityerses we have the description of a Phrygian harvest custom in accordance with which certain persons, especially strangers passing the harvest field, were regularly regarded as embodiments of the corn-spirit and as such were seized by the reapers, wrapt in sheaves, and beheaded, their bodies, bound up in the corn-stalks, being afterwards thrown into water as a rain-charm. The grounds for this supposition are, first, the resemblance of the Lityerses story to the harvest customs of European peasantry, and, second, the frequency of human sacrifices offered by savage races to promote the fertility of the fields. We will examine these grounds successively, beginning with the former.

In comparing the story with the harvest customs of Europe,³ three points deserve special attention, namely: I. the reaping match and the binding of persons in the sheaves; II. the killing of the corn-spirit or his representatives; III. the treatment of visitors to the harvest-field or of strangers passing it.

I. In regard to the first head, we have seen that in modern Europe the person who cuts or binds or threshes the

¹ The story was told by Sosithus in his play of *Daphnis*. His verses have been preserved in the tract of an anonymous writer. See *Scriptores rerum mirabilium Graeci*, ed. Westermann, p. 220; also Athenaeus, x. p. 415 B; Schol. on Theocritus, x. 41; Photius, *Lexicon*, Suidas, and Hesychius, s.v.

Lityerses; Apostolius, x. 74. Photius mentions the sickle. Lityerses is the subject of a special study by Mannhardt (*Mythologische Forschungen*, p. 1 sqq.), whom I follow.

² Pollux, iv. 54.

³ In this comparison I closely follow Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 18 sqq.

last sheaf is often exposed to rough treatment at the hands of his fellow-labourers. For example, he is bound up in the last sheaf, and, thus encased, is carried or carted about, beaten, drenched with water, thrown on a dunghill, and so forth. Or, if he is spared this horseplay, he is at least the subject of ridicule or is thought to be destined to suffer some misfortune in the course of the year. Hence the harvesters are naturally reluctant to give the last cut at reaping or the last stroke at threshing or to bind the last sheaf, and towards the close of the work this reluctance produces an emulation among the labourers, each striving to finish his task as fast as possible, in order that he may escape the invidious distinction of being last.¹ For example, in the neighbourhood of Danzig, when the winter corn is cut and mostly bound up in sheaves, the portion which still remains to be bound is divided amongst the women binders, each of whom receives a swath of equal length to bind. A crowd of reapers, children, and idlers gathers round to witness the contest, and at the word, "Seize the Old Man," the women fall to work, all binding their allotted swaths as hard as they can. The spectators watch them narrowly, and the woman who cannot keep pace with the rest and consequently binds the last sheaf has to carry the Old Man (that is, the last sheaf made up in the form of a man) to the farmhouse and deliver it to the farmer with the words, "Here I bring you the Old Man." At the supper which follows, the Old Man is placed at the table and receives an abundant portion of food, which, as he cannot eat it, falls to the share of the woman who carried him. Afterwards the Old Man is placed in the yard and all the people dance round him. Or the woman who bound the last sheaf dances for a good while with the Old Man, while the rest form a ring round them; afterwards they all, one after the other, dance a single round with him. Further, the woman who bound the last sheaf goes herself by the name of the Old

¹ Cp. above, pp. 172, 179 *sq.*, 181 *sq.* On the other hand, the last sheaf is sometimes an object of desire and emulation. See p. 173 *sq.* It is so at Balquhider also (*Folk-lore Journal*, vi. 269); and it was formerly so on the Gareloch, Dumbartonshire, where there was a competi-

tion for the honour of cutting it, and handfuls of standing corn used to be hidden under sheaves in order that the last to be uncovered should form the Maiden. — (From the information of Archie Leitch. See p. 185, note 2.)

Man till the next harvest, and is often mocked with the cry, "Here comes the Old Man."¹ At Aschbach in Bavaria, when the reaping is nearly finished, the reapers say, "Now, we will drive out the Old Man." Each of them sets himself to reap a patch of corn as fast as he can; he who cuts the last handful or the last stalk is greeted by the rest with an exulting cry, "You have the Old Man." Sometimes a black mask is fastened on the reaper's face and he is dressed in woman's clothes; or if the reaper is a woman, she is dressed in man's clothes. A dance follows. At the supper the Old Man gets twice as large a portion of food as the others. At threshing, the proceedings are the same; the person who gives the last stroke is said to have the Old Man.²

These examples illustrate the contests in reaping, threshing, and binding which take place amongst the harvesters, from their unwillingness to suffer the ridicule and discomfort incurred by the one who happens to finish his work last. It will be remembered that the person who is last at reaping, binding, or threshing, is regarded as the representative of the corn-spirit,³ and this idea is more fully expressed by binding him or her in corn-stalks. The latter custom has been already illustrated, but a few more instances may be added. At Kloxin, near Stettin, the harvesters call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You have the Old Man, and must keep him." The Old Man is a great bundle of corn decked with flowers and ribbons, and fashioned into a rude semblance of the human form. It is fastened on a rake or strapped on a horse, and brought with music to the village. In delivering the Old Man to the farmer, the woman says—

"Here, dear Sir, is the Old Man.
He can stay no longer on the field,
He can hide himself no longer,
He must come into the village.
Ladies and gentlemen, pray be so kind
As to give the Old Man a present."

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 195. *deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 217, § 397.

² *Ibid.* p. 20; Panzer, *Beitrag zur* ³ Above, p. 190.

Fifty or sixty years ago the custom was to tie up the woman herself in pease-straw, and bring her with music to the farmhouse, where the harvesters danced with her till the pease-straw fell off.¹ In other villages round Stettin, when the last harvest-waggon is being loaded, there is a regular race amongst the women, each striving not to be last. For she who places the last sheaf on the waggon is called the Old Man, and is completely swathed in corn-stalks; she is also decked with flowers, and flowers and a helmet of straw are placed on her head. In solemn procession she carries the harvest-crown to the squire, over whose head she holds it while she utters a string of good wishes. At the dance which follows, the Old Man has the right to choose his, or rather her, partner; it is an honour to dance with him.² At Blankenfelde, in the district of Potsdam, the woman who binds the last sheaf at the rye-harvest is saluted with the cry, "You have the Old Man." A woman is then tied up in the last sheaf in such a way that only her head is left free; her hair also is covered with a cap made of rye-stalks, adorned with ribbons and flowers. She is called the Harvest-man, and must keep dancing in front of the last harvest-waggon till it reaches the squire's house, where she receives a present and is released from her envelope of corn.³ At Gommern, near Magdeburg, the reaper who cuts the last ears of corn is often wrapt up in corn-stalks so completely that it is hard to see whether there is a man in the bundle or not. Thus wrapt up he is taken by another stalwart reaper on his back, and carried round the field amidst the joyous cries of the harvesters.⁴ At Neuhausen, near Merseburg, the person who binds the last sheaf is wrapt in ears of oats and saluted as the Oats-man, whereupon the others dance round him.⁵ At Brie, Isle de France, the farmer himself is tied up in the *first* sheaf.⁶ At the harvest-home at Udvarhely, Transylvania, a person is encased in corn-stalks, and wears on his head a crown made out of the last ears cut. On reaching the village he is soured with water over and over.⁷ At Dingelstedt, in the district of Erfurt, about sixty years ago it was the

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 22.

² *Ibid.* p. 22.

³ *Ibid.* p. 22 sq.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 23.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 23 sq.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 24.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 24.

custom to tie up a man in the last sheaf. He was called the Old Man, and was brought home on the last waggon, amid huzzas and music. On reaching the farmyard he was rolled round the barn and drenched with water.¹ At Nördlingen in Bavaria the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is wrapt in straw and rolled on the threshing-floor.² In some parts of Oberpfalz, Bavaria, he is said to "get the Old Man," is wrapt in straw, and carried to a neighbour who has not yet finished his threshing.³ In Thüringen a sausage is stuck in the last sheaf at threshing, and thrown, with the sheaf, on the threshing-floor. It is called the *Barrenwurst* or *Bazenwurst*, and is eaten by all the threshers. After they have eaten it a man is encased in pease-straw, and thus attired is led through the village.⁴

"In all these cases the idea is that the spirit of the corn—the Old Man of vegetation—is driven out of the corn last cut or last threshed, and lives in the barn during the winter. At sowing-time he goes out again to the fields to resume his activity as animating force among the sprouting corn."⁵

Ideas of the same sort appear to attach to the last corn in India. At Hoshangábád, in Central India, when the reaping is nearly done, a patch of corn, about a rood in extent, is left standing in the cultivator's last field, and the reapers rest a little. Then they rush at this remnant, tear it up, and cast it into the air, shouting victory to one or other of the local gods, according to their religious persuasion. A sheaf is made out of this corn, tied to a bamboo, set up in the last harvest cart, and carried home in triumph. Here it is fastened up in the threshing-floor or attached to a tree or to the cattle-shed, where its services are held to be essential for the purpose of averting the evil-eye.⁶ A like custom prevails in the eastern districts of the North-Western Provinces of India. Sometimes a little patch is left untilled as a refuge for the field-spirit; sometimes it is sown, and when the corn of this patch has

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 24.

² *Ibid.* p. 24 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 25.

⁴ Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 223.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 25 sq.

⁶ C. A. Elliot, *Hoshangábád Settlement Report*, p. 178, quoted in *Panjab Notes and Queries*, iii. §§ 8, 168; W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 382 sq.

been reaped with a rush and a shout, it is presented to the priest, who offers it to the local gods or bestows it on a beggar.¹

II. Passing to the second point of comparison between the Lityerses story and European harvest customs, we have now to see that in the latter the corn-spirit is often believed to be killed at reaping or threshing. In the Romsdal and other parts of Norway, when the haymaking is over, the people say that "the Old Hay-man has been killed." In some parts of Bavaria the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is said to have killed the Corn-man, the Oats-man, or the Wheat-man, according to the crop.² In the Canton of Tillot, in Lothringen, at threshing the last corn the men keep time with their flails, calling out as they thresh, "We are killing the Old Woman! We are killing the Old Woman!" If there is an old woman in the house she is warned to save herself, or she will be struck dead.³ Near Ragnit, in Lithuania, the last handful of corn is left standing by itself, with the words, "The Old Woman (*Boba*) is sitting in there." Then a young reaper whets his scythe, and, with a strong sweep, cuts down the handful. It is now said of him that "he has cut off the Boba's head"; and he receives a gratuity from the farmer and a jugful of water over his head from the farmer's wife.⁴ According to another account, every Lithuanian reaper makes haste to finish his task; for the Old Rye-woman lives in the last stalks, and whoever cuts the last stalks kills the Old Rye-woman, and by killing her he brings trouble on himself.⁵ In Wilkischken (district of Tilsit) the man who cuts the last corn goes by the name of "The killer of the Rye-woman."⁶ In Lithuania, again, the corn-spirit is believed to be killed at threshing as well as at reaping. When only a single pile of corn remains to be threshed, all the threshers suddenly step back a few paces, as if at the word of command. Then they fall to work, plying their flails with the utmost rapidity and vehemence, till they come to the last bundle. Upon this they fling themselves with almost frantic fury, straining every nerve, and raining blows on it till the word "Halt!" rings out

¹ W. Crooke, *op. cit.* p. 383.

² W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 31.

³ *Ibid.* p. 334.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 330.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 331.

sharply from the leader. The man whose flail is the last to fall after the command to stop has been given is immediately surrounded by all the rest, crying out that "he has struck the Old Rye-woman dead." He has to expiate the deed by treating them to brandy; and, like the man who cuts the last corn, he is known as "the killer of the Old Rye-woman."¹ Sometimes in Lithuania the slain corn-spirit was represented by a puppet. Thus a female figure was made out of corn-stalks, dressed in clothes, and placed on the threshing-floor, under the heap of corn which was to be threshed last. Whoever thereafter gave the last stroke at threshing "struck the Old Woman dead."² We have already met with examples of burning the figure which represents the corn-spirit.³ Sometimes, again, the corn-spirit is represented by a man, who lies down under the last corn; it is threshed upon his body, and the people say that "the Old Man is being beaten to death."⁴ We have already seen that sometimes the farmer's wife is thrust, together with the last sheaf, under the threshing-machine, as if to thresh her, and that afterwards a pretence is made of winnowing her.⁵ At Volders, in the Tyrol, husks of corn are stuck behind the neck of the man who gives the last stroke at threshing, and he is throttled with a straw garland. If he is tall, it is believed that the corn will be tall next year. Then he is tied on a bundle and flung into the river.⁶ In Carinthia, the thresher who gave the last stroke, and the person who untied the last sheaf on the threshing-floor, are bound hand and foot with straw bands, and crowns of straw are placed on their heads. Then they are tied, face to face, on a sledge, dragged through the village, and flung into a brook.⁷ The custom of throwing the representative of the corn-spirit into a stream, like that of drenching him with water, is, as usual, a rain-charm.⁸

III. Thus far the representatives of the corn-spirit have generally been the man or woman who cuts, binds, or

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p.

⁵ Above, p. 182.

335.

² *Ibid.* p. 335.

³ Above, pp. 173, 181, 193.

⁶ W. Mannhardt, *M.F.* p. 50.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 50 sq.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Korndämonen*, p.

⁸ See above, pp. 121 sqq., 171, 174,

26.

179, 180.

threshes the last corn. We now come to the cases in which the corn-spirit is represented either by a stranger passing the harvest-field (as in the Lityerses tale), or by a visiter entering it for the first time. All over Germany it is customary for the reapers or threshers to lay hold of passing strangers and bind them with a rope made of corn-stalks, till they pay a forfeit; and when the farmer himself or one of his guests enters the field or the threshing-floor for the first time, he is treated in the same way. Sometimes the rope is only tied round his arm or his feet or his neck.¹ But sometimes he is regularly swathed in corn. Thus at Solör in Norway, whoever enters the field, be he the master or a stranger, is tied up in a sheaf and must pay a ransom. In the neighbourhood of Soest, when the farmer visits the flax-pullers for the first time, he is completely enveloped in flax. Passers-by are also surrounded by the women, tied up in flax, and compelled to stand brandy.² At Nördlingen strangers are caught with straw ropes and tied up in a sheaf till they pay a forfeit.³ In Anhalt, when the proprietor or one of his family, the steward, or even a stranger enters the harvest-field for the first time after the reaping has begun, the wife of the chief reaper ties a rope twisted of corn-ears, or a nosegay made of corn-ears and flowers, to his arm, and he is obliged to ransom himself by the payment of a fine.⁴ In the canton of Putanges, in Normandy, the custom of tying up the owner of the land in the last sheaf of wheat is still practised, or at least was still practised some thirteen or fourteen years ago. The task falls to the women alone. They throw themselves on the proprietor, seize him by the arms, the legs, and the body, throw him to the ground, and stretch him on the last sheaf. Then a pretence is made of binding him, and the conditions to be observed at the harvest-supper are dictated to him. When he has accepted them, he is released and allowed to get up.⁵ At Brie, Isle de France, when any one

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 32 199. Compare *Revue des Traditions populaires*, iii. (1888), p. 598.

² W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 35 19.

³ *Ibid.* p. 36.

⁴ O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 153.

⁵ J. Leccœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 240 19. (Condé-sur-Noireau, 1887).

who does not belong to the farm passes by the harvest-field, the reapers give chase. If they catch him, they bind him in a sheaf and bite him, one after the other, in the forehead, crying, "You shall carry the key of the field."¹ "To have the key" is an expression used by harvesters elsewhere in the sense of to cut or bind or thresh the last sheaf;² hence, it is equivalent to the phrases "You have the Old Man," "You are the Old Man," which are addressed to the cutter, binder, or thresher of the last sheaf. Therefore, when a stranger, as at Brie, is tied up in a sheaf and told that he will "carry the key of the field," it is as much as to say that he is the Old Man, that is, an embodiment of the corn-spirit.

Thus, like Lityerses, modern reapers lay hold of a passing stranger and tie him up in a sheaf. It is not to be expected that they should complete the parallel by cutting off his head; but if they do not take such a strong step, their language and gestures are at least indicative of a desire to do so. For instance, in Mecklenburg on the first day of reaping, if the master or mistress or a stranger enters the field, or merely passes by it, all the mowers face towards him and sharpen their scythes, clashing their whet-stones against them in unison, as if they were making ready to mow. Then the woman who leads the mowers steps up to him and ties a band round his left arm. He must ransom himself by payment of a forfeit.³ Near Ratzeburg, when the master or other person of mark enters the field or passes by it, all the harvesters stop work and march towards him in a body, the men with their scythes in front. On meeting him they form up in line, men and women. The men stick the poles of their scythes in the ground, as they do in whetting them; then they take off their caps and hang them on the scythes, while their leader stands forward and makes a speech. When he has done, they all whet their scythes in measured time very loudly, after which they put on their caps. Two of the women binders then come forward; one of them ties the master or stranger (as the case may be)

¹ Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 36.

² For the evidence, see *ibid.* p. 36, note 2. The "key" in the European custom is probably intended to serve

the same purpose as the "knot" in the Cingalese custom, as to which see vol. i. p. 400 *sq.*

³ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 39.

with corn-ears or with a silken band; the other delivers a rhyming address. The following are specimens of the speeches made by the reaper on these occasions. In some parts of Pomerania every passer-by is stopped, his way being barred with a corn-rope. The reapers form a circle round him and sharpen their scythes, while their leader says—

“The men are ready,
The scythes are bent,
The corn is great and small,
The gentleman must be mowed.”

Then the process of whetting the scythes is repeated.¹ At Ramin, in the district of Stettin, the stranger, standing encircled by the reapers, is thus addressed—

“We'll stroke the gentleman
With our naked sword,
Wherewith we shear meadows and fields.
We shear princes and lords.
Labourers are often athirst;
If the gentleman will stand beer and brandy
The joke will soon be over.
But, if our prayer he does not like,
The sword has a right to strike.”²

That in these customs the whetting of the scythes is really meant as a preliminary to mowing appears from the following variation of the preceding customs. In the district of Lüneburg when any one enters the harvest-field, he is asked whether he will engage a good fellow. If he says yes, the harvesters mow some swaths, yelling and screaming, and then ask him for drink-money.³

On the threshing-floor strangers are also regarded as embodiments of the corn-spirit, and are treated accordingly. At Wiedingharde in Schleswig when a stranger comes to the threshing-floor he is asked, “Shall I teach you the flail-dance?” If he says yes, they put the arms of the threshing-flail round his neck as if he were a sheaf of corn, and press them together so tight that he is nearly choked.⁴ In

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 39 sq.

or the master, see *ibid.* p. 41; Lemke, *Volksthümliches in Ostpreussen*, i. 23 sq.

² *Ibid.* p. 40. For the speeches made by the woman who binds the stranger

³ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 41 sq.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 42.

some parishes of Wermland (Sweden), when a stranger enters the threshing-floor where the threshers are at work, they say that "they will teach him the threshing-song." Then they put a flail round his neck and a straw rope about his body. Also, as we have seen, if a stranger woman enters the threshing-floor, the threshers put a flail round her body and a wreath of corn-stalks round her neck, and call out, "See the Corn-woman! See! that is how the Corn-maiden looks!"¹

In these customs, observed both on the harvest-field and on the threshing-floor, a passing stranger is regarded as a personification of the corn, in other words, as the corn-spirit; and a show is made of treating him like the corn by mowing, binding, and threshing him. If the reader still doubts whether European peasants can really regard a passing stranger in this light, the following custom should set their doubts at rest. During the madder-harvest in the Dutch province of Zealand a stranger passing by a field where the people are digging the madder-roots will sometimes call out to them *Koortspillers* (a term of reproach). Upon this, two of the fleetest runners make after him, and, if they catch him, they bring him back to the madder-field and bury him in the earth up to his middle at least, jeering at him the while; then they ease nature before his face.² This last act is to be explained as follows. The spirit of the corn and of other cultivated plants is sometimes conceived, not as immanent in the plant, but as its owner; hence the cutting of the corn at harvest, the digging of the roots, and the gathering of fruit from the fruit-trees are each and all of them acts of spoliation, which strip him of his property and reduce him to poverty. Hence he is often known as "the Poor Man" or "the Poor Woman." Thus in the neighbourhood of

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 42. See above, p. 182. In Thüringen a being called the Rush-cutter used to be much dreaded. On the morning of St. John's Day he was wont to walk through the fields with sickles tied to his ankles cutting avenues in the corn as he walked. To detect him, seven bundles of brush-wood were silently threshed with the flail on the threshing-floor, and the stranger

who appeared at the door of the barn during the threshing was the Rush-cutter. See Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 221. With the *Binsenschneider* compare the *Bilschneider* and *Biberschnider* (Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 210 sq. §§ 372-378.)

² W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 47 sq.

Eisenach a small sheaf is sometimes left standing on the field for "the Poor Old Woman."¹ At Marksuhl, near Eisenach, the puppet formed out of the last sheaf is itself called "the Poor Woman." At Alt Lest in Silesia the man who binds the last sheaf is called the Beggar-man.² In a village near Roeskilde, in Zealand (Denmark), old-fashioned peasants sometimes make up the last sheaf into a rude puppet, which is called the Rye-beggar.³ In Southern Schonen the sheaf which is bound last is called the Beggar; it is made bigger than the rest and is sometimes dressed in clothes. In the district of Olmütz the last sheaf is called the Beggar; it is given to an old woman, who must carry it home, limping on one foot.⁴ Thus when the spirit of vegetation is conceived as a being who is robbed of his store and

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 48. To prevent a rationalistic explanation of this custom, which, like most rationalistic explanations of folk-custom, would be wrong, it may be pointed out that a little of the crop is sometimes left on the field for the spirit under other names than "the Poor Old Woman." Thus in a village of the Tilsit district, the last sheaf was left standing on the field "for the Old Rye-woman" (*M.F.* p. 337). In Neftenbach (Canton of Zurich) the first three ears of corn reaped are thrown away on the field "to satisfy the Corn-mother and to make the next year's crop abundant" (*ibid.*). In Thüringen when the after-grass (*Grummet*) is being got in, a little heap is left lying on the field; it belongs to "the Little Wood-woman" in return for the blessing she has bestowed (Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 224). At Kupferberg, Bavaria, some corn is left standing on the field when the rest has been cut. Of this corn left standing, they say that "it belongs to the Old Woman," to whom it is dedicated in the following words—

"We give it to the Old Woman;
She shall keep it.
Next year may she be to us
As kind as this time she has been."

M.F. p. 337 sq. These last expressions are quite conclusive. See also Mannhardt, *Korndämonen*, p. 7 sq. In

Russia a patch of unreaped corn is left in the field and the ears are knotted together; this is called "the plaiting of the beard of Volos." "The un-reaped patch is looked upon as tabooed; and it is believed that if any one meddles with it he will shrivel up, and become twisted like the interwoven ears" (Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 251). In the north-east of Scotland a few stalks were sometimes left un-reaped for the benefit of "the aul' man" (W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 182). Here "the aul' man" is probably the equivalent of the Old Man (*der Alte*) of Germany. At Lindau in Anhalt the reapers used to leave some stalks standing in the last corner of the last field for the "Corn-woman (*Kornmume*) to eat" (*Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 154). In some parts of Bavaria three handfuls of flax were left on the field "for the Wood-woman" (*Bavaria, Landes und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 343 sq.). In the island of Nias, to prevent the depredations of wandering spirits among the rice at harvest, a miniature field is dedicated to them in which are sown all the plants that grow in the real fields (E. Modigliani, *Un Viaggio a Nias*, p. 593).

² *M.F.* p. 48.

³ *Ibid.* p. 48 sq.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 49.

impoverished by the harvesters, it is natural that his representative—the passing stranger—should upbraid them; and it is equally natural that they should seek to disable him from pursuing them and recapturing the stolen property. Now, it is an old superstition that by easing nature on the spot where a robbery is committed, the robbers secure themselves, for a certain time, against interruption.¹ Hence when madder-diggers resort to this proceeding in presence of the stranger whom they have caught and buried in the field, we may infer that they consider themselves robbers and him as the person robbed. Regarded as such, he must be the natural owner of the madder-roots, that is, their spirit or demon; and this conception is carried out by burying him, like the madder-roots, in the ground.² The Greeks, it may be observed, were quite familiar with the idea that a passing stranger may be a god. Homer says that the gods in the likeness of foreigners roam up and down cities.³ Once in Poso, a district of Celebes, when a new missionary entered a house where a number of people were gathered round a sick man, one of them addressed the new-comer in these words: "Well, sir, as we had never seen you before, and you came suddenly in, while we sat here by ourselves, we thought it was a spirit."⁴

Thus in these harvest-customs of modern Europe the person who cuts, binds, or threshes the last corn is treated as an embodiment of the corn-spirit by being wrapt up in sheaves, killed in mimicry by agricultural implements, and thrown into the water.⁵ These coincidences with the Lityerses story seem to prove that the latter is a genuine description of an old Phrygian harvest-custom. But since in the modern parallels the killing of the personal representative of the corn-spirit is necessarily omitted or at most enacted only in mimicry, it is desirable to show that in rude society human beings have been commonly killed as an agricultural

¹ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 49 sq.; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*, § 400; Töppen, *Aberglaube aus Masurien*, p. 57.

² The explanation of the custom is Mannhardt's. *Id. F.* p. 49.

³ *Odyssey*, xvii. 485 sqq. Cp. Plato,

Sophist, p. 216 A.

⁴ A. C. Kruijt, "Mijne eerste ervaringen te Poso," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-genootschap*, xxxvi. (1892), p. 402.

⁵ For throwing him into the water, see p. 231.

ceremony to promote the fertility of the fields. The following examples will make this plain.

The Indians of Guayaquil, in Ecuador, used to sacrifice human blood and the hearts of men when they sowed their fields.¹ At a Mexican harvest-festival, when the first-fruits of the season were offered to the sun, a criminal was placed between two immense stones, balanced opposite each other, and was crushed by them as they fell together. His remains were buried, and a feast and dance followed. This sacrifice was known as "the meeting of the stones."² Another series of human sacrifices offered in Mexico to make the maize thrive has been already referred to.³ The Pawnees annually sacrificed a human victim in spring when they sowed their fields. The sacrifice was believed to have been enjoined on them by the Morning Star, or by a certain bird which the Morning Star had sent to them as its messenger. The bird was stuffed and preserved as a powerful talisman. They thought that an omission of this sacrifice would be followed by the total failure of the crops of maize, beans, and pumpkins. The victim was a captive of either sex. He was clad in the gayest and most costly attire, was fattened on the choicest food, and carefully kept in ignorance of his doom. When he was fat enough, they bound him to a cross in the presence of the multitude, danced a solemn dance, then cleft his head with a tomahawk and shot him with arrows. According to one trader, the squaws then cut pieces of flesh from the victim's body, with which they greased their hoes; but this was denied by another trader who had been present at the ceremony. Immediately after the sacrifice the people proceeded to plant their fields. A particular account has been preserved of the sacrifice of a Sioux girl by the Pawnees in April 1837 or 1838. The girl had been kept for six months and well treated. Two days before the sacrifice she was led from wigwam to wigwam, accompanied by the whole council of chiefs and warriors. At each lodge she received a small billet of wood and a little paint, which she handed to

¹ Cieza de Leon, *Travels*, translated by Markham, p. 203 (Hakluyt Society, 1864).

² Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de*

l'Amérique Centrale, i. 274; Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 340.

³ See above, p. 143.

the warrior next to her. In this way she called at every wigwam, receiving at each the same present of wood and paint. On the twenty-second of April she was taken out to be sacrificed, attended by the warriors, each of whom carried two pieces of wood which he had received from her hands. She was burned for some time over a slow fire, and then shot to death with arrows. The chief sacrificer next tore out her heart and devoured it. While her flesh was still warm it was cut in small pieces from the bones, put in little baskets, and taken to a neighbouring corn-field. Here the head chief took a piece of the flesh from a basket and squeezed a drop of blood upon the newly-deposited grains of corn. His example was followed by the rest, till all the seed had been sprinkled with the blood; it was then covered up with earth.¹

A West African queen used to sacrifice a man and woman in the month of March. They were killed with spades and hoes, and their bodies buried in the middle of a field which had just been tilled.² At Lagos in Guinea it was the custom annually to impale a young girl alive soon after the spring equinox in order to secure good crops. Along with her were sacrificed sheep and goats, which, with yams, heads of maize, and plantains, were hung on stakes on each side of her. The victims were bred up for the purpose in the king's seraglio, and their minds had been so powerfully wrought upon by the fetish men that they went cheerfully to their fate.³ A similar sacrifice used to be annually offered at Benin, in Guinea.⁴ The Marimos, a Bechuana tribe, sacrifice a human being for the crops. The victim chosen is generally a short, stout man. He is seized by violence or

¹ E. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, ii. 80 sq.; Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 77 sqq.; De Smet, *Voyages aux Montagnes Rocheuses*, nouvelle ed. 1873, p. 121 sqq. The accounts by Schoolcraft and De Smet of the sacrifice of the Sioux girl are independent and supplement each other. Another description of the sacrifice is given by Mr. G. B. Grinnell from the recollection of an eye-witness (*Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-tales*, pp. 362-369). According to this last account the victim was

shot with arrows and afterwards burnt. Before the body was consumed in the fire a man pulled out the arrows, cut open the breast of the victim, and having smeared his face with the blood ran away as fast as he could.

² Labat, *Relation historique de l'Ethiopie occidentale*, i. 380.

³ John Adams, *Sketches taken during Ten Voyages in Africa between the years 1786 and 1800*, p. 25.

⁴ P. Bouche, *La Côte des Esclaves*, p. 132.

intoxicated and taken to the fields, where he is killed amongst the wheat to serve as "seed" (so they phrase it). After his blood has coagulated in the sun, it is burned along with the frontal bone, the flesh attached to it, and the brain; the ashes are then scattered over the ground to fertilise it. The rest of the body is eaten.¹ The Rev. John Roscoe, for many years a missionary in Central Africa, informed me in conversation that an agricultural tribe, among whom he resided for some time, used to offer human sacrifices of a peculiar kind once a year, about the time of harvest. The victims, who were young women, were taken away to the hills, where their heads were crushed between two branches. The sacrifices were not performed in the fields, and Mr. Roscoe could not ascertain their object, but we may conjecture that they were offered to ensure good crops in the following year.²

The Bagobos of Mindanao, one of the Philippine Islands, offer a human sacrifice before they sow their rice. The victim is a slave, who is hewn to pieces in the forest.³ The Shans of Indo-China still believe in the efficacy of human sacrifice to procure a good harvest, though they act on the belief less than some other tribes of this region. Their practice now is to poison somebody at the state festival, which is generally held at some time between March and May.⁴ Among the Lhota Naga, one of the tribes of North-Eastern India, it used to be a common custom to chop off the heads, hands, and feet of people they met with, and then to stick up the severed extremities in their fields to ensure a good crop of grain. They bore no ill-will whatever to the persons whom they treated in this unceremonious fashion. Once they flayed a boy alive, carved him in pieces, and distributed the flesh among all the villagers, who put it into their corn-bins to avert bad luck and ensure plentiful crops of grain. The

¹ Arbousset et Daumas, *Voyage d'exploration au Nord-est de la Colonie du Cap de Bonne-Espérance*, p. 117 sq.

² Unfortunately I omitted to take down the name of the tribe. It was not the Waganda. I have written to Mr. Roscoe to ascertain the name of the tribe, but have not yet received his answer. He is at present stationed at Mengo in Uganda.

³ F. Blumentritt, "Das Stromgebiet des Rio Grande de Mindanao," *Petermanns Mitteilungen*, xxxvii. (1891), p. 110.

⁴ R. G. Woodthorpe, "Some Account of the Shans and Hill Tribes of the States on the Mekong," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvi. (1897), p. 24.

Angami, another tribe of the same region, used also to relieve casual passers-by of their heads, hands, and feet with the same excellent intention.¹ The hill tribe Kudulu, near Vizagapatam in the Bombay Presidency, offered human sacrifices to the god Jankari for the purpose of obtaining good crops. The ceremony was generally performed on the Sunday before or after the Pongal feast. For the most part the victim was purchased, and until the time for the sacrifice came he was free to wander about the village, to eat and drink what he liked, and even to lie with any woman he met. On the appointed day he was carried before the idol drunk; and when one of the villagers had cut a hole in his stomach and smeared the blood on the idol, the crowds from the neighbouring villages rushed upon him and cut him to pieces. All who were fortunate enough to secure morsels of his flesh carried them away and presented them to their village idols.² The Gonds of India, a Dravidian race, kidnapped Brahman boys, and kept them as victims to be sacrificed on various occasions. At sowing and reaping, after a triumphal procession, one of the lads was slain by being punctured with a poisoned arrow. His blood was then sprinkled over the ploughed field or the ripe crop, and his flesh was devoured.³

But the best known case of human sacrifices, systematically offered to ensure good crops, is supplied by the Khonds or Kandhs, another Dravidian race in Bengal. Our knowledge of them is derived from the accounts written by British officers who, fifty or sixty years ago, were engaged in putting them down.⁴ The sacrifices were offered to the Earth Goddess, Tari Pennu or Bera Pennu, and were believed to ensure good crops and immunity from all disease and accidents. In particular, they were considered necessary in the cultivation of turmeric, the Khonds arguing that the turmeric could not have a deep red colour without the shedding of blood.⁵ The victim or Meriah was acceptable

¹ Miss G. M. Godden, "Naga and other Frontier Tribes of North-Eastern India," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxvii. (1898), pp. 9 sq., 38 sq.

² *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 4, § 15.

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³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 127 sq., § 721.

⁴ Major S. C. Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India*, p. 113 sq.; Major-General John Campbell, *Wild Tribes of Khondistan*, pp. 52-58, etc.

⁵ J. Campbell, *op. cit.* p. 56.

to the goddess only if he had been purchased, or had been born a victim—that is, the son of a victim father—or had been devoted as a child by his father or guardian. Khonds in distress often sold their children for victims, “considering the beatification of their souls certain, and their death, for the benefit of mankind, the most honourable possible.” A man of the Panua tribe was once seen to load a Khond with curses, and finally to spit in his face, because the Khond had sold for a victim his own child, whom the Panua had wished to marry. A party of Khonds, who saw this, immediately pressed forward to comfort the seller of his child, saying, “Your child has died that all the world may live, and the Earth Goddess herself will wipe that spittle from your face.”¹ The victims were often kept for years before they were sacrificed. Being regarded as consecrated beings, they were treated with extreme affection, mingled with deference, and were welcomed wherever they went. A Meriah youth, on attaining maturity, was generally given a wife, who was herself usually a Meriah or victim; and with her he received a portion of land and farm-stock. Their offspring were also victims. Human sacrifices were offered to the Earth Goddess by tribes, branches of tribes, or villages, both at periodical festivals and on extraordinary occasions. The periodical sacrifices were generally so arranged by tribes and divisions of tribes that each head of a family was enabled, at least once a year, to procure a shred of flesh for his fields, generally about the time when his chief crop was laid down.²

The mode of performing these tribal sacrifices was as follows. Ten or twelve days before the sacrifice, the victim was devoted by cutting off his hair, which, until then, had been kept unshorn. Crowds of men and women assembled to witness the sacrifice; none might be excluded, since the sacrifice was declared to be for all mankind. It was preceded by several days of wild revelry and gross debauchery.³ On the day before the sacrifice the victim, dressed in a new garment, was led forth from the village in solemn procession, with music and dancing, to the Meriah grove, a clump of

¹ S. C. Macpherson, *op. cit.* p. 115 *sq.*

² *Ibid.* p. 117 *sq.*; J. Campbell, p. 112.

³ *Ibid.* p. 113.

high forest trees standing a little way from the village and untouched by the axe. Here they tied him to a post, which was sometimes placed between two plants of the sankissar shrub. He was then anointed with oil, ghee, and turmeric, and adorned with flowers; and "a species of reverence, which it is not easy to distinguish from adoration," was paid to him throughout the day.¹ A great struggle now arose to obtain the smallest relic from his person; a particle of the turmeric paste with which he was smeared, or a drop of his spittle, was esteemed of sovereign virtue, especially by the women. The crowd danced round the post to music, and, addressing the earth, said, "O God, we offer this sacrifice to you; give us good crops, seasons, and health."²

On the last morning the orgies, which had been scarcely interrupted during the night, were resumed, and continued till noon, when they ceased, and the assembly proceeded to consummate the sacrifice. The victim was again anointed with oil, and each person touched the anointed part, and wiped the oil on his own head. In some places they took the victim in procession round the village, from door to door, where some plucked hair from his head, and others begged for a drop of his spittle, with which they anointed their heads.³ As the victim might not be bound nor make any show of resistance, the bones of his arms and, if necessary, his legs were broken; but often this precaution was rendered unnecessary by stupefying him with opium.⁴ The mode of putting him to death varied in different places. One of the commonest modes seems to have been strangulation, or squeezing to death. The branch of a green tree was cleft several feet down the middle; the victim's neck (in other places, his chest) was inserted in the cleft, which the priest, aided by his assistants, strove with all his force to close.⁵ Then he wounded the victim slightly with his axe, whereupon the crowd rushed at the wretch and cut the flesh from the bones, leaving the head and bowels untouched. Sometimes he was cut up alive.⁶ In Chinna Kimedya he was dragged

¹ S. C. Macpherson, p. 118.

² J. Campbell, p. 54.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 55, 112.

⁴ S. C. Macpherson, p. 119; J. Campbell, p. 113.

⁵ S. C. Macpherson, p. 127. Instead of the branch of a green tree, Campbell mentions two strong planks or bamboos (p. 57) or a slit bamboo (p. 182).

⁶ J. Campbell, pp. 56, 58, 120.

along the fields, surrounded by the crowd, who, avoiding his head and intestines, hacked the flesh from his body with their knives till he died.¹ Another very common mode of sacrifice in the same district was to fasten the victim to the proboscis of a wooden elephant, which revolved on a stout post, and, as it whirled round, the crowd cut the flesh from the victim while life remained. In some villages Major Campbell found as many as fourteen of these wooden elephants, which had been used at sacrifices.² In one district the victim was put to death slowly by fire. A low stage was formed, sloping on either side like a roof; upon it they laid the victim, his limbs wound round with cords to confine his struggles. Fires were then lighted and hot brands applied, to make him roll up and down the slopes of the stage as long as possible; for the more tears he shed the more abundant would be the supply of rain. Next day the body was cut to pieces.³

The flesh cut from the victim was instantly taken home by the persons who had been deputed by each village to bring it. To secure its rapid arrival, it was sometimes forwarded by relays of men, and conveyed with postal fleetness fifty or sixty miles.⁴ In each village all who stayed at home fasted rigidly until the flesh arrived. The bearer deposited it in the place of public assembly, where it was received by the priest and the heads of families. The priest divided it into two portions, one of which he offered to the Earth Goddess by burying it in a hole in the ground with his back turned, and without looking. Then each man added a little earth to bury it, and the priest poured water on the spot from a hill gourd. The other portion of flesh he divided into as many shares as there were heads of houses present. Each head of a house rolled his shred of

¹ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 288, quoting Colonel Campbell's Report.

² J. Campbell, p. 126. The elephant represented the Earth Goddess herself, who was here conceived in elephant-form (Campbell, pp. 51, 126). In the hill tracts of Goomsur she was represented in peacock-form, and the post to which the victim was bound bore the

effigy of a peacock (Campbell, p. 54).

³ S. C. Macpherson, p. 130. In Mexico also the tears of the human victims were sometimes regarded as an omen of rain (Sahagun, *Histoire générale des Choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, ii. ch. 20, p. 86).

⁴ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 288, referring to Colonel Campbell's Report.

flesh in leaves, and buried it in his favourite field, placing it in the earth behind his back without looking.¹ In some places each man carried his portion of flesh to the stream which watered his fields, and there hung it on a pole.² For three days thereafter no house was swept; and, in one district, strict silence was observed, no fire might be given out, no wood cut, and no strangers received. The remains of the human victim (namely, the head, bowels, and bones) were watched by strong parties the night after the sacrifice; and next morning they were burned, along with a whole sheep, on a funeral pile. The ashes were scattered over the fields, laid as paste over the houses and granaries, or mixed with the new corn to preserve it from insects.³ Sometimes, however, the head and bones were buried, not burnt.⁴ After the suppression of the human sacrifices, inferior victims were substituted in some places; for instance, in the capital of Chinna Kimedya a goat took the place of a human victim.⁵

In these Khond sacrifices the Meriahs are represented by our authorities as victims offered to propitiate the Earth Goddess. But from the treatment of the victims both before and after death it appears that the custom cannot be explained as merely a propitiatory sacrifice. A part of the flesh certainly was offered to the Earth Goddess, but the rest of the flesh was buried by each householder in his fields, and the ashes of the other parts of the body were scattered over the fields, laid as paste on the granaries, or mixed with the new corn. These latter customs imply that to the body of the Meriah there was ascribed a direct or intrinsic power of making the crops to grow, quite independent of the indirect efficacy which it might have as an offering to secure the good-will of the deity. In other words, the flesh and ashes of the victim were believed to be endowed with a magical or physical power of fertilising the land. The same intrinsic power was ascribed to the blood and tears of the Meriah, his blood causing the redness of the turmeric and his tears

¹ S. C. Macpherson, p. 129. Compare J. Campbell, pp. 55, 58, 113, 121, 187.

² J. Campbell, p. 182.

³ S. C. Macpherson, p. 128; Dalton, *l.c.*

⁴ J. Campbell, pp. 55, 182.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 187.

producing rain ; for it can hardly be doubted that, originally at least, the tears were supposed to bring down the rain, not merely to prognosticate it. Similarly the custom of pouring water on the buried flesh of the Meriah was no doubt a rain-charm. Again, magical power as an attribute of the Meriah appears in the sovereign virtue believed to reside in anything that came from his person, as his hair or spittle. The ascription of such power to the Meriah indicates that he was much more than a mere man sacrificed to propitiate a deity. Once more, the extreme reverence paid him points to the same conclusion. Major Campbell speaks of the Meriah as "being regarded as something more than mortal,"¹ and Major Macpherson says, "A species of reverence, which it is not easy to distinguish from adoration, is paid to him."² In short, the Meriah appears to have been regarded as divine. As such, he may originally have represented the Earth goddess or perhaps a deity of vegetation ; though in later times he came to be regarded rather as a victim offered to a deity than as himself an incarnate god. This later view of the Meriah as a victim rather than a divinity may perhaps have received undue emphasis from the European writers who have described the Khond religion. Habituated to the later idea of sacrifice as an offering made to a god for the purpose of conciliating his favour, European observers are apt to interpret all religious slaughter in this sense, and to suppose that wherever such slaughter takes place, there must necessarily be a deity to whom the carnage is believed by the slayers to be acceptable. Thus their preconceived ideas may unconsciously colour and warp their descriptions of savage rites.

The same custom of killing the representative of a god, of which strong traces appear in the Khond sacrifices, may perhaps be detected in some of the other human sacrifices described above. Thus the ashes of the slaughtered Marimo were scattered over the fields ; the blood of the Brahman lad was put on the crop and field ; the flesh of the slain Naga was stowed in the corn-bin ; and the blood of the Sioux girl was allowed to trickle on the seed.³ Again, the

¹ J. Campbell, p. 112.

² S. C. Macpherson, p. 118.

³ Above, pp. 239, 240, 241.

identification of the victim with the corn, in other words, the view that he is an embodiment or spirit of the corn, is brought out in the pains which seem to be taken to secure a physical correspondence between him and the natural object which he embodies or represents. Thus the Mexicans killed young victims for the young corn and old ones for the ripe corn; the Marimos sacrifice, as "seed," a short, fat man, the shortness of his stature corresponding to that of the young corn, his fatness to the condition which it is desired that the crops may attain; and the Pawnees fattened their victims probably with the same view. Again, the identification of the victim with the corn comes out in the African custom of killing him with spades and hoes, and the Mexican custom of grinding him, like corn, between two stones.

One more point in these savage customs deserves to be noted. The Pawnee chief devoured the heart of the Sioux girl, and the Marimos and Gonds ate the victim's flesh. If, as we suppose, the victim was regarded as divine, it follows that in eating his flesh his worshippers were partaking of the body of their god. To this point we shall return later on.

The savage rites just described offer analogies to the harvest-customs of Europe. Thus the fertilising virtue ascribed to the corn-spirit is shown equally in the savage custom of mixing the victim's blood or ashes with the seed-corn and the European custom of mixing the grain from the last sheaf with the young corn in spring.¹ Again, the identification of the person with the corn appears alike in the savage custom of adapting the age and stature of the victim to the age and stature, whether actual or expected, of the crop; in the Scotch and Styrian rules that when the corn-spirit is conceived as the Maiden the last corn shall be cut by a young maiden, but when it is conceived as the Corn-mother it shall be cut by an old woman;² in the Lothringian warning given to old women to save themselves when the Old Woman is being killed, that is, when the last corn is being threshed;³ and in the Tyrolese expectation that if the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is tall, the next year's corn will be tall also.⁴ Further, the same

¹ Above, p. 172.

² Above, pp. 171, 184, 185, 186.

³ Above, p. 230.

⁴ Above, p. 231.

identification is implied in the savage custom of killing the representative of the corn-spirit with hoes or spades or by grinding him between stones, and in the European custom of pretending to kill him with the scythe or the flail. Once more the Khond custom of pouring water on the buried flesh of the victim is parallel to the European customs of pouring water on the personal representative of the corn-spirit or plunging him into a stream.¹ Both the Khond and the European customs are rain-charms.

To return now to the Lityerses story. It has been shown that in rude society human beings have been commonly killed to promote the growth of the crops. There is therefore no improbability in the supposition that they may once have been killed for a like purpose in Phrygia and Europe; and when Phrygian legend and European folk-custom, closely agreeing with each other, point to the conclusion that men were so slain, we are bound, provisionally at least, to accept the conclusion. Further, both the Lityerses story and European harvest-customs agree in indicating that the person slain was slain as a representative of the corn-spirit, and this indication is in harmony with the view which savages appear to take of the victim slain to make the crops flourish. On the whole, then, we may fairly suppose that both in Phrygia and in Europe the representative of the corn-spirit was annually killed upon the harvest-field. Grounds have been already shown for believing that similarly in Europe the representative of the tree-spirit was annually slain. The proofs of these two remarkable and closely analogous customs are entirely independent of each other. Their coincidence seems to furnish fresh presumption in favour of both.

To the question, how was the representative of the corn-spirit chosen? one answer has been already given. Both the Lityerses story and European folk-custom show that passing strangers were regarded as manifestations of the corn-spirit escaping from the cut or threshed corn, and as such were seized and slain. But this is not the only answer which the evidence suggests. According to one version of the Phrygian legend the victims of Lityerses were not pass-

¹ Above, pp. 121 *sqq.*, 174, 179, 180, 231.

ing strangers but persons whom he had vanquished in a reaping contest; and though it is not said that he killed, but only that he thrashed them, we can hardly help supposing that in one version of the story the vanquished reapers, like the strangers in the other version, were said to have been wrapt up by Lityerses in corn-sheaves and so beheaded. The supposition is countenanced by European harvest-customs. We have seen that in Europe there is sometimes a contest amongst the reapers to avoid being last, and that the person who is vanquished in this competition, that is, who cuts the last corn, is often roughly handled. It is true we have not found that a pretence is made of killing him; but on the other hand we have found that a pretence is made of killing the man who gives the last stroke at threshing, that is, who is vanquished in the threshing contest.¹ Now, since it is in the character of representative of the corn-spirit that the thresher of the last corn is slain in mimicry, and since the same representative character attaches (as we have seen) to the cutter and binder as well as to the thresher of the last corn, and since the same repugnance is evinced by harvesters to be last in any one of these labours, we may conjecture that a pretence has been commonly made of killing the reaper and binder as well as the thresher of the last corn, and that in ancient times this killing was actually carried out. This conjecture is corroborated by the common superstition that whoever cuts the last corn must die soon.² Sometimes it is thought that the person who binds the last sheaf on the field will die in the course of next year.³ The reason for fixing on the reaper, binder, or thresher of the last corn as the representative of the corn-spirit may be this. The corn-spirit is supposed to lurk as long as he can in the corn, retreating before the reapers, the binders, and the threshers at their work. But when he is forcibly expelled from his refuge in the last corn cut or the last sheaf bound or the last grain threshed, he necessarily assumes some other form than that of the corn-stalks which had hitherto been his garments or body. And what form can the expelled corn-spirit assume more naturally than that of the person who

¹ Above, p. 231.

² W. Mannhardt, *Korndämonen*, p. 5.

³ Plannenschmid, *Germanische Erntefeste*, p. 98.

stands nearest to the corn from which he (the corn-spirit) has just been expelled? But the person in question is necessarily the reaper, binder, or thresher of the last corn. He or she, therefore, is seized and treated as the corn-spirit himself.

Thus the person who was killed on the harvest-field as the representative of the corn-spirit may have been either a passing stranger or the harvester who was last at reaping, binding, or threshing. But there is a third possibility, to which ancient legend and modern folk-custom alike point. Lityerses not only put strangers to death; he was himself slain, and probably in the same way as he had slain others, namely, by being wrapt in a corn-sheaf, beheaded, and cast into the river; and it is implied that this happened to Lityerses on his own land. Similarly in modern harvest-customs the pretence of killing appears to be carried out quite as often on the person of the master (farmer or squire) as on that of strangers.¹ Now when we remember that Lityerses was said to have been the son of the King of Phrygia, and combine with this the tradition that he was put to death, apparently as a representative of the corn-spirit, we are led to conjecture that we have here another trace of the custom of annually slaying one of those divine or priestly kings who are known to have held ghostly sway in many parts of Western Asia and particularly in Phrygia. The custom appears, as we have seen,² to have been so far modified in places that the king's son was slain in the king's stead. Of the custom thus modified the story of Lityerses would therefore be a reminiscence.

Turning now to the relation of the Phrygian Lityerses to the Phrygian Attis, it may be remembered that at Pessinus—the seat of a priestly kingship—the high-priest appears to have been annually slain in the character of Attis, a god of vegetation, and that Attis was described by an ancient authority as “a reaped ear of corn.”³ Thus Attis, as an embodiment of the corn-spirit, annually slain in the person of his representative, might be thought to be ultimately identical with Lityerses, the latter being simply the rustic

¹ Above, p. 233 sq.

² Above, p. 38 sq.

³ Above, p. 133.

prototype out of which the state religion of Attis was developed. It may have been so ; but, on the other hand, the analogy of European folk-custom warns us that amongst the same people two distinct deities of vegetation may have their separate personal representatives, both of whom are slain in the character of gods at different times of the year. For in Europe, as we have seen, it appears that one man was commonly slain in the character of the tree-spirit in spring, and another in the character of the corn-spirit in autumn. It may have been so in Phrygia also. Attis was especially a tree-god, and his connection with corn may have been only such an extension of the power of a tree-spirit as is indicated in customs like the Harvest-May.¹ Again, the representative of Attis appears to have been slain in spring ; whereas Lityerses must have been slain in summer or autumn, according to the time of the harvest in Phrygia.² On the whole, then, while we are not justified in regarding Lityerses as the prototype of Attis, the two may be regarded as parallel products of the same religious idea, and may have stood to each other as in Europe the Old Man of harvest stands to the Wild Man, the Leaf Man, and so forth, of spring. Both were spirits or deities of vegetation, and the personal representatives of both were annually slain. But whereas the Attis worship became elevated into the dignity of a state religion and spread to Italy, the rites of Lityerses seem never to have passed the limits of their native Phrygia, and always retained their character of rustic ceremonies performed by peasants on the harvest-field. At most a few villages may have clubbed together, as amongst the Khonds, to procure a human victim to be slain as representative of the corn-spirit for their common benefit. Such victims may have been drawn from the families of priestly kings or kinglets, which would account for the legendary character of Lityerses as the son of a Phrygian king. When villages did not so club together, each village or farm may have procured its own representative of the corn-spirit by dooming to death either a passing stranger or the harvester who cut, bound, or

¹ Above, p. 233 *sq.*

² I do not know when the corn is reaped in Phrygia ; but the high upland

character of the country makes it likely that harvest is later there than on the coasts of the Mediterranean.

threshed the last sheaf. It is hardly necessary to add that in Phrygia, as in Europe, the old barbarous custom of killing a man on the harvest-field or the threshing-floor had doubtless passed into a mere pretence long before the classical era, and was probably regarded by the reapers and threshers themselves as no more than a rough jest which the license of a harvest-home permitted them to play off on a passing stranger, a comrade, or even on their master himself.¹

I have dwelt on the Lityerses song at length because it affords so many points of comparison with European and savage folk-custom. The other harvest songs of Western Asia and Egypt, to which attention has been called above,² may now be dismissed much more briefly. The similarity of the Bithynian Bormus³ to the Phrygian Lityerses helps to bear out the interpretation which has been given of the latter. Bormus, whose death or rather disappearance was annually mourned by the reapers in a plaintive song, was, like Lityerses, a king's son or at least the son of a wealthy and distinguished man. The reapers whom he watched were at work on his own fields, and he disappeared in going to fetch water for them; according to one version of the story he was carried off by the nymphs, doubtless the nymphs of the spring or pool or river whither he went to draw water.⁴ Viewed in the light of the Lityerses story and of European folk-custom, this disappearance of Bormus may be a reminiscence of the custom of binding the farmer himself in a corn-sheaf and throwing him into the water. The mournful strain which the reapers sang was probably a lamentation over the death of the corn-spirit, slain either in the cut corn or in the person of a human representative; and the call which they addressed to him may have been a prayer that he might return in fresh vigour next year.

The Phœnician Linus song was sung at the vintage, at least in the west of Asia Minor, as we learn from Homer;

¹ There are traces in Greece itself of an old custom of sacrificing human victims to promote the fertility of the earth. See Pausanias, vii. 19. 3 sq. compared with vii. 20. 1; *id.*, viii. 53. 3; L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the*

Greek States, ii. 455; and above, p. 34 sqq.

² Above, p. 223 sq.

³ Above, p. 224.

⁴ Hesychius, s.v. Βόρμος.

and this, combined with the legend of Syleus, suggests that in ancient times passing strangers were handled by vintagers and vine-diggers in much the same way as they are said to have been handled by the reaper Lityerses. The Lydian Syleus, so ran the legend, compelled passers-by to dig for him in his vineyard, till Hercules came and killed him and dug up his vines by the roots.¹ This seems to be the outline of a legend like that of Lityerses; but neither ancient writers nor modern folk-custom enable us to fill in the details.² But, further, the Linus song was probably sung also by Phoenician reapers, for Herodotus compares it to the Maneros song, which, as we have seen, was a lament raised by Egyptian reapers over the cut corn. Further, Linus was identified with Adonis, and Adonis has some claims to be regarded as especially a corn-deity.³ Thus the Linus lament, as sung at harvest, would be identical with the Adonis lament; each would be the lamentation raised by reapers over the dead spirit of the corn. But whereas Adonis, like Attis, grew into a stately figure of mythology, adored and mourned in splendid cities far beyond the limits of his Phoenician home, Linus appears to have remained a simple ditty sung by reapers and vintagers among the corn-sheaves and the vines. The analogy of Lityerses and of folk-custom, both European and savage, suggests that in Phoenicia the slain corn-spirit—the dead Adonis—may formerly have been represented by a human victim; and this suggestion is possibly supported by the Harran legend that Tammuz (Adonis) was slain by his cruel lord, who ground his bones in a mill and scattered them to the wind.⁴ For in Mexico, as we have seen, the human victim at harvest was crushed between two stones; and both in India and Africa the ashes of the victim were scattered over the fields.⁵ But the Harran legend may be only a mythical way of expressing the grinding of corn in the mill and the scattering of the seed. It seems worth suggesting that the mock king who was annually killed at the Babylonian festival of the Sacaea on

¹ Apollodorus, ii. 6. 3.

² The scurrilities exchanged both in ancient and modern times between vine-dressers, vintagers, and passers-by seem to belong to a different category.

See W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 53 *sq.*

³ Above, p. 118 *sq.*

⁴ Above, p. 119.

⁵ Above, pp. 238, 240, 245.

the sixteenth day of the month Lous may have represented Tammuz himself. For the historian Berosus, who records the festival and its date, probably used the Macedonian calendar, since he dedicated his history to Antiochus Soter; and in his day the Macedonian month Lous appears to have corresponded to the Babylonian month Tammuz.¹ If this conjecture is right, the view that the mock king at the Sacaea was slain in the character of a god would be established. But to this point we shall return later on.

There is a good deal more evidence that in Egypt the slain corn-spirit—the dead Osiris—was represented by a human victim, whom the reapers slew on the harvest-field, mourning his death in a dirge, to which the Greeks, through a verbal misunderstanding, gave the name of *Maneros*.² For the legend of Busiris seems to preserve a reminiscence of human sacrifices once offered by the Egyptians in connection with the worship of Osiris. Busiris was said to have been an Egyptian king who sacrificed all strangers on the altar of Zeus. The origin of the custom was traced to a dearth which afflicted the land of Egypt for nine years. A Cyprian seer informed Busiris that the dearth would cease if a man were annually sacrificed to Zeus. So Busiris instituted the sacrifice. But when Hercules came to Egypt, and was being dragged to the altar to be sacrificed, he burst his bonds and slew Busiris and his son.³ Here then is a legend that in Egypt a human victim was annually sacrificed to prevent the failure of the crops, and a belief is implied that an omission of the sacrifice would have entailed a recurrence of that infertility which it was the object of the sacrifice to

¹ The probable correspondence of the months, which supplies so welcome a confirmation of the conjecture in the text, was pointed out to me by my friend W. Robertson Smith, who furnished me with the following note: "In the Syro-Macedonian calendar Lous represents Ab, not Tammuz. Was it different in Babylon? I think it was, and one month different, at least in the early times of the Greek monarchy in Asia. For we know from a Babylonian observation in the *Almagest* (*Ideler*, i. 396) that in 229

B.C. Xanthicus began on February 26. It was therefore the month before the equinoctial moon, not Nisan but Adar, and consequently Lous answered to the lunar month Tammuz."

² Above, p. 223.

³ Apollodorus, ii. 5. 11; Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* iv. 1396; Plutarch, *Parall.* 38. Herodotus (ii. 45) discredits the idea that the Egyptians ever offered human sacrifices. But his authority is not to be weighed against that of Manetho (Plutarch, *Is. et Os.* 73), who affirms that they did.

prevent. So the Pawnees, as we have seen, believed that an omission of the human sacrifice at planting would have been followed by a total failure of their crops. The name Busiris was in reality the name of a city, *pe-Asar*, "the house of Osiris,"¹ the city being so called because it contained the grave of Osiris. The human sacrifices were said to have been offered at his grave, and the victims were red-haired men, whose ashes were scattered abroad by means of winnowing-fans.² In the light of the foregoing discussion, this Egyptian tradition admits of a consistent and fairly probable explanation. Osiris, the corn-spirit, was annually represented at harvest by a stranger, whose red hair made him a suitable representative of the ripe corn. This man, in his representative character, was slain on the harvest-field, and mourned by the reapers, who prayed at the same time that the corn-spirit might revive and return (*mââ-ne-rha*, Maneros) with renewed vigour in the following year. Finally, the victim, or some part of him, was burned, and the ashes scattered by winnowing-fans over the fields to fertilise them. Here the choice of the victim on the ground of his resemblance to the corn which he was to represent agrees with the Mexican and African customs already described.³ Similarly the woman who died in the character of the Corn-mother at the Mexican midsummer sacrifice had her face painted red and yellow in token of the colours of the corn, and she wore a pasteboard mitre surmounted by waving plumes in imitation of the tassel of the maize.⁴ On the other hand, at the festival of the Goddess of the White Maize the Mexicans sacrificed lepers.⁵ The Romans sacrificed red-haired puppies in spring, believing that the crops would thus grow ripe and ruddy.⁶ The Sabaeans offered to the sun, moon, and planets human victims who were chosen on the ground of their supposed resemblance to the heavenly bodies to which they were sacrificed; for example, the priests,

¹ E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, i. § 57.

² Diodorus, i. 88; Plutarch, *Is. et Os.* 73, compare 30, 33.

³ Above, pp. 143, 239 sq., 247.

⁴ E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 422.

⁵ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale*, iii. 535.

⁶ Festus, s.v. *Catularia*. Cp. *id.*, s.v. *Rutilae canes*; Columella, *De re rustica*, x. 342 sq.; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 905 sq.; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 14.

clothed in red and smeared with blood, offered a red-haired, red-cheeked man to "the red planet Mars" in a temple which was painted red and draped with red hangings.¹ These and the like cases of assimilating the victim to the god, or to the natural phenomenon which he represents, are based ultimately on the principle of sympathetic or imitative magic, the notion being that the object aimed at will be most readily attained by means of a sacrifice which resembles the effect that it is designed to bring about.

Again, the scattering of the Egyptian victim's ashes over the fields resembles the Marimo and Khond custom,² and the use of winnowing-fans for the purpose is another hint of his identification with the corn. So in Vendée a pretence is made of threshing and winnowing the farmer's wife, regarded as an embodiment of the corn-spirit; in Mexico the victim was ground between stones; and in Africa he was slain with spades and hoes.³ The story that the fragments of Osiris's body were scattered up and down the land, and buried by Isis on the spots where they lay,⁴ may very well be a reminiscence of a custom, like that observed by the Khonds, of dividing the human victim in pieces and burying the pieces, often at intervals of many miles from each other, in the fields. However, it is possible that the story of the dismemberment of Osiris, like the similar story told of Tammuz, may have been simply a mythical expression for the scattering of the seed. Once more, the legend that the body of Osiris enclosed in a coffer was thrown by Typhon into the Nile perhaps points to a custom of casting the body of the victim, or at least a portion of it, into the Nile as a rain-charm, or rather to make the Nile rise. For a similar purpose Phrygian reapers seem to have flung the headless bodies of their victims, wrapt in corn-sheaves, into a river, and the Khonds poured water on the buried flesh of the human victim. Probably when Osiris ceased to be represented by a human victim, an image of him was annually thrown into the Nile, just as the effigy of his Syrian counter-

¹ Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 388 sq. Compare *ibid.*, pp. 384 sq., 386 sq., 391, 393, 395, 397. For other instances of the assimilation of the victim to the god, see

H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, pp. 77 sq., 357-359.

² Above, pp. 240, 245.

³ Above, pp. 182, 238, 239.

⁴ Plutarch, *Is. et Os.* 18.

part, Adonis, used to be cast into the sea at Alexandria. Or water may have been simply poured over it, as on the monument already mentioned a priest is seen pouring water over the body of Osiris, from which corn stalks are sprouting. The accompanying legend, "This is Osiris of the mysteries, who springs from the returning waters," bears out the view that at the mysteries of Osiris a charm to make rain fall or the river rise was regularly wrought by pouring water on his effigy or flinging it into the Nile.

It may be objected that the red-haired victims were slain as representatives not of Osiris, but of his enemy Typhon; for the victims were called Typhonian, and red was the colour of Typhon, black the colour of Osiris.¹ The answer to this objection must be reserved for the present. Meantime it may be pointed out that if Osiris is often represented on the monuments as black, he is still more commonly depicted as green,² appropriately enough for a corn-god, who may be conceived as black while the seed is under ground, but as green after it has sprouted. So the Greeks recognised both a green and a black Demeter,³ and sacrificed to the green Demeter in spring with mirth and gladness.⁴

Thus, if I am right, the key to the mysteries of Osiris is furnished by the melancholy cry of the Egyptian reapers, which down to Roman times could be heard year after year sounding across the fields, announcing the death of the corn-spirit, the rustic prototype of Osiris. Similar cries, as we have seen, were also heard on all the harvest-fields of Western Asia. By the ancients they are spoken of as songs; but to judge from the analysis of the names Linus and Maneros, they probably consisted only of a few words uttered in a prolonged musical note which could be heard for a great distance. Such sonorous and long-drawn cries, raised by a number of strong voices in concert, must have

¹ Plutarch, *Is. et Os.* 22, 30, 31, 33, 73.

² Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (ed. 1878), iii. 81.

³ Pausanias, i. 22. 3, viii. 5, 8, viii. 42. 1.

⁴ Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 28. Green Demeter was worshipped at Athens and in the island of Myconos. See Pausanias, i. 22. 3, with my note; Dittenberger, *Syllage Inscriptionum Graecarum*, No. 373.

had a striking effect, and could hardly fail to arrest the attention of any traveller who happened to be within hearing. The sounds, repeated again and again, could probably be distinguished with tolerable ease even at a distance; but to a Greek traveller in Asia or Egypt the foreign words would commonly convey no meaning, and he might take them, not unnaturally, for the name of some one (Maneros, Linus, Lityerses, Bormus) upon whom the reapers were calling. And if his journey led him through more countries than one, as Bithynia and Phrygia, or Phoenicia and Egypt, while the corn was being reaped, he would have an opportunity of comparing the various harvest cries of the different peoples. Thus we can readily understand why these harvest cries were so often noted and compared with each other by the Greeks. Whereas, if they had been regular songs, they could not have been heard at such distances, and therefore could not have attracted the attention of so many travellers; and, moreover, even if the traveller were within hearing of them, he could not so easily have picked out the words.

To this day Devonshire reapers utter cries of the same sort, and perform on the field a ceremony exactly analogous to that in which, if I am not mistaken, the rites of Osiris originated. The cry and the ceremony are thus described by an observer who wrote in the first half of the nineteenth century. "After the wheat is all cut, on most farms in the north of Devon, the harvest people have a custom of 'crying the neck.' I believe that this practice is seldom omitted on any large farm in that part of the country. It is done in this way. An old man, or some one else well acquainted with the ceremonies used on the occasion (when the labourers are reaping the last field of wheat), goes round to the shocks and sheaves, and picks out a little bundle of all the best ears he can find; this bundle he ties up very neat and trim, and plats and arranges the straws very tastefully. This is called 'the neck' of wheat, or wheaten-ears. After the field is cut out, and the pitcher once more circulated, the reapers, binders, and the women stand round in a circle. The person with 'the neck' stands in the centre, grasping it with both his hands. He first stoops and holds it near the ground, and all the men forming the ring take off their hats, stooping

and holding them with both hands towards the ground. They then all begin at once in a very prolonged and harmonious tone to cry 'The neck!' at the same time slowly raising themselves upright, and elevating their arms and hats above their heads; the person with 'the neck' also raising it on high. This is done three times. They then change their cry to 'Wee yen!'—'Way yen!'—which they sound in the same prolonged and slow manner as before, with singular harmony and effect, three times. This last cry is accompanied by the same movements of the body and arms as in crying 'the neck.' . . . After having thus repeated 'the neck' three times, and 'wee yen,' or 'way yen,' as often, they all burst out into a kind of loud and joyous laugh, flinging up their hats and caps into the air, capering about and perhaps kissing the girls. One of them then gets 'the neck' and runs as hard as he can down to the farmhouse, where the dairymaid or one of the young female domestics stands at the door prepared with a pail of water. If he who holds 'the neck' can manage to get into the house, in any way unseen, or openly, by any other way than the door at which the girl stands with the pail of water, then he may lawfully kiss her; but, if otherwise, he is regularly soused with the contents of the bucket. On a fine still autumn evening, the 'crying of the neck' has a wonderful effect at a distance, far finer than that of the Turkish muezzin, which Lord Byron eulogises so much, and which he says is preferable to all the bells in Christendom. I have once or twice heard upwards of twenty men cry it, and sometimes joined by an equal number of female voices. About three years back, on some high grounds, where our people were harvesting, I heard six or seven 'necks' cried in one night, although I know that some of them were four miles off. They are heard through the quiet evening air, at a considerable distance sometimes."¹ Again, Mrs. Bray tells how, travelling in Devonshire, "she saw a party of reapers standing in a circle on a rising ground, holding their sickles aloft. One in the middle held up some ears of corn tied together with flowers, and the party shouted three times (what she writes as) 'Arnack, arnack, arnack, we *haven*, we *haven*, we *haven*.' They

¹ Hone, *Every-day Book*, ii. col. 1170 sq.

went home, accompanied by women and children carrying boughs of flowers, shouting and singing. The manservant who attended Mrs. Bray said 'it was only the people making their games, as they always did, *to the spirit of harvest.*'"¹ Here, as Miss Burne remarks, "'arnack, we haven!' is obviously in the Devon dialect, 'a neck (or nack)! we have un!'" "The neck" is generally hung up in the farmhouse, where it sometimes remains for two or three years.² A similar custom is still observed in some parts of Cornwall, as I was told by my lamented friend J. H. Middleton. "The last sheaf is decked with ribbons. Two strong-voiced men are chosen and placed (one with the sheaf) on opposite sides of a valley. One shouts, 'I've gotten it.' The other shouts, 'What hast gotten?' The first answers, 'I'se gotten the neck.'"³

In these Devonshire and Cornish customs a particular bunch of ears, generally the last left standing,⁴ is conceived as the neck of the corn-spirit, who is consequently beheaded when the bunch is cut down. Similarly in Shropshire the name "neck," or "the gander's neck," used to be commonly given to the last handful of ears left standing in the middle of the field, when all the rest of the corn was cut. It was plaited together, and the reapers, standing ten or twenty paces off, threw their sickles at it. Whoever cut it through was said to have cut off the gander's neck. The "neck" was taken to the farmer's wife, who was supposed to keep it in the house for good luck till the next harvest came round.⁵ Near Trèves, the man who reaps the last standing corn "cuts the goat's neck off."⁶ At Faslane, on the Gareloch (Dumbartonshire), the last handful of standing corn was sometimes called the "head."⁷ At Aurich, in East Friesland, the man who reaps the last corn "cuts the

¹ Miss C. S. Burne and Miss G. F. Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-lore*, p. 372 sq., referring to Mrs. Bray's *Traditions of Devon*, i. 330.

² Hone, *op. cit.* ii. 1172.

³ The Rev. Sydney Cooper, of 80 Gloucester Street, Cirencester, writes to me (4th February 1893) that his wife remembers the "neck" being kept on the mantelpiece of the parlour in a

Cornish farmhouse; it generally stayed there throughout the year.

⁴ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 20 (Bohn's ed.); Burne and Jackson, *op. cit.* p. 371.

⁵ Burne and Jackson, *l.c.*

⁶ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 185.

⁷ See above, p. 185.

hare's tail off."¹ In mowing down the last corner of a field French reapers sometimes call out, "We have the cat by the tail."² In Bresse (Bourgogne) the last sheaf represented the fox. Beside it a score of ears were left standing to form the tail, and each reaper, going back some paces, threw his sickle at it. He who succeeded in severing it "cut off the fox's tail," and a cry of "*You cou cou!*" was raised in his honour.³ These examples leave no room to doubt the meaning of the Devonshire and Cornish expression "the neck," as applied to the last sheaf. The corn-spirit is conceived in human or animal form, and the last standing corn is part of its body—its neck, its head, or its tail. Sometimes, as we have seen, the last corn is regarded as the navel-string.⁴ Lastly, the Devonshire custom of drenching with water the person who brings in "the neck" is a rain-charm, such as we have had many examples of. Its parallel in the mysteries of Osiris was the custom of pouring water on the image of Osiris or on the person who represented him.

In Germany cries of *Waul!* or *Wol!* or *Wöld!* are sometimes raised by the reapers at cutting the last corn. Thus in some places the last patch of standing rye was called the *Waul*-rye; a stick decked with flowers was inserted in it, and the ears were fastened to the stick. Then all the reapers took off their hats and cried thrice, "*Waul! Waul! Waul!*" Sometimes they accompanied the cry by clashing with their whetstones on their scythes.⁵

§ 10. *The Corn-spirit as an Animal*

In some of the examples which I have cited to establish the meaning of the term "neck" as applied to the last sheaf, the corn-spirit appears in animal form as a gander, a goat, a

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 185.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Revue des Traditions populaires*, ii. (1887), p. 500.

⁴ Above, p. 182.

⁵ E. Meier, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), pp. 170-173; U. Jahn, *Die deutschen*

Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht, pp. 166-169; Pfannenschmid, *Germanische Erntefeste*, p. 104 sq.; Kuhn, *Westfälische Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen*, ii. p. 177 sq., §§ 491, 492; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 395, § 97; Lynker, *Deutsche Sagen und Sitten in hessischen Gauen*, p. 256, § 340.

hare, a cat, and a fox. This introduces us to a new aspect of the corn-spirit, which we must now examine. By doing so we shall not only have fresh examples of killing the god, but may hope also to clear up some points which remain obscure in the myths and worship of Attis, Adonis, Osiris, Dionysus, Demeter, and Virbius.

Amongst the many animals whose forms the corn-spirit is supposed to take are the wolf, dog, hare, cock, goose, cat, goat, cow (ox, bull), pig, and horse. In one or other of these shapes the corn-spirit is believed to be present in the corn, and to be caught or killed in the last sheaf. As the corn is being cut the animal flees before the reapers, and if a reaper is taken ill on the field, he is supposed to have stumbled unwittingly on the corn-spirit, who has thus punished the profane intruder. It is said "the Rye-wolf has got hold of him," "the Harvest-goat has given him a push." The person who cuts the last corn or binds the last sheaf gets the name of the animal, as the Rye-wolf, the Rye-sow, the Oats-goat, and so forth, and retains the name sometimes for a year. Also the animal is frequently represented by a puppet made out of the last sheaf or of wood, flowers, and so on, which is carried home amid rejoicings on the last harvest-waggon. Even where the last sheaf is not made up in animal shape, it is often called the Rye-wolf, the Hare, Goat, and so forth. Generally each kind of crop is supposed to have its special animal, which is caught in the last sheaf, and called the Rye-wolf, the Barley-wolf, the Oats-wolf, the Pea-wolf, or the Potato-wolf, according to the crop; but sometimes the figure of the animal is only made up once for all at getting in the last crop of the whole harvest. Sometimes the creature is believed to be killed by the last stroke of the sickle or scythe. But oftener it is thought to live so long as there is corn still unthreshed, and to be caught in the last sheaf threshed. Hence the man who gives the last stroke with the flail is told that he has got the Corn-sow, the Threshing-dog, or the like. When the threshing is finished, a puppet is made in the form of the animal, and this is carried by the thresher of the last sheaf to a neighbouring farm, where the threshing is still going on. This again shows that the corn-spirit is believed to live wherever the corn is still being threshed. Sometimes

the thresher of the last sheaf himself represents the animal ; and if the people of the next farm, who are still threshing, catch him, they treat him like the animal he represents, by shutting him up in the pig-sty, calling him with the cries commonly addressed to pigs and so forth.¹

These general statements will now be illustrated by examples. We begin with the corn-spirit conceived as a wolf or a dog. This conception is common in France, Germany, and Slavonic countries. Thus, when the wind sets the corn in wave-like motion, the peasants often say, "The Wolf is going over, or through, the corn," "the Rye-wolf is rushing over the field," "the Wolf is in the corn," "the mad Dog is in the corn," "the big Dog is there."² When children wish to go into the corn-fields to pluck ears or gather the blue corn-flowers, they are warned not to do so, for "the big Dog sits in the corn," or "the Wolf sits in the corn, and will tear you in pieces," "the Wolf will eat you." The wolf against whom the children are warned is not a common wolf, for he is often spoken of as the Corn-wolf, Rye-wolf, or the like ; thus they say, "The Rye-wolf will come and eat you up, children," "the Rye-wolf will carry you off," and so forth.³ Still he has all the outward appearance of a wolf. For in the neighbourhood of Feilenhof (East Prussia), when a wolf was seen running through a field, the peasants used to watch whether he carried his tail in the air or dragged it on the ground. If he dragged it on the ground, they went after him, and thanked him for bringing them a blessing, and even set tit-bits before him. But if he carried his tail high, they cursed him and tried to kill him. Here the wolf is the corn-spirit, whose fertilising power is in his tail.⁴

Both dog and wolf appear as embodiments of the corn-spirit in harvest-customs. Thus in some parts of Silesia the

¹ W. Mannhardt, *Die Korndämonen*, pp. 1-6.

² W. Mannhardt, *Roggenwolf und Roggenhund* (Danzig, 1865), p. 5 ; *id.*, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 318 sq. ; *id.*, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 103 ; Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 213 ; O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeit-*

schrift des Vereins für Volkskunde, vii. (1897), p. 150 ; W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 327.

³ W. Mannhardt, *Roggenwolf und Roggenhund*, p. 7 sqq. ; *id.*, *A.W.F.* p. 319.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Roggenwolf*, p. 10.

person who binds the last sheaf is called the Wheat-dog or the Peas-pug.¹ But it is in the harvest-customs of the north-east of France that the idea of the Corn-dog comes out most clearly. Thus when a harvester, through sickness, weariness, or laziness, cannot or will not keep up with the reaper in front of him, they say, "The White Dog passed near him," "he has the White Bitch," or "the White Bitch has bitten him."² In the Vosges the Harvest-May is called the "Dog of the harvest,"³ and the person who cuts the last handful of hay or wheat is said to "kill the Dog."⁴ About Lons-le-Saulnier, in the Jura, the last sheaf is called the Bitch. In the neighbourhood of Verdun the regular expression for finishing the reaping is, "They are going to kill the Dog"; and at Epinal they say, according to the crop, "We will kill the Wheat-dog, or the Rye-dog, or the Potato-dog."⁵ In Lorraine it is said of the man who cuts the last corn, "He is killing the Dog of the harvest."⁶ At Dux, in the Tyrol, the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is said to "strike down the Dog";⁷ and at Ahnebergen, near Stade, he is called, according to the crop, Corn-pug, Rye-pug, Wheat-pug.⁸

So with the wolf. In Germany it is said that "the Wolf sits in the last sheaf."⁹ In some places they call out to the reaper, "Beware of the Wolf"; or they say, "He is chasing the Wolf out of the corn."¹⁰ The last bunch of standing corn is called the Wolf, and the man who cuts it "has the Wolf." The last sheaf is also called the Wolf; and of the woman who binds it they say, "The Wolf is biting her," "she has the Wolf," "she must fetch the Wolf" (out of the corn).¹¹ Moreover, she is herself called Wolf and has to bear the name for a whole year; sometimes, according to the crop, she is called the Rye-wolf or the Potato-wolf.¹² In the island of Rügen they call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You're Wolf"; and when she comes home

¹ W. Mannhardt, *M.F.* p. 104.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* p. 104 sq. On the Harvest-May, see above, vol. i. p. 190.

⁴ Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 191.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *M.F.* p. 105.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 30.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 30, 105.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 105 sq.

⁹ *A.W.F.* p. 320; *Roggenwolf*, p. 24.

¹⁰ *Roggenwolf*, p. 24.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.* p. 25.

she bites the lady of the house and the stewardess, for which she receives a large piece of meat. The same woman may be Rye-wolf, Wheat-wolf, and Oats-wolf, if she happens to bind the last sheaf of rye, wheat, and oats.¹ At Buir, in the district of Cologne, it was formerly the custom to give to the last sheaf the shape of a wolf. It was kept in the barn till all the corn was threshed. Then it was brought to the farmer, and he had to sprinkle it with beer or brandy.² In many places the sheaf called the Wolf is made up in human form and dressed in clothes. This indicates a confusion of ideas between the corn-spirit conceived in human and in animal form.³ Generally the Wolf is brought home on the last waggon, with joyful cries.⁴

Again, the Wolf is supposed to hide himself amongst the cut corn in the granary, until he is driven out of the last bundle by the strokes of the flail. Hence at Wanzleben, near Magdeburg, after the threshing the peasants go in procession, leading by a chain a man who is enveloped in the threshed-out straw and is called the Wolf.⁵ He represents the corn-spirit who has been caught escaping from the threshed corn. In Trier it is believed that the Corn-wolf is killed at threshing. The men thresh the last sheaf till it is reduced to chopped straw. In this way they think that the Corn-wolf, who was lurking in the last sheaf, has been certainly killed.⁶

In France also the Corn-wolf appears at harvest. Thus they call out to the reaper of the last corn, "You will catch the Wolf." Near Chambéry they form a ring round the last standing corn, and cry, "The Wolf is in there." In Finisterre, when the reaping draws near an end, the harvesters cry, "There is the Wolf; we will catch him." Each takes a swath to reap, and he who finishes first calls out, "I've caught the Wolf."⁷ In Guyenne, when the last corn has been reaped, they lead a wether all round the field. It is called "the Wolf of the field." Its horns are decked with a wreath of flowers and corn-ears, and its neck and

¹ *Roggenwolf*, p. 28; *A. W. F.* p. 320.

² *Ibid.* p. 25.

³ *Ibid.* p. 26.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 26; *A. W. F.* p. 320.

⁵ *A. W. F.* p. 321.

⁶ *A. W. F.* p. 321 sq.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 320.

body are also encircled with garlands and ribbons. All the reapers march, singing, behind it. Then it is killed on the field. In this part of France the last sheaf is called the *coujoulage*, which, in the patois, means a wether. Hence the killing of the wether represents the death of the corn-spirit, considered as present in the last sheaf; but two different conceptions of the corn-spirit—as a wolf and as a wether—are mixed up together.¹

Sometimes it appears to be thought that the Wolf, caught in the last corn, lives during the winter in the farmhouse, ready to renew his activity as corn-spirit in the spring. Hence at midwinter, when the lengthening days begin to herald the approach of spring, the Wolf makes his appearance once more. In Poland a man, with a wolf's skin thrown over his head, is led about at Christmas; or a stuffed wolf is carried about by persons who collect money.² There are facts which point to an old custom of leading about a man enveloped in leaves and called the Wolf, while his conductors collected money.³

Another form which the corn-spirit often assumes is that of a cock. In Austria children are warned against straying in the corn-fields, because the Corn-cock sits there, and will peck their eyes out.⁴ In North Germany they say that "the Cock sits in the last sheaf"; and at cutting the last corn the reapers cry, "Now we will chase out the Cock." When it is cut they say, "We have caught the Cock." Then a cock is made of flowers, fastened on a pole, and carried home by the reapers, singing as they go.⁵ At Braller, in Transylvania, when the reapers come to the last patch of corn, they cry, "Here we shall catch the Cock."⁶ At Fürstenwalde, when the last sheaf is about to be bound, the master releases a cock, which he has brought in a basket, and lets it run over the field. All the harvesters chase it till they catch it. Elsewhere the harvesters all try to seize the last corn cut;

¹ *A.W.F.* p. 320 sq.

² *Ibid.* p. 322.

³ *Ibid.* p. 323.

⁴ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*; Schmitz, *Sitten und Sagen des Eifler Volkes*, i. 95; Kuhn, *West-*

fälische Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche, ii. 181; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 398.

⁶ G. A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens*, p. 21.

he who succeeds in grasping it must crow, and is called Cock.¹ Among the Wends it is or used to be customary for the farmer to hide a live cock under the last sheaf as it lay on the field; and when the corn was being gathered up, the harvester who lighted upon this sheaf had a right to keep the cock, provided he could catch it. This formed the close of the harvest-festival and was known as "the Cock-catching," and the beer which was served out to the reapers at this time went by the name of "Cock-beer."² The last sheaf is called Cock, Cock-sheaf, Harvest-cock, Harvest-hen, Autumn-hen. A distinction is made between a Wheat-cock, Bean-cock, and so on, according to the crop.³ At Wünschensuhl, in Thüringen, the last sheaf is made into the shape of a cock, and called Harvest-cock.⁴ A figure of a cock, made of wood, pasteboard, or ears of corn, is borne in front of the harvest-waggon, especially in Westphalia, where the cock carries in his beak fruits of the earth of all kinds. Sometimes the image of the cock is fastened to the top of a May-tree on the last harvest-waggon. Elsewhere a live cock, or a figure of one, is attached to a harvest-crown and carried on a pole. In Galicia and elsewhere this live cock is fastened to the garland of corn-ears or flowers, which the leader of the women-reapers carries on her head as she marches in front of the harvest procession.⁵ In Silesia a live cock is presented to the master on a plate. The harvest-supper is called Harvest-cock, Stubble-cock, etc., and a chief dish at it, at least in some places, is a cock.⁶ If a waggoner upsets a harvest-waggon, it is said that "he has spilt the Harvest-cock," and he loses the cock, that is, the harvest-supper.⁷ The harvest-waggon, with the figure of

¹ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 13. Cp. Kuhn and Schwartz, *l.c.*

² K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, i. p. 232, No. 277 note.

³ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 13.

⁴ Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 220.

⁵ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 13 sq.; Kuhn, *Westfälische Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, ii. 180 sq.; Pfannenschmid, *Germanische Erntefeste*, p. 110.

⁶ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 14; Pfannenschmid, *op. cit.* pp. 111, 419 sq.

⁷ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 15. So in Shropshire, where the corn-spirit is conceived in the form of a gander (see above, p. 260), the expression for overthrowing a load at harvest is "to lose the goose," and the penalty used to be the loss of the goose at the harvest-supper (Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-lore*, p. 375); and in some parts of England the harvest-supper was called the Harvest Gosling, or the Inning Goose (Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 23, 26, Bohn's ed.).

the cock on it, is driven round the farmhouse before it is taken to the barn. Then the cock is nailed over, or at the side of the house-door, or on the gable, and remains there till next harvest.¹ In East Friesland the person who gives the last stroke at threshing is called the Clucking-hen, and grain is strewed before him as if he were a hen.²

Again, the corn-spirit is killed in the form of a cock. In parts of Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Picardy the reapers place a live cock in the corn which is to be cut last, and chase it over the field, or bury it up to the neck in the ground; afterwards they strike off its head with a sickle or scythe.³ In many parts of Westphalia, when the harvesters bring the wooden cock to the farmer, he gives them a live cock, which they kill with whips or sticks, or behead with an old sword, or throw into the barn to the girls, or give to the mistress to cook. If the harvest-cock has not been spilt—that is, if no waggon has been upset—the harvesters have the right to kill the farmyard cock by throwing stones at it or beheading it. Where this custom has fallen into disuse, it is still common for the farmer's wife to make cockie-leekie for the harvesters, and to show them the head of the cock which has been killed for the soup.⁴ In the neighbourhood of Klausenburg, Transylvania, a cock is buried on the harvest-field in the earth, so that only its head appears. A young man then takes a scythe and cuts off the cock's head at a single sweep. If he fails to do this, he is called the Red Cock for a whole year, and people fear that next year's crop will be bad.⁵ Near Udvarhely, in Transylvania, a live cock is bound up in the last sheaf and killed with a spit. It is then skinned. The flesh is thrown away, but the skin and feathers are kept till next year; and in spring the grain from the last sheaf is mixed with the feathers of the cock and scattered on the field which is to be tilled.⁶ Nothing could set in a clearer light the identification of the cock with the spirit of the corn. By being tied up in the last sheaf and killed, the cock is identified with the corn, and its death with the cutting of the corn.

¹ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 14.

² *Ibid.* p. 15.

³ *M.F.* p. 30.

⁴ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 15.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 15 sq.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 15; *M.F.* p. 30.

By keeping its feathers till spring, then mixing them with the seed-corn taken from the very sheaf in which the bird had been bound, and scattering the feathers together with the seed over the field, the identity of the bird with the corn is again emphasised, and its quickening and fertilising power, as the corn-spirit, is intimated in the plainest manner. Thus the corn-spirit, in the form of a cock, is killed at harvest, but rises to fresh life and activity in spring. Again, the equivalence of the cock to the corn is expressed, hardly less plainly, in the custom of burying the bird in the ground, and cutting off its head (like the ears of corn) with the scythe.

Another common embodiment of the corn-spirit is the hare.¹ In Galloway the reaping of the last standing corn is called "cutting the Hare." The mode of cutting it is as follows. When the rest of the corn has been reaped, a handful is left standing to form the Hare. It is divided into three parts and plaited, and the ears are tied in a knot. The reapers then retire a few yards and each throws his or her sickle in turn at the Hare to cut it down. It must be cut below the knot, and the reapers continue to throw their sickles at it, one after the other, until one of them succeeds in severing the stalks below the knot. The Hare is then carried home and given to a maidservant in the kitchen, who places it over the kitchen-door on the inside. Sometimes the Hare used to be thus kept till the next harvest. In the parish of Minnigaff, when the Hare was cut, the unmarried reapers ran home with all speed, and the one who arrived first was the first to be married.² In Southern Ayrshire the last corn cut is also called the Hare, and the mode of cutting it seems to be the same as in Galloway; at least in the neighbourhood of Kilmarnock the last corn left standing in the middle of the field is plaited, and the reapers used to try to cut it by throwing their sickles at it. When cut, it was carried home and hung up over the door.³ In the Vosges the person who cuts the last handful of hay or wheat is said to have caught the Hare; he is congratulated by his

¹ *Die Kornämonen*, p. 1.

Report of the British Association for 1896, p. 623.

² W. Gregor, "Preliminary Report on Folklore in Galloway, Scotland,"

³ *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 47 sq.

comrades and has the honour of carrying the nosegay or the small fir-tree decorated with ribbons which marks the conclusion of the harvest.¹ In Germany also one of the names for the last sheaf is the Hare.² Thus in some parts of Anhalt, when the corn has been reaped and only a few stalks are left standing, they say, "The Hare will soon come," or the reapers cry to each other, "Look how the Hare comes jumping out."³ In East Prussia they say that the Hare sits in the last patch of standing corn, and must be chased out by the last reaper. The reapers hurry with their work, each being anxious not to have "to chase out the Hare"; for the man who does so, that is, who cuts the last corn, is much laughed at.⁴ At Birk, in Transylvania, when the reapers come to the last patch, they cry out, "We have the Hare."⁵ At Aurich, as we have seen,⁶ an expression for cutting the last corn is "to cut off the Hare's tail." "He is killing the Hare" is commonly said of the man who cuts the last corn in Germany, Sweden, Holland, France, and Italy.⁷ In Norway the man who is thus said to "kill the Hare" must give "hare's blood," in the form of brandy, to his fellows to drink.⁸ In Lesbos when the reapers are at work in two neighbouring fields, each party tries to finish first in order to drive the Hare into their neighbour's field; the reapers who succeed in doing so believe that next year the crop will be better. A small sheaf of corn is made up and kept beside the holy picture till next harvest.⁹

Again, the corn-spirit sometimes takes the form of a cat.¹⁰ Near Kiel children are warned not to go into the corn-fields because "the Cat sits there." In the Eisenach Oberland they are told "the Corn-cat will come and fetch you," "the Corn-cat goes in the corn." In some parts of Silesia at mowing

¹ Sauv , *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 191.

² W. Mannhardt, *Die Kornd monen*, p. 3.

³ O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins f r Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 154.

⁴ Lemke, *Volksk mliches in Ostpreussen*, i. 24.

⁵ G. A. Heinrich, *Agarische Sitten*

und Gebr uche unter den Sachsen Siebenb rgens, p. 21.

⁶ Above, p. 260 sq.

⁷ M.F. p. 29.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 29 sq.; *Die Kornd monen*, p. 5.

⁹ Georgeakis et Pineau, *Folk-lore de Lesbos* (Paris, 1894), p. 310.

¹⁰ A.W.F. pp. 172-174; M.F. p. 30; Sauv , *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 191.

the last corn they say, "The Cat is caught"; and at threshing, the man who gives the last stroke is called the Cat. In the neighbourhood of Lyons the last sheaf and the harvest-supper are both called the Cat. About Vesoul when they cut the last corn they say, "We have the Cat by the tail." At Briançon, in Dauphiné, at the beginning of reaping, a cat is decked out with ribbons, flowers, and ears of corn. It is called the Cat of the ball-skin (*le chat de peau de balle*). If a reaper is wounded at his work, they make the cat lick the wound. At the close of the reaping the cat is again decked out with ribbons and ears of corn; then they dance and make merry. When the dance is over the girls solemnly strip the cat of its finery. At Grüneberg, in Silesia, the reaper who cuts the last corn goes by the name of the Tom-cat. He is enveloped in rye-stalks and green withes, and is furnished with a long plaited tail. Sometimes as a companion he has a man similarly dressed, who is called the (female) Cat. Their duty is to run after people whom they see and beat them with a long stick. Near Amiens the expression for finishing the harvest is, "They are going to kill the Cat"; and when the last corn is cut they kill a cat in the farmyard. At threshing, in some parts of France, a live cat is placed under the last bundle of corn to be threshed, and is struck dead with the flails. Then on Sunday it is roasted and eaten as a holiday dish.

Further, the corn-spirit often appears in the form of a goat. In some parts of Prussia, when the corn bends before the wind, they say, "The Goats are chasing each other," "the wind is driving the Goats through the corn," "the Goats are browsing there," and they expect a very good harvest. Again they say, "The Oats-goat is sitting in the oats-field," "the Corn-goat is sitting in the rye-field."¹ Children are warned not to go into the corn-fields to pluck the blue corn-flowers, or amongst the beans to pluck pods, because the Rye-goat, the Corn-goat, the Oats-goat, or the Bean-goat is sitting or lying there, and will carry them away or kill them.² When a harvester is taken sick or lags behind his fellows at their work, they call out, "The Harvest-

¹ W. Mannhardt, *A. W. F.* p. 155 sq.

² *Ibid.* p. 157 sq.

goat has pushed him," "he has been pushed by the Corn-goat."¹ In the neighbourhood of Braunsberg (East Prussia) at binding the oats every harvester makes haste "lest the Corn-goat push him." At Oefoten, in Norway, each harvester has his allotted patch to reap. When a harvester in the middle has not finished reaping his piece after his neighbours have finished theirs, they say of him, "He remains on the island." And if the laggard is a man, they imitate the cry with which they call a he-goat; if a woman, the cry with which they call a she-goat.² Near Straubing, in Lower Bavaria, it is said of the man who cuts the last corn that "he has the Corn-goat or the Wheat-goat, or the Oats-goat," according to the crop. Moreover, two horns are set up on the last heap of corn, and it is called "the horned Goat." At Kreutzburg, East Prussia, they call out to the woman who is binding the last sheaf, "The Goat is sitting in the sheaf."³ At Gablingen, in Swabia, when the last field of oats upon a farm is being reaped, the reapers carve a goat out of wood. Ears of oats are inserted in its nostrils and mouth, and it is adorned with garlands of flowers. It is set upon the field and called the Oats-goat. When the reaping approaches an end, each reaper hastens to finish his piece first; he who is the last to finish gets the Oats-goat.⁴ Again, the last sheaf is itself called the Goat. Thus, in the valley of the Wiesent, Bavaria, the last sheaf bound on the field is called the Goat, and they have a proverb, "The field must bear a goat."⁵ At Spachbrücken, in Hesse, the last handful of corn which is cut is called the Goat, and the man who cuts it is much ridiculed.⁶ Sometimes the last sheaf is made up in the form of a goat, and they say, "The Goat is sitting in it."⁷ Again, the person who cuts or binds the last sheaf is called the Goat. Thus, in parts of Mecklenburg they call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You are the Harvest-goat." Near Uelzen, in Hanover, the harvest festival begins with "the bringing of the Harvest-goat"; that

¹ W. Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 159.

² *Ibid.* p. 161 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 162.

⁴ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 232 sq., § 426; *A.W.F.* p. 162.

⁵ Panzer, *op. cit.* ii. p. 228 sq., § 422; *A.W.F.* p. 163; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 344.

⁶ *A.W.F.* p. 163.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 164.

is, the woman who bound the last sheaf is wrapt in straw, crowned with a harvest-wreath, and brought in a wheelbarrow to the village, where a round dance takes place. About Luneburg, also, the woman who binds the last corn is decked with a crown of corn-ears and is called the Corn-goat.¹ In the Canton St. Gall, Switzerland, the person who cuts the last handful of corn on the field, or drives the last harvest-waggon to the barn, is called the Corn-goat or the Rye-goat, or simply the Goat.² In the Canton Thurgau he is called Corn-goat; like a goat he has a bell hung round his neck, is led in triumph, and drenched with liquor. In parts of Styria, also, the man who cuts the last corn is called Corn-goat, Oats-goat, or the like. As a rule, the man who thus gets the name of Corn-goat has to bear it a whole year till the next harvest.³

According to one view, the corn-spirit, who has been caught in the form of a goat or otherwise, lives in the farmhouse or barn over winter. Thus, each farm has its own embodiment of the corn-spirit. But, according to another view, the corn-spirit is the genius or deity, not of the corn of one farm only, but of all the corn. Hence when the corn on one farm is all cut, he flees to another where there is still corn left standing. This idea is brought out in a harvest-custom which was formerly observed in Skye. The farmer who first finished reaping sent a man or woman with a sheaf to a neighbouring farmer who had not finished; the latter in his turn, when he had finished, sent on the sheaf to his neighbour who was still reaping; and so the sheaf made the round of the farms till all the corn was cut. The sheaf was called the *goabbir bhacagh*, that is, the Cripple Goat.⁴ The custom appears not to be extinct at the present day, for it was reported from Skye only a few years ago. We are told that when the crofters and small farmers are cutting down their corn, each tries his best to finish before his neighbour. The first to finish goes to his neighbour's field and makes up at one end of it a bundle of sheaves in a fanciful shape which goes by the name of the *gobhar bhacach* or *Lame Goat*. As each man in succession finishes reaping

¹ *A. W. F.* p. 164.

² *Ibid.* p. 164 sq.

³ *Ibid.* p. 165.

⁴ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 24, Bohn's ed.; *A. W. F.* p. 165.

his field, he proceeds to set up a lame goat of this sort in his neighbour's field where there is still corn standing. No one likes to have the Lame Goat put in his field, "not from any ill-luck it brings, but because it is humiliating to have it standing there visible to all neighbours and passers-by, and of course he cannot retaliate."¹ The corn-spirit was probably thus represented as lame because he had been crippled by the cutting of the corn. We have seen that sometimes the old woman who brings home the last sheaf must limp on one foot.² In the Böhmer Wald mountains, between Bohemia and Bavaria, when two peasants are driving home their corn together, they race against each other to see who shall get home first. The village boys mark the loser in the race, and at night they come and erect on the roof of his house the Oats-goat, which is a colossal figure of a goat made of straw.³

But sometimes the corn-spirit, in the form of a goat, is believed to be slain on the harvest-field by the sickle or scythe. Thus, in the neighbourhood of Bernkastel, on the Moselle, the reapers determine by lot the order in which they shall follow each other. The first is called the fore-reaper, the last the tail-bearer. If a reaper overtakes the man in front he reaps past him, bending round so as to leave the slower reaper in a patch by himself. This patch is called the Goat; and the man for whom "the Goat is cut" in this way, is laughed and jeered at by his fellows for the rest of the day. When the tail-bearer cuts the last ears of corn, it is said, "He is cutting the Goat's neck off."⁴ In the neighbourhood of Grenoble, before the end of the reaping, a live goat is adorned with flowers and ribbons and allowed to run about the field. The reapers chase it and try to catch it. When it is caught, the farmer's wife holds it fast while the farmer cuts off its head. The goat's flesh serves to furnish the harvest-supper. A piece of the flesh is pickled and kept till the next harvest, when another goat is killed. Then all the harvesters eat of the flesh. On the same day the skin of

¹ R. C. Maclagan, "Notes on folk-lore objects collected in Argyleshire," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 151, from information given by Mrs. C. Nicholson.

² Above, p. 236.

³ *A.W.F.* p. 165.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 166; *M.F.* p. 185.

the goat is made into a cloak, which the farmer, who works with his men, must always wear at harvest-time if rain or bad weather sets in. But if a reaper gets pains in his back, the farmer gives him the goat-skin to wear.¹ The reason for this seems to be that the pains in the back, being inflicted by the corn-spirit, can also be healed by it. Similarly, we saw that elsewhere, when a reaper is wounded at reaping, a cat, as the representative of the corn-spirit, is made to lick the wound.² Esthonian reapers in the island of Mon think that the man who cuts the first ears of corn at harvest will get pains in his back,³ probably because the corn-spirit is believed to resent especially the first wound; and, in order to escape pains in the back, Saxon reapers in Transylvania gird their loins with the first handful of ears which they cut.⁴ Here, again, the corn-spirit is applied to for healing or protection, but in his original vegetable form, not in the form of a goat or a cat.

Further, the corn-spirit under the form of a goat is sometimes conceived as lurking among the cut corn in the barn, till he is driven from it by the threshing-flail. For example, near Marktl, in Upper Bavaria, the sheaves are called Straw-goats or simply Goats. They are laid in a great heap on the open field and threshed by two rows of men standing opposite each other, who, as they ply their flails, sing a song in which they say that they see the Straw-goat amongst the corn-stalks. The last Goat, that is, the last sheaf, is adorned with a wreath of violets and other flowers and with cakes strung together. It is placed right in the middle of the heap. Some of the threshers rush at it and tear the best of it out; others lay on with their flails so recklessly that heads are sometimes broken. In threshing this last sheaf, each man casts up to the man opposite him the misdeeds of which he has been guilty throughout the year.⁵ At Oberinntal, in Tyrol, the last thresher is called Goat.⁶ At Tettwang, in Würtemberg, the thresher who

¹ *A.W.F.* p. 166.

² Above, p. 271.

³ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. Heft 2, p. 107.

⁴ G. A. Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten*

u. *Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens*, p. 19. Cp. *B.K.* p. 482 sqq.

⁵ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 225 sqq., § 421; *A.W.F.* p. 167 sq.

⁶ *A.W.F.* p. 168.

gives the last stroke to the last bundle of corn before it is turned goes by the name of the He-goat, and it is said "he has driven the He-goat away." The person who, after the bundle has been turned, gives the last stroke of all, is called the She-goat.¹ In this custom it is implied that the corn is inhabited by a pair of corn-spirits, male and female. Further, the corn-spirit, captured in the form of a goat at threshing, is passed on to a neighbour whose threshing is not yet finished. In Franche Comté, as soon as the threshing is over, the young people set up a straw figure of a goat on the farmyard of a neighbour who is still threshing. He must give them wine or money in return. At Ellwangen, in Würtemberg, the effigy of a goat is made out of the last bundle of corn at threshing; four sticks form its legs, and two its horns. The man who gives the last stroke with the flail must carry the Goat to the barn of a neighbour who is still threshing and throw it down on the floor; if he is caught in the act, they tie the Goat on his back.² A similar custom is observed at Indersdorf, in Upper Bavaria; the man who throws the straw Goat into the neighbour's barn imitates the bleating of a goat; if they catch him, they blacken his face and tie the Goat on his back.³ At Zabern, in Elsass, when a farmer is a week or more behind his neighbours with his threshing, they set a real stuffed goat or fox before his door.⁴ Sometimes the spirit of the corn in goat form is believed to be killed at threshing. In the district of Traunstein, Upper Bavaria, they think that the Oats-goat is in the last sheaf of oats. He is represented by an old rake set up on end, with an old pot for a head. The children are then told to kill the Oats-goat.⁵ A stranger passing a harvest-field is sometimes taken for the Corn-goat escaping in human shape from the cut or threshed grain. Thus, when a stranger passes a harvest-field, all the labourers stop and shout as with one voice, "He-goat! He-goat!" At rape-seed threshing in Schleswig, which is generally done on the field, the same cry is raised if the stranger does not take off his hat.⁶

¹ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 445, § 162; *A.W.F.* p. 168.

² *A.W.F.* p. 169.

³ Panzer, *op. cit.* ii. p. 224 sq., § 420; *A.W.F.* p. 169.

⁴ *A.W.F.* p. 169.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 170.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 170.

At sowing their winter corn the old Prussians used to kill a goat, consume its flesh with many superstitious ceremonies, and hang the skin on a high pole near an oak and a large stone. Here it remained till harvest, when a great bunch of corn and herbs was fastened to the pole above the goat-skin. Then, after a prayer had been offered by a peasant who acted as priest (*Weidulut*), the young folks joined hands and danced round the oak and the pole. Afterwards they scrambled for the bunch of corn, and the priest distributed the herbs with a sparing hand. Then he placed the goat-skin on the large stone, sat down on it and preached to the people about the history of their forefathers and their old heathen customs and beliefs.¹ The goat-skin thus suspended on the field from sowing time to harvest represents the corn-spirit superintending the growth of the corn.

Another form which the corn-spirit often assumes is that of a bull, cow, or ox. When the wind sweeps over the corn they say at Conitz, in West Prussia, "The Steer is running in the corn";² when the corn is thick and strong in one spot, they say in some parts of East Prussia, "The Bull is lying in the corn." When a harvester has overstrained and lamed himself, they say in the Graudenz district (West Prussia), "The Bull pushed him"; in Lothringen they say, "He has the Bull." The meaning of both expressions is that he has unwittingly lighted upon the divine corn-spirit, who has punished the profane intruder with lameness.³ So near Chambéry when a reaper wounds himself with his sickle, it is said that he has "the wound of the Ox."⁴ In the district of Bunzlau the last sheaf is sometimes made into the shape of a horned ox, stuffed with tow and wrapt in corn-ears. This figure is called the Old Man (*der Alte*). In some parts of Bohemia the last sheaf is made up in human form and called the Buffalo-bull.⁵ These cases show a confusion of the human with the animal shape of the corn-spirit. The confusion is like that of killing a wether under the name of a wolf.⁶ In the Canton of Thurgau, Switzer-

¹ Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae*, p. 23 sq.; B.K. p. 394 sq.

² M.F. p. 58.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 62.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 59.

⁶ Above, p. 265 sq.

land, the last sheaf, if it is a large one, is called the Cow.¹ All over Swabia the last bundle of corn on the field is called the Cow; the man who cuts the last ears "has the Cow," and is himself called Cow or Barley-cow or Oats-cow, according to the crop; at the harvest-supper he gets a nosegay of flowers and corn-ears and a more liberal allowance of drink than the rest. But he is teased and laughed at; so no one likes to be the Cow.² The Cow was sometimes represented by the figure of a woman made out of ears of corn and corn-flowers. It was carried to the farmhouse by the man who had cut the last handful of corn. The children ran after him and the neighbours turned out to laugh at him, till the farmer took the Cow from him.³ Here again the confusion between the human and the animal form of the corn-spirit is apparent. In various parts of Switzerland the reaper who cuts the last ears of corn is called Wheat-cow, Corn-cow, Oats-cow, or Corn-steer, and is the butt of many a joke.⁴ In some parts of East Prussia, when a few ears of corn have been left standing by inadvertence on the last swath, the foremost reaper seizes them and cries, "Bull! Bull!"⁵ On the other hand, in the district of Rosenheim, Upper Bavaria, when a farmer is later of getting in his harvest than his neighbours, they set up on his land a Straw-bull, as it is called. This is a gigantic figure of a bull made of stubble on a framework of wood and adorned with flowers and leaves. Attached to it is a label on which are scrawled doggerel verses in ridicule of the man on whose land the Straw-bull is set up.⁶

Again, the corn-spirit in the form of a bull or ox is killed on the harvest-field at the close of the reaping. At Pouilly, near Dijon, when the last ears of corn are about to be cut, an ox adorned with ribbons, flowers, and ears of corn is led all round the field, followed by the whole troop of reapers dancing. Then a man disguised as the Devil cuts the last ears of corn and immediately slaughters the ox.

¹ *M.F.* p. 59.

² E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 440 sq., §§ 151, 152, 153; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 234, § 428; *M.F.* p. 59.

³ Panzer, *op. cit.* ii. p. 233, § 427; *M.F.* p. 59.

⁴ *M.F.* p. 59 sq.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 58.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 58 sq.

Part of the flesh of the animal is eaten at the harvest-supper; part is pickled and kept till the first day of sowing in spring. At Pont à Mousson and elsewhere on the evening of the last day of reaping, a calf adorned with flowers and ears of corn is led thrice round the farmyard, being allured by a bait or driven by men with sticks, or conducted by the farmer's wife with a rope. The calf chosen for this ceremony is the calf which was born first on the farm in the spring of the year. It is followed by all the reapers with their tools. Then it is allowed to run free; the reapers chase it, and whoever catches it is called King of the Calf. Lastly, it is solemnly killed; at Lunéville the man who acts as butcher is the Jewish merchant of the village.¹

Sometimes again the corn-spirit hides himself amongst the cut corn in the barn to reappear in bull or cow form at threshing. Thus at Wurmlingen, in Thüringen, the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is called the Cow, or rather the Barley-cow, Oats-cow, Peas-cow, or the like, according to the crop. He is entirely enveloped in straw; his head is surmounted by sticks in imitation of horns, and two lads lead him by ropes to the well to drink. On the way thither he must low like a cow, and for a long time afterwards he goes by the name of the Cow.² At Obermedlingen, in Swabia, when the threshing draws near an end, each man is careful to avoid giving the last stroke. He who does give it "gets the Cow," which is a straw figure dressed in an old ragged petticoat, hood, and stockings. It is tied on his back with a straw-rope; his face is blackened, and being tied with straw-ropes to a wheelbarrow he is wheeled round the village.³ Here, again, we meet with that confusion between the human and animal shape of the corn-spirit which we have noted in other customs. In Canton Schaffhausen the man who threshes the last corn is called the Cow; in Canton Thurgau, the Corn-bull; in Canton Zurich, the Thresher-cow. In the last-mentioned district he is wrapt in straw and bound to one of the trees in the orchard.⁴

¹ *M.F.* p. 60.

² E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 444 sq., § 162; *M.F.* p. 61.

³ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. p. 233, § 427.

⁴ *M.F.* p. 61 sq.

At Arad in Hungary the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is enveloped in straw and a cow's hide with the horns attached to it.¹ At Pessnitz, in the district of Dresden, the man who gives the last stroke with the flail is called Bull. He must make a straw-man and set it up before a neighbour's window.² Here, apparently, as in so many cases, the corn-spirit is passed on to a neighbour who has not finished threshing. So at Herbrechtingen, in Thüringen, the effigy of a ragged old woman is flung into the barn of the farmer who is last with his threshing. The man who throws it in cries, "There is the Cow for you." If the threshers catch him they detain him over night and punish him by keeping him from the harvest-supper.³ In these latter customs the confusion between the human and the animal shape of the corn-spirit meets us again. Further, the corn-spirit in bull form is sometimes believed to be killed at threshing. At Auxerre in threshing the last bundle of corn they call out twelve times, "We are killing the Bull." In the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, where a butcher kills an ox on the field immediately after the close of the reaping, it is said of the man who gives the last stroke at threshing that "he has killed the Bull."⁴ At Chambéry the last sheaf is called the sheaf of the Young Ox and a race takes place to it, in which all the reapers join. When the last stroke is given at threshing they say that "the Ox is killed"; and immediately thereupon a real ox is slaughtered by the reaper who cut the last corn. The flesh of the ox is eaten by the threshers at supper.⁵

We have seen that sometimes the young corn-spirit, whose task it is to quicken the corn of the coming year, is believed to be born as a Corn-baby on the harvest-field.⁶ Similarly in Berry the young corn-spirit is sometimes supposed to be born on the field in calf form. For when a binder has not rope enough to bind all the corn in sheaves, he puts aside the wheat that remains over and imitates the lowing of a cow. The meaning is that "the sheaf has given

¹ *M.F.* p. 62.

² *Ibid.* p. 62.

³ E. Meier, *op. cit.* p. 445 sq., § 163.

⁴ *M.F.* p. 60.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 62.

⁶ Above, p. 182 sq.

birth to a calf."¹ In Puy-de-Dôme when a binder cannot keep up with the reaper whom he or she follows, they say "He or she is giving birth to the Calf."² In some parts of Prussia, in similar circumstances, they call out to the woman, "The Bull is coming," and imitate the bellowing of a bull.³ In these cases the woman is conceived as the Corn-cow or old corn-spirit, while the supposed calf is the Corn-calf or young corn-spirit. In some parts of Austria a mythical calf (*Muhkälbchen*) is believed to be seen amongst the sprouting corn in spring and to push the children; when the corn waves in the wind they say, "The Calf is going about." Clearly, as Mannhardt observes, this calf of the spring-time is the same animal which is afterwards believed to be killed at reaping.⁴

Sometimes the corn-spirit appears in the shape of a horse or mare. Between Kalw and Stuttgart, when the corn bends before the wind, they say, "There runs the Horse."⁵ In Hertfordshire, at the end of the reaping, there is or used to be observed a ceremony called "crying the Mare." The last blades of corn left standing on the field are tied together and called the Mare. The reapers stand at a distance and throw their sickles at it; he who cuts it through "has the prize, with acclamations and good cheer." After it is cut the reapers cry thrice with a loud voice, "I have her!" Others answer thrice, "What have you?"—"A Mare! a Mare! a Mare!"—"Whose is she?" is next asked thrice. "A. B.'s," naming the owner thrice. "Whither will you send her?"—"To C. D.," naming some neighbour who has not all his corn reaped.⁶ In this custom the corn-spirit in the form of a mare is passed on from a farm where the corn is all cut to another farm where it is still standing, and where therefore the corn-spirit may be supposed naturally to take refuge. In Shropshire the custom is similar. "Crying, calling, or shouting the mare is a ceremony performed by the men of that farm which is the first in any parish or district to finish the harvest. The object of it is to make known their own prowess, and to taunt the laggards

¹ Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, ii. 135.

² *M. F.* p. 62: "Il fait le veau."

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 63.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 167.

⁶ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 24, Bohn's ed.

by a pretended offer of the 'owd mar' [old mare] to help out their 'chem' [team]. All the men assemble (the wooden harvest-bottle being of course one of the company) in the stackyard, or, better, on the highest ground on the farm, and there shout the following dialogue, preceding it by a grand 'Hip, hip, hip, hurrah!'

"'I 'ave 'er, I 'ave 'er, I 'ave 'er!'

"'Whad 'ast thee, whad 'ast thee, whad 'ast thee?'

"'A mar'! a mar'! a mar'!'

"'Whose is 'er, whose is 'er, whose is 'er?'

"Maister A.'s, Maister A.'s, Maister A.'s!' (naming the farmer whose harvest is finished).

"'W'eer sha't the' send 'er? w'eer sha't the' send 'er? w'eer sha't the' send 'er?'

"'To Maister B.'s, to Maister B.'s, to Maister B.'s' (naming one whose harvest is *not* finished)."

The farmer who finishes his harvest last, and who therefore cannot send the Mare to any one else, is said "to keep her all winter." The mocking offer of the Mare was sometimes responded to by a mocking acceptance of her help. Thus an old man told an inquirer, "While we wun at supper, a mon cumm'd wi' a autar [halter] to fatch her away." But at one place (Longnor, near Leebotwood), down to about 1850, the Mare used really to be sent. "The head man of the farmer who had finished harvest first was mounted on the best horse of the team—the leader—both horse and man being adorned with ribbons, streamers, etc. Thus arrayed, a boy on foot led the pair in triumph to the neighbouring farmhouses. Sometimes the man who took the 'mare' received, as well as plenty of harvest-ale, some rather rough, though good-humoured, treatment, coming back minus his decorations, and so on."¹ In the neighbourhood of Lille the idea of the corn-spirit in horse form is clearly preserved. When a harvester grows weary at his work, it is said, "He has the fatigue of the Horse." The first sheaf, called the "Cross of the Horse," is placed on a cross of boxwood in the barn, and the youngest horse on the farm must tread on it. The reapers dance round the last blades of corn, crying, "See the remains of the Horse."

¹ Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-lore*, p. 373 sq.

The sheaf made out of these last blades is given to the youngest horse of the parish (*commune*) to eat. This youngest horse of the parish clearly represents, as Mannhardt says, the corn-spirit of the following year, the Corn-foal, which absorbs the spirit of the old Corn-horse by eating the last corn cut; for, as usual, the old corn-spirit takes his final refuge in the last sheaf. The thrasher of the last sheaf is said to "beat the Horse."¹ Again, a trace of the horse-shaped corn-spirit is reported from Berry. The harvesters there are accustomed to take a noon-day sleep in the field. This is called "seeing the Horse." The leader or "King" of the harvesters gives the signal for going to sleep. If he delays giving the signal, one of the harvesters will begin to neigh like a horse, the rest imitate him, and then they all go "to see the Horse."²

In some parts of Normandy there are traces of a belief that the spirit of the corn may assume the form of a quail. When the reapers have come to the last ears of the last rig they surround them for the purpose of catching the quail which is supposed to have taken refuge there. They run round about the corn crying, "Mind the Quail!" and pretend to grab at the bird amid shouts and laughter.³ In Poitou, on the other hand, the spirit of the corn appears to be conceived in the shape of a fox. When the corn is being reaped in a district, all the reapers strive to finish as quickly as possible, in order that they may send "the fox" to the fields of a farmer who has not yet got in his harvest. The man who cuts the last handful of standing corn is said to "have the Fox." This last handful is carried to the farmer's house and occupies a place on the table during the harvest-supper; and it is customary to drench it with water. After that it is set up on the chimney-piece and remains there the whole year.⁴

¹ *M.F.* p. 167. We may compare the Scotch custom of giving the last sheaf to a horse or mare to eat. See above, pp. 177, 185 sq., 187.

² Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, ii. 133; *M.F.* p. 167 sq. I am informed by Mrs. Hoggan, M.D., of 37 Fitzroy Square, London, that in South Wales the man who cut the "Neck" used to

be roughly handled if he was caught. One way of punishing him was to shoe him, that is, to beat the soles of his feet severely with sods. Perhaps he was thus treated as representing the corn-spirit in the form of a horse.

³ J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 240.

⁴ L. P'ineau, *Folk-lore du Poitou* (Paris, 1892), p. 500 sq.

The last animal embodiment of the corn-spirit which we shall notice is the pig (boar or sow). In Thüringen, when the wind sets the young corn in motion, they sometimes say, "The Boar is rushing through the corn."¹ Amongst the Esthonians of the island of Oesel the last sheaf is called the Rye-boar, and the man who gets it is saluted with a cry of, "You have the Rye-boar on your back!" In reply he strikes up a song, in which he prays for plenty.² At Kohlerwinkel, near Augsburg, at the close of the harvest, the last bunch of standing corn is cut down, stalk by stalk, by all the reapers in turn. He who cuts the last stalk "gets the Sow," and is laughed at.³ In other Swabian villages also the man who cuts the last corn "has the Sow," or "has the Rye-sow."⁴ In the Traunstein district, Upper Bavaria, the man who cuts the last handful of rye or wheat "has the Sow," and is called Sow-driver.⁵ At Friedingen, in Swabia, the thresher who gives the last stroke is called Sow—Barley-sow, Corn-sow, or the like, according to the crop. At Onstmettingen the man who gives the last stroke at threshing "has the Sow"; he is often bound up in a sheaf and dragged by a rope along the ground.⁶ And, generally, in Swabia the man who gives the last stroke with the flail is called Sow. He may, however, rid himself of this invidious distinction by passing on to a neighbour the straw-rope, which is the badge of his position as Sow. So he goes to a house and throws the straw-rope into it, crying, "There, I bring you the Sow." All the inmates give chase; and if they catch him they beat him, shut him up for several hours in the pig-sty, and oblige him to take the "Sow" away again.⁷ In various parts of Upper Bavaria the man who gives the last stroke at threshing must "carry the Pig"—that is, either a straw effigy of a pig or merely a bundle of straw—

¹ Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 213, § 4. So at Kleptzig, in Anhalt (*Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 150).

² Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. Heft 2, p. 107; *M.F.* p. 187.

³ Birlinger, *Aus Schwaben*, ii. 328.

⁴ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. pp. 223, 224, §§ 417, 419.

⁵ *M.F.* p. 112.

⁶ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 445, § 162.

⁷ Birlinger, *Volksstümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. p. 425, § 379.

ropes. This he carries to a neighbouring farm where the threshing is not finished, and throws it into the barn. If the threshers catch him they handle him roughly, beating him, blackening or dirtying his face, throwing him into filth, binding the Sow on his back, and so on; if the bearer of the Sow is a woman they cut off her hair. At the harvest supper or dinner the man who "carried the Pig" gets one or more dumplings made in the form of pigs; sometimes he gets a large dumpling and a number of small ones, all in pig form, the large one being called the sow and the small ones the sucking-pigs. Sometimes he has the right to be the first to put his hand into the dish and take out as many small dumplings ("sucking-pigs") as he can, while the other threshers strike at his hand with spoons or sticks. When the dumplings are served up by the maid-servant, all the people at table cry, "Süz, süz, süz!" being the cry used in calling pigs. Sometimes after dinner the man who "carried the Pig" has his face blackened, and is set on a cart and drawn round the village by his fellows, followed by a crowd crying, "Süz, süz, süz!" as if they were calling swine. Sometimes, after being wheeled round the village, he is flung on the dunghill.¹

Again, the corn-spirit in the form of a pig plays his part at sowing-time as well as at harvest. At Neuautz, in Courland, when barley is sown for the first time in the year, the farmer's wife boils the chine of a pig along with the tail, and brings it to the sower on the field. He eats of it, but cuts off the tail and sticks it in the field; it is believed that the ears of corn will then grow as long as the tail.² Here the pig is the corn-spirit, whose fertilising power is sometimes supposed to lie especially in his tail.³ As a pig he is put in the ground at sowing-time, and as a pig he reappears amongst the ripe corn at harvest. For amongst the neighbouring Esthonians, as we have seen,⁴ the last sheaf is called the Rye-boar. Somewhat similar customs are observed in Germany. In the Salza district, near Meiningen, a certain bone in the pig is called "the Jew on the winnowing-fan."

¹ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. pp. 221-224, §§ 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 418.

² *M. F.* p. 186 sq.

³ Above, p. 260 sq., 263.

⁴ Above, p. 284.

The flesh of this bone is boiled on Shrove Tuesday, but the bone is put amongst the ashes which the neighbours exchange as presents on St. Peter's Day (the twenty-second of February), and then mix with the seed-corn.¹ In the whole of Hesse, Meiningen, etc., people eat pea-soup with dried pig-ribs on Ash Wednesday or Candlemas. The ribs are then collected and hung in the room till sowing-time, when they are inserted in the sown field or in the seed-bag amongst the flax seed. This is thought to be an infallible specific against earth-fleas and moles, and to cause the flax to grow well and tall.² In many parts of White Russia people eat a roast lamb or sucking-pig at Easter, and then throw the bones backwards upon the fields, to preserve the corn from hail.³

But the idea of the corn-spirit as embodied in pig form is nowhere more clearly expressed than in the Scandinavian custom of the Yule Boar. In Sweden and Denmark at Yule (Christmas) it is the custom to bake a loaf in the form of a boar-pig. This is called the Yule Boar. The corn of the last sheaf is often used to make it. All through Yule the Yule Boar stands on the table. Often it is kept till the sowing-time in spring, when part of it is mixed with the seed-corn and part given to the ploughmen and plough-horses or plough-oxen to eat, in the expectation of a good harvest.⁴ In this custom the corn-spirit, immanent in the last sheaf, appears at midwinter in the form of a boar made from the corn of the last sheaf; and his quickening influence on the corn is shown by mixing part of the Yule Boar with the seed-corn, and giving part of it to the ploughman and his cattle to eat. Similarly we saw that the Corn-wolf makes his appearance at midwinter, the time when the year begins to verge towards spring.⁵ We may conjecture that the Yule straw, which Swedish peasants turn to various superstitious uses, comes, in part at least, from the sheaf out of which the Yule Boar is made. The Yule straw is long

¹ *M.F.* p. 187.

² *M.F.* p. 187 sq.; Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, pp. 189, 218; W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche* (Marburg, 1888), p. 35.

³ *M.F.* p. 188; Kalston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 220.

⁴ *A.W.F.* p. 197 sq.; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 491; Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Maiden"; Afzelius, *Volksagen und Volkslieder aus Schwedens älterer und neuerer Zeit*, übersetzt von Ungewitter, i. 9.

⁵ Above, p. 266.

rye-straw, a portion of which is always set apart for this season. It is strewn over the floor at Christmas, and the peasants attribute many virtues to it. For example, they think that some of it scattered on the ground will make a barren field productive. Again, the peasant at Christmas seats himself on a log; and his eldest son or daughter, or the mother herself, if the children are not old enough, places a wisp of the Yule straw on his knee. From this he draws out single straws, and throws them, one by one, up to the ceiling; and as many as lodge in the rafters, so many will be the sheaves of rye he will have to thresh at harvest.¹ Again, it is only the Yule straw which may be used in binding the fruit-trees as a charm to fertilise them.² These uses of the Yule straw show that it is believed to possess fertilising virtues analogous to those ascribed to the Yule Boar; we may therefore fairly conjecture that the Yule straw is made from the same sheaf as the Yule Boar. Formerly a real boar was sacrificed at Christmas,³ and apparently also a man in the character of the Yule Boar. This, at least, may perhaps be inferred from a Christmas custom still observed in Sweden. A man is wrapt up in a skin, and carries a wisp of straw in his mouth, so that the projecting straws look like the bristles of a boar. A knife is brought, and an old woman, with her face blackened, pretends to sacrifice him.⁴ On Christmas Eve in some parts of the Esthonian island of Oesel they bake a long cake with the two ends turned up. It is called the Christmas Boar, and stands on the table till the morning of New Year's Day, when it is distributed among the cattle. In other parts of the island the Christmas Boar is not a cake but a little pig born in March, which the housewife fattens secretly, often without the knowledge of the other members of the family. On Christmas Eve the little pig is secretly killed, then roasted in the oven, and set on the table standing on all fours, where it remains in this posture for several days. In other parts of the island, again, though the Christmas cake

¹ L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, pp. 169 *sq.*, 182. On Christmas night children sleep on a bed of the Yule straw (*ibid.* p. 177).

² Jahn, *Deutsche Opfergebräuche*, p. 215. Cp. above, vol. i. p. 177.

³ Afzelius, *op. cit.* i. 31.

⁴ Afzelius, *op. cit.* i. 9; Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, pp. 181, 185.

has neither the name nor the shape of a boar, it is kept till the New Year, when half of it is divided among all the members and all the quadrupeds of the family. The other half of the cake is kept till sowing-time comes round, when it is similarly distributed in the morning among human beings and beasts.¹ In other parts of Esthonia, again, the Christmas Boar, as it is called, is baked of the first rye cut at harvest; it has a conical shape and a cross is impressed on it with a pig's bone or a key, or three dints are made in it with a buckle or a piece of charcoal. It stands with a light beside it on the table all through the festal season. On New Year's Day and Epiphany, before sunrise, a little of the cake is crumbled with salt and given to the cattle. The rest is kept till the day when the cattle are driven out to pasture for the first time in spring. It is then put in the herdsman's bag, and at evening is divided among the cattle to guard them from magic and harm. In some places the Christmas Boar is partaken of by farm-servants and cattle at the time of the barley sowing for the purpose of thereby producing a heavier crop.²

So much for the animal embodiments of the corn-spirit as they are presented to us in the folk-customs of Northern Europe. These customs bring out clearly the sacramental character of the harvest-supper. The corn-spirit is conceived as embodied in an animal; this divine animal is slain, and its flesh and blood are partaken of by the harvesters. Thus, the cock, the goose, the hare, the cat, the goat, and the ox are eaten sacramentally by the harvesters, and the pig is eaten sacramentally by ploughmen in spring.³ Again, as a substitute for the real flesh of the divine being, bread or dumplings are made in his image and eaten sacramentally; thus, pig-shaped dumplings are eaten by the harvesters, and loaves made in boar-shape (the Yule Boar) are eaten in spring by the ploughman and his cattle.

The reader has probably remarked the complete parallel-

¹ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. Heft 2 (1872), p. 55 sq.

und äussern Leben der Esten, pp. 344, 485.

² Above, pp. 267, 268, 270, 271, 274, 279, 280, 285. In regard to the hare, the substitution of brandy for hare's blood is probably modern.

³ F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren*

ism between the conceptions of the corn-spirit in human and in animal form. The parallel may be here briefly resumed. When the corn waves in the wind it is said either that the Corn-mother or that the Corn-wolf, etc., is passing through the corn. Children are warned against straying in corn-fields either because the Corn-mother or because the Corn-wolf, etc., is there. In the last corn cut or the last sheaf threshed either the Corn-mother or the Corn-wolf, etc., is supposed to be present. The last sheaf is itself called either the Corn-mother or the Corn-wolf, etc., and is made up in the shape either of a woman or of a wolf, etc. The person who cuts, binds, or threshes the last sheaf is called either the Old Woman or the Wolf, etc., according to the name bestowed on the sheaf itself. As in some places a sheaf made in human form and called the Maiden, the Mother of the Maize, etc., is kept from one harvest to the next in order to secure a continuance of the corn-spirit's blessing; so in some places the Harvest-cock and in others the flesh of the goat is kept for a similar purpose from one harvest to the next. As in some places the grain taken from the Corn-mother is mixed with the seed-corn in spring to make the crop abundant; so in some places the feathers of the cock, and in Sweden the Yule Boar, are kept till spring and mixed with the seed-corn for a like purpose. As part of the Corn-mother or Maiden is given to the cattle at Christmas or to the horses at the first ploughing, so part of the Yule Boar is given to the ploughing horses or oxen in spring. Lastly, the death of the corn-spirit is represented by killing or pretending to kill either his human or his animal representative; and the worshippers partake sacramentally either of the actual body and blood of the representative of the divinity, or of bread made in his likeness.

Other animal forms assumed by the corn-spirit are the stag, roe, sheep, bear, ass, mouse, stork, swan, and kite.¹ If it is asked why the corn-spirit should be thought to appear in the form of an animal and of so many different animals, we may reply that to primitive man the simple appearance of an animal or bird among the corn is probably enough to suggest a mysterious link between the creature

¹ *Die Korndämonen*, p. 1.

and the corn ; and when we remember that in the old days, before fields were fenced in, all kinds of animals must have been free to roam over them, we need not wonder that the corn-spirit should have been identified even with large animals like the horse and cow, which nowadays could not, except by a rare accident, be found straying in an English corn-field. This explanation applies with peculiar force to the very common case in which the animal embodiment of the corn-spirit is believed to lurk in the last standing corn. For at harvest a number of wild animals, such as hares, rabbits, and partridges, are commonly driven by the progress of the reaping into the last patch of standing corn, and make their escape from it as it is being cut down. So regularly does this happen that reapers and others often stand round the last patch of corn armed with sticks or guns, with which they kill the animals as they dart out of their last refuge among the stalks. Now, primitive man, to whom magical changes of shape seem perfectly credible, finds it most natural that the spirit of the corn, driven from his home in the ripe grain, should make his escape in the form of the animal which is seen to rush out of the last patch of corn as it falls under the scythe of the reaper. Thus the identification of the corn-spirit with an animal is analogous to the identification of him with a passing stranger. As the sudden appearance of a stranger near the harvest-field or threshing-floor is, to the primitive mind, enough to identify him as the spirit of the corn escaping from the cut or threshed corn, so the sudden appearance of an animal issuing from the cut corn is enough to identify it with the corn-spirit escaping from his ruined home. The two identifications are so analogous that they can hardly be dissociated in any attempt to explain them. Those who look to some other principle than the one here suggested for the explanation of the latter identification are bound to show that their theory covers the former identification also.

But however we may explain it, the fact remains that in peasant folk-lore the corn-spirit is very commonly conceived and represented in animal form. May not this fact explain the relation in which certain animals stood to the

ancient deities of vegetation, Dionysus, Demeter, Adonis, Attis, and Osiris?

To begin with Dionysus. We have seen that he was represented sometimes as a goat and sometimes as a bull. As a goat he can hardly be separated from the minor divinities, the Pans, Satyrs, and Silenuses, all of whom are closely associated with him and are represented more or less completely in the form of goats. Thus, Pan was regularly portrayed in sculpture and painting with the face and legs of a goat.¹ The Satyrs were depicted with pointed goat-ears, and sometimes with sprouting horns and short tails.² They were sometimes spoken of simply as goats;³ and in the drama their parts were played by men dressed in goat-skins.⁴ Silenus is represented in art clad in a goat-skin.⁵ Further, the Fauns, the Italian counterpart of the Greek Pans and Satyrs, are described as being half goats, with goat-feet and goat-horns.⁶ Again, all these minor goat-formed divinities partake more or less clearly of the character of woodland deities. Thus, Pan was called by the Arcadians the Lord of the Wood.⁷ The Silenuses associated with the tree-nymphs.⁸ The Fauns are expressly designated as woodland deities;⁹ and their character as such is still further brought out by their association, or even identification, with Silvanus and the Silvanuses, who, as their name of itself indicates, are spirits of the woods.¹⁰ Lastly, the association of the Satyrs with the Silenuses, Fauns, and Silvanuses,¹¹ proves that the Satyrs also were woodland deities. These goat-formed spirits of the woods have their counterparts in the folk-lore of Northern Europe. Thus, the Russian wood-spirits, called *Ljeschie* (from *ljes*, "wood") are believed to appear partly in human shape, but with the

¹ Herodotus, ii. 46.

² Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*,³ i. 600; *A.W.F.* p. 138.

³ *A.W.F.* p. 139.

⁴ Pollux, iv. 118.

⁵ *A.W.F.* p. 142 sq.

⁶ Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 361, iii. 312, v. 101; *id.*, *Heroides*, iv. 49.

⁷ Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 22. 3.

⁸ Homer, *Hymn to Aphrodite*, 262 sqq.

⁹ Pliny, *N.H.* xii. 3; Ovid, *Metam.* vi. 392; *id.*, *Fasti*, iii. 303, 309; Gloss. Isid. Mart. Cap. ii. 167, cited by Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 113.

¹⁰ Pliny, *N.H.* xii. 3; Martianus Capella, ii. 167; Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, xv. 23; Aurelius Victor, *Origo gentis Romanæ*, iv. 6.

¹¹ Servius on Virgil, *Ecl.* vi. 14; Ovid, *Metam.* vi. 392 sq.; Martianus Capella, ii. 167.

horns, ears, and legs of goats. The *Ljeschi* can alter his stature at pleasure; when he walks in the wood he is as tall as the trees; when he walks in the meadows he is no higher than the grass. Some of the *Ljeschie* are spirits of the corn as well as of the wood; before harvest they are as tall as the corn-stalks, but after it they shrink to the height of the stubble.¹ This brings out—what we have remarked before—the close connection between tree-spirits and corn-spirits, and shows how easily the former may melt into the latter. Similarly the Fauns, though wood-spirits, were believed to foster the growth of the crops.² We have already seen how often the corn-spirit is represented in folk-custom as a goat.³ On the whole, then, as Mannhardt argues,⁴ the Pans, Satyrs, and Fauns appear to belong to a widely diffused class of wood-spirits conceived in goat-form. The fondness of goats for straying in woods and nibbling the bark of trees—to which it is well known that they are most destructive—is an obvious and perhaps sufficient reason why wood-spirits should so often be supposed to take the form of goats. The inconsistency of a god of vegetation subsisting upon the vegetation which he personifies is not one to strike the primitive mind. Such inconsistencies arise when the deity, ceasing to be immanent in the vegetation, comes to be regarded as its owner or lord; for the idea of owning the vegetation naturally leads to that of subsisting on it. We have already seen that the corn-spirit, originally conceived as immanent in the corn, afterwards comes to be regarded as its owner, who lives on it and is reduced to poverty and want by being deprived of it.⁵

Thus the representation of wood-spirits in the form of goats appears to be both widespread and, to the primitive mind, natural. Therefore when we find, as we have done, that Dionysus—a tree-god—is sometimes represented in goat form,⁶ we can hardly avoid concluding that this representation is simply a part of his proper character as a tree-god and is not to be explained by the fusion of two distinct and independent worships, in one of which he originally

¹ *B.A.* p. 138 sq.; *A.W.F.* p. 145.

² Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* i. 10.

³ Above, p. 271 sqq.

⁴ *A.W.F.* ch. iii.

⁵ Above, p. 235 sqq.

⁶ Above, p. 165 sq.

appeared as a tree-god and in the other as a goat. If such a fusion took place in the case of Dionysus, it must equally have taken place in the case of the Pans and Satyrs of Greece, the Fauns of Italy, and the *Ljeschie* of Russia. That such a fusion of two wholly disconnected worships should have occurred once is possible; that it should have occurred twice independently is improbable; that it should have occurred thrice independently is so unlikely as to be practically incredible.

Dionysus was also figured, as we have seen,¹ in the shape of a bull. After what has gone before we are naturally led to expect that his bull form must have been only another expression for his character as a deity of vegetation, especially as the bull is a common embodiment of the corn-spirit in Northern Europe;² and the close association of Dionysus with Demeter and Proserpine in the mysteries of Eleusis shows that he had at least strong agricultural affinities. The other possible explanation of the bull-shaped Dionysus would be that the conception of him as a bull was originally entirely distinct from the conception of him as a deity of vegetation, and that the fusion of the two conceptions was due to some such circumstance as the union of two tribes, one of which had previously worshipped a bull-god and the other a tree-god. This appears to be the view taken by Mr. Andrew Lang, who suggests that the bull-formed Dionysus "had either been developed out of, or had succeeded to, the worship of a bull-totem."³ Of course this is possible. But it is not yet certain that the Aryans ever had totemism. On the other hand, it is quite certain that many Aryan peoples have conceived deities of vegetation as embodied in animal forms. Therefore when we find amongst an Aryan people like the Greeks a deity of vegetation represented as an animal, the presumption must be in favour of explaining this by a principle which is certainly known to have influenced the Aryan race rather than by one which is not certainly known to have done so. In the present state of our knowledge, therefore, it is safer to regard the bull form of Dionysus as being, like his goat

¹ Above, p. 164 sq.

² Above, p. 277 sqq.

³ A. Lang, *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*,² ii. 252.

form, an expression of his proper character as a deity of vegetation.

The probability of this view will be somewhat increased if it can be shown that in other rites than those of Dionysus the ancients slew an ox as a representative of the spirit of vegetation. This they appear to have done in the Athenian sacrifice known as "the murder of the ox" (*bouphonia*). It took place about the end of June or beginning of July, that is, about the time when the threshing is nearly over in Attica. According to tradition the sacrifice was instituted to procure a cessation of drought and dearth which had afflicted the land. The ritual was as follows. Barley mixed with wheat, or cakes made of them, were laid upon the bronze altar of Zeus Polieus on the Acropolis. Oxen were driven round the altar, and the ox which went up to the altar and ate the offering on it was sacrificed. The axe and knife with which the beast was slain had been previously wetted with water brought by maidens called "water-carriers." The weapons were then sharpened and handed to the butchers, one of whom felled the ox with the axe and another cut its throat with the knife. As soon as he had felled the ox, the former threw the axe from him and fled; and the man who cut the beast's throat apparently imitated his example. Meantime the ox was skinned and all present partook of its flesh. Then the hide was stuffed with straw and sewed up; next the stuffed animal was set on its feet and yoked to a plough as if it were ploughing. A trial then took place in an ancient law-court presided over by the King (as he was called) to determine who had murdered the ox. The maidens who had brought the water accused the men who had sharpened the axe and knife; the men who had sharpened the axe and knife blamed the men who had handed these implements to the butchers; the men who had handed the implements to the butchers blamed the butchers; and the butchers laid the blame on the axe and knife, which were accordingly found guilty, condemned and cast into the sea.¹

¹ Pausanias, i. 24. 4; *id.*, i. 28. 10; Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 29 sq.; Aelian, *Var. Hist.* viii. 3; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Peace*, 419, and *Clouds*, 985; Hesychius, Suidas, and *Etymol.*

Magnum, s.v. *βοῦφονία*; Suidas, s.v. *θαύλω*; Bekker's *Anecdota Graeca*, p. 238, s.v. *Διπρόλια*. The date of the sacrifice (14th Skirophorion) is given by the Schol. on Aristophanes and

The name of this sacrifice,—“the *murder* of the ox,”¹—the pains taken by each person who had a hand in the slaughter to lay the blame on some one else, together with the formal trial and punishment of the axe or knife or both, prove that the ox was here regarded not merely as a victim offered to a god, but as itself a sacred creature, the slaughter of which was sacrilege or murder. This is borne out by a statement of Varro that to kill an ox was formerly a capital crime in Attica.² The mode of selecting the victim suggests that the ox which tasted the corn was viewed as the corn-deity taking possession of his own. This interpretation is supported by the following custom. In Beauce, in the district of Orleans, on the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth of April they make a straw-man called “the great *mondard*.” For they say that the old *mondard* is now dead and it is necessary to make a new one. The straw-man is carried in solemn procession up and down the village and at last is placed upon the oldest apple-tree. There he remains till the apples are gathered, when he is taken down and thrown into the water, or he is burned and his ashes cast into water. But the person who plucks the first fruit from the tree succeeds to the title of “the great *mondard*.”³ Here the straw figure, called “the great *mondard*” and placed on the apple-tree in spring, represents the spirit of the tree, who, dead in winter, revives when the apple-blossoms appear on the boughs. Thus the person who plucks the first fruit from the tree and thereby receives the name of “the great *mondard*” must be regarded as a representative of the tree-spirit. Primitive peoples are usually reluctant to taste the annual

the *Etym. Magn.*; and this date corresponds, according to Mannhardt (*M.F.* p. 68), with the close of the threshing in Attica. No writer mentions the trial of both the axe and the knife. Pausanias speaks of the trial of the axe, Porphyry and Aelian of the trial of the knife. But from Porphyry's description it is clear that the slaughter was carried out by two men, one wielding an axe and the other a knife, and that the former laid the blame on the latter. Perhaps the knife alone was condemned. That the King (as to whom see above, vol. i, p.

7) presided at the trial of all lifeless objects, is mentioned by Aristotle (*Constitution of Athens*, 57) and Pollux (viii. 90, cp. viii. 120).

¹ The real import of the name *bouphonia* was first perceived by W. Robertson Smith. See his *Religion of the Semites*,² p. 304 sqq.

² Varro, *De re rustica*, ii. 5. 4. Cp. Columella, *De re rustica*, vi. prael. § 7. Perhaps, however, Varro's statement may be merely an inference drawn from the ritual of the *bouphonia* and the legend told to explain it.

³ W. Mannhardt, *B.A.* p. 409.

first-fruits of any crop, until some ceremony has been performed which makes it safe and pious for them to do so. The reason of this reluctance appears to be a belief that the first-fruits either belong to or actually contain a divinity. Therefore when a man or animal is seen boldly to appropriate the sacred first-fruits, he or it is naturally regarded as the divinity himself in human or animal form taking possession of his own. The time of the Athenian sacrifice, which fell about the close of the threshing, suggests that the wheat and barley laid upon the altar were a harvest offering; and the sacramental character of the subsequent repast—all partaking of the flesh of the divine animal—would make it parallel to the harvest-suppers of modern Europe, in which, as we have seen, the flesh of the animal who stands for the corn-spirit is eaten by the harvesters. Again, the tradition that the sacrifice was instituted in order to put an end to drought and famine is in favour of taking it as a harvest festival. The resurrection of the corn-spirit, enacted by setting up the stuffed ox and yoking it to the plough, may be compared with the resurrection of the tree-spirit in the person of his representative, the Wild Man.¹

The ox appears as a representative of the corn-spirit in other parts of the world. At Great Bassam, in Guinea, two oxen are slain annually to procure a good harvest. If the sacrifice is to be effectual, it is necessary that the oxen should weep. So all the women of the village sit in front of the beasts, chanting, "The ox will weep; yes, he will weep!" From time to time one of the women walks round the beasts, throwing manioc meal or palm wine upon them, especially into their eyes. When tears roll down from the eyes of the oxen, the people dance, singing, "The ox weeps! the ox weeps!" Then two men seize the tails of the beasts and cut them off at one blow. It is believed that a great misfortune will happen in the course of the year if the tails are not severed at one blow. The oxen are afterwards killed, and their flesh is eaten by the chiefs.² Here the tears of the oxen, like those of the human victims amongst the Khonds, are probably a rain-charm. We have already

¹ See above, p. 62.

in das Innere von West-Afrika, pp.

² Hecquard, *Reise an die Küste und* 41-43.

seen that the virtue of the corn-spirit, embodied in animal form, is sometimes supposed to reside in the tail, and that the last handful of corn is sometimes conceived as the tail of the corn-spirit.¹ Still more clearly does the ox appear as a personification of the corn-spirit in a ceremony which is observed in all the provinces and districts of China to welcome the approach of spring. On the first day of spring the governor or prefect of the city goes in procession to the east gate of the city, and sacrifices to the Divine Husbandman, who is represented with a bull's head on the body of a man. A large effigy of an ox, cow, or buffalo has been prepared for the occasion, and stands outside of the east gate, with agricultural implements beside it. The figure is made of differently-coloured pieces of paper pasted on a framework either by a blind man or according to the directions of a necromancer. The colours of the paper prognosticate the character of the coming year; if red prevails, there will be many fires; if white, there will be floods and rain; and so with the other colours. The mandarins walk slowly round the ox, beating it severely at each step with rods of various hues. It is filled with five kinds of grain, which pour forth when the effigy is broken by the blows of the rods. The paper fragments are then set on fire, and a scramble takes place for the burning fragments, as the people believe that whoever gets one of them is sure to be fortunate throughout the year. A live buffalo is next killed, and its flesh is divided among the mandarins. According to one account, the effigy of the ox is made of clay, and, after being beaten by the governor, is stoned by the people till they break it in pieces, "from which they expect an abundant year."² But the ceremony varies somewhat in the different provinces. According to another account the effigy of the cow, made of earthenware, with gilded horns, is borne in procession, and is of such colossal dimensions that forty or fifty men can hardly carry it. Behind this monstrous cow walks a boy with one foot shod and the other bare, personifying the Genius of Industry.

¹ Above, pp. 260 *sq.*, 263.

203 *sq.*; Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese*, p. 375 *sq.*, ed. Paxton Hood; Gray, *China*, ii. 115 *sq.*

² *China Review*, i. 62, 154, 162.

He beats the effigy with a rod, as if to drive it forward. A great many little clay cows are afterwards taken out of the large one and distributed among the people. Both the big cow and the little ones are then broken in pieces, and the people take the sherds home with them in order to grind them to powder and strew the powder on their fields, for they think thus to secure a plentiful harvest.¹ In one form of this Chinese custom the corn-spirit appears to be plainly represented by the corn-filled ox, whose fragments may therefore be supposed to bring fertility with them. We may compare the Silesian custom of burning the effigy of Death, scrambling for the burning fragments, and burying them in the fields to secure a good crop, and the Florentine custom of sawing the Old Woman and scrambling for the dried fruits with which she was filled.² Both these customs, like their Chinese counterpart, are observed in spring.

On the whole, then, we may perhaps conclude that both as a goat and as a bull Dionysus was essentially a god of vegetation. The Chinese and European customs just referred to may perhaps shed light on the custom of rending a live bull or goat at the rites of Dionysus. The animal was torn in fragments, as the Khond victim was cut in pieces, in order that the worshippers might each secure a portion of the life-giving and fertilising influence of the god. The flesh was eaten raw as a sacrament, and we may con-

¹ *Ostasiatischer Lloyd*, March 14, 1890, quoted by J. D. E. Schmeltz, "Das Pflugfest in China," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, xi. (1898), p. 79. With this account the one given by S. W. Williams (*The Middle Kingdom* (New York and London, 1848), ii. 109) substantially agrees. In many districts, according to the *Ostasiatischer Lloyd*, the Genius of Spring is represented at this festival by a boy of blameless character, clad in green. The custom of going with one foot bare and the other shod has some mystic meaning which I am unable to explain. Persons who were being purified by means of the skin of the ram sacrificed to Zeus (*Διὸς κῶδιον*) seem to have had one foot bare and the other shod. See *Gazette Arché-*

logique, ix. (1884), pl. 44, 45, 46; Hesychius, s.v. *Διὸς κῶδιον*; Polemo, ed. Preller, p. 140 sqq. Pelias was warned by an oracle that his death would be brought about by a man with one shoe, and the oracle was fulfilled by Jason. See Pindar, *Pyth.* iv. 75 (135) with the scholium; Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, i. 5 sqq. The Plataeans who escaped from their besieged city had only the left foot shod (Thucydides, iii. 22). The historian who records this last circumstance thought it was a measure of precaution to prevent the men's feet from slipping in the mud; but more probably it was an old superstition.

² Above, pp. 87, 95.

jecture that some of it was taken home to be buried in the fields, or otherwise employed so as to convey to the fruits of the earth the quickening influence of the god of vegetation. The resurrection of Dionysus, related in his myth, may have been enacted in his rites by stuffing and setting up the slain ox, as was done at the Athenian *bouphonia*.

Passing next to the corn-goddess Demeter, and remembering that in European folk-lore the pig is a common embodiment of the corn-spirit,¹ we may now ask whether the pig, which was so closely associated with Demeter, may not have been originally the goddess herself in animal form? The pig was sacred to her;² in art she was portrayed carrying or accompanied by a pig;³ and the pig was regularly sacrificed in her mysteries, the reason assigned being that the pig injures the corn and is therefore an enemy of the goddess.⁴ But after an animal has been conceived as a god, or a god as an animal, it sometimes happens, as we have seen, that the god sloughs off his animal form and becomes purely anthropomorphic; and that then the animal, which at first had been slain in the character of the god, comes to be viewed as a victim offered to the god on the ground of its hostility to the deity; in short, that the god is sacrificed to himself on the ground that he is his own enemy. This happened to Dionysus, and it may have happened to Demeter also. And in fact the rites of one of her festivals, the Thesmophoria, bear out the view that originally the pig was an embodiment of the corn-goddess herself, either Demeter or her daughter and double Proserpine. The Thesmophoria was an autumn festival, celebrated by women alone in October,⁵ and appears to have represented with mourning rites the descent of Proserpine (or Demeter)⁶ into the lower world, and with

¹ See above, p. 284 *sqq.*

² Schol. on Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 747.

³ Overbeck, *Griechische Kunst-mythologie*, ii. 493; Müller-Wieseler, *Denkmäler d. alt. Kunst*, ii. pl. viii. 94.

⁴ Hyginus, *Fab.* 277; Cornutus, *De nat. deor.* 28; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 12. 23; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 747; *id.*, on *Fregi*, 338; *id.*, on *Peace*,

374; Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 380; Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* x. 16.

⁵ For the authorities on the Thesmophoria and a discussion of some doubtful points in the festival, I may be permitted to refer to my article "Thesmophoria" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ninth ed.

⁶ Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. *στίλβια*, speaks of the ascent of Demeter from the lower

joy her return from the dead.¹ Hence the name Descent or Ascent variously applied to the first, and the name *Kalligeneia* (fair-born) applied to the third day of the festival. Now from an old scholium on Lucian² we learn some details about the mode of celebrating the Thesmophoria, which shed important light on the part of the festival called the Descent or the Ascent. The scholiast tells us that it was customary at the Thesmophoria to throw pigs, cakes of dough, and branches of pine-trees into "the chasms of Demeter and Proserpine," which appear to have been sacred caverns or vaults.³ In these caverns or vaults there were said to be serpents, which guarded the caverns and consumed most of the flesh of the pigs and dough-cakes which were thrown in. Afterwards—apparently at the next annual festival⁴—the decayed remains of the pigs, the cakes, and the pine-branches were fetched by women called "drawers," who, after observing rules of ceremonial purity for three days, descended into the caverns, and, frightening away the serpents by clapping their hands, brought up the remains and placed them on the altar. Whoever got a piece of the decayed flesh and cakes, and sowed it with the seed-corn in his field, was believed to be sure of a good crop.

To explain this rude and ancient rite the following

world; and Clement of Alexandria speaks of both Demeter and Proserpine as having been engulfed in the chasm (*Protrept.* ii. 17). The original equivalence of Demeter and Proserpine must be borne steadily in mind.

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 69; Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. *σπηρα*.

² E. Rohde, "Unedirte Lucianscholien, die attischen Thesmophorien und Haloen betreffend," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xxv. (1870), p. 548. Two passages of classical writers (Clement Alex. *Protrept.* ii. 17, and Pausanias, ix. 8. 1) refer to the rites described by the scholiast on Lucian, and had been rightly interpreted by Lobeck (*Aglaophamus*, p. 827 sq.).

³ The scholiast speaks of them as *megara* and *adyta*. *Megara* (from a Phoenician word meaning "cavern," "subterranean chasm," Movers, *Die*

Phoenisier, i. 220) were properly subterranean vaults or chasms sacred to the gods. See Hesychius, quoted by Movers, *l.c.* (the passage does not appear in M. Schmidt's minor edition of Hesychius); Porphyry, *De antro nymph.* 6; and my note on Pausanias, ii. 2. 1.

⁴ We infer this from Pausanias, ix. 8. 1, though the passage is incomplete and apparently corrupt. For *ἐν Δωδώνῃ* Lobeck (*Aglaophamus*, p. 829 sq.) proposed to read *ἐν ἀδύταις* or *ἐν ἀδύταις*. At the spring and autumn festivals of Isis at Tithorea geese and goats were thrown into the *adyton* and left there till the following festival, when the remains were removed and buried at a certain spot a little way from the temple. See Pausanias, x. 32. 14. This analogy supports the view that the pigs thrown into the caverns at the Thesmophoria were left there till the next festival.

legend was told. At the moment when Pluto carried off Proserpine, a swineherd called Eubuleus chanced to be herding his swine on the spot, and his herd was engulfed in the chasm down which Pluto vanished with Proserpine. Accordingly at the Thesmophoria pigs were annually thrown into caverns to commemorate the disappearance of the swine of Eubuleus. It follows from this that the casting of the pigs into the vaults at the Thesmophoria formed part of the dramatic representation of Proserpine's descent into the lower world; and as no image of Proserpine appears to have been thrown in, we may infer that the descent of the pigs was not so much an accompaniment of her descent as the descent itself, in short, that the pigs were Proserpine. Afterwards when Proserpine or Demeter (for the two are equivalent) became anthropomorphic, a reason had to be found for the custom of throwing pigs into caverns at her festival; and this was done by saying that when Pluto carried off Proserpine, there happened to be some swine browsing near, which were swallowed up along with her. The story is obviously a forced and awkward attempt to bridge over the gulf between the old conception of the corn-spirit as a pig and the new conception of her as an anthropomorphic goddess. A trace of the older conception survived in the legend that when the sad mother was searching for traces of the vanished Proserpine, the footprints of the lost one were obliterated by the footprints of a pig;¹ originally, we may conjecture, the footprints of the pig were the footprints of Proserpine and of Demeter herself. A consciousness of the intimate connection of the pig with the corn lurks in the legend that the swineherd Eubuleus was a brother of Triptolemus, to whom Demeter first imparted the secret of the corn. Indeed, according to one version of the story, Eubuleus himself received, jointly with his brother Triptolemus, the gift of the corn from Demeter as a reward for revealing to her the fate of Proserpine.² Further, it is to be noted that at the Thesmophoria the women appear to have eaten swine's flesh.³ The meal, if I am right, must have

¹ Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 461-466, upon which Gierig remarks, "*Sues melius poeta omisisset in hac narratione.*" Such is the wisdom of the commentator.

² Pausanias, i. 14. 3.

³ Schol. on Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 338.

been a solemn sacrament or communion, the worshippers partaking of the body of the god.

As thus explained, the Thesmophoria has its analogies in the folk-customs of Northern Europe which have been already described. Just as at the Thesmophoria—an autumn festival in honour of the corn-goddess—swine's flesh was partly eaten, partly kept in caverns till the following year, when it was taken up to be sown with the seed-corn in the fields for the purpose of securing a good crop; so in the neighbourhood of Grenoble the goat killed on the harvest-field is partly eaten at the harvest-supper, partly pickled and kept till the next harvest;¹ so at Pouilly the ox killed on the harvest-field is partly eaten by the harvesters, partly pickled and kept till the first day of sowing in spring,² probably to be then mixed with the seed, or eaten by the ploughmen, or both; so at Udvarhely the feathers of the cock which is killed in the last sheaf at harvest are kept till spring, and then sown with the seed on the field;³ so in Hesse and Meiningen the flesh of pigs is eaten on Ash Wednesday or Candlemas, and the bones are kept till sowing-time, when they are put into the field sown or mixed with the seed in the bag;⁴ so, lastly, the corn from the last sheaf is kept till Christmas, made into Yule Boar, and afterwards broken and mixed with the seed-corn at sowing in spring.⁵ Thus, to put it generally, the corn-spirit is killed in animal form in autumn; part of his flesh is eaten as a sacrament by his worshippers; and part of it is kept till next sowing-time or harvest as a pledge and security for the continuance or renewal of the corn-spirit's energies. Whether in the interval between autumn and spring he is conceived as dead, or whether, like the ox in the *bouphonia*, he is supposed to come to life again immediately after being killed, is not clear. At the Thesmophoria, according to Clement and Pausanias, as emended by Lobeck,⁶ the pigs were thrown in alive, and were supposed to reappear at the

¹ Above, p. 274.

² Above, p. 279.

³ Above, p. 268.

⁴ Above, p. 286.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ In Clemens Alex., *Protrept.* ii. 17, for μεγαρίστας χοίρου ἐμβάλλουσι Lobeck (*Aglaophamus*, p. 831) would read μεγάροις ζῶντας χοίρου ἐμβάλλουσι. For his emendation of Pausanias, see above, p. 300, note 4.

festival of the following year. Here, therefore, if we accept Lobeck's emendations, the corn-spirit is conceived as alive throughout the year; he lives and works under ground, but is brought up each autumn to be renewed and then replaced in his subterranean abode.¹

If it is objected that the Greeks never could have conceived Demeter and Proserpine to be embodied in the form of pigs, it may be answered that in the cave of Phigalia in Arcadia the Black Demeter was portrayed with the head and mane of a horse on the body of a woman.² Between the portrait of a goddess as a pig, and the portrait of her as a woman with a horse's head, there is little to choose in respect of barbarism. The legend told of the Phigalian Demeter indicates that the horse was one of the animal forms assumed in ancient Greece, as in modern Europe,³ by the corn-spirit. It was said that in her search for her daughter, Demeter assumed the form of a mare to escape the addresses of Poseidon, and that, offended at his impotency, she withdrew in dudgeon to a cave not far from Phigalia in the highlands of Western Arcadia. The very cavern, now turned into a little Christian chapel with its holy pictures, is still shown to the curious traveller far down the side of that profound ravine through which the brawling Neda winds under overhanging woods to the sea. There, robed in black, she tarried so long that the fruits of the earth were perishing, and mankind would have died of famine if Pan had not soothed the angry goddess and persuaded her to quit the cave. In memory of this event, the Phigalians set up an image of the Black Demeter in the cave; it represented a woman dressed in a long robe, with the head and mane of a horse.⁴ The Black Demeter, in whose absence the fruits of the earth perish, is plainly a mythical expression for the bare wintry earth stripped of its summer mantle of green.

¹ It is worth nothing that in Crete, which was an ancient seat of Demeter worship (see above, p. 170), the pig was esteemed very sacred and was not eaten (Athenaeus, ix. pp. 375 F-376 A). This would not exclude the possibility of its being eaten sacramentally, as at the Thesmophoria.

² Pausanias, viii. 42.

³ Above, p. 281 *sqq.*

⁴ Pausanias, viii. 25 and 42. On the Phigalian Demeter, see W. Mannhardt, *M.F.* p. 244 *sqq.* I well remember how on a summer afternoon I sat at the mouth of the shallow cave, watching the play of sunshine on the lofty wooded sides of the ravine and listening to the murmur of the stream.

Passing now to Attis and Adonis, we may note a few facts which seem to show that these deities of vegetation had also, like other deities of the same class, their animal embodiments. The worshippers of Attis abstained from eating the flesh of swine.¹ This appears to indicate that the pig was regarded as an embodiment of Attis. And the legend that Attis was killed by a boar² points in the same direction. For after the examples of the goat Dionysus and the pig Demeter it may almost be laid down as a rule that an animal which is said to have injured a god was originally the god himself. Perhaps the cry of "Hyes Attes! Hyes Attes!"³ which was raised by the worshippers of Attis, may be neither more nor less than "Pig Attis! Pig Attis!"—*hyes* being possibly a Phrygian form of the Greek *hys*, "a pig."⁴

In regard to Adonis, his connection with the boar was not always explained by the story that he had been killed by a boar. According to another story, a boar rent with his tusk the bark of the tree in which the infant Adonis was born.⁵ According to another story, he perished at the hands of Hephaestus on Mount Lebanon while he was hunting wild boars.⁶ These variations in the legend serve to show that, while the connection of the boar with Adonis was certain, the reason of the connection was not understood, and that consequently different stories were devised to explain it. Certainly the pig ranked as a sacred animal among the Syrians. At the great religious metropolis of Hierapolis pigs were neither sacrificed nor eaten, and if a man touched a pig he was unclean for the rest of the day. Some people said this was because the pigs were unclean; others said it was because the pigs were sacred.⁷ This difference of opinion points to a hazy state of religious thought in which the ideas of sanctity and uncleanness are not yet sharply distinguished, both being blent in a sort of vaporous solution to which we give the name of taboo. It is quite consistent with this that the pig should have been held to be an embodiment of the divine Adonis, and the

¹ Above, p. 131.

² *Ibid.*

³ Demosthenes, *De corona*, p. 313.

⁴ The suggestion was made to me in conversation by my friend Mr. R. A.

Neil of Pembroke College.

⁵ Above, p. 117.

⁶ Cureton, *Spicilegium Syriacum*, p.

44.

⁷ Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 54.

analogies of Dionysus and Demeter make it probable that the story of the hostility of the animal to the god was only a late misapprehension of the old view of the god as embodied in a pig. The rule that pigs were not sacrificed or eaten by worshippers of Attis and presumably of Adonis, does not exclude the possibility that in these rituals the pig was slain on solemn occasions as a representative of the god and consumed sacramentally by the worshippers. Indeed, the sacramental killing and eating of an animal implies that the animal is sacred, and that, as a general rule, it is spared.¹

The attitude of the Jews to the pig was as ambiguous as that of the heathen Syrians towards the same animal. The Greeks could not decide whether the Jews worshipped swine or abominated them. On the one hand they might not eat swine; but on the other hand they might not kill them. And if the former rule speaks for the uncleanness, the latter speaks still more strongly for the sanctity of the animal. For whereas both rules may, and one rule must, be explained on the supposition that the pig was sacred; neither rule must, and one rule cannot, be explained on the supposition that the pig was unclean. If, therefore, we prefer the former supposition, we must conclude that, originally at least, the pig was revered rather than abhorred by the Israelites. We are confirmed in this opinion by observing that down to the time of Isaiah some of the Jews used to meet secretly in gardens to eat the flesh of swine and mice as a religious rite.² Doubtless this was a very ancient rite, dating from a time when both the pig and the mouse were venerated as divine, and when their flesh was partaken of sacramentally on rare and solemn occasions as the body and blood of gods. And in general it may be said that all so-called unclean animals were originally sacred; the reason for not eating them was that they were divine.

In ancient Egypt, within historical times, the pig

¹ The heathen Harranians sacrificed swine once a year and ate the flesh (En-Nedlm, in Chwolson's *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 42). My friend W. Robertson Smith conjectured that the wild boars annually sacrificed in

Cyprus on 2nd April (Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv. 45) represented Adonis himself. See his *Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 290 sq., 411.

² Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* iv. 5.

³ Isaiah lxx. 3, lxxvi. 3, 17.

occupied the same dubious position as in Syria and Palestine, though at first sight its uncleanness is more prominent than its sanctity. The Egyptians are generally said by Greek writers to have abhorred the pig as a foul and loathsome animal.¹ If a man so much as touched a pig in passing, he stepped into the river with all his clothes on, to wash off the taint.² To drink pig's milk was believed to cause leprosy to the drinker.³ Swineherds, though natives of Egypt, were forbidden to enter any temple, and they were the only men who were thus excluded. No one would give his daughter in marriage to a swineherd, or marry a swineherd's daughter; the swineherds married among themselves.⁴ Yet once a year the Egyptians sacrificed pigs to the moon and to Osiris, and not only sacrificed them, but ate of their flesh, though on any other day of the year they would neither sacrifice them nor taste of their flesh. Those who were too poor to offer a pig on this day baked cakes of dough, and offered them instead.⁵ This can hardly be explained except by the supposition that the pig was a sacred animal which was eaten sacramentally by his worshippers once a year. The view that in Egypt the pig was sacred is borne out by the very facts which, to moderns, might seem to prove the contrary. Thus the Egyptians thought, as we have seen, that to drink pig's milk produced leprosy. But exactly analogous views are held by savages about the animals and plants which they deem most sacred. Thus in the island of Wetar (between New Guinea and Celebes) people believe themselves to be variously descended from wild pigs, serpents, crocodiles, turtles, dogs, and eels; a man may not eat an animal of the kind from which he is descended; if he does so, he will become a leper, and go

¹ Herodotus, ii. 47; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 8; Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* x. 16. Josephus merely says that the Egyptian priests abstained from the flesh of swine (*Contra Apionem*, ii. 13).

² Herodotus, *l.c.*

³ Plutarch and Aelian, *ll. cc.*

⁴ Herodotus, *l.c.*

⁵ Herodotus, ii. 47 *sq.*; Aelian and Plutarch, *ll. cc.* Herodotus distinguishes the sacrifice to the moon from that to

Osiris. According to him, at the sacrifice to the moon, the extremity of the pig's tail, together with the spleen and the caul, was covered with fat and burned; the rest of the flesh was eaten. On the evening (not the eve, see Stein's note on the passage) of the festival the sacrifice to Osiris took place. Each man slew a pig before his door, then gave it to the swineherd, from whom he had bought it, to take away.

mad.¹ Amongst the Omaha Indians of North America men whose totem is the elk, believe that if they ate the flesh of the male elk they would break out in boils and white spots in different parts of their bodies.² In the same tribe men whose totem is the red maize, think that if they ate red maize they would have running sores all round their mouths.³ The Bush negroes of Surinam, who practise totemism, believe that if they ate the *capiat* (an animal like a pig) it would give them leprosy;⁴ perhaps the *capiat* is one of their totems. In Samoa each man had generally his god in the shape of some species of animal; and if he ate one of these divine animals, it was supposed that the god avenged himself by taking up his abode in the eater's body, and there generating an animal of the kind he had eaten till it caused his death. For example, if a man whose god was the prickly sea-urchin ate one of these creatures, a prickly sea-urchin grew in his stomach and killed him. If his god was an eel, and he ate an eel, he became very ill, and before he died the voice of the god was heard from his stomach saying, "I am killing this man; he ate my incarnation."⁵ The Syrians, in antiquity, who esteemed fish sacred, thought that if they ate fish their bodies would break out in ulcers, and their feet and stomach would swell up.⁶ These examples prove that the eating of a sacred animal is often believed to produce skin-disease or even death; so far, therefore, they support the view that the pig must have been sacred in Egypt, since the effect of drinking its milk was believed to be leprosy.

Again, the rule that, after touching a pig, a man had to wash himself and his clothes, also favours the view of the sanctity of the pig. For it is a common belief that the effect of contact with a sacred object must be removed, by washing or otherwise, before a man is free to mingle with his fellows. Thus the Jews wash their hands after reading

¹ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Celebes en Papua*, pp. 432, 452.

² *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 225.

³ *Ibid.* p. 231.

⁴ J. Crevaux, *Voyages dans l'Amerique du Sud*, p. 59.

⁵ Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 17 sq., 50 sq.

⁶ Plutarch, *De superstitione*, 10; Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, iv. 15. As to the sanctity of fish among the Syrians, see also Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 473 sq.; Diodorus, ii. 4.

the sacred scriptures. Before coming forth from the tabernacle after the sin-offering, the high priest had to wash himself, and put off the garments which he had worn in the holy place.¹ It was a rule of Greek ritual that, in offering an expiatory sacrifice, the sacrificer should not touch the sacrifice, and that, after the offering was made, he must wash his body and his clothes in a river or spring before he could enter a city or his own house.² The Polynesians felt strongly the need of ridding themselves of the sacred contagion, if it may be so called, which they caught by touching sacred objects. Various ceremonies were performed for the purpose of removing this contagion. We have seen, for example, how in Tonga a man who happened to touch a sacred chief, or anything personally belonging to him, had to perform a certain ceremony before he could feed himself with his hands; otherwise it was believed that he would swell up and die, or at least be afflicted with scrofula or some other disease.³ We have seen, too, what fatal effects are supposed to follow, and do actually follow, from contact with a sacred object in New Zealand.⁴ In short, primitive man believes that what is sacred is dangerous; it is pervaded by a sort of electrical sanctity which communicates a shock to, even if it does not kill, whatever comes in contact with it. Hence the savage is unwilling to touch or even to see that which he deems peculiarly holy. Thus Bechuanas, of the Crocodile clan, think it "hateful and unlucky" to meet or see a crocodile; the sight is thought to cause inflammation of the eyes. Yet the crocodile is their most sacred object; they call it their father, swear by it, and celebrate it in their festivals.⁵ The goat is the sacred animal of the Madenassana Bushmen; yet "to look upon it would be to render the man for the time impure, as well as to cause him undefined uneasiness."⁶ The Elk clan, among the Omaha Indians, believe that even to touch the male elk would be followed

¹ Leviticus xvi. 23 sq.

² Porphyry, *De abst.* ii. 44. For this and the Jewish examples I am indebted to my friend W. Robertson Smith. Compare his *Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 351, 426, 450 sq.

³ Vol. I. p. 319 sq.

⁴ Above, vol. i. p. 321 sq.

⁵ Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 211; Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, p. 255; John Mackenzie, *Ten Years north of the Orange River*, p. 135 note.

⁶ J. Mackenzie, *l.c.*

by an eruption of boils and white spots on the body.¹ Members of the Reptile clan in the same tribe think that if one of them touches or smells a snake, it will make his hair white.² In Samoa people whose god was a butterfly believed that if they caught a butterfly it would strike them dead.³ Again, in Samoa the reddish-seared leaves of the banana-tree were commonly used as plates for handing food; but if any member of the Wild Pigeon family had used banana leaves for this purpose, it was supposed that he would suffer from rheumatic swellings or an eruption all over the body like chicken-pox.⁴

In the light of these parallels the beliefs and customs of the Egyptians touching the pig are probably to be explained as based upon an opinion of the extreme sanctity rather than of the extreme uncleanness of the animal; or rather, to put it more correctly, they imply that the animal was looked on, not simply as a filthy and disgusting creature, but as a being endowed with high supernatural powers, and that as such it was regarded with that primitive sentiment of religious awe and fear in which the feelings of reverence and abhorrence are almost equally blended. The ancients themselves seem to have been aware that there was another side to the horror with which swine seemed to inspire the Egyptians. For the Greek astronomer and mathematician Eudoxus, who resided fourteen months in Egypt and conversed with the priests,⁵ was of opinion that the Egyptians spared the pig, not out of abhorrence, but from a regard to its utility in agriculture; for, according to him, when the Nile had subsided, herds of swine were turned loose over the fields to tread the seed down into the moist earth.⁶ But when a being is thus the object of mixed and implicitly contradictory feelings, he may be said to occupy a position of unstable equilibrium. In course of time one of the contradictory feelings is likely to prevail over the other, and according as the feeling which finally predominates is that

¹ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 225.

² *Ibid.* p. 275.

³ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 76.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 70.

⁵ Diogenes Laertius, *Vita Philos.* viii. 8.

⁶ Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* x. 16. The story is repeated by Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 168.

of reverence or abhorrence, the being who is the object of it will rise into a god or sink into a devil. The latter, on the whole, was the fate of the pig in Egypt. For in historical times the fear and horror of the pig seem certainly to have outweighed the reverence and worship of which he must once have been the object, and of which, even in his fallen state, he never quite lost trace. He came to be looked on as an embodiment of Set or Typhon, the Egyptian devil and enemy of Osiris. For it was in the shape of a boar that Typhon menaced the eye of the god Horus, who burned him and instituted the sacrifice of the pig, the sun-god Ra having declared the pig abominable.¹ Again, the story that Typhon was hunting a boar when he discovered and mangled the body of Osiris, and that this was the reason why pigs were sacrificed once a year,² is clearly a modernised version of an older story that Osiris, like Adonis and Attis, was slain or mangled by a boar, or by Typhon in the form of a boar. Thus, the annual sacrifice of a pig to Osiris might naturally be interpreted as vengeance inflicted on the hostile animal that had slain or mangled the god. But, in the first place, when an animal is thus killed as a solemn sacrifice once and once only in the year, it generally or always means that the animal is divine, that he is spared and respected the rest of the year as a god and slain, when he is slain, also in the character of a god.³ In the second place, the examples of Dionysus and Demeter, if not of Attis and Adonis, have taught us that the animal which is sacrificed to a god on the ground that he is the god's enemy may have been, and probably was, originally the god himself. Therefore, the annual sacrifice of a pig to Osiris, coupled with the alleged hostility of the animal to the god, tends to show, first, that originally the pig was a god, and, second, that he was Osiris. At a later age, when Osiris became anthropomorphic and his original relation to the pig had been forgotten, the animal was first distinguished from him, and afterwards opposed as an enemy to him by mythologists who could think of no reason for killing a

¹ Lefébure, *Le mythe Osirien*, p. 44.

² Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 8. Lefébure (*op. cit.* p. 46) recognises that in this story the boar is Typhon himself.

³ This important principle was first

recognised by W. Robertson Smith. See his article "Sacrifice," *Encycl. Britann.* 9th ed. xxi. 137 sq. Cp. his *Religion of the Semites*,² pp. 373, 410 sq.

beast in connection with the worship of a god except that the beast was the god's enemy ; or, as Plutarch puts it, not that which is dear to the gods, but that which is the contrary, is fit to be sacrificed.¹ At this later stage the havoc which a wild boar notoriously makes amongst the corn² would supply a plausible reason for regarding him as an enemy of the corn-spirit, though originally, if I am right, the very freedom with which the boar ranged at will through the corn led people to identify him with the corn-spirit, to whom he was afterwards opposed as an enemy. The view which identifies the pig with Osiris derives not a little support from the sacrifice of pigs to him on the very day on which, according to tradition, Osiris himself was killed ;³ for thus the killing of the pig was the annual representation of the killing of Osiris, just as the throwing of the pigs into the caverns at the Thesmophoria was an annual representation of the descent of Proserpine into the lower world ; and both customs are parallel to the European practice of killing a goat, cock, and so forth, at harvest as a representative of the corn-spirit.

Again, the view that the pig, originally Osiris himself, afterwards came to be regarded as an embodiment of his enemy Typhon, is supported by the similar relation of red-haired men and red oxen to Typhon. For in regard to the red-haired men who were burned and whose ashes were scattered with winnowing-fans, we have seen fair grounds for believing that originally, like the red-haired puppies killed at Rome in spring, they were representatives of the corn-spirit himself, that is, of Osiris, and were slain for the express purpose of making the corn turn red or golden. Yet at a later time these men were explained to be representatives,

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 31.

² Wild pigs are the special enemies of the crops in South Africa ; the fences erected by the Zulus round their gardens are principally intended to serve as a protection against the devastating incursions of these animals. See J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 19. In Nias also whole fields are sometimes trampled down by these pests in a single night. Often the

stillness of the serene equatorial nights is broken by the strident cries of the watchers of the fields, who are trying to frighten away the swine ; the sound goes echoing through the wooded valleys for a long time, and here and there a dull grunting tells that the efforts of the sentinels have not been in vain. See E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias*, pp. 525 sq., 601.

³ Lefébure, *Le mythe Osirien*, p. 48 sq.

not of Osiris, but of his enemy Typhon,¹ and the killing of them was regarded as an act of vengeance inflicted on the enemy of the god. Similarly, the red oxen sacrificed by the Egyptians were said to be offered on the ground of their resemblance to Typhon;² though it is more likely that originally they were slain on the ground of their resemblance to the corn-spirit Osiris. We have seen that the ox is a common representative of the corn-spirit and is slain as such on the harvest-field.

Osiris was regularly identified with the bull Apis of Memphis and the bull Mnevis of Heliopolis.³ But it is hard to say whether these bulls were embodiments of him as the corn-spirit, as the red oxen appear to have been, or whether they were not rather entirely distinct deities which came to be fused with Osiris by syncretism. The universality of the worship of these two bulls⁴ seems to put them on a different footing from the ordinary sacred animals whose worships were purely local. Hence if the latter were evolved from totems, as they may have been, some other origin would have to be found for the worship of Apis and Mnevis. If these bulls were not originally embodiments of the corn-god Osiris, they may possibly be descendants of the sacred cattle worshipped by a pastoral people.⁵ If this were so, ancient Egypt would exhibit a stratification of three great types of religion corresponding to three great stages of society. Totemism, which from one point of view may be described as a species of worship of wild animals practised by many tribes in the hunting stage of society, would be represented by the worship of the local sacred animals; the worship of cattle, which

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 33, 73; Diodorus, i. 88.

² Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 31; Diodorus, i. 88. Cp. Herodotus, ii. 38.

³ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 20, 29, 33, 43; Strabo, xvii. 1. 31; Diodorus, i. 21, 85; Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums*,⁶ i. 55 sqq. On Apis and Mnevis, see also Herodotus, ii. 153, with Wiedemann's comment, iii. 27 sq.; Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii. 14. 7; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 184 sqq.; Solinus, xxxii. 17-21; Cicero, *De nat. deor.* i. 29; Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* xi. 10 sq.; Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* viii. 1. 3;

id., *Isis et Osiris*, 5, 35; Eusebius, *Præpar. Evang.* iii. 13. 1 sq.; Pausanias, i. 18. 4, vii. 22. 3 sq. Both Apis and Mnevis were black bulls, but Apis had certain white spots. See Wiedemann, *Die Religion der alten Ägypter*, pp. 95, 99-101.

⁴ Diodorus, i. 21.

⁵ On the religious reverence of pastoral peoples for their cattle, and the possible derivation of the Apis and Isis-Hathor worship from the pastoral stage of society, see W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² p. 296 sqq.

belongs to society in the pastoral stage, would be represented by the cults of Apis and Mnevis; and the worship of cultivated plants, which is peculiar to society in the agricultural stage, would be represented by the religion of Osiris and Isis.¹ The Egyptian reverence for cows, which were never killed,² might belong either to the second or third of these stages. The consecration of cows to Isis, who was portrayed with cow's horns and may have been supposed to be incarnate in the animals, would indicate that they, like the red oxen, were embodiments of the corn-spirit. However, this identification of Isis with the cow, like that of Osiris with the bulls Apis and Mnevis, may be only an effect of syncretism. But whatever the original relation of Apis to Osiris may have been, there is one fact about the former which ought not to be passed over in a chapter dealing with the custom of killing the god. Although the bull Apis was worshipped as a god with much pomp and profound reverence, he was not suffered to live beyond a certain length of time which was prescribed by the sacred books, and on the expiry of which he was drowned in a holy spring.³ The limit, according to Plutarch, was twenty-five years;⁴ but it cannot always have been enforced, for the tombs of the Apis bulls have been discovered in modern times, and from the inscriptions on them it appears that in the twenty-second dynasty two bulls lived more than twenty-six years.⁵

We are now in a position to hazard a conjecture—for it can be little more—as to the meaning of the tradition that Virbius, the first of the divine Kings of the Wood at Aricia, was killed by horses. Having found, first, that spirits of vegetation are not infrequently represented in the form of horses;⁶ and, second, that the animal which in later legends is said to have injured the god was sometimes

¹ I have allowed this passage to stand substantially as I wrote it, though in the light of the Central Australian evidence, so admirably collected and presented by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, totemism would seem to have been in its origin a system of magic rather than of religion. (Note to Second Edition.)

² Herodotus, ii. 41.

³ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 184; Solinus, xxxii. 18; Ammianus Mar-

cellinus, xxii. 14. 7. The spring or well in which he was drowned was perhaps the one from which his drinking-water was procured; he might not drink the water of the Nile (Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 5).

⁴ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 56.

⁵ Maspero, *Histoire ancienne*,⁴ p. 31. Cp. Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums*,⁵ i. 56.

⁶ See above, p. 281 sqq.

originally the god himself, we may conjecture that the horses by which Virbius was said to have been slain were really embodiments of him as a deity of vegetation. The myth that Virbius had been killed by horses was probably invented to explain certain features in his worship, amongst others the custom of excluding horses from his sacred grove. For myth changes while custom remains constant; men continue to do what their fathers did before them, though the reasons on which their fathers acted have been long forgotten. The history of religion is a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason, to find a sound theory for an absurd practice. In the case before us we may be sure that the myth is more modern than the custom and by no means represents the original reason for excluding horses from the grove. From their exclusion it might be inferred that horses could not be the sacred animals or embodiments of the god of the grove. But the inference would be rash. The goat was at one time a sacred animal or embodiment of Athena, as may be inferred from the practice of representing her clad in a goat-skin (*aegis*). Yet the goat was neither sacrificed to her as a rule, nor allowed to enter her great sanctuary, the Acropolis at Athens. The reason alleged for this was that the goat injured the olive, the sacred tree of Athena.¹ So far, therefore, the relation of the goat to Athena is parallel to the relation of the horse to Virbius, both animals being excluded from the sanctuary on the ground of injury done by them to the god. But from Varro we learn that there was an exception to the rule which excluded the goat from the Acropolis. Once a year, he says, the goat was driven on to the Acropolis for a necessary sacrifice.² Now, as has been remarked before, when an animal is sacrificed once and once only in the year, it is probably slain, not as a victim offered to the god, but as a representative of the god himself. Therefore we may infer that if a goat was sacrificed on the Acropolis once a year, it was sacrificed in the character of Athena herself;³

¹ Athenaeus, xiii. p. 587 A; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 204. Cp. *Encycl. Britann.* 9th ed. art. "Sacrifice," xxi. 135.

² Varro, *De agri cult.* i. 2. 19 sq. :

"hoc nomine etiam Athenis in arcem non inigi, praeterquam semel ad necessarium sacrificium." By semel Varro probably means once a year.

³ The force of this inference is

and it may be conjectured that the skin of the sacrificed animal was placed on the statue of the goddess and formed the *aegis*, which would thus be renewed annually. Similarly at Thebes in Egypt rams were sacred and were not sacrificed. But on one day in the year a ram was killed, and its skin was placed on the statue of the god Ammon.¹ Now, if we knew the ritual of the Arician grove better, we might find that the rule of excluding horses from it, like the rule of excluding goats from the Acropolis at Athens, was subject to an annual exception, a horse being once a year taken into the grove and sacrificed as an embodiment of the god Virbius.² By the usual misunderstanding the horse thus killed would come in time to be regarded as an enemy offered up in sacrifice to the god whom he had injured, like the pig which was sacrificed to Demeter and Osiris or the goat which was sacrificed to Athena and Dionysus. It is so easy for a writer to record a rule without noticing an exception that we need not wonder at finding the rule of the Arician grove recorded without any mention of an exception such as I suppose. If we had had only the statements of Athenaeus and Pliny, we should have known only the rule which forbade the sacrifice of goats to Athena and excluded them from the Acropolis, without being aware of the important exception which the fortunate preservation of Varro's work has revealed to us.

The conjecture that once a year a horse may have been sacrificed in the Arician grove as a representative of the deity of the grove derives some support from the similar sacrifice of a horse which took place once a year at Rome. On the fifteenth of October in each year a chariot-race was run on the Field of Mars. Stabbed with a spear, the right-hand horse of the victorious team was then sacrificed to

greatly weakened, if not destroyed, by a fact which I had overlooked when I wrote this book originally. A goat was sacrificed to Brauronian Artemis at her festival called the Brauronia (Hesychius, s.v. *Βραυρωνίους*; compare Bekker's *Anecdota Graeca*, p. 445, line 6 sqq.). As the Brauronian Artemis had a sanctuary on the Acropolis of Athens (Pausanias, i. 23. 7), it seems probable that the goat

sacrificed once a year on the Acropolis was sacrificed to her and not to Athena. (Note to Second Edition.)

¹ Herodotus, ii. 42.

² It is worth noting that Hippolytus, with whom Virbius was identified, and who was also reported to have been killed by horses, is said to have dedicated horses to Aesculapius, who had raised him from the dead (Pausanias, ii. 27. 4).

Mars for the purpose of ensuring good crops, and its head was cut off and adorned with a string of loaves. Thereupon the inhabitants of two wards—the Sacred Way and the Subura—contended with each other who should get the head. If the people of the Sacred Way got it, they fastened it to a wall of the king's house; if the people of the Subura got it, they fastened it to the Mamilian tower. The horse's tail was cut off and carried to the king's house with such speed that the blood dripped on the hearth of the house.¹ Further, it appears that the blood of the horse was caught and preserved till the twenty-first of April, when the Vestal virgins mixed it with the blood of the unborn calves which had been sacrificed six days before. The mixture was then distributed to shepherds, and used by them for fumigating their flocks.²

In this ceremony the decoration of the horse's head with a string of loaves, and the alleged object of the sacrifice, namely, to procure a good harvest, clearly indicate that the horse was killed as one of those animal representatives of the corn-spirit of which we have seen so many examples. The custom of cutting off the horse's tail is like the African custom of cutting off the tails of the oxen and sacrificing them to obtain a good crop.³ In both the Roman and the African custom the animal stands for the corn-spirit, and its fructifying power is supposed to reside especially in its tail. The latter idea occurs, as we have seen, in European folk-lore.⁴ Again, the custom of fumigating the cattle in spring with the blood of the horse may be compared with the custom of giving the Maiden as fodder to the horses in spring or the cattle at Christmas, and giving the Yule Boar to the ploughing oxen or horses to eat in spring.⁵ All these customs aim at ensuring the blessing of the corn-spirit on the homestead and its inmates and storing it up for another year.

The Roman sacrifice of the October horse, as it was called, carries us back to the early days when the Subura, afterwards a low and squalid quarter of the great metro-

¹ Festus, ed. Müller, pp. 178, 179, 220; Plutarch, *Quæst. Rom.* 97; Polybius, xii. 4 B. The sacrifice is referred to by Julian, *Orat.* v. p. 176 D (p. 228 ed. Hertlein).

² Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 731 *sqq.*, cp. 629 *sqq.*; Propertius, v. 1. 19 *sq.*

³ Above, p. 296.

⁴ Above, pp. 260 *sq.*, 263.

⁵ Above, p. 286.

polis, was still a separate village, whose inhabitants engaged in a friendly contest on the harvest-field with their neighbours of Rome, then a little rural town. The Field of Mars on which the ceremony took place lay beside the Tiber, and formed part of the king's domain down to the abolition of the monarchy. For tradition ran that at the time when the last of the kings was driven from Rome, the corn stood ripe for the sickle on the crown lands beside the river; but no one would eat the accursed grain and it was flung into the river in such heaps that, the water being low with the summer heat, it formed the nucleus of an island.¹ The horse sacrifice was thus an old autumn custom observed upon the king's corn-fields at the end of the harvest. The tail and blood of the horse, as the chief parts of the corn-spirit's representative, were taken to the king's house and kept there; just as in Germany the harvest-cock is nailed on the gable or over the door of the farmhouse; and as the last sheaf, in the form of the Maiden, is carried home and kept over the fireplace in the Highlands of Scotland. Thus the blessing of the corn-spirit was brought to the king's house and hearth and, through them, to the community of which he was the head. Similarly in the spring and autumn customs of Northern Europe the Maypole is sometimes set up in front of the house of the mayor or burgo-master, and the last sheaf at harvest is brought to him as the head of the village. But while the tail and blood fell to the king, the neighbouring village of the Subura, which no doubt once had a similar ceremony of its own, was gratified by being allowed to compete for the prize of the horse's head. The Mamilian tower to which the Suburans nailed the horse's head when they succeeded in carrying it off, appears to have been a peel-tower or keep of the old Mamilian family, the magnates of the village.² The ceremony thus performed on the king's fields and at his house on behalf of the whole town and of the neighbouring village presupposes a time when each township performed a similar ceremony on its own fields. In the rural districts of Latium the villages may have continued to observe the custom, each on its own land, long after the Roman hamlets

¹ Livy, ii. 5.

² Festus, ed. Müller, pp. 130, 131.

had merged their separate harvest-homes in the common celebration on the king's lands.¹ There is no intrinsic improbability in the supposition that the sacred grove of Aricia, like the Field of Mars at Rome, may have been the scene of a common harvest celebration, at which a horse was sacrificed with the same rude rites on behalf of the neighbouring villages. The horse would represent the fructifying spirit both of the tree and of the corn, for the two ideas melt into each other, as we see in customs like the Harvest-May.

§ 11. *Eating the God*

We have now seen that the corn-spirit is represented sometimes in human, sometimes in animal form, and that in both cases he is killed in the person of his representative and eaten sacramentally. To find examples of actually killing the human representative of the corn-spirit we had of course to go to savage races; but the harvest-suppers of our European peasants have furnished unmistakable examples of the sacramental eating of animals as representatives of the corn-spirit. But further, as might have been anticipated, the new corn is itself eaten sacramentally, that is, as the body of the corn-spirit. In Wermland, Sweden, the farmer's wife uses the grain of the last sheaf to bake a loaf in the shape of a little girl; this loaf is divided amongst the whole household and eaten by them.² Here the loaf represents the corn-spirit conceived as a maiden; just as in Scotland the corn-spirit is similarly conceived and represented by the last sheaf made up in the form of a woman and bearing the name of the Maiden. As usual, the corn-spirit is believed to reside in the last sheaf; and to eat a loaf made from the last sheaf is, therefore, to eat the corn-spirit itself. Similarly at La Palisse, in France, a man made of dough is hung upon the fir-tree which is carried on the last harvest-waggon. The tree and the dough-man are taken to the mayor's house and kept there till the vintage is over. Then the close of the harvest is celebrated by a

¹ The October horse is the subject of an essay by Mannhardt (*Mytholog. Forsch.* pp. 156-201), of which the

above account is a summary.

² Mannhardt, *Myth. Forsch.* p. 179.

feast at which the mayor breaks the dough-man in pieces and gives the pieces to the people to eat.¹

In these examples the corn-spirit is represented and eaten in human shape. In other cases, though the new corn is not baked in loaves of human shape, still the solemn ceremonies with which it is eaten suffice to indicate that it is partaken of sacramentally, that is, as the body of the corn-spirit. For example, the following ceremonies used to be observed by Lithuanian peasants at eating the new corn. When the harvest and the sowing of the new corn were over, each farmer held a festival called *Sabarios*, that is, "the mixing or throwing together." He took nine good handfuls of each kind of crop—wheat, barley, oats, flax, beans, lentils, and the rest; and each handful he divided into three parts. The twenty-seven portions of each grain were then thrown on a heap and all mixed up together. The grain used had to be that which was first threshed and winnowed and which had been set aside and kept for this purpose. A part of the grain thus mixed was employed to bake little loaves, one for each of the household; the rest was mixed with more barley or oats and made into beer. The first beer brewed from this mixture was for the drinking of the farmer, his wife, and children; the second brew was for the servants. The beer being ready, the farmer chose an evening when no stranger was expected. Then he knelt down before the barrel of beer, drew a jugful of the liquor and poured it on the bung of the barrel, saying, "O fruitful earth, make rye and barley and all kinds of corn to flourish." Next he took the jug to the parlour, where his wife and children awaited him. On the floor of the parlour lay bound a black or white or speckled (not a red) cock and a hen of the same colour and of the same brood, which must have been hatched within the year. Then the farmer knelt down, with the jug in his hand, and thanked God for the harvest and prayed for a good crop next year. Next all lifted up their hands and said, "O God, and thou, O earth, we give you this cock and hen as a free-will offering." With that the farmer killed the fowls with the blows of a wooden spoon, for he might not cut

¹ Mannhardt, *Älteste Kunde*, p. 205. made of the new corn; but probably
It is not said that the dough-man is this is, or once was, the case.

their heads off. After the first prayer and after killing each of the birds he poured out a third of the beer. Then his wife boiled the fowls in a new pot which had never been used before. After that, a bushel was set, bottom upwards, on the floor, and on it were placed the little loaves mentioned above and the boiled fowls. Next the new beer was fetched, together with a ladle and three mugs, none of which was used except on this occasion. When the farmer had ladled the beer into the mugs, the family knelt down round the bushel. The father then uttered a prayer and drank off the three mugs of beer. The rest followed his example. Then the loaves and the flesh of the fowls were eaten, after which the beer went round again, till every one had emptied each of the three mugs nine times. None of the food should remain over; but if anything did happen to be left, it was consumed next morning with the same ceremonies. The bones were given to the dog to eat; if he did not eat them all up, the remains were buried under the dung in the cattle-stall. This ceremony was observed at the beginning of December. On the day on which it took place no bad word might be spoken.¹

Such was the custom about two hundred years ago. At the present day in Lithuania, when new potatoes or loaves made from the new corn are being eaten, all the people at table pull each other's hair.² The meaning of this last custom is obscure, but a similar custom was certainly observed by the heathen Lithuanians at their solemn sacrifices.³ Many of the Esthonians of the island of Oesel will not eat bread baked of the new corn till they have first taken a bite at a piece of iron.⁴ The iron is here plainly a charm, intended to render harmless the spirit that is in the corn.⁵ In Sutherlandshire at the present day, when the new potatoes are dug all the family must taste them, otherwise "the spirits in them [the potatoes] take offence, and the potatoes would not keep."⁶ In one part of Yorkshire it is

¹ Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae*, pp. 60-64; Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 249 sqq.

² Betzenberger, *Litauische Forschungen* (Göttingen, 1882), p. 89.

³ Simon Grunau, *Preussische Chronik*, ed. Perlbach, i. 91.

⁴ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. Heft 2, p. 108.

⁵ On iron as a charm against spirits, see above, vol. i. p. 344 sqq.

⁶ *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 54.

still customary for the clergyman to cut the first corn; and my informant believes that the corn so cut is used to make the communion bread.¹ If the latter part of the custom is correctly reported (and analogy is all in its favour), it shows how the Christian communion has absorbed within itself a sacrament which is doubtless far older than Christianity.

Among the heathen Cheremiss on the left bank of the Volga, when the first bread baked from the new corn is to be eaten, the villagers assemble in the house of the oldest inhabitant, the eastern door is opened, and all pray with their faces towards it. Then the sorcerer or priest gives to each of them a mug of beer, which they drain; next he cuts and hands to every person a morsel of the loaf, which they partake of. Finally, the young people go to the elders and bowing down to the earth before them say, "We pray God that you may live, and that God may let us pray next year for new corn." The rest of the day is passed in mirth and dancing. The whole ceremony, observes the writer who has described it, looks almost like a caricature of the Eucharist.² According to another account, each Cheremiss householder on this occasion, after bathing, places some of each kind of grain, together with malt, cakes, and drink, in a vessel, which he holds up to the sun, at the same time thanking the gods for the good things which they have bestowed upon him.³ But this part of the ceremony is a sacrifice rather than a sacrament of the new corn.

At the close of the rice harvest in the East Indian island of Buro, each clan (*fenna*) meets at a common sacramental meal, to which every member of the clan is bound to contribute a little of the new rice. This meal is called "eating the soul of the rice," a name which clearly indicates the sacramental character of the repast. Some of the rice is also set apart and offered to the spirits.⁴ Amongst the Alfoors of Minahassa the priest sows the first rice-seed and plucks the first ripe

¹ Communicated by the Rev. J. J. C. Yarborough, of Chislehurst, Kent. See *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 50.

² Von Haxthausen, *Studien über die innern Zustände, das Volksleben und insbesondere die ländliche Einrichtungen Russlands*, i. 448 sq.

³ Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reichs*, p. 37.

⁴ G. A. Wilken, "Bijdragen tot de kennis der Alfoeren van het eiland Boeroe," p. 26 (*Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, vol. xxxvi.).

rice in each field. This rice he roasts and grinds into meal, and gives some of it to each of the household.¹ Shortly before the rice-harvest in Bolang Mongondo, Celebes, an offering is made of a small pig or a fowl. Then the priest plucks a little rice, first on his own field and then on those of his neighbours. All the rice thus plucked by him he dries along with his own, and then gives it back to the respective owners, who have it ground and boiled. When it is boiled the women take it back, with an egg, to the priest, who offers the egg in sacrifice and returns the rice to the women. Of this rice every member of the family, down to the youngest child, must partake. After this ceremony every one is free to get in his rice.² Amongst the Burghers, a tribe of the Neilgherry Hills in Southern India, the first handful of seed is sown and the first sheaf reaped by a Curumbar—a man of a different tribe, whom the Burghers regard as sorcerers. The grain contained in the first sheaf "is that day reduced to meal, made into cakes, and, being offered as a first-fruit oblation, is, together with the remainder of the sacrificed animal, partaken of by the Burgher and the whole of his family as the meat of a federal offering and sacrifice."³

Amongst the Coorgs of Southern India the man who is to cut the first sheaf of rice at harvest is chosen by an astrologer. At sunset the whole household takes a hot bath and then goes to the rice-field, where the chosen reaper cuts an armful of rice with a new sickle, and distributes two or more stalks to all present. Then all return to the threshing-floor. A bundle of leaves is adorned with a stalk of rice and fastened to the post in the centre of the threshing-floor. Enough of the new rice is now threshed, cleaned, and ground to provide flour for the dough-cakes which each member of the household is to eat. Then they go to the door of the house, where the mistress washes

¹ P. N. Wilken, "Bijdragen tot de kennis van de zeden en gewoonten der Alfoeren in de Minahassa," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, vii. (1863), p. 197.

² N. P. Wilken en J. A. Schwarz, "Allerlei over het land en volk van

Bolaang Mongondou," *Mededeel. v. w. h. Nederl. Zendinggenootschap*, xi. (1867), p. 369 sq.

³ H. Harkness, *Description of a Singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the Summit of the Neilgherry Hills* (London, 1832), p. 56 sq.

the feet of the sheaf-cutter, and presents to him, and after him to all the rest, a brass vessel full of milk, honey, and sugar, from which each person takes a draught. Next the man who cut the sheaf kneads a cake of rice-meal, plantains, milk, honey, seven new rice corns, seven pieces of cocoa-nut, and so on. Every one receives a little of this cake on an Ashvatha leaf, and eats it. The ceremony is then over and the sheaf-cutter mixes with the company. When he was engaged in cutting the rice no one might touch him.¹ Among the Hindoos of Southern India the eating of the new rice is the occasion of a family festival called Pongol. The new rice is boiled in a new pot on a fire which is kindled at noon on the day when, according to Hindoo astrologers, the sun enters the tropic of Capricorn. The boiling of the pot is watched with great anxiety by the whole family, for as the milk boils, so will the coming year be. If the milk boils rapidly, the year will be prosperous; but it will be the reverse if the milk boils slowly. Some of the new boiled rice is offered to the image of Gaṇeṣa; then every one partakes of it.² At Gilgit, in the Hindoo Koosh, before wheat-harvest begins, a member of every household gathers a handful of ears of corn secretly at dusk. A few of the ears are hung up over the door of the house, and the rest are roasted next morning, and eaten steeped in milk. The day is spent in rejoicings, and next morning the harvest begins.³

The Chams of Binh-Thuan, in Indo-China, may not reap the rice-harvest until they have offered the first-fruits to Po-Nagar, the goddess of agriculture, and have consumed them sacramentally. These first-fruits are gathered from certain sacred fields called *Hamou-Klék-Laoa* or "fields of secret tillage," which are both sown and reaped with peculiar ceremonies. Apparently the tilling of the earth is considered a crime which must be perpetrated secretly and afterwards atoned for. On a lucky day in June, at the first cock-crow, two men lead the buffaloes and the plough to

¹ Gover, *Folk-songs of Southern India*, p. 105 sqq.; *Folk-lore Journal*, vii (1889), p. 302 sqq.

Southern India," *Journ. R. Asiatic Society*, N.S., v. (1871), p. 91 sqq.

³ Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 103.

the sacred field, round which they draw three furrows in profound silence and then retire. Afterwards at dawn the owner of the land comes lounging by, as if by the merest chance. At sight of the furrows he stops, pretends to be much surprised, and cries out, "Who has been secretly ploughing my field this night?" Hastening home, he kills a kid or some fowls, cooks the victuals, and prepares five quids of betel, some candles, a flask of oil, and lustral water of three different sorts. With these offerings and the plough drawn by the buffaloes, he returns to the field, where he lights the candles and spreading out the victuals worships Po-Nagar and the other deities, saying: "I know not who has secretly ploughed my field this night. Pardon, ye gods, those who have done this wrong. Accept these offerings. Bless us. Suffer us to proceed with this work." Then, speaking in the name of the deities, he gives the reassuring answer, "All right. Plough away!" With the lustral water he washes or sprinkles the buffaloes, the yoke, and the plough. The oil serves to anoint the plough and to pour libations on the ground. The five quids of betel are buried in the field. Thereupon the owner sows a handful of rice on the three furrows that have been traced, and eats the victuals with his people. After all these rites have been duly performed, he may plough and sow his land as he likes. When the rice has grown high enough in this field "of secret tillage" to hide pigeons, offerings of ducks, eggs, and fowls are made to the deities; and fresh offerings, which generally consist of five plates of rice, two boiled fowls, a bottle of spirits, and five quids of betel, are made to Po-Nagar and the rest at the time when the rice is in bloom. Finally, when the rice in "the field of secret tillage" is ripe, it has to be reaped before any of the rest. Offerings of food, such as boiled fowls, plates of rice, cakes, and so forth, are spread out on the field; a candle is lit, and a priest or, in his absence, the owner prays to the guardian deities to come and partake of the food set before them. After that the owner of the land cuts three stalks of rice with a sickle in the middle of the field, then he cuts three handfuls at the side, and places the whole in a napkin. These are the first-fruits offered to Po-Nagar, the goddess of

agriculture. On being taken home the rice from the three handfuls is husked, pounded in a mortar, and presented to the goddess with these words: "Taste, O goddess, these first-fruits which have just been reaped." This rice is afterwards eaten, while the straw and husks are burned. Having eaten the first-fruits of the rice, the owner takes the three stalks cut in the middle of the field, passes them through the smoke of the precious eagle-wood, and hangs them up in his house, where they remain till the next sowing-time comes round. The grain from these three stalks will form the seed of the three furrows in "the field of secret tillage." Not till these ceremonies have been performed is the proprietor at liberty to reap the rest of that field and all the others.¹

The ceremony of eating the new yams at Onitsha, on the Niger, is thus described: "Each headman brought out six yams, and cut down young branches of palm-leaves and placed them before his gate, roasted three of the yams, and got some kola-nuts and fish. After the yam is roasted, the *Libia*, or country doctor, takes the yam, scrapes it into a sort of meal, and divides it into halves; he then takes one piece, and places it on the lips of the person who is going to eat the new yam. The eater then blows up the steam from the hot yam, and afterwards pokes the whole into his mouth, and says, 'I thank God for being permitted to eat the new yam'; he then begins to chew it heartily, with fish likewise."² Amongst the Caffres of Natal and Zululand, no one may eat of the new fruits till after a festival which marks the beginning of the Caffre year and falls at the end of December or the beginning of January. All the people assemble at the king's kraal, where they feast and dance. Before they separate the "dedication of the people" takes place. Various fruits of the earth, as corn, mealies, and pumpkins, mixed with the flesh of a sacrificed animal and with "medicine," are boiled in great pots, and a little of this food is placed in each man's mouth

¹ E. Aymonier, "Les Tchames et leurs religions," *Revue de l'histoire des Religions*, xxiv. (1891), pp. 272-274.

² Crowther and Taylor, *The Gospel*

on the Banks of the Niger, p. 287 sq. Mr. Taylor's information is repeated in *West African Countries and Peoples*, by J. Africanus B. Horton (London, 1868), p. 180 sq.

by the king himself. After thus partaking of the sanctified fruits, a man is himself sanctified for the whole year, and may immediately get in his crops.¹ It is believed that if any man were to partake of the new fruits before the festival, he would die;² if he were detected, he would be put to death, or at least all his cattle would be taken from him.³ The holiness of the new fruits is well marked by the rule that they must be cooked in a special pot which is used only for this purpose, and on a new fire kindled by a magician through the friction of two sticks which are called "husband and wife." These sticks are prepared by the sorcerers from the wood of the *Uswati* tree and belong exclusively to the chief. The "wife" is the shorter of the two. When the magician has kindled the new fire on which the new fruits are to be cooked, he hands the fire-sticks back to the chief, for no other hand may touch them; and they are then put away till they are required next season. The sticks are regarded as in a measure sacred, and no one, except the chief's personal servant, may go to the side of the hut where they are kept. No pot but the one used for the preparation of this feast may be set on a fire made by the friction of the "husband and wife." When the feast is over, the fire is carefully extinguished, and the pot is put away with the fire-sticks, where it remains untouched for another year.⁴ A remarkable feature of the festival, as it is observed at the court of the Zulu king, is a dance performed by the king himself in a mantle of grass or, according to another account, of herbs and corn-leaves. This mantle is afterwards burnt and its ashes are scattered and trodden into the ground by cattle.⁵ Further, it is worthy of notice that the festival is described as a saturnalia, and we are told that "a great deal of noise and dancing goes on, and people are not supposed to be responsible for what they say or do."⁶ Thus, for example, among the Pondos the festival includes a period of license,

¹ F. Speckmann, *Die Hermannsburg Mission in Afrika* (Hermannsburg, 1876), p. 150 sq.

² L. Grout, *Zulu-land* (Philadelphia, N.D.), p. 161.

³ *South African Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1879), p. 135; Callaway, *Religious*

System of the Amasulu, p. 389 note.

⁴ J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p. 216 sq.

⁵ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 27; N. Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, ii. 293.

⁶ J. Macdonald, *op. cit.* p. 189.

during the continuance of which the chief abdicates his functions and any crime may be committed with impunity. The description of the Pondo festival comprises so many interesting features that I will reproduce it entire. "When a Pondo chief is to hold the feast of first-fruits, some of his people procure a ripe plant of the gourd family, pumpkin or calabash, from another tribe. This is cooked; the inside cleaned out, and the rind made ready for use as a vessel. It is then presented to the chief with much ceremony. The first-fruits are now brought forward, and a sacrifice, generally a young bull, is offered, after which the feast commences. The chief issues certain orders for the conduct of the proceedings, tastes the fruits which are served in the gourd-dish with which he has been presented, and then abdicates all his functions while the festival lasts. The cattle from all the neighbouring villages are collected in the vicinity, and now they are brought together, and the bulls incited to fight to determine which is to be king among them for the next year. The young people engage in games and dances, feats of strength and running. After these are over the whole community give themselves over to disorder, debauchery, and riot. In their bull-fights and games they but did honour to the powers of nature, and now, as they eat and drink, the same powers are honoured in another form and by other rites. There is no one in authority to keep order, and every man does what seems good in his own eyes. Should a man stab his neighbour he escapes all punishment, and so too with all other crimes against the person, property, and morality. People are even permitted to abuse the chief to his face, an offence which at any other time would meet with summary vengeance and an unceremonious dispatch to join the ancestors. While the feast continues, a deafening noise is kept up by drumming, shouting, hand-clapping, and every kind of instrument that can be made to emit sound. Men advance to the chief and explain their origin, and also the object they hold sacred, by imitating the sounds and movements of their most sacred animal. This is the person's totem. Others imitate the gurgling made by an enemy when stabbed in the throat. Those who adopt this latter emblem are known as 'children

of the spear.' When the ceremonies, revels, and mummeries are ended, the chief repairs to his accustomed place, and sitting down there, by that act resumes his kingly functions. He calls the bravest of his braves before him, who is immediately clothed and decorated with skins of animals suggestive of courage and strategy. He performs a dance amid the frenzied shouting of the multitude, after which the chief declares the festival at an end and harvest commenced."¹ Another writer, speaking of the Zulu festival of first-fruits as it was celebrated in the time of the ferocious despot Chaka, says that "at this period the chiefs are allowed to converse unreservedly with the king, speaking with great freedom, and in some measure to be dictatorial."² Such liberties taken with the despotic Zulu king seem to point to a time when he too, like the Pondo chiefs, abdicated or was deposed during the festival. Perhaps we may even go a step further. We have seen that on this occasion the Zulu king dances in a mantle of grass or of herbs and corn-leaves, which is afterwards burnt and the ashes scattered and trodden into the ground. This custom seems clearly intended to promote the fertility of the earth, and in earlier times the same end may have been compassed by burning the king himself and dispersing his ashes; for we have seen that a Bechuana tribe, of the same Bantu stock as the Zulus, were wont to sacrifice a human victim for the good of the crops and to scatter his ashes over the ground.³ In this connection it should be borne in mind that we have found independent evidence of a custom of putting the Zulu king to death whenever his bodily strength began to fail.⁴

¹ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, pp. 136-138, from manuscript notes furnished by J. Sutton. Mr. Macdonald has described the custom more briefly in his *Light in Africa*, p. 189.

² N. Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, ii. 292.

³ Above, p. 239 sq.

⁴ Above, p. 9 sq. On the Zulu festival of first-fruits see also Arbousset et Daumas, *Voyage d'Exploration*, p. 308 sq.; G. Fritsch, *Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrikas*, p. 143. Fritsch mentions

that after executing a grotesque dance in the presence of the assembled multitude the king gives formal permission to eat of the new fruits by dashing a gourd or calabash to the ground. This ceremony of breaking the calabash is mentioned also by Shooter (*Kafirs of Natal*, p. 27) and Grout (*Zulu-land*, p. 162). According to this last writer, a bull is killed and its gall drunk by the king and the people. In killing it the warriors must use nothing but their naked hands. The flesh of the

Amongst the Creek Indians of North America, the *busk* or festival of first-fruits was the chief ceremony of the year.¹ It was held in July or August, when the corn was ripe, and marked the end of the old year and the beginning of the new one. Before it took place, none of the Indians would eat or even handle any part of the new harvest. Sometimes each town had its own busk; sometimes several towns united to hold one in common. Before celebrating the busk, the people provided themselves with new clothes and new household utensils and furniture; they collected their old clothes and rubbish, together with all the remaining grain and other old provisions, cast them together in one common heap, and consumed them with fire.² As a preparation for the ceremony, all the fires in the village were extinguished, and the ashes swept clean away. In particular, the hearth or altar of the temple was dug up and the ashes carried out. Then the chief priest put some roots of the

bull is given to the boys to eat what they like and burn the rest; the men may not taste it. See Grout, *op. cit.* p. 161. According to Shooter, two bulls are killed; the first is black, the second of another colour. The boys who eat the beef of the black bull may not drink till the next morning, else the king would be defeated in war or visited with some personal misfortune. See Shooter, *op. cit.* p. 26 *sq.* According to another account the sacrifice of the bull, performed by the warriors of a particular regiment with their bare hands, takes place several weeks before the festival of first-fruits, and "the strength of the bull is supposed to enter into the king, thereby prolonging his health and strength." See D. Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*,² p. 91. As to the festival of first-fruits among the Matabeles, a Zulu people, see L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 157 *sq.*

¹ The ceremony is described independently by James Adair, *History of the American Indians* (London, 1775), pp. 96-111; W. Bartram, *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida* (Lon-

don, 1792), p. 507 *sq.*; B. Hawkins, "Sketch of the Creek country," in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society*, iii. (Savannah, 1848), pp. 75-78; A. A. McGillivray, in Schoolcraft's *Indian Tribes*, v. 267 *sq.* Adair's description is the fullest and has been chiefly followed in the text. In *Observations on the Creek and Cherokee Indians*, by William Bartram (1789), with *prefatory and supplementary notes*, by E. G. Squier, p. 75, there is a description—extracted from an MS. of J. H. Payne (author of *Home, Sweet Home*)—of the similar ceremony observed by the Cherokees. I possess a copy of this work in pamphlet form, but it appears to be an extract from the transactions or proceedings of a society, probably an American one. Mr. Squier's preface is dated New York, 1851. The Indians of Alabama also held a great festival at their harvest in July. They passed the day fasting, lit a new fire, purged themselves, and offered the first-fruits to their *Manitoo*: the ceremony ended with a religious dance. See Bossu, *Noirveaux Voyages aux Indes occidentales* (Paris, 1768), ii. 54.

² W. Bartram, *Travels*, p. 507.

button-snake plant, with some green tobacco leaves and a little of the new fruits, at the bottom of the fireplace, which he afterwards commanded to be covered up with white clay, and wetted over with clean water. A thick arbour of green branches of young trees was then made over the altar.¹ Meanwhile the women at home were cleaning out their houses, renewing the old hearths, and scouring all the cooking vessels that they might be ready to receive the new fire and the new fruits.² The public or sacred square was carefully swept of even the smallest crumbs of previous feasts, "for fear of polluting the first-fruit offerings." Also every vessel that had contained or had been used about any food during the expiring year was removed from the temple before sunset. Then all the men who were not known to have violated the law of the first-fruit offering and that of marriage during the year were summoned by a crier to enter the holy square and observe a solemn fast. But the women (except six old ones), the children, and all who had not attained the rank of warriors were forbidden to enter the square. Sentinels were also posted at the corners of the square to keep out all persons deemed impure and all animals. A strict fast was then observed for two nights and a day, the devotees drinking a bitter decoction of button-snake root "in order to vomit and purge their sinful bodies." That the people outside the square might also be purified, one of the old men laid down a quantity of green tobacco at a corner of the square; this was carried off by an old woman and distributed to the people without, who chewed and swallowed it "in order to afflict their souls." During this general fast, the women, children, and men of weak constitution were allowed to eat after mid-day, but not before. On the morning when the fast ended, the women brought a quantity of the old year's food to the outside of the sacred square. These provisions were then brought in and set before the famished multitude, but all traces of them

¹ So amongst the Cherokees, according to J. H. Payne, an arbour of green boughs was made in the sacred square; then "a beautiful bushy-topped shade-tree was cut down close to the roots, and planted in the very centre of the

sacred square. Every man then provided himself with a green bough."

² So Adair. Bartram, on the other hand, as we have seen, says that the old vessels were burned and new ones prepared for the festival.

had to be removed before noon. When the sun was declining from the meridian, all the people were commanded by the voice of a crier to stay within doors, to do no bad act, and to be sure to extinguish and throw away every spark of the old fire. Universal silence now reigned. Then the high priest made the new fire by the friction of two pieces of wood, and placed it on the altar under the green arbour. This new fire was believed to atone for all past crimes except murder. Next a basket of new fruits was brought; the high priest took out a little of each sort of fruit, rubbed it with bear's oil, and offered it, together with some flesh, "to the bountiful holy spirit of fire, as a first-fruit offering, and an annual oblation for sin." He also consecrated the sacred emetics (the button-snake root and the cassina or black-drink) by pouring a little of them into the fire. The persons who had remained outside now approached, without entering, the sacred square; and the chief priest thereupon made a speech, exhorting the people to observe their old rites and customs, announcing that the new divine fire had purged away the sins of the past year, and earnestly warning the women that, if any of them had not extinguished the old fire, or had contracted any impurity, they must forthwith depart, "lest the divine fire should spoil both them and the people." Some of the new fire was then set down outside the holy square; the women carried it home joyfully, and laid it on their unpolluted hearths. When several towns had united to celebrate the festival, the new fire might thus be carried for several miles. The new fruits were then dressed on the new fires and eaten with bear's oil, which was deemed indispensable. At one point of the festival the men rubbed the new corn between their hands, then on their faces and breasts.¹ During the festival which followed, the warriors, dressed in their wild martial array, their heads covered with white down and carrying white feathers in their hands, danced round the sacred arbour, under which burned the new fire. The ceremonies lasted eight days, during which the strictest continence was practised. Towards the conclusion of the festival the warriors fought a mock battle; then the men and women together,

¹ B. Hawkins, "Sketch," etc., p. 76.

in three circles, danced round the sacred fire. Lastly, all the people smeared themselves with white clay and bathed in running water. They came out of the water believing that no evil could now befall them for what they had done amiss in the past. So they departed in joy and peace.

To this day the remnant of the Seminole Indians of Florida, a people of the same stock as the Creeks,¹ hold an annual purification and festival called the Green Corn Dance, at which the new corn is eaten. On the evening of the first day of the festival they quaff a nauseous "Black Drink," as it is called, which acts both as an emetic and a purgative; they believe that he who does not drink of this liquor cannot safely eat the new green corn, and besides that he will be sick at some time in the year. While the liquor is being drunk, the dancing begins, and the medicine-men join in it. Next day they eat of the green corn; the following day they fast, probably from fear of polluting the sacred food in their stomachs by contact with common food; but the third day they hold a great feast.² Further, the Natchez Indians, another tribe of the same stock, who used to inhabit a district on the lower course and eastern bank of the Mississippi, ate the new corn sacramentally at a great festival which has been fully described by Du Pratz, the French historian of Louisiana. As his work is probably not easily accessible to many of my readers, I shall perhaps consult their convenience by extracting his description entire. The Natchez, he tells us, began their year in March and divided it into thirteen moons. Their sixth moon, which answered to our August, was the Mulberry Moon, and the seventh was the moon of Maize or Great Corn. "This feast is beyond dispute the most solemn of all. It principally consists in eating in common, and in a religious manner, of new corn, which had been sown expressly with that design, with suitable ceremonies. This corn is sown upon a spot of ground never before cultivated; which ground is dressed and prepared by the warriors alone, who also are the only persons that sow the corn, weed it, reap it, and gather it. When

¹ Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, iii. 42.

² C. MacCauley, "Seminole Indians

of Florida," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1887), p. 522 sq.

this corn is near ripe, the warriors fix on a place proper for the general feast, and close adjoining to that they form a round granary, the bottom and sides of which are of cane; this they fill with the corn, and when they have finished the harvest, and covered the granary, they acquaint the Great Sun,¹ who appoints the day for the general feast. Some days before the feast, they build huts for the Great Sun, and for all the other families, round the granary, that of the Great Sun being raised upon a mound of earth about two feet high. On the feast-day the whole nation set out from their village at sun-rising, leaving behind only the aged and infirm that are not able to travel, and a few warriors, who are to carry the Great Sun on a litter upon their shoulders. The seat of this litter is covered with several deer-skins, and to its four sides are fastened four bars which cross each other, and are supported by eight men, who at every hundred paces transfer their burden to eight other men, and thus successively transport it to the place where the feast is celebrated, which may be near two miles from the village. About nine o'clock the Great Sun comes out of his hut dressed in the ornaments of his dignity, and being placed in his litter, which has a canopy at the head formed of flowers, he is carried in a few minutes to the sacred granary, shouts of joy re-echoing on all sides. Before he alights he makes the tour of the whole place deliberately, and when he comes before the corn, he salutes it thrice with the words, *hoo, hoo, hoo*, lengthened and pronounced respectfully. The salutation is repeated by the whole nation, who pronounce the word *hoo* nine times distinctly, and at the ninth time he alights and places himself on his throne.

"Immediately after they light a fire by rubbing two pieces of wood violently against each other, and when everything is prepared for dressing the corn, the chief of war, accompanied by the warriors belonging to each family, presents himself before the throne, and addresses the Sun in these words, 'Speak, for I hear thee.' The sovereign then rises up, bows towards the four quarters of the world, and

¹ That is, the grand chief of the nation. All the chiefs of the Natchez were called Suns and were connected with the head chief or Great Sun, who

bore on his breast an image of the sun and claimed to be descended from the luminary. See Bossu, *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes occidentales*, i. 42.

advancing to the granary, lifts his eyes and hands to heaven, and says, 'Give us corn': upon which the great chief of war, the princes and princesses, and all the men, thank him separately by pronouncing the word *hoo*. The corn is then distributed, first to the female Suns, and then to all the women, who run with it to their huts, and dress it with the utmost dispatch. When the corn is dressed in all the huts, a plate of it is put into the hands of the Great Sun, who presents it to the four quarters of the world, and then says to the chief of war, 'Eat'; upon this signal all the warriors begin to eat in all the huts; after them the boys of whatever age, excepting those who are on the breast; and last of all the women. When the warriors have finished their repast, they form themselves into two choirs before the huts, and sing war-songs for half an hour; after which the chief of war, and all the warriors in succession, recount their brave exploits, and mention, in a boasting manner, the number of enemies they have slain. The youths are next allowed to harangue, and each tells in the best manner he can, not what he has done, but what he intends to do; and if his discourse merits approbation, he is answered by a general *hoo*; if not, the warriors hang down their heads and are silent.

"This great solemnity is concluded with a general dance by torch-light. Upwards of two hundred torches of dried canes, each of the thickness of a child, are lighted round the place, where the men and women often continue dancing till day-light; and the following is the disposition of their dance. A man places himself on the ground with a pot covered with a deer-skin, in the manner of a drum, to beat time to the dancers; round him the women form themselves into a circle, not joining hands, but at some distance from each other; and they are inclosed by the men in another circle, who have in each hand a chichicois, or calabash, with a stick thrust through it to serve for a handle. When the dance begins, the women move round the men in the centre, from left to right, and the men contrariwise from right to left, and they sometimes narrow and sometimes widen their circles. In this manner the dance continues without intermission the whole night, new performers successively taking the place of those who are wearied and fatigued.

"Next morning no person is seen abroad before the Great Sun comes out of his hut, which is generally about nine o'clock, and then upon a signal made by the drum, the warriors make their appearance distinguished into two troops, by the feathers which they wear on their heads. One of these troops is headed by the Great Sun, and the other by the chief of war, who begin a new diversion by tossing a ball of deer-skin stuffed with Spanish beard from the one to the other. The warriors quickly take part in the sport, and a violent contest ensues which of the two parties shall drive the ball to the hut of the opposite chief. The diversion generally lasts two hours, and the victors are allowed to wear the feathers of superiority till the following year, or till the next time they play at the ball. After this the warriors perform the war dance; and last of all they go and bathe; an exercise which they are very fond of when they are heated or fatigued.

"The rest of that day is employed as the preceding; for the feast holds as long as any of the corn remains. When it is all eat up, the Great Sun is carried back in his litter, and they all return to the village, after which he sends the warriors to hunt both for themselves and him."¹

In the foregoing customs the solemn preparation for eating of the new fruits, taken together with the danger supposed to be incurred by persons who partake of them without observing the prescribed ritual, suffices to prove that the new fruits are regarded as instinct with a divine virtue, and consequently that the eating of them is a sacrament or communion. Nothing, perhaps, brings this out so clearly as the Creek and Seminole practice of taking a purgative before swallowing the new corn. The intention is thereby to prevent the sacred food from being polluted by contact

¹ Du Pratz, *History of Louisiana, or of the western parts of Virginia and Carolina*, translated from the French, New Edition (London, 1784), pp. 338-341. On the festival of first-fruits among the Natchez see also *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, vii. 19; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 183; De Tonti, "Relation de la Louisiane et du Mississippi," *Recueil de Voyages au Nord*, v. 122 (Amsterdam

edition); Le Petit, "Relation des Natchez," *ibid.* ix. 13 sq. (reprint of the account in the *Lettres édifiantes* cited above); Bossu, *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes occidentales*, i. 43. According to Charlevoix, Le Petit, and Bossu the festival fell in July. For Chateaubriand's description of the custom, see Note C, "Offerings of First-fruits," at the end of this volume.

with common food in the stomach of the eater. For the same reason Catholics partake of the Eucharist fasting; and among the pastoral Masai of Eastern Africa the young warriors, who live on meat and milk exclusively, are obliged to eat nothing but milk for so many days and then nothing but meat for so many more, and before they pass from the one food to the other they must make sure that none of the old food remains in their stomachs; this they do by swallowing a very powerful purgative and emetic.¹ Among the Wataturu, another people of Eastern Africa akin to the Masai, a warrior who had eaten antelope's flesh might not drink of milk on the same day.² Similarly among the Central Esquimaux the rules prohibiting contact between venison and the flesh of marine animals are very strict. The Esquimaux themselves say that the goddess Sedna dislikes the deer, and therefore they may not bring that animal into contact with her favourites, the sea beasts. Hence the meat of the whale, the seal, or the walrus may not be eaten on the same day with venison. Both sorts of meat may not even lie on the floor of the hut or behind the lamps at the same time. If a man who has eaten venison in the morning happens to enter a hut in which the flesh of seal is being cooked, he is allowed to eat venison on the bed, but it must be wrapt up before being carried into the hut, and he must take care to keep clear of the floor. Before changing from one food to the other the Esquimaux must wash themselves.³ Again, just as the Esquimaux think that their goddess would be offended if venison met seal or whale or walrus meat in the eater's stomach, so the Melanesians of Florida, one of the Solomon Islands, believe that if a man who has eaten pork or fish or shell-fish or the flesh of a certain sort of cuscus were to enter a garden immediately

¹ Joseph Thomson, *Through Masai Land*, p. 430; P. Reichard, *Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Leipsic, 1892), p. 288; O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 162. According to Reichard the warriors may partake of honey both with meat and with milk. Thomson does not mention honey and speaks of a purgative only. The periods during which meat and milk are alternately consumed

vary, according to Reichard, from twelve to fifteen days. We may conjecture, therefore, that two of them, making up a complete cycle, correspond to a lunar month, with reference to which the diet is perhaps determined.

² O. Baumann, *op. cit.* p. 171.

³ Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 595.

afterwards, the ghosts who preside over the garden and cause the fruits to grow would be angry and the crop would consequently suffer; but three or four days after partaking of such victuals, when the food has quite left his stomach, he may enter the garden without offence to the ghosts or injury to the crop.¹ In like manner the ancient Greeks, of whose intellectual kinship with savages like the Esquimaux and the Melanesians we have already met with many proofs, laid it down as a rule that a man who had partaken of the flesh offered to Pelops at Olympia might not enter into the temple of Zeus, and that persons who had sacrificed to Telephus at Pergamus might not go up to the temple of Aesculapius until they had washed themselves,² just as the Esquimaux who have eaten venison must wash before they may partake of seal or whale or walrus meat.

In some of the festivals which we have examined, as in the Buro, Cheremiss, Cham, and Creek ceremonies, the sacrament of first-fruits is combined with a sacrifice, and in course of time the sacrifice of first-fruits tends to throw the sacrament into the shade, if not to supersede it. The mere fact of offering the first-fruits to the gods or ancestral spirits comes now to be thought a sufficient preparation for eating the new corn; the gods having received their share, man is free to enjoy the rest. This mode of viewing the new fruits implies that they are regarded no longer as themselves instinct with divine life, but merely as a gift bestowed by the gods upon man, who is bound to express his gratitude and homage to his divine benefactors by returning to them a portion of their bounty. But with sacrifice, as distinct from sacrament, we are not here concerned.³

The custom of eating bread sacramentally as the body of a god was practised by the Aztecs before the discovery and conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards. Twice a year, in May and December, an image of the great Mexican god Huitzilopochtli or Vitziliputzli was made of dough, then broken in pieces, and solemnly eaten by his worshippers.

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 134.

² Pausanias, v. 13. 3. We may assume, though Pausanias does not expressly say so, that persons who

sacrificed to Pelops partook of the sacrifice.

³ See Note C, "Offerings of First-fruits," at the end of the volume.

The May ceremony is thus described by the historian Acosta. "Two days before this feast, the virgins whereof I have spoken (the which were shut up and secluded in the same temple and were as it were religious women) did mingle a quantity of the seed of beets with roasted maize, and then they did mould it with honey, making an idol of that paste in bigness like to that of wood, putting instead of eyes grains of green glass, of blue or white; and for teeth grains of maize set forth with all the ornament and furniture that I have said. This being finished, all the noblemen came and brought it an exquisite and rich garment, like unto that of the idol, wherewith they did attire it. Being thus clad and deckt, they did set it in an azure chair and in a litter to carry it on their shoulders. The morning of this feast being come, an hour before day all the maidens came forth attired in white, with new ornaments, the which that day were called the Sisters of their god Vitziliputzli, they came crowned with garlands of maize roasted and parched, being like unto azahar or the flower of orange; and about their necks they had great chains of the same, which went bauldrickwise under their left arm. Their cheeks were dyed with vermilion, their arms from the elbow to the wrist were covered with red parrots' feathers." Young men, dressed in red robes and crowned like the virgins with maize, then carried the idol in its litter to the foot of the great pyramid-shaped temple, up the steep and narrow steps of which it was drawn to the music of flutes, trumpets, cornets, and drums. "While they mounted up the idol all the people stood in the court with much reverence and fear. Being mounted to the top, and that they had placed it in a little lodge of roses which they held ready, presently came the young men, which strewed many flowers of sundry kinds, wherewith they filled the temple both within and without. This done, all the virgins came out of their convent, bringing pieces of paste compounded of beets and roasted maize, which was of the same paste whereof their idol was made and compounded, and they were of the fashion of great bones. They delivered them to the young men, who carried them up and laid them at the idol's feet, wherewith they filled the whole place that it could receive no more. They

called these morsels of paste the flesh and bones of Vitzilipuztli. Having laid abroad these bones, presently came all the ancients of the temple, priests, Levites, and all the rest of the ministers, according to their dignities and antiquities (for herein there was a strict order amongst them) one after another, with their veils of diverse colours and works, every one according to his dignity and office, having garlands upon their heads and chains of flowers about their necks; after them came their gods and goddesses whom they worshiped, of diverse figures, attired in the same livery; then putting themselves in order about those morsels and pieces of paste, they used certain ceremonies with singing and dancing. By means whereof they were blessed and consecrated for the flesh and bones of this idol. This ceremony and blessing (whereby they were taken for the flesh and bones of the idol) being ended, they honoured those pieces in the same sort as their god.

"Then came forth the sacrificers, who began the sacrifice of men in the manner as hath been spoken, and that day they did sacrifice a greater number than at any other time, for that it was the most solemn feast they observed. The sacrifices being ended, all the young men and maids came out of the temple attired as before, and being placed in order and rank, one directly against another, they danced by drums, the which sounded in praise of the feast, and of the idol which they did celebrate. To which song all the most ancient and greatest noblemen did answer dancing about them, making a great circle, as their use is, the young men and maids remaining always in the midst. All the city came to this goodly spectacle, and there was a commandment very strictly observed throughout all the land, that the day of the feast of the idol of Vitzilipuztli they should eat no other meat but this paste, with honey, whereof the idol was made. And this should be eaten at the point of day, and they should drink no water nor any other thing till after noon: they held it for an ill sign, yea, for sacrilege to do the contrary: but after the ceremonies ended, it was lawful for them to eat anything. During the time of this ceremony they hid the water from their little children, admonishing all such as had the use of reason not to drink

any water ; which, if they did, the anger of God would come upon them, and they should die, which they did observe very carefully and strictly. The ceremonies, dancing, and sacrifice ended, they went to unclothe themselves, and the priests and superiors of the temple took the idol of paste, which they spoiled of all the ornaments it had, and made many pieces, as well of the idol itself as of the truncheons which were consecrated, and then they gave them to the people in manner of a communion, beginning with the greater, and continuing unto the rest, both men, women, and little children, who received it with such tears, fear, and reverence as it was an admirable thing, saying that they did eat the flesh and bones of God, wherewith they were grieved. Such as had any sick folks demanded thereof for them, and carried it with great reverence and veneration."¹

After the explanation which has been given of the reason why the Creek and Seminole Indians cleanse their bodies with a purgative before they partake of the sacrament of first-fruits, the reader will have no difficulty in understanding why on the day of their solemn communion with the deity the Mexicans refused to eat any other food than the consecrated bread which they revered as the very flesh and bones of their God, and why up till noon they might drink nothing at all, not even water. They feared to defile the portion of God in their stomachs by contact with common things. We can now also conjecture the reason why Zulu boys, after eating the flesh of the black bull at the feast of first-fruits, are forbidden to drink anything till the next day.²

At the festival of the winter solstice in December the Aztecs killed their god Huitzilopochtli in effigy first and ate him afterwards. As a preparation for this solemn ceremony an image of the deity in the likeness of a man was fashioned out of seeds of various sorts, which were kneaded into a dough with the blood of children. The bones of the

¹ Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, bk. v. ch. 24, vol. ii. pp. 356-360 (Hakluyt Society, 1880). I have modernised the old translator's spelling. Acosta's description is fol-

lowed by Herrera (*General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, trans. by Stevens, iii. 213-215).

² Above, p. 329 note.

god were represented by pieces of acacia wood. This image was placed on the chief altar of the temple, and on the day of the festival the king offered incense to it. Early next day it was taken down and set on its feet in a great hall. Then a priest, who bore the name and acted the part of the god Quetzalcoatl, took a flint-tipped dart and hurled it into the breast of the dough-image, piercing it through and through. This was called "killing the god Huitzilopochtli so that his body might be eaten." One of the priests cut out the heart of the image and gave it to the king to eat. The rest of the image was divided into minute pieces, of which every man great and small, down to the male children in the cradle, received one to eat. But no woman might taste a morsel. The ceremony was called *teoqualo*, that is, "god is eaten."¹

At another festival the Mexicans made little images like men, which stood for the cloud-capped mountains. These images were moulded of a paste of various seeds and were dressed in paper ornaments. Some people fashioned five, others ten, others as many as fifteen of them. Having been made, they were placed in the oratory of each house and worshipped. Four times in the course of the night offerings of food were brought to them in tiny vessels; and people sang and played the flute before them through all the hours of darkness. At break of day the priests stabbed the images with a weaver's instrument, cut off their heads, and tore out their hearts, which they presented to the master of the house on a green saucer. The bodies of the images were then eaten by all the family, especially by the servants, "in order that by eating them they might be preserved from certain distempers, to which those persons who were negligent of worship to those deities conceived themselves to be subject."² In some cities of Mexico, as in

¹ Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, iii. 297-300 (after Torquemada); Clavigero, *History of Mexico*, trans. by Cullen, i. 309 sqq.; Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle-Espagne*, traduite et annotée par Jourdanet et Siméon (Paris, 1880), p. 203 sq.; J. G. Müller, *Geschichte der amerikanischen Urreligionen*, p. 605; Brasseur de

Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale*, iii. 531-534.

² Clavigero, i. 311; Sahagun, pp. 74, 156 sq.; Müller, p. 606; Bancroft, iii. 316; Brasseur de Bourbourg, iii. 535. This festival took place on the last day of the 16th month (which extended from 23rd December to 11th January). At another festival the

Tlacopan and Coyohuacan, an idol was fashioned out of grains of various kinds, and the warriors ate it in the belief that the sacred food would increase their forces fourfold when they marched to the fight.¹ At certain festivals held thrice a year in Nicaragua all the men, beginning with the priests and chiefs, drew blood from their tongues and genital organs with sharp knives of flint, allowed it to drip on some sheaves of maize, and then ate the bloody grain as a blessed food.²

But the Mexicans did not always content themselves with eating their gods in the outward and visible shape of bread or grain; it was not even enough that this material vehicle of the divine life should be kneaded and fortified with human blood. They craved, as it seems, after a closer union with the living god, and attained it by devouring the flesh of a real man, who, after he had paraded for a time in the trappings and received the honours of a god, was slaughtered and eaten by his cannibal worshippers. The deity thus consumed in effigy was Tetzcatlipoca, and the man chosen to represent him and die in his stead was a young captive of handsome person and illustrious birth. During his captivity the youth thus doomed to play the fatal part of divinity was allowed to range the streets of Mexico freely, escorted by a distinguished train, who paid him as much respect as if he had been indeed the god himself instead of only his living image. Twenty days before the festival at which the tragic mockery was to end, that he might taste all the joys of this transient world to which he must soon bid farewell, he received in marriage four women, from whom he parted only when he took his place in the last solemn procession. Arrived at the foot of the sacred pyramid on the top of which he was to die, the sacrificers saluted him and led him up the long staircase. On the summit five of them seized him and held him down on his back upon the sacrificial stone, while the high priest, after bowing

Mexicans made the semblance of a bone out of paste and ate it sacramentally as the bone of the god. See Sahagun, *op. cit.* p. 33.

¹ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *op. cit.* iii. 539.

² Oviedo, *Histoire du Nicaragua* (Paris, 1840), p. 219. Oviedo's account is borrowed by Herrera (*General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, trans. by Stevens, iii. 301).

to the god he was about to kill, cut open his breast and tore out the throbbing heart with the accustomed rites. But instead of being kicked down the staircase and sent rolling from step to step like the corpses of common victims, the body of the dead god was carried respectfully down, and his flesh, chopped up small, was distributed among the priests and nobles as a blessed food. The head, being severed from the trunk, was preserved in a sacred place along with the white and grinning skulls of all the other victims who had lived and died in the character of the god Tetzcatlipoca.¹

We are now able to suggest an explanation of the proverb "There are many Manii at Aricia."² Certain loaves made in the shape of men were called by the Romans *maniae*, and it appears that this kind of loaf was especially made at Aricia.³ Now, Mania, the name of one of these loaves, was also the name of the Mother or Grandmother of Ghosts,⁴ to whom woollen effigies of men and women were dedicated at the festival of the Compitalia. These effigies were hung at the doors of all the houses in Rome; one effigy was hung up for every free person in the house, and one effigy, of a different kind, for every slave. The reason was that on this day the ghosts of the dead were believed to be going about, and it was hoped that they would carry off the effigies at the door instead of the living people in the house. According to tradition, these woollen figures were substitutes for a former custom of sacrificing human beings.⁵ Upon data so fragmentary and uncertain, it is of course impossible to build with confidence; but it seems worth suggesting that the loaves in human form, which appear to have been baked at Aricia, were sacramental bread, and that in the old days, when the divine King of the Wood

¹ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *op. cit.* iii. 510-512.

² See above, vol. i. p. 5 sq.

³ Festus, ed. Müller, pp. 128, 129, 145. The reading of the last passage is, however, uncertain ("et Ariciae genus panni fieri; quod manici appellatur").

⁴ Varro, *De ling. lat.* ix. 61; Arnobius, *Adv. nationes*, iii. 41; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 7. 35; Festus, p. 128, ed. Müller. Festus speaks of

the mother or grandmother of the *larvae*; the other writers speak of the mother of the *lares*.

⁵ Macrobius, *l.c.*; Festus, pp. 121, 239, ed. Müller. The effigies hung up for the slaves were called *pilae*, not *maniae*. *Pilae* was also the name given to the straw-men which were thrown to the bulls to gore in the arena. See Martial, *Epigr.* ii. 43. 5 sq.; Asconius, *In Cornel.* p. 55, ed. Kiessling and Schoell.

was annually slain, loaves were made in his image, like the paste figures of the gods in Mexico, and were eaten sacramentally by his worshippers.¹ The Mexican sacraments in honour of Huitzilopochtli were also accompanied by the sacrifice of human victims. The tradition that the founder of the sacred grove at Aricia was a man named Manius, from whom many Manii were descended, would thus be an etymological myth invented to explain the name *maniae* as applied to these sacramental loaves. A dim recollection of the original connection of these loaves with human sacrifices may perhaps be traced in the story that the effigies dedicated to Mania at the Compitalia were substitutes for human victims. The story itself, however, is probably devoid of foundation, since the practice of putting up dummies to divert the attention of ghosts or demons from living people is not uncommon. As the practice is both widely spread and very characteristic of the manner of thought of primitive man, who tries in a thousand ways to outwit the malice of spiritual beings, I may be pardoned for devoting a few pages to its illustration, even though in doing so I diverge somewhat from the strict line of argument. I would ask the

¹ The ancients were at least familiar with the practice of sacrificing images made of dough or other materials as substitutes for the animals themselves. It was a recognised principle that when an animal could not be easily obtained for sacrifice, it was lawful to offer an image of it made of bread or wax (Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 116; cp. Pausanias, x. 18. 5). (Similarly a North-American Indian dreamed that a sacrifice of twenty elans was necessary for the recovery of a sick girl; but the elans could not be procured, and the girl's parents were allowed to sacrifice twenty loaves instead. *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 11, ed. 1858.) Poor people who could not afford to sacrifice real animals offered dough images of them (Suidas, s. v. *βοῦς ἱβδόμος*; cp. Hesychius, s. v. *βοῦς, ἱβδόμος βοῦς*). Hence bakers made a regular business of baking cakes in the likeness of all the animals which were sacrificed to the gods (Proculus, quoted and emended

by Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 1079). When Cyzicus was besieged by Mithridates and the people could not procure a black cow to sacrifice at the rites of Proserpine, they made a cow of dough and placed it at the altar (Plutarch, *Lucullus*, 10). In a Boeotian sacrifice to Hercules, in place of the ram which was the proper victim, an apple was regularly substituted, four chips being stuck in it to represent legs and two to represent horns (Pollux, i. 30 sq.). The Athenians are said to have once offered to Hercules a similar substitute for an ox (Zenobius, *Cent.* v. 22). And the Locrians, being at a loss for an ox to sacrifice, made one out of figs and sticks, and offered it instead of the animal (Zenobius, *Cent.* v. 5). At the Athenian festival of the Diasia cakes shaped like animals were sacrificed (Schol. on Thucydides, i. 126, p. 36 ed. Didot). We have seen above (p. 306) that the poorer Egyptians offered cakes of dough instead of pigs.

reader to observe that the vicarious use of images, with which we are here concerned, differs wholly in principle from the sympathetic use of them which we examined before;¹ and that while the sympathetic use belongs purely to magic, the vicarious use falls within the domain of religion.

It is well known that the spirits of persons who have recently departed this life are apt to carry off with them to the world of the dead the souls of their surviving relations. Hence the savage resorts to the device of making up dummies or effigies which he puts in the way of the ghost, hoping that the dull-witted spirit will mistake them for real people and so leave the survivors in peace. Hence in Tahiti the priest who performed the funeral rites used to lay some slips of plantain leaf-stalk on the breast and under the arms of the corpse, saying, "There are your family, there is your child, there is your wife, there is your father, and there is your mother. Be satisfied yonder (that is, in the world of spirits). Look not towards those who are left in the world." This ceremony, we are told, was designed "to impart contentment to the departed, and to prevent the spirit from repairing to the places of his former resort, and so distressing the survivors."² When the Galelareese bury a corpse, they bury with it the stem of a banana-tree for company, in order that the dead person may not seek a companion among the living. Just as the coffin is being lowered into the earth, one of the bystanders steps up and throws a young banana-tree into the grave, saying, "Friend, you must miss your companions of this earth; here, take this as a comrade."³ In the Banks Islands, Melanesia, the ghost of a woman who has died in childbed cannot go away to Panoi or ghost-land if her child lives, for she cannot leave the baby behind. Hence to bilk her ghost they tie up a piece of banana-trunk loosely in leaves and lay it on her bosom in the grave. So away she goes, thinking she has her baby with her, and as she goes the banana-stalk keeps slipping about in the leaves, and she fancies it is the child stirring at her breast.

¹ See vol. i. p. 10 *sqq.*

² W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 402.

³ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen,

Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 539.

Thus she is happy till she comes to ghost-land and finds she has been deceived ; for a baby of banana-stalk cannot pass muster among the ghosts. So back she comes tearing in grief and rage to look for the child ; but meantime the infant has been artfully removed to another house, where the dead mother cannot find it, though she looks for it everywhere for ever.¹ In the Pelew Islands, when a woman has died in childbed, her spirit comes and cries, "Give me the child!" So to beguile her they bury the stem of a young banana-tree with her body, cutting it short and laying it between her right arm and her breast.² The same device is adopted for the same purpose in the island of Timor.³ In like circumstances negroes of the Niger Delta force a piece of the stem of a plantain into the womb of the dead mother, in order to make her think that she has her babe with her and so to prevent her spirit from coming back to claim the living child.⁴ Among the Yorubas of West Africa, when one of twins dies, the mother carries about, along with the surviving child, a small wooden figure roughly fashioned in human shape and of the sex of the dead twin. This figure is intended not merely to keep the live child from pining for its lost comrade, but also to give the spirit of the dead child something into which it can enter without disturbing its little brother or sister.⁵ Among the Tschwi of West Africa a lady observed a sickly child with an image beside it which she took for a doll. But it was no doll, it was an image of the child's dead twin which was being kept near the survivor as a habitation for the dead twin's soul, lest it should wander homeless and, feeling lonely, call its companion away after it along the darkling road of death.⁶ At Onitsha, a village on the left bank of the Niger, a missionary once met a funeral procession which he describes as very singular. The real body had already been buried in the house, but a piece of wood in the form of a

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 275.

² J. Kubary, "Die Religion der Pelauer," in Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde*, i. 9.

³ W. M. Donselaar, "Aanteekeningen over het eiland Saleijer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, i. (1857), p. 290.

⁴ Le Comte C. N. de Cardi, "Juju laws and customs in the Niger Delta," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxix. (1899), p. 58.

⁵ A. B. Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 80.

⁶ Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 473.

sofa and covered up was being borne by two persons on their heads, attended by a procession of six men and six women. The men carried cutlasses and the women clapped their hands as they passed along each street, crying, "This is the dead body of him that is dead, and is gone into the world of spirits." Meantime the rest of the villagers had to keep indoors.¹ The sham corpse was probably intended as a lure to draw away prowling demons from the real body. So among the Angoni, who inhabit the western bank of Lake Nyassa, there is a common belief that demons hover about the dying and dead before burial in order to snatch away their souls to join their own evil order. Guns are fired and drums are beaten to repel these spiritual foes, but a surer way of baulking their machinations is to have a mock funeral and so mislead and confound them. A sham corpse is made up out of anything that comes to hand, and it is treated exactly as if it were what it pretends to be. This lay figure is then carried some distance to a grave, followed by a great crowd weeping and wailing as if their hearts would break, while the rub-a-dub of drums and the discharge of guns add to the uproar. Meantime the real corpse is being interred as quietly and stealthily as possible near the house. Thus the demons are baffled; for when the dummy corpse has been laid in the earth with every mark of respect, and the noisy crowd has dispersed, the fiends swoop down on the mock grave only to find a bundle of rushes or some such trash in it; but the true grave they do not know and cannot find.² Similarly among the Bakundu of the Cameroons two graves are always made, one in the hut of the deceased and another somewhere else, and no one knows where the corpse is really buried. The custom is apparently intended to guard the knowledge of the real grave from demons, who might make an ill use of the body, if not of the soul, of the departed.³ In like manner the Kamilaroi tribe of Australia are reported to make two graves, a real

¹ S. Crowther and J. C. Taylor, *The Gospel on the banks of the Niger*, p. 250 sq.

² J. Macdonald, "East Central African Customs," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxii. (1893),

p. 114 sq.; *id.*, *Myth and Religion*, p. 155 sq. (from MS. notes of Dr. Elmslie).

³ B. Schwarz, *Kamerun* (Leipsic, 1886), p. 256 sq.; E. Reclus, *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*, xiii. 68 sq.

one and an empty one, for the purpose of cheating a malevolent spirit called Krooben.¹ In Bombay, if a person dies on an unlucky day, a dough figure of a man is carried on the bier with him and burnt with his corpse. This is supposed to hinder a second death from occurring in the family,² probably because the demons are thought to take the dough figure instead of a real person.

Again, effigies are often employed as a means of preventing or curing sickness; the demons of disease either mistake the effigies for living people or are persuaded or compelled to enter them, leaving the real men and women well and whole. Thus the Alfoors of Minahassa, in Celebes, will sometimes transport a sick man to another house, while they leave on his bed a dummy made up of a pillow and clothes. This dummy the demon is supposed to mistake for the sick man, who consequently recovers.³ Cure or prevention of this sort seems to find especial favour with the Dyaks of Borneo. Thus, when an epidemic is raging among them, the Dyaks of the Katoengouw river set up wooden images at their doors in the hope that the demons of the plague may be deluded into carrying off the effigies instead of the people.⁴ Among the Oloh Ngadju of Borneo, when a sick man is supposed to be suffering from the assaults of a ghost, puppets of dough or rice-meal are made and thrown under the house as substitutes for the patient, who thus rids himself of the ghost. So if a man has been attacked by a crocodile and has contrived to escape, he makes a puppet of dough or meal and casts it into the water as a vicarious offering; otherwise the water god, who is conceived in the shape of a crocodile, might be angry.⁵ In certain of the western districts of Borneo if a man is taken suddenly and violently sick, the physician, who in this part of the world is generally an old woman, fashions a wooden image and brings it seven times into contact with the sufferer's head, while she says:

¹ J. Fraser, "The aborigines of New South Wales," *Jour. and Proc. R. Soc. of New South Wales*, xvi. (1882), p. 229.

² *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 39, § 240.

³ N. Graafland, *De Minahassa*, i. 326.

⁴ P. J. Veth, *Borneo's West- Afdeeling* (Zaltbommel, 1854-56), ii. 309.

⁵ F. Grabowsky, "Ueber verschiedene weniger bekannte opfer bei den Oloh Ngadju in Borneo," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, i. (1888), p. 132 sq.

"This image serves to take the place of the sick man; sickness, pass over into the image." Then, with some rice, salt, and tobacco in a little basket, the substitute is carried to the spot where the evil spirit is supposed to have entered into the man. There it is set upright on the ground, after the physician has invoked the spirit as follows: "O devil, here is an image which stands instead of the sick man. Release the soul of the sick man and plague the image, for it is indeed prettier and better than he." Similar substitutes are used almost daily by these Dyaks for the purpose of drawing off evil influences from anybody's person. Thus when an Ot Danom baby will not stop squalling, its maternal grandmother takes a large leaf, fashions it into a puppet to represent the child, and presses it against the infant's body. Having thus decanted the spirit, so to speak, from the baby into the puppet, she pierces the effigy with little arrows from a blow-gun, thereby killing the spirit that had vexed her child.¹ Similarly in the island of Dama, between New Guinea and Celebes, where sickness is ascribed to the agency of demons, the doctor makes a doll of palm-leaf and lays it, together with some betel, rice, and half of an empty egg-shell, on the patient's head. Lured by this bait the demon quits the sufferer's body and enters the palm-leaf doll, which the wily doctor thereupon promptly decapitates. This may be supposed to make an end of the demon and of the sickness together.² A Dyak sorcerer, being called in to prescribe for a little boy who suffered from a disorder of the stomach, constructed two effigies of the boy and his mother out of bundles of clothes and offered them, together with some of the parents' finery, to the devil who was plaguing the child; it was hoped that the demon would take the effigies and leave the boy.³ Batta magicians can conjure the demon of disease out of the patient's body into an image made out of a banana-tree with a human face and wrapt up in magic

¹ E. L. M. Kühr, "Schetsen uit Borneo's Westerafdeeling," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlvii. (1897), p. 60 sq. For another mode in which these same Dyaks seek to heal sickness by means of an image, see above, vol.

i. p. 267 sq.

² J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Sebebes en Papua*, p. 465.

³ H. Ling Roth, "Low's Natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 117.

herbs; the image is then hurriedly removed and thrown away or buried beyond the boundaries of the village.¹

In the island of Nias people fear that the spirits of murdered infants may come and cause women with child to miscarry. To divert the unwelcome attention of these sprites from a pregnant woman an elaborate mechanism has been contrived. A potent idol called Fangola is set up beside her bed to guard her slumbers during the hours of darkness from the evil things that might harm her; another idol, connected with the first by a chain of palm-leaves, is erected in the large room of the house; and lastly a small banana-tree is planted in front of the second idol. The notion is that the sprites, scared away by the watchful Fangola from the sleeping woman, will scramble along the chain of palm-leaves to the other idol, and then, beholding the banana-tree, will mistake it for the woman they were looking for, and so pounce upon it instead of her.² In Bhutan, when the Lamas make noisy music to drive away the demon who is causing disease, little models of animals are fashioned of flour and butter and the evil spirit is implored to enter these models, which are then burnt.³ A Burmese mode of curing a sick man is to bury a small effigy of him in a tiny coffin, after which he ought certainly to recover.⁴ In Siam, when a person is dangerously ill, the magician models a small image of him in clay and carrying it away to a solitary place recites charms over it which compel the malady to pass from the sick man into the image. The sorcerer then buries the image, and the sufferer is made whole.⁵ So, too, in Cambodia the doctor fashions a rude effigy of his patient in clay and deposits it in some lonely spot, where the ghost or demon takes it instead of the man.⁶ The same ideas and the same practices prevail much further to the north among the tribes on the lower course of the River Amoor. When a Goldi or a Gilyak shaman has

¹ B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. (1883), p. 531.

² Fr. Kramer, "Der Götzendienst der Niasser," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890), p. 489.

³ A. Bastian, *Die Völkerstämme am*

Brahmaputra (Berlin, 1883), p. 73.

⁴ Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 138.

⁵ Pallegoix, *Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam*, ii. 48 sq. Compare A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 293, 486; E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 121.

⁶ J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 176.

cast out the devil that caused disease, an abode has to be provided for the homeless devil, and this is done by making a wooden idol in human form of which the ejected demon takes possession.¹ In Corea effigies are employed on much the same principle for the purpose of prolonging life. On the fourteenth and fifteenth day of the first month all men and women born under the Jen or "Man" star make certain straw images dressed in clothes and containing a number of the copper "cash" which form the currency of the country. Strictly speaking, there should be as many "cash" in the image as the person whom it represents has lived years; but the rule is not strictly observed. These images are placed on the path outside the house, and the poor people seize them and tear them up in order to get the "cash" which they contain. The destruction of the image is supposed to save the person represented from death for ten years. Accordingly the ceremony need only be performed once in ten years, though some people from excess of caution appear to observe it annually.² Among the Nishga Indians of British Columbia when a medicine-man dreams a dream which portends death to somebody, he informs the person whose life is threatened, and together they concert measures to avert the evil omen. The man whose life is at stake has a small wooden figure called a *shigigiadsqu* made as like himself as the skill of the wood-carver will allow, and this he hangs round his neck by a string so that the figure lies exactly over his heart. In this position he wears it long enough to allow the heat of his body to be imparted to it, generally for about four days. On the fourth day the medicine-man comes to the house, arrayed in his bearskin and other insignia of office and bringing with him a wisp of teased bark and a toy canoe made of cedar-bark. Thus equipped, he sings a doleful ditty, the death-song of the tribe. Then he washes the man over the region of the heart with the wisp of bark dipped in water, places the wisp, together with the wooden image, in the canoe, and after again

¹ A. Woldt, "Die Kultus-gegenstände der Golden und Giljaken," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, i. (1888), p. 102 sq.

² T. Watters, "Some Korean Customs and Notions," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 82 sq.

singing the death-chant, commits image, wisp, and canoe to the flames, where they are all consumed. The death-chant is now changed to a song of joy, and the man who was lately in fear of his life joins in. He may well be gay, for has he not given death the slip by devoting to destruction, not merely a wisp saturated with the dangerous defilement of his body, but also a substitute made in his own likeness and impregnated with his very heart's warmth?¹

With these examples before us we may fairly conclude that the woollen effigies, which at the festival of the Compitalia might be seen hanging at the doors of all the houses in ancient Rome, were not substitutes for human victims who had formerly been sacrificed at this season, but rather vicarious offerings presented to the Mother or Grandmother of Ghosts, in the hope that on her rounds through the city she would accept or mistake the effigies for the inmates of the house and so spare the living for another year. It is possible that the puppets made of rushes, which were annually thrown into the Tiber from the old Sublician bridge at Rome, had originally the same significance, though other and perhaps more probable explanations of the custom have been put forward.² But it is time to return from this digression to the custom of eating a god.

The practice of killing the god has now been traced amongst peoples who have reached the agricultural stage of society. We have seen that the spirit of the corn, or of other cultivated plants, is commonly represented either in human or in animal form, and that a custom has prevailed of killing annually either the human or the animal representative of the god. The reason for thus killing the corn-spirit in the person of his representative has been given implicitly in the earlier part of this chapter. But, further, we have found a widespread custom of eating the god sacramentally, either in the shape of the man or animal who represents the god,

¹ *The Illustrated Missionary News*, April 1st, 1891, p. 59 sq.

² As to the custom see Varro, *De lingua latina*, v. 44; Ovid, *Fasti*, v. 621 sqq.; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 38. For various explanations which have been proposed, see L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³

ii. 134 sqq.; W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 265 sqq.; *Journal of Philology*, xiv. (1885), p. 156 note; W. Warde Fowler, *The Roman Festivals of the period of the Republic* (London, 1899), p. 111 sqq. The ceremony was observed on the fifteenth of May.

or in the shape of bread made in human or animal form. The reasons for thus partaking of the body of the god are, from the primitive standpoint, simple enough. The savage commonly believes that by eating the flesh of an animal or man he acquires not only the physical, but even the moral and intellectual qualities which were characteristic of that animal or man. To take examples. The Creeks, Cherokees, and kindred tribes of North American Indians "believe that nature is possessed of such a property, as to transfuse into men and animals the qualities, either of the food they use, or of those objects that are presented to their senses; he who feeds on venison is, according to their physical system, swifter and more sagacious than the man who lives on the flesh of the clumsy bear, or helpless dunghill fowls, the slow-footed tame cattle, or the heavy wallowing swine. This is the reason that several of their old men recommend, and say, that formerly their greatest chieftains observed a constant rule in their diet, and seldom ate of any animal of a gross quality, or heavy motion of body, fancying it conveyed a dulness through the whole system, and disabled them from exerting themselves with proper vigour in their martial, civil, and religious duties."¹ The Zaparo Indians of South America "will, unless from necessity, in most cases not eat any heavy meats, such as tapir and peccary, but confine themselves to birds, monkeys, deer, fish, etc., principally because they argue that the heavier meats make them unwieldy, like the animals who supply the flesh, impeding their agility, and unfitting them for the chase."²

Certain tribes on the Upper Zambesi believe in transmigration, and every man in his lifetime chooses the kind of animal whose body he wishes to enter. He then performs an initiatory rite, which consists in swallowing the maggots bred in the putrid carcass of the animal of his choice; thenceforth he partakes of that animal's nature. And on the occasion of a calamity, while the women are giving themselves up to lamentation, you will see one man writhing on the ground like a boa constrictor or a crocodile, another

¹ James Adair, *History of the Wilds of Ecuador* (London, 1887), p. 168; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropol.*

² Alfred Simson, *Travels in the Institute*, vii. (1878), p. 503.

howling and leaping like a panther, a third baying like a jackal, roaring like a lion, or grunting like a hippopotamus, all of them imitating the characters of the various animals to perfection.¹ Clearly these people imagine that the soul or vital essence of the animal is manifested in the maggots bred in its decaying carcass; hence they imagine that by swallowing the maggots they imbue themselves with the very life and spirit of the creature which they desire to become. The Namaquas abstain from eating the flesh of hares, because they think it would make them faint-hearted as a hare. But they eat the flesh of the lion, or drink the blood of the leopard or lion, to get the courage and strength of these beasts.² The flesh of the lion and also that of the spotted leopard are sometimes cooked and eaten by native warriors in South-Eastern Africa, who hope thereby to become as brave as lions.³ When a Zulu army assembles to go forth to battle, the warriors eat slices of meat which is smeared with a powder made of the dried flesh of various animals, such as the leopard, lion, elephant, snakes, and so on; for thus it is thought that the soldiers will acquire the bravery and other warlike qualities of these animals. Sometimes if a Zulu has killed a wild beast, for instance a leopard, he will give his children the blood to drink, and will roast the heart for them to eat, expecting that they will thus grow up brave and daring men. But others say that this is dangerous, because it is apt to produce courage without prudence, and to make a man rush heedlessly on his death.⁴ Among the Wabondei of Eastern Africa the heart of a lion or leopard is eaten with the intention of making the eater strong and brave.⁵ In British Central Africa aspirants after courage consume the flesh and especially the hearts of lions, while lecherous persons eat the testicles of goats.⁶ Arab

¹ A. Bertrand, *The Kingdom of the Barotsi, Upper Zambesia* (London, 1899), p. 277, quoting the description given by the French missionary M. Coillard.

² Theophilus Hahn, *Truni-||Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*, p. 106.

³ J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p.

174; *id.*, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 282.

⁴ Callaway, *Religious Systems of the Amasulu*, p. 438, note 16.

⁵ O. Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete* (Berlin, 1891), p. 128.

⁶ Sir H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa* (London, 1897), p. 438; J. Buchanan, *The Shire Highlands*, p. 138.

women in North Africa give their male children a piece of a lion's heart to eat to make them fearless.¹ The flesh of an elephant is thought by the Ewe-speaking peoples of West Africa to make the eater strong.² When a serious disease has attacked a Zulu kraal, the medicine-man takes the bone of a very old dog, or the bone of an old cow, bull, or other very old animal, and administers it to the healthy as well as to the sick people, in order that they may live to be as old as the animal of whose bone they have partaken.³ So to restore the aged Aeson to youth, the witch Medea infused into his veins a decoction of the liver of the long-lived deer and the head of a crow that had outlived nine generations of men.⁴ In antiquity the flesh of deer and crows was eaten for other purposes than that of prolonging life. As deer were supposed not to suffer from fever, some women used to taste venison every morning, and it is said that in consequence they lived to a great age without ever being attacked by a fever; only the venison lost all its virtue if the animal had been killed by more blows than one.⁵ Again, ancient diviners sought to imbue themselves with the spirit of prophecy by swallowing vital portions of birds and beasts of omen; for example, they thought that by eating the hearts of crows or moles or hawks they took into their bodies, along with the flesh, the prophetic soul of the creature.⁶

Amongst the Dyaks of North-West Borneo young men and warriors may not eat venison, because it would make them as timid as deer; but the women and very old men are free to eat it.⁷ When the Kansas Indians were going to war, a feast used to be held in the chief's hut, and the

¹ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country*, p. 399.

² A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. 99.

³ Callaway, *Nursery Tales, Traditions, and Histories of the Zulus*, p. 175 note.

⁴ Ovid, *Metam.* vii. 271 sqq. As to the supposed longevity of deer and crows, see L. Stephani, in *Compte Rendu de la Commission Archéologique* (St. Petersburg), 1863, p. 140 sq., and my note on Pausanias, viii. 10. 10.

⁵ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 119.

⁶ Porphyry, *De Abstemientia*, ii. 48: *οὐ γὰρ ζῶν μαρτυρῶν ψυχὰς δέξασθαι βουλευμένοι εἰς ἑαυτοὺς, τὰ κυριώτατα μέρη καταπίνοντες, ὡς καρδίας κοράκων ἢ ἀσπαλάκων ἢ ἰεράκων, ἔχουσι παρῶσαν τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ χρηματίζουσιν ὡς θεοὶ καὶ εἰσιούσαν εἰς αὐτοὺς ἅμα τῇ ἐνθέσει τῇ τοῦ σώματος.* Pliny also mentions the custom of eating the heart of a mole, raw and palpitating, as a means of acquiring skill in divination (*Nat. Hist.* xxx. 19).

⁷ St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 186, 206.

principal dish was dog's flesh, because, said the Indians, the animal who is so brave that he will let himself be cut in pieces in defence of his master, must needs inspire valour.¹ Men of the Buro and Aru Islands, East Indies, eat the flesh of dogs in order to be bold and nimble in war.² Amongst the Papuans of the Port Moresby and Motumotu districts, New Guinea, young lads eat strong pig, wallaby, and large fish, in order to acquire the strength of the animal or fish.³ Some of the natives of Northern Australia fancy that by eating the flesh of the kangaroo or emu they are enabled to jump or run faster than before.⁴ The Miris of Northern India prize tiger's flesh as food for men; it gives them strength and courage. But "it is not suited for women; it would make them too strong-minded."⁵ In Corea the bones of tigers fetch a higher price than those of leopards as a means of inspiring courage. A Chinaman in Soul bought and ate a whole tiger to make himself brave and fierce.⁶ The special seat of courage, according to the Chinese, is the gall-bladder; so they sometimes procure the gall-bladders of tigers and bears, and eat the bile in the belief that it will give them courage.⁷ In Norse history, Ingiald, son of King Aunund, was timid in his youth, but after eating the heart of a wolf he became very bold; and Hialto gained strength and courage by eating the heart of a bear and drinking its blood.⁸ So the Similkameen Indians of British Columbia imagine that to eat the heart of a bear inspires courage.⁹ In Morocco lethargic patients are given ants to swallow; and to eat lion's flesh will make a coward brave.¹⁰ When a child is late in learning to speak,

¹ Bossu, *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes occidentales* (Paris, 1768), i. 112.

² Riedel, *De sluk- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selesbes en Papua*, pp. 10, 262.

³ James Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 166.

⁴ *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), p. 179.

⁵ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 33.

⁶ *Proceedings Royal Geogr. Society*, N.S., viii. (1886), p. 307.

⁷ J. Henderson, "The Medicine and Medical Practice of the Chinese," *Journ. North China Branch R. Asiatic Society*, New Series, i. (Shanghai, 1865), p. 35 sq. Compare Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours* (London, 1898), i. 79.

⁸ Müller on Saxo Grammaticus, vol. ii. p. 60.

⁹ Mrs. S. S. Allison, "Account of the Similkameen Indians of British Columbia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 313.

¹⁰ Leared, *Morocco and the Moors* (London, 1876), p. 281.

the Turks of Central Asia will give it the tongues of certain birds to eat.¹ A North American Indian thought that brandy must be a decoction of hearts and tongues, "because," said he, "after drinking it I fear nothing, and I talk wonderfully."² In Java there is a tiny earthworm which now and then utters a shrill sound like that of the alarum of a small clock. Hence when a public dancing girl has screamed herself hoarse in the exercise of her calling, the leader of the troop makes her eat some of these worms, in the belief that thus she will regain her voice and will, after swallowing them, be able to scream as shrilly as ever.³ The people of Darfur, in Central Africa, think that the liver is the seat of the soul, and that a man may enlarge his soul by eating the liver of an animal. "Whenever an animal is killed its liver is taken out and eaten, but the people are most careful not to touch it with their hands, as it is considered sacred; it is cut up in small pieces and eaten raw, the bits being conveyed to the mouth on the point of a knife, or the sharp point of a stick. Any one who may accidentally touch the liver is strictly forbidden to partake of it, which prohibition is regarded as a great misfortune for him." Women are not allowed to eat liver, because they have no soul.⁴

Again, the flesh and blood of men are commonly eaten and drunk to inspire bravery, wisdom, or other qualities for which the men themselves were remarkable, or which are supposed to have their special seat in the particular part eaten. Thus among the mountain tribes of South-Eastern Africa there are ceremonies by which the youths are formed into guilds or lodges, and among the rites of initiation there is one which is intended to infuse courage, intelligence, and other qualities into the novices. Whenever an enemy who has behaved with conspicuous bravery is killed, his liver, which is considered the seat of valour; his ears, which are supposed to be the seat of intelligence; the skin of his forehead, which is regarded as the seat of perseverance; his

¹ Vambery, *Das Türkenvolk* (Leipsic, 1885), p. 218.

² Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 8.

³ P. J. Veth, "De leer der Sig-

natuur," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vii. (1894), p. 140 sq.

⁴ Felkin, "Notes on the For tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, xiii. (1884-1886), p. 218.

testicles, which are held to be the seat of strength; and other members, which are viewed as the seat of other virtues, are cut from his body and baked to cinders. The ashes are carefully kept in the horn of a bull, and, during the ceremonies observed at circumcision, are mixed with other ingredients into a kind of paste, which is administered by the tribal priest to the youths. By this means the strength, valour, intelligence, and other virtues of the slain are believed to be imparted to the eaters.¹ When Basutos of the mountains have killed a very brave foe, they immediately cut out his heart and eat it, because this is supposed to give them his courage and strength in battle. At the close of the war the man who has slain such a foe is called before the chief and gets from the doctor a medicine which he chews with his food. The third day after this he must wash his body in running water, and at the expiry of ten days he may return to his wives and children.² So an Ovambo warrior in battle will tear out the heart of his slain foe in the belief that by eating it he can acquire the bravery of the dead man.³ A similar belief and practice prevail among some of the tribes of British Central Africa, notably among the Angoni. These tribes also mutilate the dead and reduce the severed parts to ashes. Afterwards the ashes are stirred into a broth or gruel, "which must be 'lapped' up with the hand and thrown into the mouth, but not eaten as ordinary food is taken, to give the soldiers courage, perseverance, fortitude, strategy, patience and wisdom."⁴ It is said that the Amazons of Dahomey still eat the hearts of foes remarkable for their bravery, in order that some of the intrepidity which animated them may be transfused into the eaters. In former days, if report may be trusted, the hearts of enemies who enjoyed a reputation for sagacity were also eaten, for the Ewe-speaking negro of these regions holds that the

¹ J. Macdonald, "Manners, customs, etc., of the South African tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 116; *id.*, *Light in Africa*, p. 212. Compare Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 257 sq.

² J. Macdonald, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xx. (1891), p. 138; *id.*, *Light in Africa*, p. 220.

³ H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 320.

⁴ J. Macdonald, "East Central African Customs," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxii. (1893), p. 111. Compare J. Buchanan, *The Shire Highlands*, p. 138; Sir H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 438.

heart is the seat of the intellect as well as of courage.¹ Among the Yoruba-speaking negroes of the Slave Coast the priests of Ogun, the war-god, usually take out the hearts of human victims, which are then dried, crumbled to powder, mixed with rum, and sold to aspirants after courage, who swallow the mixture in the belief that they thereby absorb the manly virtue of which the heart is supposed to be the seat.² Similarly Indians of the Orinoco region used to toast the hearts of their enemies, grind them to powder, and then drink the powder in a liquid in order to be brave and valiant the next time they went forth to fight.³ The Nauras Indians of New Granada ate the hearts of Spaniards when they had the opportunity, hoping thereby to make themselves as dauntless as the dreaded Castilian chivalry.⁴

But while the human heart is thus commonly eaten for the sake of imbuing the eater with the qualities of its original owner, it is not, as we have already seen, the only part of the body which is consumed for this purpose. The Australian Kamilaroi eat the liver as well as the heart of a brave man to get his courage.⁵ With the like intent the Chinese swallow the bile of notorious bandits who have been executed.⁶ The Italonos of the Philippine Islands drink the blood of their slain enemies, and eat part of the back of their heads and of their entrails raw to acquire their courage. For the same reason the Efugaos, another tribe of the Philippines, suck the brains of their foes.⁷ Among the Dieri tribe of Central Australia, when a man has been condemned and killed by a properly constituted party of executioners, the weapons with which the deed was done are washed in a small wooden vessel, and the bloody mixture is administered to all the slayers in a

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 99 sq.

² *Id.*, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 69.

³ A. Caulin, *Historia Corographica natural y evangelica dela Nueva Andalucia* (1779), p. 98.

⁴ Herrera, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, trans. by Stevens, vi. 187.

⁵ W. Ridley, *Kamilaroi*, p. 160.

⁶ J. Henderson, "The Medicine and Medical Practice of the Chinese," *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, New Series, i. (Shanghai, 1865), p. 35 sq.

⁷ Blumentritt, "Der Ahnencultus und die religiösen Anschauungen der Malaien des Philippinen-Archipels," *Mittheilungen der Wiener Geograph. Gesellschaft*, 1882, p. 154.

prescribed manner, while they lie down on their backs and the elders pour it into their mouths. This is believed to give them double strength, courage, and great nerve for any future enterprise.¹ Among the Kimbunda of Western Africa, when a new king succeeds to the throne, a brave prisoner of war is killed in order that the king and nobles may eat his flesh, and so acquire his strength and courage.² The notorious Zulu chief Matuana drank the gall of thirty chiefs, whose people he had destroyed, in the belief that it would make him strong.³ It is a Zulu fancy that by eating the centre of the forehead and the eyebrow of an enemy they acquire the power of looking steadfastly at a foe.⁴ In Tud or Warrior Island, Torres Straits, men would drink the sweat of renowned warriors, and eat the scrapings from their finger-nails which had become coated and sodden with human blood. This was done "to make strong and like stone; no afraid."⁵ In Nagir, another island of Torres Straits, in order to infuse courage into boys a warrior used to take the eye and tongue of a dead man (probably of a slain enemy), and after mincing them and mixing them with his urine he administered the compound to the boy, who received it with shut eyes and open mouth seated between the warrior's legs.⁶ Before every warlike expedition the people of Minahassa in Celebes used to take the locks of hair of a slain foe and dabble them in boiling water to extract the courage; this infusion of bravery was then drunk by the warriors.⁷ In New Zealand "the chief was an *atua* [god], but there were powerful and powerless gods; each naturally sought to make himself one of the former; the plan therefore adopted was to incorporate the spirits of others with their own; thus, when a warrior slew a chief he immediately gouged out his eyes and swallowed them, the *atua tonga*, or divinity, being supposed to reside

¹ S. Gason, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxiv. (1895), p. 172.

² Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika in den Jahren 1849-1857*, pp. 273-276.

³ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 216.

⁴ Callaway, *Nursery Tales, Traditions and Histories of the Zulus*, p. 163 note.

⁵ A. C. Haddon, "The Ethnography of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 414, cp. p. 312.

⁶ A. C. Haddon, *op. cit.* p. 420.

⁷ S. J. Hickson, *A Naturalist in North Celebes* (London, 1889), p. 216.

in that organ; thus he not only killed the body, but also possessed himself of the soul of his enemy, and consequently the more chiefs he slew the greater did his divinity become."¹ A peculiar form of communion with the dead is practised by the Gallas of Eastern Africa. They think that food from the house of a dead man, especially food that he liked, or that he cooked for himself, contains a portion of his life or soul. If at the funeral feast a man eats some of that food, he fancies that he has thereby absorbed some of the life or soul of the departed, a portion of his spirit, intelligence, or courage.²

Just as the savage thinks that he can swallow the moral and other virtues in the shape of food, so he fondly imagines that he can inoculate himself with them. Here in Europe we as yet inoculate only against disease; in Basutoland they have learned the art of inoculating not merely against disease but against moral evil and public calamity, against wild beasts and winter cold. For example, if an epidemic is raging, if public affairs go ill, or war threatens to break out, the chief, with paternal solicitude, seeks to guard his people against the evils that menace them by inoculating them with his own hand. Armed with a lancet, he makes a slight incision in the temples of each one, and rubs into the wound a pinch of magic powder which has been carefully compounded of the ashes of certain plants and animals. The plants and animals whose ashes compose this sovereign medicine are always symbolical; in other words, they are supposed to be imbued with the virtues which the chief desires to impart to his people. They consist, for example, of plants whose foliage withstands the rigours of winter; mimosas, whose thorns present an impenetrable barrier to all animals of the deer kind; the claws or a few hairs from the mane of a lion, the bravest of beasts; the tuft of hair round the root of the horns of a bull, which

¹ R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants* (London, 1870), p. 352. Compare *ibid.* p. 173; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 358; J. Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde sur la corvette Astrolabe*, ii. 547; E. Tregear, "The

Maoris of New Zealand," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 108.

² Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somali* (Berlin, 1896), p. 56.

is the emblem of strength and fecundity; the skin of a serpent; the feathers of a kite or a hawk.¹ So when the Barotsi wish to be swift of foot, to cripple the fleeing game, and to ensure an abundant catch, they scarify their arms and legs and rub into the wounds a powder made of the burnt bones of various beasts and birds.² Among some tribes of South-Eastern Africa the same magic powder which is made from various parts of slain foes, and is eaten by boys at circumcision,³ is used to inoculate the fighting-men in time of war. The medicine-man makes an incision in the forehead of each warrior, and puts the powder into the cut, thus infusing strength and courage for the battle.⁴ Among some Caffre tribes the powdered charcoal with which the warriors are thus inoculated in various parts of their bodies is procured by burning the flesh of a live ox with a certain kind of wood or roots, to which magic virtue is attributed.⁵ Again, the Zulus know how to inoculate themselves not merely with moral-virtue, but even with celestial power. For you must know that the Zulus have heaven-herds or sky-herds, who drive away clouds big with hail and lightning, just as herdsmen drive cattle before them. These heaven-herds are in sympathy with the heaven. For when the heaven is about to be darkened, and before the clouds appear or the thunder mutters, the heart of the heaven-herd feels it coming, for it is hot within him and he is excited by anger. When the sky begins to be overcast, he too grows dark like it; when it thunders, he frowns, that his face may be black as the scowl of the angry heaven. Now the way in which he thus becomes sympathetic with all the changing moods of the inconstant heaven is this: he eats the heaven and scarifies himself with it. And the way in which he eats the heaven and scarifies himself with it is as follows. When a bullock is struck by lightning, the wizard takes its flesh and puts it in a sherd and eats it while it is hot, mixed with

¹ Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 256 sq.

² E. Holub, *Sieben Jahre in Süd-Afrika*, ii. 361.

³ See above, p. 357 sq.

⁴ J. Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, etc., of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Insti-*

tute, xx. (1891), p. 133. The Barolong, a Bechuana tribe, observe a custom of this sort. See W. Joest, "Bei den Barolong," *Das Ausland*, 16th June 1884, p. 464.

⁵ Maclean, *Kafir Laws and Customs*, p. 82.

medicine ; and thus he eats the heaven by eating the flesh, which came from the beast, which was struck by the lightning, which came down from the heaven. And in like manner he scarifies himself with the heaven, for he makes cuts in his body and rubs in medicine mixed with the flesh of a bullock that was struck by lightning.¹ In some Caffre tribes, when an animal or a man has been struck by lightning, the priest comes straightway and vaccinates every person in the kraal, apparently as a sort of insurance against lightning. He sets to work by tying a number of charms round the neck of every man and woman in the village, in order that they may have power to dig the dead man's grave ; for in these tribes beasts and men alike that have been struck by lightning are always buried, and the flesh is never eaten. Next a sacrificial beast is killed and a fire kindled, in which certain magic woods or roots are burned to charcoal, and then ground to powder. The priest thereupon makes incisions in various parts of the bodies of each inmate of the kraal, and rubs a portion of the powdered charcoal into the cuts ; the rest of the powder he mixes with sour milk, and gives to them all to drink. From the time the lightning strikes the kraal until this ceremony has been performed, the people are obliged to abstain entirely from the use of milk. Their heads are then shaved. Should a house have been struck by lightning it must be abandoned, with everything in it. Until all these rites have been performed, none of the people may leave the kraal or have any intercourse whatever with others ; but when the ceremonies have been duly performed, the people are pronounced clean, and may again associate with their neighbours. However, for some months afterwards none of the live stock of the kraal and few other things belonging to it are allowed to pass into other hands, whether by way of sale or of gift.² Hence it would appear that all persons in a village which has been struck by lightning are supposed to be infected with a dangerous virus, which they might communicate to their neighbours ; and the vaccination is intended to disinfect them as well as to protect them against the recurrence of a like calamity. Young Carib warriors used to be inoculated

¹ Callaway, *Religious System of the Amaculu*, pp. 380-382.

² Maclean, *Kafir Laws and Customs*, p. 83 sq.

for the purpose of making them brave and hardy. Some time before the ceremony the lad who was to be operated on caught a bird of prey of a particular sort and kept it in captivity till the day appointed. When the time was come and friends had assembled to witness the ceremony, the father of the boy seized the bird by its legs and crushed its head by beating it on the head of his son, who dared not wince under the rain of blows that nearly stunned him. Next the father bruised and pounded the bird's flesh, and steeped it in water together with a certain spice; after which he scored and slashed his son's body in all directions, washed his wounds with the decoction, and gave him the bird's heart to eat, in order, as it was said, that he might be the braver for it.¹

It is not always deemed necessary either that the mystical substance should be swallowed by the communicant, or that he should receive it by the more painful process of scarification and inoculation. Sometimes it is thought enough merely to anoint him with it. Among some of the Australian blacks it used to be a common practice to kill a man, cut out his caul-fat, and rub themselves with it, in the belief that all the qualities, both physical and mental, which had distinguished the original owner of the fat, were thus communicated by its means to the person who greased himself with it.² The negroes of Southern Guinea regard the brain as the seat of wisdom, and think it a pity that, when a wise man dies, his brain and his wisdom should go to waste together. So they sever his head from his body and hang it up over a mass of chalk, which, as the head decays, receives the drippings of brain and wisdom. Any one who applies this precious mixture to his forehead is supposed to absorb thereby the intelligence of the dead.³ At a certain stage of the ceremonies by which, in the Andaman Islands, a boy is initiated into manhood, the chief takes the carcass of a boar and presses it heavily down on the shoulders, back, and limbs of the young man as he sits,

¹ Du Tertre, *Histoire generale des Isles de S. Christophe, de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique et autres dans l'Amerique* (Paris, 1654), p. 417 sq.; *id.*, *Histoire generale des Antilles*, ii. 377; Rochefort, *Histoire Naturelle et*

*Morale des Iles Antilles*² (Rotterdam, 1665), p. 556.

² Brough Smith, *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 313.

³ J. L. Wilson, *Western Africa*, p. 394.

silent and motionless, on the ground. This is done to make him brave and strong. Afterwards the animal is cut up, and its melted fat is poured over the novice, and rubbed into his body.¹ The Arabs of Eastern Africa believe that an unguent of lion's fat inspires a man with boldness, and makes the wild beasts flee in terror before him.² Most of the Baperis, or Malekootoos, a Bechuana tribe of South Africa, revere or, as they say, sing the porcupine, which seems to be their totem, as the sun is the totem of some members of the tribe, and a species of ape the totem of others. Those of them who have the porcupine for their totem swear by the animal, and lament if any one injures it. When a porcupine has been killed, they religiously gather up its bristles, spit on them, and rub their eyebrows with them, saying, "They have slain our brother, our master, one of ourselves, him whom we sing." They would fear to die if they ate of its flesh. Nevertheless they esteem it wholesome for an infant of the clan to rub into his joints certain portions of the paunch of the animal mixed with the sap of some plants to which they ascribe an occult virtue.³ So at the solemn ceremony which is observed by the Central Australian tribes for the purpose of multiplying kangaroos, men of the kangaroo totem not only eat a little kangaroo flesh as a sacrament, but also have their bodies anointed with kangaroo fat. Doubtless the intention alike of the eating and of the anointing is to impart to the man the qualities of his totem animal, and thus to enable him to perform the ceremonies for the multiplication of the breed.⁴

It is now easy to understand why a savage should desire

¹ E. H. Man, *Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands*, p. 66.

² Jerome Becker, *La Vie en Afrique* (Paris and Brussels, 1887), ii. 366.

³ Arbousset et Daumas, *Voyage d'Exploration au Nord-est de la Colonie du Cap de Bonne-Espérance* (Paris, 1842), p. 349 sq.

⁴ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 204 sq. Men of other totem clans also partake of their totems sacramentally at these *Intichiuma* ceremonies (Spencer and

Gillen, *op. cit.* pp. 202-206). As to the *Intichiuma* ceremonies, see above, p. 113 sqq. Another Central Australian mode of communicating qualities by external application is seen in the custom of beating boys on the calves of their legs with the leg-bone of an eagle-hawk; strength is supposed to pass thereby from the bone into the boy's leg. See Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 472; *Report on the Work of the Horn Scientific Expedition to Central Australia*, part iv. p. 180.

to partake of the flesh of an animal or man whom he regards as divine. By eating the body of the god he shares in the god's attributes and powers. And when the god is a corn-god, the corn is his proper body; when he is a vine-god, the juice of the grape is his blood; and so by eating the bread and drinking the wine the worshipper partakes of the real body and blood of his god. Thus the drinking of wine in the rites of a vine-god like Dionysus is not an act of revelry, it is a solemn sacrament.¹ Yet a time comes when reasonable men find it hard to understand how any one in his senses can suppose that by eating bread or drinking wine he consumes the body or blood of a deity. "When we call corn Ceres and wine Bacchus," says Cicero, "we use a common figure of speech; but do you imagine that anybody is so insane as to believe that the thing he feeds upon is a god?"²

§ 12. *Killing the Divine Animal*

It remains to show that hunting and pastoral tribes, as well as agricultural peoples, have been in the habit of killing their gods. Among the gods whom hunters and shepherds adore and kill are animals pure and simple, not animals regarded as embodiments of other supernatural beings. Our first example is drawn from the Indians of California, who living in a fertile country³ under a serene and temperate sky, nevertheless rank near the bottom of the savage scale. Where a stretch of iron-bound coast breaks the long line of level sands that receive the rollers of the Pacific, there stood in former days, not far from the brink of the great cliffs, the white mission-house of San Juan Capistrano. Among the monks who here exercised over a handful of wretched Indians the austere discipline of Catholic Spain, there was a certain Father Boscana who has bequeathed to us a precious record of the customs and superstitions of his

¹ On the custom of eating a god, see also a paper by Felix Liebrecht, "Der aufgegessene Gott," in *Zur Volkskunde*, pp. 436-439; and especially W. R. Smith, art. "Sacrifice," *Encycl. Britann.* 9th ed. vol. xxi. p. 137 sq. On wine as the blood of a god, see above,

vol. i. p. 358 sqq.

² Cicero, *De natura deorum*, iii. 16. 41.

³ This does not refer to the Californian peninsula, which is an arid and treeless wilderness of rock and sand.

savage flock. Thus he tells us that the Acagchemen tribe adored the great buzzard. Once a year, at a great festival called *Panes* or bird-feast, they carried one of these birds in procession to their chief temple, which seems to have been merely an unroofed enclosure of stakes. Here they killed the bird without losing a drop of its blood. The skin was removed entire and preserved with the feathers as a relic or for the purpose of making the festal garment or *paelt*. The carcass was buried in a hole in the temple, and the old women gathered round the grave weeping and moaning bitterly, while they threw various kinds of seeds or pieces of food on it, crying out, "Why did you run away? Would you not have been better with us? you would have made pinole as we do, and if you had not run away you would not have become a Panes," and so on. They said that the Panes was a woman who had run off to the mountains and there been changed into a bird by the god Chinigchinich. They believed that though they sacrificed the bird annually, she came to life again and returned to her home in the mountains. Moreover they thought that "as often as the bird was killed, it became multiplied; because every year all the different Capitanes celebrated the same feast of the Panes, and were firm in the opinion that the birds sacrificed were but one and the same female."¹

¹ Boscana, in Alfred Robinson's *Life in California* (New York, 1846), p. 291 sq.; Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, iii. 168. The mission station of San Juan Capistrano is described by Dana (*Two Years before the Mast*, chaps. xviii. and xxiv.). A favourable picture of the missions is drawn by Langsdorff (*Reise um die Welt*, ii. p. 134 sqq.), but the severe discipline of the Spanish monks is noticed by other travellers. See Kotzebue, *Reise um die Welt* (Weimar, 1830), ii. 42 sqq.; F. W. Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beering's Strait* (London, 1831), ii. chap. i. A poet has described the pastoral crook, the carnal arm, by which these good shepherds brought back their strayed lambs to the spiritual fold—

"Six horses sprang across the level ground
As six dragoons in open order dashed;
Above their heads the lassos circled round,
In every eye a pious fervour flashed;
They charged the camp, and in one moment more
They lassoed six and reconverted four."
(Bret Harte, *Friar Pedro's Ride*.)
In the verses inscribed *The Angelus*, heard at the Mission Dolores, 1868, and beginning
"Bells of the Past, whose long-forgotten music
Still fills the wide expanse,"
the same poet shows that he is not

The unity in multiplicity thus postulated by the Californians is very noticeable and helps to explain their motive for killing the divine bird. The notion of the life of a species as distinct from that of an individual, easy and obvious as it seems to us, appears to be one which the Californian savage cannot grasp. He is unable to conceive the life of the species otherwise than as an individual life, and therefore as exposed to the same dangers and calamities which menace and finally destroy the life of the individual. Apparently he thinks that a species left to itself will grow old and die like an individual, and that therefore some step must be taken to save from extinction the particular species which he regards as divine. The only means he can think of to avert the catastrophe is to kill a member of the species in whose veins the tide of life is still running strong, and has not yet stagnated among the fens of old age. The life thus diverted from one channel will flow, he fancies, more freshly and freely in a new one; in other words, the slain animal will revive and enter on a new term of life with all the spring and energy of youth. To us this reasoning is transparently absurd, but so too is the custom. If a better explanation, that is, one more consonant with the facts and with the principles of savage thought, can be given of the custom, I will willingly withdraw the one here proposed. A similar confusion, it may be noted, between the individual life and the life of the species was made by the Samoans. Each family had for its god a particular species of animal; yet the death of one of these animals, for example an owl, was not the death of the god, "he was supposed to be yet alive, and incarnate in all the owls in existence."¹

The rude Californian rite which we have just considered has a close parallel in the religion of ancient Egypt. The Thebans and all other Egyptians who worshipped the Theban god Ammon held rams to be sacred, and would not sacrifice them. But once a year at the festival of Ammon they killed a ram, skinned it, and clothed the image of the god in the skin. Then they mourned over the ram and buried it in a

insensible to the poetical side of those old Spanish missions, which have long passed away.

¹ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 21, cp. pp. 26, 61.

sacred tomb. The custom was explained by a story that Zeus had once exhibited himself to Hercules clad in the fleece and wearing the head of a ram.¹ Of course the ram in this case was simply the beast-god of Thebes, as the wolf was the beast-god of Lycopolis, and the goat was the beast-god of Mendes. In other words, the ram was Ammon himself. On the monuments, it is true, Ammon appears in semi-human form with the body of a man and the head of a ram.² But this only shows that he was in the usual chrysalis state through which beast-gods regularly pass before they emerge as full-fledged anthropomorphic gods. The ram, therefore, was killed, not as a sacrifice to Ammon, but as the god himself, whose identity with the beast is plainly shown by the custom of clothing his image in the skin of the slain ram. The reason for thus killing the ram-god annually may have been that which I have assigned for the general custom of killing the god and for the special Californian custom of killing the divine buzzard. As applied to Egypt, this explanation is supported by the analogy of the bull-god Apis, who was not suffered to outlive a certain term of years.³ The intention of thus putting a limit to the life of the god was, as I have argued, to secure him from the weakness and frailty of age. The same reasoning would explain the custom—probably an older one—of putting the beast-god to death annually, as was done with the ram of Thebes.

One point in the Theban ritual—the application of the skin to the image of the god—deserves special attention. If the god was at first the living ram, his representation by an image must have originated later. But how did it originate? The answer to this question is perhaps furnished by the practice of preserving the skin of the animal which is slain as divine. The Californians, as we have seen, preserved the skin of the buzzard; and the skin of the goat, which is killed on the harvest-field as a representative of the corn-spirit, is kept for various superstitious purposes.⁴ The skin in fact

¹ Herodotus, ii. 42. The custom has been already referred to above, p. 315.

² Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, i. § 58. Cp. Wilkinson, *Manners*

and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, iii. 1 sqq. (ed. 1878).

³ Above, p. 313.

⁴ Above, pp. 274 sq., 277.

was kept as a token or memorial of the god, or rather as containing in it a part of the divine life, and it had only to be stuffed or stretched upon a frame to become a regular image of him. At first an image of this kind would be renewed annually,¹ the new image being provided by the skin of the slain animal. But from annual images to permanent images the transition is easy. We have seen that the older custom of cutting a new May-tree every year was superseded by the practice of maintaining a permanent May-pole, which was, however, annually decked with fresh leaves and flowers, and even surmounted each year by a fresh young tree.² Similarly when the stuffed skin, as a representative of the god, was replaced by a permanent image of him in wood, stone, or metal, the permanent image was annually clad in the fresh skin of the slain animal. When this stage had been reached, the custom of killing the ram came naturally to be interpreted as a sacrifice offered to the image, and was explained by a story like that of Ammon and Hercules.

West Africa furnishes another example of the annual killing of a sacred animal and the preservation of its skin. The negroes of Issapoo, in the island of Fernando Po, regard the cobra-capella as their guardian deity, who can do them good or ill, bestow riches or inflict disease and death. The skin of one of these reptiles is hung tail downwards from a branch of the highest tree in the public square, and the placing of it on the tree is an annual ceremony. As soon as the ceremony is over, all children born within the past year are carried out and their hands made to touch the tail of the serpent's skin.³ The latter custom is clearly a way of placing the infants under the protection of the tribal god. Similarly in Senegambia a python is expected to visit every

¹ The Italmens of Kamtschatka, at the close of the fishing season, used to make the figure of a wolf out of grass. This figure they carefully kept the whole year, believing that it wedded with their maidens and prevented them from giving birth to twins; for twins were esteemed a great misfortune. See Steller, *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, p. 327 sq. According to Hartknoch (*Dissertat. histor. de*

variis rebus Prussiciis, p. 163; *Alt-preussen*, p. 161) the image of the old Prussian god Curcho was annually renewed. But see Mannhardt, *Die Vorurtheile*, p. 27.

² Above, vol. i. p. 204 sq.

³ T. J. Hutchinson, *Impressions of Western Africa* (London, 1858), p. 196 sq. The writer does not expressly state that a serpent is killed annually, but his statement implies it.

child of the Python clan within eight days after birth;¹ and the Psylli, a Snake clan of ancient Africa, used to expose their infants to snakes in the belief that the snakes would not harm true-born children of the clan.²

In the Californian, Egyptian, and Fernando Po customs the animal slain may perhaps have been at some time or other a totem, but this is very doubtful.³ At all events, in all three cases the worship of the animal seems to have no relation to agriculture, and may therefore be presumed to date from the hunting or pastoral stage of society. The same may be said of the following custom, though the people who practise it—the Zuni Indians of New Mexico—are now settled in walled villages or towns of a peculiar type, and practise agriculture and the arts of pottery and weaving. But the Zuni custom is marked by certain features which appear to place it in a somewhat different category from the preceding cases. It may be well therefore to describe it at full length in the words of an eye-witness.

"With midsummer the heat became intense. My brother [*i.e.* adopted Indian brother] and I sat, day after day, in the cool under-rooms of our house,—the latter [*sic*] busy with his quaint forge and crude appliances, working Mexican coins over into bangles, girdles, ear-rings, buttons, and what not for savage ornament." "One day as I sat watching him, a procession of fifty men went hastily down the hill, and off westward over the plain. They were solemnly led by a painted and shell-bedecked priest, and followed by the torch-bearing Shu-lu-wit-si, or God of Fire. After they had vanished, I asked old brother what it all meant.

¹ *Revue d'Ethnographie*, iii. 397.

² Varro in Priscian, x. 32, vol. i. p. 524, ed. Keil; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 14. Pliny's statement is to be corrected by Varro's.

³ When I wrote this book originally I said that in these three cases "the animal slain probably is, or once was, a totem." But this seems to me less probable now than it did then. In regard to the Californian custom in particular, there appears to be no good evidence that within the area now occupied by the United States totemism was practised by any tribes to the west of the

Rocky Mountains. See H. Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, p. 199; George Gibbs, in *Contributions to North American Ethnology*, i. 184; S. Powers, *Tribes of California*, p. 5; A. S. Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of South-western Oregon*, vol. i. p. cvi. "California and Oregon seem never to have had any gentes or phratries" (A. S. Gatschet in a letter to me, dated November 5th, 1888). Beyond the very doubtful case cited in the text, I know of no evidence that totemism exists in Fernando Po.

" 'They are going,' said he, 'to the city of the Ka-ka and the home of our others.'

"Four days after, toward sunset, costumed and masked in the beautiful paraphernalia of the Ka-k'ok-shi, or 'Good Dance,' they returned in file up the same pathway, each bearing in his arms a basket filled with living, squirming turtles, which he regarded and carried as tenderly as a mother would her infant. Some of the wretched reptiles were carefully wrapped in soft blankets, their heads and forefeet protruding,—and, mounted on the backs of the plume-bedecked pilgrims, made ludicrous but solemn caricatures of little children in the same position. While I was at supper upstairs that evening, the governor's brother-in-law came in. He was welcomed by the family as if a messenger from heaven. He bore in his tremulous fingers one of the much abused and rebellious turtles. Paint still adhered to his hands and bare feet, which led me to infer that he had formed one of the sacred embassy.

" 'So you went to Ka-thlu-el-lon, did you?' I asked.

" 'E'e,' replied the weary man, in a voice husky with long chanting, as he sank, almost exhausted, on a roll of skins which had been placed for him, and tenderly laid the turtle on the floor. No sooner did the creature find itself at liberty than it made off as fast as its lame legs would take it. Of one accord the family forsook dish, spoon, and drinking-cup, and grabbing from a sacred meal-bowl whole handfuls of the contents, hurriedly followed the turtle about the room, into dark corners, around water-jars, behind the grinding-troughs, and out into the middle of the floor again, praying and scattering meal on its back as they went. At last, strange to say, it approached the foot-sore man who had brought it.

" 'Ha!' he exclaimed, with emotion; 'see, it comes to me again; ah, what great favours the fathers of all grant me this day,' and, passing his hand gently over the sprawling animal, he inhaled from his palm deeply and long, at the same time invoking the favour of the gods. Then he leaned his chin upon his hand, and with large wistful eyes regarded his ugly captive as it sprawled about, blinking its meal-bedimmed eyes, and clawing the smooth floor in memory

of its native element. At this juncture I ventured a question :

" ' Why do you not let him go, or give him some water ? ' "

" Slowly the man turned his eyes toward me, an odd mixture of pain, indignation, and pity on his face, while the worshipful family stared at me with holy horror.

" ' Poor younger brother ! ' he said at last, ' know you not how precious it is ? It die ? It will *not* die ; I tell you, it cannot die. ' "

" ' But it will die if you don't feed it and give it water. ' "

" ' I tell you it *cannot* die ; it will only change houses to-morrow, and go back to the home of its brothers. Ah, well ! How should *you* know ? ' he mused. Turning to the blinded turtle again : ' Ah ! my poor dear lost child or parent, my sister or brother to have been ! Who knows which ? Maybe my own great-grandfather or mother ! ' And with this he fell to weeping most pathetically, and, tremulous with sobs, which were echoed by the women and children, he buried his face in his hands. Filled with sympathy for his grief, however mistaken, I raised the turtle to my lips and kissed its cold shell ; then depositing it on the floor, hastily left the grief-stricken family to their sorrows. Next day, with prayers and tender beseechings, plumes, and offerings, the poor turtle was killed, and its flesh and bones were removed and deposited in the little river, that it might ' return once more to eternal life among its comrades in the dark waters of the lake of the dead. ' The shell, carefully scraped and dried, was made into a dance-rattle, and, covered by a piece of buckskin, it still hangs from the smoke-stained rafters of my brother's house. Once a Navajo tried to buy it for a ladle ; loaded with indignant reproaches, he was turned out of the house. Were any one to venture the suggestion that the turtle no longer lived, his remark would cause a flood of tears, and he would be reminded that it had only ' changed houses and gone to live for ever in the home of " our lost others. " ' " ¹

In this custom we find expressed in the clearest way a belief in the transmigration of human souls into the bodies

¹ Frank H. Cushing, " My Adventures in Zuñi, " *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, May 1883, p. 45 sq.

of turtles.¹ The theory of transmigration is held by the Moqui Indians, who belong to the same race as the Zunis. The Moquis are divided into totem clans—the Bear clan, Deer clan, Wolf clan, Hare clan, and so on; they believe that the ancestors of the clans were bears, deer, wolves, hares, and so forth; and that at death the members of each clan become bears, deer, and so on according to the particular clan to which they belonged.² The Zuni are also divided into clans, the totems of which agree closely with those of the Moquis, and one of their totems is the turtle.³ Thus their belief in transmigration into the turtle is probably one of the regular articles of their totem faith.⁴ What then is the meaning of killing a turtle in which the soul of a kinsman is believed to be present? Apparently the object is to keep up a communication with the other world in which the souls of the departed are believed to be assembled in the form of turtles. It is a common belief that the spirits of the dead return occasionally to their old homes; and accordingly the unseen visitors are welcomed and feasted by the living, and then sent upon their way.⁵ In the Zuni ceremony the dead are fetched home in the form of turtles, and the killing of the turtles is the way of sending back the souls to the spirit-land. Thus the general explanation given above of the custom of killing a god seems inapplicable to the Zuni custom, the true meaning of which is somewhat obscure.

Doubt also hangs at first sight over the meaning of the bear-sacrifice offered by the Ainos, a primitive people who

¹ Mr. Cushing, indeed, while he admits that the ancestors of the Zuni may have believed in transmigration, says, "Their belief, to-day, however, relative to the future life is spiritualistic." But the expressions in the text seem to leave no room for doubting that the transmigration into turtles is a living article of Zuni faith.

² Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, iv. 86. On the totem clans of the Moquis, see J. G. Bourke, *Snake-Dance of the Moquis of Arizona*, pp. 116 sq., 334 sqq.

³ For this information I am indebted to the kindness of the late Captain J. G. Bourke, 3rd Cavalry, U.S. Army, author of the work mentioned in the

preceding note. In his letter Captain Bourke gave a list of fourteen totem clans of Zuni, which he received on the 20th of May 1881 from Pedro Dino (?), Governor of Zuni.

⁴ It should be observed, however, that Mr. Cushing omits to say whether or not the persons who performed the ceremony described by him had the turtle for their totem. If they had not, the ceremony need not have had anything to do with totemism.

⁵ The old Prussian and Japanese customs are typical. For the former, see above, vol. i. p. 351. For the latter, see below, vol. iii. p. 86 sq. A general account of such customs must be reserved for another work.

are found in the Japanese islands of Yesso and Saghalien, and also in the southern of the Kurile Islands. It is not quite easy to make out the attitude of the Ainos towards the bear. On the one hand they give it the name of *kamui* or "god"; but as they apply the same word to strangers,¹ it probably means no more than a being supposed to be endowed with superhuman, or at all events extraordinary, powers.² Again, it is said "the bear is their chief divinity";³ "in the religion of the Ainos the bear plays a chief part";⁴ "amongst the animals it is especially the bear which receives an idolatrous veneration";⁵ "they worship it after their fashion"; "there is no doubt that this wild beast inspires more of the feeling which prompts worship than the inanimate forces of nature, and the Ainos may be distinguished as bear-worshippers."⁶ Yet, on the other hand, they kill the bear whenever they can;⁷ "the men spend the autumn, winter, and spring in hunting deer and bears. Part of their tribute or taxes is paid in skins, and they subsist on the dried meat";⁸ bear's flesh is indeed one of their staple foods; they eat it both fresh and salted;⁹ and the skins of bears furnish them with clothing.¹⁰ In fact, the "worship" of which writers on this subject speak appears to be paid

¹ B. Scheube, "Der Baerencultus und die Baerenfeste der Ainos," *Mittheilungen der deutschen Gesellschaft b. S. und S. Ostasiens* (Yokama), Heft xxii. p. 45.

² We are told that the Aino has gods for almost every conceivable object, and that the word *kamui* "has various shades of meaning, which vary if used before or after another word, and according to the object to which it is applied." "When the term *kamui* is applied to good objects, it expresses the quality of usefulness, beneficence, or of being exalted or divine. When applied to supposed evil gods, it indicates that which is most to be feared and dreaded. When applied to devils, reptiles, and evil diseases, it signifies what is most hateful, abominable, and repulsive. When applied as a prefix to animals, fish or fowl, it represents the greatest or fiercest, or the most useful for food or clothing. When applied to persons, it is sometimes expressive of goodness,

but more often is a mere title of respect and reverence." See J. Batchelor, *The Aino of Japan*, pp. 245-251. Thus the Aino *kamui* appears to mean nearly the same as the Dacotan *wakan*, as to which see vol. i. p. 343, note 2.

³ W. Martin Wood, "The Hairy Men of Yesso," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., iv. (1866), p. 36.

⁴ Rein, *Japan*, i. 446.

⁵ H. von Siebold, *Ethnologische Studien über die Aino auf der Insel Yesso* (Berlin, 1881), p. 26.

⁶ Miss Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (new ed. 1885), p. 275.

⁷ *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. l.c.*

⁸ Miss Bird, *op. cit.* p. 269.

⁹ Scheube, *Die Ainos*, p. 4 (reprinted from *Mittheilungen d. deutsch. Gesell. b. S. und S. Ostasiens*, Yokama).

¹⁰ Scheube, "Baerencultus," etc., p. 45; Joest, in *Verhandlungen d. Berliner Gesell. f. Anthropologie*, 1882, p. 188.

only to the dead animal. Thus, although they kill a bear whenever they can, "in the process of dissecting the carcass they endeavour to conciliate the deity, whose representative they have slain, by making elaborate obeisances and deprecatory salutations";¹ "when a bear has been killed the Ainu sit down and admire it, and make their salaams to it";² "when a bear is trapped or wounded by an arrow, the hunters go through an apologetic or propitiatory ceremony."³ The skulls of slain bears receive a place of honour in their huts, or are set up on sacred posts outside the huts, and are treated with much respect; libations of *sake*, an intoxicating liquor, are offered to them.⁴ The skulls of foxes are also fastened to the sacred posts outside the huts; they are regarded as charms against evil spirits, and are consulted as oracles.⁵ Yet it is expressly said, "The live fox is revered just as little as the bear; rather they avoid it as much as possible, considering it a wily animal."⁶ The bear cannot, therefore, be described as a sacred animal of the Ainos, and it certainly is not a totem; for they do not call themselves bears, they appear to have no legend of their descent from a bear,⁷ and they kill and eat the animal freely.

But it is the bear-festival of the Ainos which concerns us here. Towards the end of winter a young bear is caught and brought into the village. At first he is suckled by an Aino woman; afterwards he is fed on fish. When he grows so strong that he threatens to break out of the wooden cage in which he is confined, the feast is held. But "it is a peculiarly striking fact that the young bear is not kept merely to furnish a good meal; rather he is regarded and honoured as a fetish, or even as a sort of higher being."⁸

¹ *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. I.c.*

² J. Batchelor, *The Ainu of Japan* (London, 1892), p. 162.

³ Miss Bird, *op. cit.* p. 277.

⁴ Scheube, *Die Ainos*, p. 15; Siebold, *op. cit.* p. 26; *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. I.c.*; Rein, *Japan*, i. 447; Von Brandt, "The Ainos and Japanese," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* iii. (1874), p. 134; Miss Bird, *op. cit.* pp. 275, 276.

⁵ Scheube, *Die Ainos*, pp. 15, 16; *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* iii. (1874), p. 134.

⁶ Scheube, *Die Ainos*, p. 16.

⁷ Reclus (*Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*, vii. 755) mentions a (Japanese?) legend which attributes the hairiness of the Ainos to the suckling of their first ancestor by a bear. But in the absence of other evidence this is no proof of totemism.

⁸ Rein, *Japan*, i. 447. Mr. Batchelor denies that the bear-cubs are suckled by the women. He says: "During five years' sojourn amongst, and almost daily intercourse with, them—living with them in their own huts—I have

The festival is generally celebrated in September or October. Before it takes place the Ainos apologise to their gods, alleging that they have treated the bear kindly as long as they could, now they can feed him no longer, and are obliged to kill him. A man who gives a bear-feast invites his relations and friends; in a small village nearly the whole community takes part in the feast. One of these festivals has been described by an eye-witness, Dr. Scheube.¹ On entering the hut he found about thirty Ainos present, men, women, and children, all dressed in their best. The master of the house first offered a libation on the fireplace to the god of the fire, and the guests followed his example. Then a libation was offered to the house-god in his sacred corner of the hut. Meanwhile the housewife, who had nursed the bear, sat by herself, silent and sad, bursting now and then into tears. Her grief was obviously unaffected, and it deepened as the festival went on. Next, the master of the house and some of the guests went out of the hut and offered libations before the bear's cage. A few drops were presented to the bear in a saucer, which he at once upset. Then the women and girls danced round the cage, their faces turned towards it, their knees slightly bent, rising and hopping on their toes. As they danced they clapped their hands and sang a monotonous song. The housewife and a few old women, who might have nursed many bears, danced tearfully, stretching out their arms to the bear, and addressing it in terms of endearment. The young folks were less affected; they laughed as well as sang. Disturbed by the noise, the bear began to rush about his cage and howl lamentably. Next libations were offered at the *inabos* or sacred wands which stand outside of an Aino hut. These wands are about a couple of feet high, and are whittled at the top into spiral shavings.² Five new wands with bamboo

never once witnessed anything of the sort, nor can I find a single Aino man or woman who has seen it done" (*The Aino of Japan*, p. 173). But as a Christian missionary Mr. Batchelor was perhaps not likely to hear of such a custom, if it existed.

¹ "Der Baerencultus," etc.; for the full title of the work see above,

p. 375, note 1.

² Scheube, "Baerencultus," etc., p. 46; *id.*, *Die Ainos*, p. 15; Miss Bird, *op. cit.* p. 273 sq. These *inabos* or *inao* are not gods but sacred offerings to gods; they are made on almost every occasion when prayer is offered. See J. Batchelor, *The Aino of Japan*, pp. 86-98.

leaves attached to them had been set up for the festival. This is regularly done when a bear is killed; the leaves mean that the animal may come to life again. Then the bear was let out of his cage, a rope was thrown round his neck, and he was led about in the neighbourhood of the hut. While this was being done the men, headed by a chief, shot at the beast with arrows tipped with wooden buttons. Dr. Scheube had to do so also. Then the bear was taken before the sacred wands, a stick was put in his mouth, nine men knelt on him and pressed his neck against a beam. In five minutes the animal had expired without uttering a sound. Meantime the women and girls had taken post behind the men, where they danced, lamenting, and beating the men who were killing the bear. The bear's carcass was next placed on a mat before the sacred wands; and a sword and quiver, taken from the wands, were hung round the beast's neck. Being a she-bear, it was also adorned with a necklace and ear-rings. Then food and drink were offered to it, in the shape of millet-broth, millet-cakes, and a pot of *sake*. The men now sat down on mats before the dead bear, offered libations to it, and drank deep. Meanwhile the women and girls had laid aside all marks of sorrow, and danced merrily, none more merrily than the old women. When the mirth was at its height two young Ainos, who had let the bear out of his cage, mounted the roof of the hut and threw cakes of millet among the company, who all scrambled for them without distinction of age or sex. The bear was next skinned and disembowelled, and the trunk severed from the head, to which the skin was left hanging. The blood, caught in cups, was eagerly swallowed by the men. None of the women or children appeared to drink the blood, though custom did not forbid them to do so. The liver was cut in small pieces and eaten raw, with salt, the women and children getting their share. The flesh and the rest of the vitals were taken into the house to be kept till the next day but one, and then to be divided among the persons who had been present at the feast. Blood and liver were offered to Dr. Scheube. While the bear was being disembowelled, the women and girls danced the same dance which they had danced at the beginning—not, however,

round the cage, but in front of the sacred wands. At this dance the old women, who had been merry a moment before, again shed tears freely. After the brain had been extracted from the bear's head and swallowed with salt, the skull, detached from the skin, was hung on a pole beside the sacred wands. The stick with which the bear had been gagged was also fastened to the pole, and so were the sword and quiver which had been hung on the carcass. The latter were removed in about an hour, but the rest remained standing. The whole company, men and women, danced noisily before the pole; and another drinking-bout, in which the women joined, closed the festival.

The mode of killing the bear is described somewhat differently by Miss Bird, who, however, did not witness the ceremony. She says: "Yells and shouts are used to excite the bear; and when he becomes much agitated a chief shoots him with an arrow, inflicting a slight wound which maddens him, on which the bars of the cage are raised, and he springs forth, very furious. At this stage the Ainos run upon him with various weapons, each one striving to inflict a wound, as it brings good luck to draw his blood. As soon as he falls down exhausted his head is cut off, and the weapons with which he has been wounded are offered to it, and he is asked to avenge himself upon them." At Usu, on Volcano Bay, when the bear is being killed, the Ainos shout, "We kill you, O bear! come back soon into an Aino."¹ A very respectable authority, Dr. Siebold, states that the bear's own heart is frequently offered to the dead animal, in order to assure him that he is still in life.² This, however, is denied by Dr. Scheube, who says the heart is eaten.³ The custom may be observed in some places, though not in others.

¹ Miss Bird, *op. cit.* p. 276 *sq.* Miss Bird's information must be received with caution, as there are grounds for believing that her informant deceived her. Mr. Batchelor, a much better authority, agrees with Dr. Scheube in saying that after the bear has been maddened by being shot at with blunt arrows he is choked to death by men who squeeze his neck between two poles. See J. Batchelor, *The Ainu of Japan*, p. 176

sq. Before the bear is let out of his cage a man tells the beast that it is about to be sent to its forefathers, craves pardon for what is about to be done, hopes that the animal will not be angry, and consoles it by saying that plenty of wine and of whittled sticks will be sent with it (*op. cit.* p. 175 *sq.*).

² Siebold, *Ethnolog. Studien über die Aino*, p. 26.

³ "Baerencultus," etc., p. 50, note.

Perhaps the first published account of the bear-feast of the Ainos is one which was given to the world by a Japanese writer in 1652. It has been translated into French and runs thus: "When they find a young bear, they bring it home, and the wife suckles it. When it is grown they feed it with fish and fowl and kill it in winter for the sake of the liver, which they esteem an antidote to poison, the worms, colic, and disorders of the stomach. It is of a very bitter taste, and is good for nothing if the bear has been killed in summer. This butchery begins in the first Japanese month. For this purpose they put the animal's head between two long poles, which are squeezed together by fifty or sixty people, both men and women. When the bear is dead they eat his flesh, keep the liver as a medicine, and sell the skin, which is black and commonly six feet long, but the longest measure twelve feet. As soon as he is skinned, the persons who nourished the beast begin to bewail him; afterwards they make little cakes to regale those who helped them."¹

The Gilyaks, a Tunguzian people of Eastern Siberia,² hold a bear-festival of the same sort. "The bear is the object of the most refined solicitude of an entire village and plays the chief part in their religious ceremonies."³ An old she-bear is shot and her cub is reared, but not suckled, in the village. When the bear is big enough he is taken from his cage and dragged through the village. But first they lead him to the bank of the river, for this is believed to ensure abundance of fish to each family. He is then taken into every house in the village, where fish, brandy, and so forth are offered to him. Some people prostrate themselves before the beast. His entrance into a house is supposed to bring a blessing; and if he snuffs at the food offered to him, this also is a blessing. Nevertheless they tease and worry, poke and tickle the animal continually, so that he is

¹ "Ieso-Ki, ou description de l'île d'Iesso, avec une notice sur la révolte de Samsay-in, composée par l'interprète Kannemon," printed in Malte-Brun's *Annales des Voyages*, xxiv. (Paris, 1814), p. 154.

² They inhabit the banks of the

lower Amoor and the north of Saghalien. See E. G. Ravenstein, *The Russians on the Amur*, p. 389.

³ "Notes on the River Amur and the adjacent districts," translated from the Russian, *Journal of the Royal Geogr. Society*, xxviii. (1858), p. 396.

surly and snappish.¹ After being thus taken to every house, he is tied to a peg and shot dead with arrows. His head is then cut off, decked with shavings, and placed on the table where the feast is set out. Here they beg pardon of the beast and worship him. Then his flesh is roasted and eaten in special vessels of wood finely carved. They do not eat the flesh raw nor drink the blood, as the Ainos do. The brain and entrails are eaten last; and the skull, still decked with shavings, is placed on a tree near the house. Then the people sing and both sexes dance in ranks, as bears.²

One of these bear-festivals was witnessed by the Russian traveller L. von Schrenck and his companions at the Gilyak village of Tebach in January 1856. From his detailed report of the ceremony we may gather some particulars which are not noticed in the briefer accounts which I have just summarised. The bear, he tells us, plays a great part in the life of all the peoples inhabiting the region of the Amoor and Siberia as far as Kamtchatka, but among none of them is his importance greater than among the Gilyaks. The immense size which the animal attains in the valley of the Amoor, his ferocity whetted by hunger, and the frequency of his appearance all combine to make him the most dreaded beast of prey in the country. No wonder, therefore, that the fancy of the Gilyaks is busied with him and surrounds him, both in life and in death, with a sort of halo of superstitious fear. Thus, for example, it is thought that if a Gilyak falls in combat with a bear, his soul transmigrates

¹ Compare the custom of pinching the frog before cutting off his head, above, vol. i. p. 219. In Japan sorceresses bury a dog in the earth, tease him, then cut off his head and put it in a box to be used in magic. See Bastian, *Die Culturländer des alten Amerika*, i. 475 note, who adds "*wie im ostindischen Archipelago die Schutzseele gereist wird.*" He probably refers to the Batta Panghulu-balang. See Rosenberg, *Der Malayische Archipel*, p. 59 sq.; W. Ködding, "Die Batakischen Götter," *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, xii. (1885), p. 478 sq.; Neumann, "Het Pane-en Bila-stroomgebied

op het eiland Sumatra," in *Tijdschrift van het Nederl. Aardrijks. Genootsch.* Tweede Serie, dl. iii. (1886), Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 2, p. 306; Van Dijk, in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxviii. (1895), p. 307 sq.

² W. Joest, in Scheube, *Die Ainos*, p. 17; *Revue d'Ethnographie*, ii. 307 sq. (on the authority of Mr. Seeland); *Internationales Archiv für Ethnologie*, i. 102 (on the authority of Captain Jacobsen). What exactly is meant by "dancing as bears" ("*tanzen beide Geschlechter Reigentänze, wie Bären*," Joest, *l.c.*) does not appear.

into the body of the beast. Nevertheless his flesh has an irresistible attraction for the Gilyak palate, especially when the animal has been kept in captivity for some time and fattened on fish, which gives the flesh, in the opinion of the Gilyaks, a peculiarly delicious flavour. But in order to enjoy this dainty with impunity they deem it needful to perform a long series of ceremonies, of which the intention is to delude the living bear by a show of respect, and to appease the anger of the dead animal by the homage paid to his departed spirit. The marks of respect begin as soon as the beast is captured. He is brought home in triumph and kept in a cage, where all the villagers take it in turns to feed him. For although he may have been captured or purchased by one man, he belongs in a manner to the whole village. His flesh will furnish a common feast, and hence all must contribute to support him in his life. His diet consists exclusively of raw or dried fish, water, and a sort of porridge compounded of powdered fish-skins, train-oil, and whortle-berries. The length of time he is kept in captivity depends on his age. Old bears are kept only a few months; cubs are kept till they are full-grown. A thick layer of fat on the captive bear gives the signal for the festival, which is always held in winter, generally in December but sometimes in January or February. At the festival witnessed by the Russian travellers, which lasted a good many days, three bears were killed and eaten. More than once the animals were led about in procession and compelled to enter every house in the village, where they were fed as a mark of honour, and to show that they were welcome guests. But before the beasts set out on this round of visits, the Gilyaks played at skipping-rope in presence, and perhaps, as L. von Schrenck inclined to believe, in honour of the animals. The night before they were killed, the three bears were led by moonlight a long way on the ice of the frozen river. That night no one in the village might sleep. Next day, after the animals had been again led down the steep bank to the river, and conducted thrice round the hole in the ice from which the women of the village drew their water, they were taken to an appointed place not far from the village, and shot to death

with arrows. The place of sacrifice or execution was marked as holy by being surrounded with whittled sticks, from the tops of which shavings hung in curls. Such sticks are with the Gilyaks, as with the Ainos, the regular symbols that accompany all religious ceremonies. Before the bears received the fatal shafts from two young men chosen for the purpose, the boys were allowed to discharge their small but not always harmless arrows at the beasts. As soon as the carcasses had been cut up, the skins with the heads attached to them were set up in a wooden cage in such a way as to make it appear that the animals had entered the cage and were looking out of it. The blood which flowed from the bears on the spot where they were killed was immediately covered up with snow, to prevent any one from accidentally treading on it, a thing which was strictly tabooed.

When the house has been arranged and decorated for their reception, the skins of the bears, with their heads attached to them, are brought into it, not however by the door, but through a window, and then hung on a sort of scaffold opposite the hearth on which the flesh is to be cooked. This ceremony of bringing the bears' skins into the house by the window was not witnessed by the Russian travellers, who only learned of it at second hand. They were told that when the thin disc of fish-skin, which is the substitute for a pane of glass in the window, has been replaced after the passage of the bear-skins, a figure of a toad made of birch bark is affixed to it on the outside, while inside the house a figure of a bear dressed in Gilyak costume is set on the bench of honour. The meaning of this part of the ceremony, as it is conjecturally interpreted by Von Schrenck, may be as follows. The toad is a creature that has a very evil reputation with the Gilyaks, and accordingly they attempt to lay upon it, as on a scapegoat, the guilt of the slaughter of the worshipful bear. Hence its effigy is excluded from the house and has to remain outside at the window, a witness of its own misdeeds; whereas the bear is brought into the house and treated as an honoured guest, for fish and flesh are laid before it, and its effigy, dressed in Gilyak costume, is seated on the bench of honour.

with the body of the bear. Nevertheless his flesh has an irresistible attraction for the *Sibirians* placed especially when the animal has been kept in captivity for some time and fattened so that which gives the flesh in the opinion of the *Sibirians* a peculiarly delicious flavour. But in order to ensure this object with impunity they have a method of preparing a long series of incisions in which the incision is to denote the living bear by a show of respect and to express the anger of the dead animal by the damage paid to his departed spirit. The marks of respect begin as soon as the bear is captured. He is brought home in triumph and kept in a cage where all the villagers pass it in turns to look on. For although he may have been captured or purchased by one man, he belongs in a manner to the whole village. His flesh will furnish a common feast and none at all must contribute to support him in his life. His diet consists exclusively of raw or dried fish, wheat and a sort of porridge compounded of powdered fish-bones, malt and whole-seeds. The length of time he is kept in captivity depends on his age. Old bears are kept only a few months: cubs are kept till they are full-grown. A black arrow of fat on the snout of the bear gives the signal for the festival which is always held in winter, generally in December but sometimes in January or February. At the festival witnessed by the Russian travellers which lasted a good many days three bears were killed and eaten. More than once the animals were set about in procession and circled in order every house in the village where they were fed as a mark of honour and to show that they were welcome guests. But before the bears set out on this round of visits the *Sibirians* passed in swarms to the presence and perhaps as *Anton Schrenck* relates in relation to honour of the animals. The night before they were killed the three bears were led by torchlight a way in the end of the frozen river. This night no one in the village might sleep. Next day after the animals had again set about the steep bank of the river and there round the hole in the ice from which the bear the village drew their water they were taken to a distant place not far from the village and shot.



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The boiling of the bear's flesh among the Gilyaks is done only by the oldest men, whose high privilege it is; women and children, young men and boys have no part in it. The task is performed slowly and deliberately, with a certain solemnity. On the occasion described by the Russian travellers the kettle was first of all surrounded with a thick wreath of shavings, and then filled with snow, for the use of water to cook bear's flesh is tabooed. Meanwhile a large wooden trough, richly adorned with arabesques and carvings of all sorts, was hung immediately under the snouts of the bears; on one side of the trough was carved in relief a bear, on the other side a toad. When the carcasses were being cut up, each leg was laid on the ground in front of the bears, as if to ask their leave, before being placed in the kettle; and the boiled flesh was fished out of the kettle with an iron hook, and placed in the trough before the bears, in order that they might be the first to taste of their own flesh. As fast, too, as the fat was cut in strips it was hung up in front of the bears, and afterwards placed in a small wooden trough on the ground before them. Last of all the inner organs of the beasts were cut up and placed in small vessels. At the same time the women made bandages out of parti-coloured rags, and after sunset these bandages were tied round the bears' snouts just below the eyes "in order to dry the tears that flowed from them." To each bandage, just below the eyes, was attached a figure of a toad cut out of birch bark. The meaning of this appears to be, as Von Schrenck conjectured, as follows. With the carving of his inner organs, the heart, liver, and so forth, the bear sees that his fate is sealed, and sheds some natural tears at his hard lot. These tears trickle down his snout over the figure of the toad, which the poor deluded bear accordingly regards as the author of all the mischief. For he cannot blame the Gilyaks, who have treated him so kindly. Have they not received him as a guest in their house, set him on the seat of honour, given him of their best, and done nothing but with his knowledge and permission? Finally, have not their women shown him the last delicate mark of attention by drying the tears that flow from his eyes and trickle down his nose? Surely

then he cannot think that these kindly folk have done him any harm ; it was all the fault of the unprincipled toad.

Whatever may be thought of this explanation, as soon as the ceremony of wiping away poor bruin's tears had been performed, the assembled Gilyaks set to work in earnest to devour his flesh. The broth obtained by boiling the meat had already been partaken of. The wooden bowls, platters, and spoons out of which the Gilyaks eat the broth and flesh of the bears on these occasions are always made specially for the purpose at the festival and only then ; they are elaborately ornamented with carved figures of bears and other devices that refer to the animal or the festival, and the people have a strong superstitious scruple against parting with them. While the festival lasts, no salt may be used in cooking the bear's flesh or indeed any other food ; and no flesh of any kind may be roasted, for the bear would hear the hissing and sputtering of the roasting flesh, and would be very angry. After the bones had been picked clean they were put back in the kettle in which the flesh had been boiled. And when the festal meal was over, an old man took his stand at the door of the house with a branch of fir in his hand, with which, as the people passed out, he gave a light blow to every one who had eaten of the bear's flesh or fat, perhaps as a punishment for their treatment of the worshipful animal. In the afternoon of the same day the women performed a strange dance. Only one woman danced at a time, throwing the upper part of her body into the oddest postures, while she held in her hands a branch of fir or a kind of wooden castanets. The other women meanwhile played an accompaniment in a peculiar rhythm by drumming on the beams of the house with clubs. The dance reminded one of the Russian travellers of the bear-dance which he had seen danced by the women of Kamtchatka. Von Schrenck believes, though he has not positive evidence, that after the fat and flesh of the bear have been consumed, his skull is cleft with an axe, and the brain taken out and eaten. Then the bones and the skull are solemnly carried out by the oldest people to a place in the forest not far from the village. There all the bones except the skull are buried. After that a young tree is felled a few inches

above the ground, its stump cleft, and the skull wedged into the cleft. When the grass grows over the spot, the skull disappears from view, and that is the end of the bear.¹

The Goldi, neighbours of the Gilyaks, treat the bear in much the same way. They hunt and kill it; but sometimes they capture a live bear and keep him in a cage, feeding him well and calling him their son and brother. Then at a great festival he is taken from his cage, paraded about with marked consideration, and afterwards killed and eaten. "The skull, jaw-bones, and ears are then suspended on a tree, as an antidote against evil spirits; but the flesh is eaten and much relished, for they believe that all who partake of it acquire a zest for the chase, and become courageous."²

The Orotchis, another Tunguzian people of the region of the Amoor, hold bear festivals of the same general character. Any one who catches a bear cub considers it his bounden duty to rear it in a cage for about three years, in order at the end of that time to kill it publicly and eat the flesh with his friends. The feasts being public, though organised by individuals, the people try to have one in each Orotchi village every year in turn. When the bear is taken out of his cage, he is led about by means of ropes to all the huts, accompanied by people armed with lances, bows, and arrows. At each hut the bear and bear-leaders are treated to something good to eat and drink. This goes on for several days until all the huts, not only in that village but also in the next, have been visited. The days are given up to sport and noisy jollity. Then the bear is tied to a tree or wooden pillar and shot to death by the arrows of the crowd, after which its flesh is roasted and eaten. Among the Orotchis of the Tundja River women take part in the bear-feasts, while among the Orotchis of the River Vi the women will not even touch bear's flesh.³

¹ L. von Schrenck, *Reisen und Forschungen im Amur-lande*, iii. 696-731.

² Ravenstein, *The Russians on the Amur*, p. 379 sq.; T. W. Atkinson, *Travels in the Regions of the Upper and Lower Amoor* (London, 1860), p. 482 sq.

³ E. H. Fraser, "The fish-skin

Tartars," *Journal of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for the year 1891-1892*, New Series, xxvi. 36-39. L. von Schrenck describes a bear-feast which he witnessed in 1855 among the Oltscha (*Reisen und Forschungen im Amur-lande*, iii. 723-728). The Oltscha are probably the same as the Orotchis.

In the treatment of the captive bear by these tribes there are features which can hardly be distinguished from worship. Such in particular is the Gilyak custom of leading him from house to house, that every family may receive his blessing—a custom parallel to the European one of taking a May-tree or a personal representative of the tree-spirit from door to door in spring, in order that all may share the fresh energies of reviving nature. Again the expected resurrection of the bear is avowedly indicated by the bamboo leaves and by the prayer addressed to him to "come back soon into an Aino." And that the eating of his flesh is regarded as a sacrament is made probable by the Gilyak custom of reserving special vessels to hold the bear's flesh on this solemn occasion.

How is the reverence thus paid to particular bears to be reconciled with the fact that bears in general are habitually hunted and killed by these tribes for the sake of their flesh and skins? On the one hand, the bear is treated as a god; on the other hand, as a creature wholly subservient to human needs. The apparent contradiction vanishes when we place ourselves at the savage point of view. The savage, we must remember, believes that animals are endowed with feelings and intelligence like those of men, and that, like men, they possess souls which survive the death of their bodies either to wander about as disembodied spirits or to be born again in animal form. Thus, for example, we are told that the Indian of Guiana does not see "any sharp line of distinction, such as we see, between man and other animals, between one kind of animal and other, or between animals—man included—and inanimate objects. On the contrary, to the Indian, all objects, animate and inanimate, seem exactly of the same nature except that they differ in the accident of bodily form. Every object in the whole world is a being, consisting of a body and spirit, and differs from every other object in no respect except that of bodily form, and in the greater or less degree of brute power and brute cunning consequent on the difference of bodily form and bodily habits."¹ Even the distinction of bodily form seems almost to elude the dull intellect of some savages. An unusually intelligent Bushman questioned by a missionary "could not state any difference between a man and

¹ E. F. im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, p. 350.

a brute—he did not know but a buffalo might shoot with bows and arrows as well as a man, if it had them.”¹ Nor is it merely that in the mental fog the savage takes beasts for men; he seems to be nearly as ready to take himself and his fellows for beasts. When the Russians first landed on one of the Alaskan islands the people took them for cuttle-fish, “on account of the buttons on their clothes.”² We have seen how some savages identify themselves with animals of various sorts by eating the maggots bred in the rotting carcasses of the beasts, and how thereafter, when occasion serves, they behave in their adopted characters by wriggling, roaring, barking, or grunting, according as they happen to be boa-constrictors, lions, jackals, or hippopotamuses.³ In the island of Mabuiag men of the Sam, that is, the Cassowary, totem think that cassowaries are men or nearly so. “Sam he all same as relation, he belong same family,” is the account they give of their kinship with the creature. Conversely they hold that they themselves are cassowaries, or at all events that they possess some of the qualities of the long-legged bird. When a Cassowary man went forth to reap laurels on the field of battle, he used to reflect with satisfaction on the length of his lower limbs: “My leg is long and thin, I can run and not feel tired; my legs will go quickly and the grass will not entangle them.”⁴ Omaha Indians believe that between a man and the creature which is his personal totem there subsists so close a bond that the man acquires the powers and qualities, the virtues and defects of the animal. Thus if a man has seen a bear in that vision at puberty which determines an Indian's personal totem, he will be apt to be wounded in battle, because the bear is a slow and clumsy animal and easily trapped. If he has dreamed of an eagle, he will be able to see into the future and foretell coming events, because the eagle's vision is keen and piercing.⁵ The Bororos, a tribe of Indians in the heart

¹ John Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, being a Narrative of a Second Journey in the Interior of that Country*, ii. 34.

² I. Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska*, p. 145.

³ Above, p. 353 sq.

⁴ A. C. Haddon, “The Ethno-

graphy of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits,” *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 393.

⁵ Miss Alice C. Fletcher, *The Import of the totem, a study from the Omaha tribe*, p. 6 (paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, August 1897).

of Brazil, will have it that they are birds of a gorgeous red plumage which live in the Brazilian forest. It is not merely that their souls will pass into these birds at death, but they are actually identical with them in their life, and accordingly they treat the birds as they might treat their fellow-tribesmen, keeping them in captivity, refusing to eat their flesh, and mourning for them when they die. However, they kill the wild birds for their feathers, and, though they will not kill, they pluck the tame ones to deck their own naked brown bodies with the gaudy plumage of their feathered brethren.¹

Thus to the savage, who regards all living creatures as practically on a footing of equality with man, the act of killing and eating an animal must wear a very different aspect from that which the same act presents to us, who regard the intelligence of animals as far inferior to our own and deny them the possession of immortal souls. Hence on the principles of his rude philosophy the primitive hunter who slays an animal believes himself exposed to the vengeance either of its disembodied spirit or of all the other animals of the same species, whom he considers as knit together, like men, by the ties of kin and the obligations of the blood feud, and therefore as bound to resent the injury done to one of their number. Accordingly the savage makes it a rule to spare the life of those animals which he has no pressing motive for killing, at least such fierce and dangerous animals as are likely to exact a bloody vengeance for the slaughter of one of their kind. Crocodiles are animals of this sort. They are only found in hot countries, where, as a rule, food is abundant and primitive man has therefore no reason to kill them for the sake of their tough and unpalatable flesh. Hence it is a general rule among savages to spare crocodiles, or rather only to kill them in obedience to the law of blood feud, that is, as a retaliation for the slaughter of men by crocodiles. For example, the Dyaks of Borneo will not kill a crocodile unless a crocodile has first killed a man. "For why, say they, should they commit an act of aggression, when he and his kindred can so easily repay them? But should the alligator take a human life,

¹ K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, pp. 352, 512.

revenge becomes a sacred duty of the living relatives, who will trap the man-eater in the spirit of an officer of justice pursuing a criminal. Others, even then, hang back, reluctant to embroil themselves in a quarrel which does not concern them. The man-eating alligator is supposed to be pursued by a righteous Nemesis; and whenever one is caught they have a profound conviction that it must be the guilty one, or his accomplice."¹ When a Dyak has made up his mind to take vengeance on the crocodiles for the death of a kinsman, he calls in the help of a Pangareran, a man whose business it is to charm and catch crocodiles and to make them do his will. While he is engaged in the discharge of his professional duties the crocodile-catcher has to observe a number of odd rules. He may not go to anybody and may not even pass in front of a window, because he is unclean. He may not himself cook anything nor come near a fire. If he would eat fruit, he may not peel or husk it himself, but must get others to do it for him. He may not even chew his food, but is obliged to swallow it unchewed. A little hut is made for him on the bank of the river, where he uses divination by means of the figure of a crocodile drawn on a piece of bamboo for the purpose of determining whether his undertaking will prosper. The boat in which he embarks to catch the wicked man-eating crocodile must be painted yellow and red, and in the middle of it lances are erected with the points upward. Then the man of skill casts lots to discover whether the hook is to be baited with pork, or venison, or the flesh of a dog or an ass. In throwing the baited hook into the water he calls out: "Ye crocodiles who are up stream, come down; and ye crocodiles who are down stream, come up; for I will give you all good food, as sweet as sugar and as fat as cocoa-nut. I will give you a pretty and beautiful necklace. When you have got it, keep it in your neck and body, for this food is very *pahuni*," which means that it would be sinful not to eat it.

¹ Rev. J. Perham, "Sea Dyak Religion," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 10, p. 221. Compare C. Hupe, "Korte verhandeling over de godsdienst zeden, enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor*

Nederlands Indië, 1846, dl. iii. 160; S. Müller, *Reizen en onderzoekingen in den Indischen Archipel*, i. 238; Perelaer, *Ethnographische Beschrijving der Dajaks*, p. 7.

If a crocodile bites at the hook, the crocodile-catcher bawls out, "Choose a place for yourself where you will lie; for many men are come to see you. They are come joyfully and exultingly, and they give you a knife, a lance, and a shroud." If the crocodile is a female, he addresses her as "Princess"; if it is a male, he calls it "Prince." The enchanter, who is generally a cunning Malay, must continue his operations till he catches a crocodile in which traces are to be found showing that he has indeed devoured a human being. Then the death of the man is atoned for, and in order not to offend the water-spirits a cat is sacrificed to the crocodiles. The heads of the dead crocodiles are fastened on stakes beside the river, where in time they bleach white and stand out sharply against the green background of the forest.¹ While the captured crocodile is being hauled in to the bank, the subtle Dyaks speak softly to him and beguile him into offering no resistance; but once they have him fast, with arms and legs securely pinioned, they howl at him and deride him for his credulity, while they rip up the belly of the infuriated and struggling brute to find the evidence of his guilt in the shape of human remains. On one occasion Rajah Brooke of Sarawak was present at a discussion among a party of Dyaks as to how they ought to treat a captured crocodile. One side maintained that it was proper to bestow all praise and honour on the kingly beast, since he was himself a rajah among animals and was now brought there to meet the rajah; in short, they held that praise and flattery were agreeable to him and would put him on his best behaviour. The other side fully admitted that on this occasion rajah met rajah; yet with prudent foresight they pointed to the dangerous consequences which might flow from establishing a precedent such as their adversaries contended for. If once a captured crocodile, said they, were praised and honoured, the other crocodiles, on hearing of it, would be puffed up with pride and ambition, and being seized with a desire to emulate the glory of their fellow would enter on a career of man-eating as the road likely to lead them by the shortest cut to the temple of fame.²

¹ F. Grabowsky, "Die Theogonie der Dajaken auf Borneo," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ii. (1892), p. 119 sq.

² H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 447 sq.

The Minangkabauers of Sumatra have also a great respect for crocodiles. Their celebrated law-giver Katoe-manggoengan was indeed born again in the form of a crocodile; and thus his descendants, including the rajah of Indrapoera and his family, are more or less distant cousins of the crocodiles, and enjoy the help and protection of the creatures in many ways, for example when they go on a journey. The respect entertained for the animals is also attested by the ceremonies observed in some places when a crocodile has been caught. A crowd of women then performs certain dances which closely resemble the dances performed when somebody has died. Moreover, it is a rule with the Minangkabauers that no cooking-pot may be washed in a river; to do so would be like offering the crocodiles the leavings of your food, and they would very naturally resent it. For the same reason in washing up the dinner or supper plates you must be careful not to make a splashing, or the crocodiles would hear it and take umbrage.¹ Like the Dyaks, the natives of Madagascar never kill a crocodile "except in retaliation for one of their friends who has been destroyed by a crocodile. They believe that the wanton destruction of one of these reptiles will be followed by the loss of human life, in accordance with the principle of *lex talionis*." The people who live near the lake Itasy in Madagascar make a yearly proclamation to the crocodiles, announcing that they will revenge the death of some of their friends by killing as many crocodiles in return, and warning all well-disposed crocodiles to keep out of the way, as they have no quarrel with them, but only with their evil-minded relations who have taken human life.² The Malagasy, indeed, regard the crocodile with superstitious veneration as the king of the waters and supreme in his own element. When they are about to cross a river they pronounce a solemn oath, or enter into an engagement to acknowledge his sovereignty over the waters. An aged native has been known to covenant with the crocodiles for nearly half an hour before plunging into the stream. After

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagnsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van*

Nederlandsch Indië, xxxix. (1890), p. 75 sq.

² Sibree, *The Great African Island*, p. 269.

that he lifted up his voice and addressed the animal, urging him to do him no harm, since he had never hurt the crocodile; assuring him that he had never made war on any of his fellows, but on the contrary had always entertained the highest veneration for him; and adding that if he wantonly attacked him, vengeance would follow sooner or later; while if the crocodile devoured him, his relations and all his race would declare war against the beast. This harangue occupied another quarter of an hour, after which the orator dashed fearlessly into the stream.¹ Crocodiles abound in the Albert Nyanza Lake and its tributaries. In many places they are extremely dangerous, but the Alur tribe of that region only hunt them when they have dragged away a man; and they think that any one who has taken away a crocodile's eggs must be on his guard when he walks near the bank of the river, for the crocodiles will try to avenge the injury by seizing him.² In general the Foulahs of Senegambia dare not kill a crocodile from fear of provoking the vengeance of the relations and friends of the murdered reptile; but if the sorcerer gives his consent and passes his word that he will guarantee them against the vengeance of the family of the deceased, they will pluck up courage to attack one of the brutes.³

Again, the tiger is another of those dangerous beasts whom the savage prefers to leave alone lest by killing one of the species he should excite the hostility of the rest. No consideration will induce a Sumatran to catch or wound a tiger except in self-defence or immediately after a tiger has destroyed a friend or relation. When a European has set traps for tigers, the people of the neighbourhood have been known to go by night to the place and explain to the animals that the traps are not set by them nor with their consent.⁴ If it is necessary to kill a tiger which has wrought much harm in the village, the Minangkabauers of Sumatra try to catch him alive in order to beg for his forgiveness before despatching him, and in ordinary life they will not

¹ W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, i. 57 sq.

² Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 510 sq.

³ A. Raffinel, *Voyage dans l'Afrique occidentale* (Paris, 1846), p. 84 sq.

⁴ Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, p. 292.

speaking evil of him or do anything that might displease him. For example, they will not use a path that has been untrodden for more than a year, because the tiger has chosen that path for himself, and would deem it a mark of disrespect were any one else to use it. Again, persons journeying by night will not walk one behind the other, or keep looking about them, for the tiger would think that this betrayed fear of him, and his feelings would be hurt by the suspicion. Neither will they travel bareheaded, for that also would be disrespectful to the tiger; nor will they knock off the glowing end of a firebrand, for the flying sparks are like the tiger's glistening eyes, and he would treat this as an attempt to mimic him.¹ The population of Mandeling, a district on the west coast of Sumatra, is divided into clans, one of which claims to be descended from a tiger. It is believed that the animal will not attack or rend the members of this clan, because they are his kinsmen. When members of the clan come upon the tracks of a tiger, they enclose them with three little sticks as a mark of homage; and when a tiger has been shot, the women of the clan are bound to offer betel to the dead beast.² The Battas of Sumatra seldom kill a tiger except from motives of revenge, observing the rule an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, or, as they express it, "He who owes gold must pay in gold; he who owes breath (that is, life) must pay with breath." Nor can the beast be attacked without some ceremony; only weapons that have proved themselves able to kill may be used for the purpose. When the tiger has been killed, they bring the carcass to the village, set offerings before it, and burn incense over it, praying the spirit of the tiger to quit its material envelope and enter the incense pot. As soon as the soul may be supposed to have complied with this request, a speaker explains to the spirits in general the reasons for killing the tiger, and begs them to set forth these reasons to the departed soul of the beast, lest the latter

¹ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), pp. 74, 75 sq.

² H. Ris, "De onderafdeeling Mandailing Oeloe en Pahantan en hare Bevolking," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xli. (1896), p. 472 sq.

should be angry and the people should suffer in consequence. Then they dance round the dead body of the tiger till they can dance no longer, after which they skin the carcass and bury it.¹ The inhabitants of the hills near Rajamahall, in Bengal, believe that if any man kills a tiger without divine orders, either he or one of his relations will be devoured by a tiger. Hence they are very averse to killing a tiger, unless one of their kinsfolk has been carried off by one of the beasts. In that case they go out for the purpose of hunting and slaying a tiger; and when they have succeeded they lay their bows and arrows on the carcass and invoke God, declaring that they slew the animal in retaliation for the loss of a kinsman. Vengeance having been thus taken they swear not to attack another tiger except under similar provocation.²

The Indians of Carolina would not molest snakes when they came upon them, but would pass by on the other side of the path, believing that if they were to kill a serpent, the reptile's kindred would destroy some of their brethren, friends, or relations in return.³ So the Seminole Indians spared the rattlesnake, because they feared that the soul of the dead rattlesnake would incite its kinsfolk to take vengeance. Once when a rattlesnake appeared in their camp they entreated an English traveller to rid them of the creature. When he had killed it, they were glad but tried to scratch him as a means of appeasing the spirit of the dead snake.⁴ Soon after the Iowas began to build their village near the mouth of Wolf River, a lad came into the village and reported that he had seen a rattlesnake on a hill not far off. A medicine-man immediately repaired to the spot, and finding the snake made it presents of tobacco and other things which he had brought with him for the purpose. He also had a long talk with the animal, and on returning to his people told them that now they might travel about in safety, for peace had been made with the snakes.⁵ The Kekchi

¹ G. G. Batten, *Glimpses of the Eastern Archipelago* (Singapore, 1894), p. 86.

² Th. Shaw, "On the inhabitants of the hills near Rajamahall," *Asiatic Researches*, iv. 37 (8vo ed.).

³ J. Bricknell, *The Natural History*

of North Carolina (Dublin, 1737), p. 368.

⁴ W. Bartram, *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, etc.* (London, 1792), pp. 258-261.

⁵ Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, iii. 273.

Indians of Guatemala will not throw serpents or scorpions into the fire, lest the other creatures of the same species should punish them for the outrage.¹ When the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia have slain a wolf they lay the carcass on a blanket and take out the heart, of which every person who helped to kill the beast must eat four morsels. Then they wail over the body, saying, "Woe! our great friend!" After that they cover the carcass with a blanket and bury it. A bow or gun that killed a wolf is regarded as unlucky, and the owner gives it away. These Indians believe that the slaying of a wolf produces a scarcity of game.² In ancient Athens any man who killed a wolf had to bury it by subscription.³ The Palenques of South America are very careful to spare harmless animals which are not good for food; because they believe that any injury inflicted on such creatures would entail the sickness or death of their own children.⁴

But the savage clearly cannot afford to spare all animals. He must either eat some of them or starve, and when the question thus comes to be whether he or the animal must perish, he is forced to overcome his superstitious scruples and take the life of the beast. At the same time he does all he can to appease his victims and their kinsfolk. Even in the act of killing them he testifies his respect for them, endeavours to excuse or even conceal his share in procuring their death, and promises that their remains will be honourably treated. By thus robbing death of its terrors he hopes to reconcile his victims to their fate and to induce their fellows to come and be killed also. For example, it was a principle with the Kamtchatkans never to kill a land or sea animal without first making excuses to it and begging that the animal would not take it ill. Also they offered it cedar-nuts and so forth, to make it think that it was not a victim but a guest at a feast. They believed that this hindered other animals of the same species from growing shy. For

¹ C. Sapper, "Die Gebräuche und religiösen Anschauungen der Kekchi-Indianer," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 204.

² Fr. Boas, in *Eleventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 9 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1896*).

³ Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonaut*, ii. 124.

⁴ Caulin, *Historia Coro-graphica natural y evangelica dela Nueva Andalucia*, p. 96: "Reusan mucho malar qualquier animal no comestible que no sea nocibo," etc. Here *reusan* appears to be a misprint for *recusan*.

instance, after they had killed a bear and feasted on its flesh, the host would bring the bear's head before the company, wrap it in grass, and present it with a variety of trifles. Then he would lay the blame of the bear's death on the Russians, and bid the beast wreak his wrath upon them. Also he would ask the bear to inform the other bears how well he had been treated, that they too might come without fear. Seals, sea-lions, and other animals were treated by the Kamtchatkans with the same ceremonious respect. Moreover, they used to insert sprigs of a plant resembling bear's wort in the mouths of the animals they killed; after which they would exhort the grinning skulls to have no fear but to go and tell it to their fellows, that they also might come and be caught and so partake of this splendid hospitality.¹ When the Ostiaks have hunted and killed a bear, they cut off its head and hang it on a tree. Then they gather round in a circle and pay it divine honours. Next they run towards the carcass uttering lamentations and saying, "Who killed you? It was the Russians. Who cut off your head? It was a Russian axe. Who skinned you? It was a knife made by a Russian." They explain, too, that the feathers which sped the arrow on its flight came from the wing of a strange bird, and that they did nothing but let the arrow go. They do all this because they believe that the wandering ghost of the slain bear would attack them on the first opportunity, if they did not thus appease it.² Or they stuff the skin of the slain bear with hay; and after celebrating their victory with songs of mockery and insult, after spitting on and kicking it, they set it up on its hind legs, "and then, for a considerable time, they bestow on it all the veneration due to a guardian god."³ When a party of Koriaks have killed a bear or a wolf, they skin the beast and dress one of themselves in the skin. Then they dance round the skin-clad man, saying that it was not they who killed the animal, but some one else, generally a Russian. When they kill a fox they skin

¹ Steller, *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, pp. 85, 280, 331.

² *Voyages au Nord* (Amsterdam, 1727), viii. 41, 416; Pallas, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs*, iii. 64; Georgi,

Beschreibung aller Nationen des russischen Reichs, p. 83.

³ Erman, *Travels in Siberia*, ii. 43. For the veneration of the polar bear by the Samoyedes, who nevertheless kill and eat it, see *ibid.* 54 sq.

it, wrap the body in grass, and bid him go tell his companions how hospitably he has been received, and how he has received a new cloak instead of his old one.¹ The Finns used to try to persuade a slain bear that he had not been killed by them, but had fallen from a tree, or met his death in some other way;² moreover, they held a funeral festival in his honour, at the close of which bards expatiated on the homage that had been paid to him, urging him to report to the other bears the high consideration with which he had been treated, in order that they also, following his example, might come and be slain.³ When the Lapps had succeeded in killing a bear with impunity, they thanked him for not hurting them and for not breaking the clubs and spears which had given him his death wounds; and they prayed that he would not visit his death upon them by sending storms or in any other way. His flesh then furnished a feast.⁴

The reverence of hunters for the bear whom they regularly kill and eat may thus be traced all along the northern region of the Old World, from Bering's Straits to Lapland. It reappears in similar forms in North America. With the American Indians a bear hunt was an important event for which they prepared by long fasts and purgations. Before setting out they offered expiatory sacrifices to the souls of bears slain in previous hunts, and besought them to be favourable to the hunters. When a bear was killed the hunter lit his pipe, and putting the mouth of it between the bear's lips, blew into the bowl, filling the beast's mouth with smoke. Then he begged the bear not to be angry at having been killed, and not to thwart him afterwards in the chase. The carcass was roasted whole and eaten; not a morsel of the flesh might be left over. The head, painted red and blue, was hung on a post and addressed by orators, who heaped praise on the dead beast.⁵ When men of the Bear clan in the Ottawa

¹ Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte*, iii. 26.

² Max Buch, *Die Wotjaken*, p. 139.

³ A. Featherman, *Social History of the Races of Mankind, Fourth Division, Dravido-Turanians*, etc., p. 422.

⁴ Scheffer, *Laponia* (Frankfort, 1673), p. 233 sq. The Lapps "have

still an elaborate ceremony in hunting the bear. They pray and chant to his carcass, and for several days worship before eating it" (E. Rae, *The White Sea Peninsula* (London, 1881), p. 276).

⁵ Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, v. 173 sq.; Chateaubriand,

tribe killed a bear, they made him a feast of his own flesh, and addressed him thus: "Cherish us no grudge because we have killed you. You have sense; you see that our children are hungry. They love you and wish to take you into their bodies. Is it not glorious to be eaten by the children of a chief?"¹ Amongst the Nootka Indians of British Columbia, when a bear had been killed, it was brought in and seated before the head chief in an upright posture, with a chief's bonnet, wrought in figures, on its head, and its fur powdered over with white down. A tray of provisions was then set before it, and it was invited by words and gestures to eat. After that the animal was skinned, boiled, and eaten.² The Assiniboina pray to the bear and offer sacrifices to it of tobacco, belts, and other valuable objects. Moreover, they hold feasts in its honour, that they may win the beast's favour and live safe and sound. The bear's head is often kept in camp for several days mounted in some suitable position and decked with scraps of scarlet cloth, necklaces, collars, and coloured feathers. They offer the pipe to it, and pray that they may be able to kill all the bears they meet, without harm to themselves, for the purpose of anointing themselves with his fine grease and banqueting on his tender flesh.³ The Ojibways will not suffer dogs to eat the flesh or gnaw the bones of a bear, and they throw all the waste portions into the fire. They think that if the flesh were desecrated, they would have no luck in hunting bears thereafter.⁴ Some of the Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands, off the north-western coast of America, used to mark the skins of bears, otters, and other animals with four red crosses in a line, by way of propitiating the spirit of the beast they

Voyage en Amérique, pp. 172-181 (Paris, Michel Lévy, 1870).

¹ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, vi. 171. Morgan states that the names of the Ottawa totem clans had not been obtained (*Ancient Society*, p. 167). From the *Lettres édifiantes*, vi. 168-171, he might have learned the names of the Hare, Carp, and Bear clans, to which may be added the Gull clan, as I learn from an extract from *The Canadian Journal* (Toronto) for March 1858, quoted in the *Academy*, 27th

September 1884, p. 203.

² *A Narrative of the Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt*, p. 117 (Middletown, 1820), p. 133 (Edinburgh, 1824).

³ De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries* (New York, 1863), p. 139.

⁴ A. P. Reid, "Religious belief of the Ojibois Indians," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, iii. (1874), p. 111.

had killed.¹ When the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia were about to hunt bears, they would sometimes address the animal and ask it to come and be shot. They prayed the grisly bear not to be angry with the hunter, nor to fight him, but rather to have pity on him and to deliver himself up to his mercies. The man who intended to hunt the grisly bear had to be chaste for some time before he set out on his dangerous adventure. When he had killed a bear, he and his companions painted their faces in alternate perpendicular stripes of black and red, and sang the bear song. Sometimes the hunter also prayed, thanking the beast for letting itself be killed so easily, and begging that its mate might share the same fate. After they had eaten the flesh of the bear's head, they tied the skull to the top of a small tree, as high as they could reach, and left it there. Having done so, they painted their faces with alternate stripes of red and black as before; for if they failed to observe this ceremony, the bears would be offended, and the hunters would not be able to kill any more. To place the heads of bears or any large beasts on trees or stones was a mark of respect to the animals.²

A like respect is testified for other dangerous creatures by the hunters who regularly trap and kill them. When Caffre hunters are in the act of showering spears on an elephant, they call out, "Don't kill us, great captain; don't strike or tread upon us, mighty chief."³ When he is dead they make their excuses to him, pretending that his death was a pure accident. As a mark of respect they bury his trunk with much solemn ceremony; for they say that "the elephant is a great lord; his trunk is his hand."⁴ Before the Anaxosa Caffres attack an elephant they shout

¹ A. Mackenzie, "Descriptive notes on certain implements, weapons, etc., from Graham Island, Queen Charlotte Islands, B.C.," *Trans. Roy. Soc. of Canada*, ix. (1891) section ii. p. 58.

² James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 347. The Thompson Indians used to be known as the Couteau or Knife Indians.

³ Stephen Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria* (London, 1833), p. 138.

⁴ Alberti, *De Kaffers aqn de Zuid-kust van Afrika* (Amsterdam, 1810), p. 95. Alberti's information is repeated by Lichtenstein (*Reisen im südlichen Afrika*, i. 412) and by Rose (*Four Years in Southern Africa*, p. 155). The burial of the trunk is also mentioned by Kay, *l.c.*

to the animal and beg him to pardon them for the slaughter they are about to perpetrate, professing great submission to his person and explaining clearly the need they have of his tusks to enable them to procure beads and supply their wants. When they have killed him they bury in the ground, along with the end of his trunk, a few of the articles they have obtained for the ivory, thus hoping to avert some mishap that would otherwise befall them.¹ Among the Wanyamwezi of Central Africa, when hunters have killed an elephant, they bury his legs on the spot where he fell, and then cover the place with stones. This burial is supposed to appease the spirit of the dead elephant and to ensure the success of the hunters in future undertakings.² Amongst some tribes of Eastern Africa, when a lion is killed, the carcass is brought before the king, who does homage to it by prostrating himself on the ground and rubbing his face on the muzzle of the beast.³ In some parts of Western Africa if a negro kills a leopard he is bound fast and brought before the chiefs for having killed one of their peers. The man defends himself on the plea that the leopard is chief of the forest and therefore a stranger. He is then set at liberty and rewarded. But the dead leopard, adorned with a chief's bonnet, is set up in the village, where nightly dances are held in its honour.⁴ Before they leave a temporary camp in the forest, where they have killed a tapir and dried the meat on a babracot, the Indians of Guiana invariably destroy this babracot, saying that should a tapir passing that way find traces of the slaughter of one of his kind, he would come by night on the next occasion when Indians slept at that place, and, taking a man, would babracot him in revenge.⁵

When a Blackfoot Indian has caught eagles in a trap and killed them, he takes them home to a special lodge, called the eagles' lodge, which has been prepared for their reception outside of the camp. Here he sets the birds in a row on the ground, and propping up their heads on a

¹ J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 215.

and Brussels, 1887), ii. 298 sq., 305.

² Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 87.

³ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, ii. 243.

⁴ J. Becker, *La Vie en Afrique* (Paris

⁵ Im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, p. 352.

stick, puts a piece of dried meat in each of their mouths in order that the spirits of the dead eagles may go and tell the other eagles how well they are being treated by the Indians.¹ So when Indian hunters of the Orinoco region have killed an animal, they open its mouth and pour into it a few drops of the liquor they generally carry with them, in order that the soul of the dead beast may inform its fellows of the welcome it has met with, and that they too, cheered by the prospect of the same kind reception, may come with alacrity to be killed.² When a Teton Indian is on a journey and he meets a grey spider or a spider with yellow legs, he kills it, because some evil would befall him if he did not. But he is very careful not to let the spider know that he kills it, for if the spider knew, his soul would go and tell the other spiders, and one of them would be sure to avenge the death of his relation. So in crushing the insect, the Indian says, "O Grandfather Spider, the Thunder-beings kill you." And the spider is crushed at once and believes what is told him. His soul probably runs and tells the other spiders that the Thunder-beings have killed him; but no harm comes of that. For what can grey or yellow-legged spiders do to the Thunder-beings?³

But it is not merely dangerous creatures with whom the savage desires to keep on good terms. It is true that the respect which he pays to wild beasts is in some measure proportioned to their strength and ferocity. Thus the savage Stiens of Cambodia, believing that all animals have souls which roam about after their death, beg an animal's pardon when they kill it, lest its soul should come and torment them. Also they offer it sacrifices, but these sacrifices are proportioned to the size and strength of the animal. The ceremonies observed at the death of an elephant are conducted with much pomp and last seven days.⁴ Similar distinctions are drawn by North American

¹ G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 240.

² Caulin, *Historia Corographica natural y evangelica de la Nueva Andalusia*, p. 97.

³ J. Owen Dorsey, "Teton Folklore Notes," *Journal of American Folk-*

lore, ii. (1889), p. 134; *id.*, "A Study of Siouan cults," *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1894), p. 479.

⁴ Mouhot, *Travels in the Central Parts of Indo-China*, i. 252; Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 422.

Indians. "The bear, the buffalo, and the beaver are manidos [divinities] which furnish food. The bear is formidable, and good to eat. They render ceremonies to him, begging him to allow himself to be eaten, although they know he has no fancy for it. We kill you, but you are not annihilated. His head and paws are objects of homage. . . . Other animals are treated similarly from similar reasons. . . . Many of the animal manidos, not being dangerous, are often treated with contempt—the terrapin, the weasel, polecat, etc."¹ The distinction is instructive. Animals which are feared, or are good to eat, or both, are treated with ceremonious respect; those which are neither formidable nor good to eat are despised. We have had examples of reverence paid to animals which are both feared and eaten. It remains to prove that similar respect is shown for animals which, without being feared, are either eaten or valued for their skins.

When Siberian sable-hunters have caught a sable, no one is allowed to see it, and they think that if good or evil be spoken of the captured sable, no more sables will be caught. A hunter has been known to express his belief that the sables could hear what was said of them as far off as Moscow. He said that the chief reason why the sable hunt was now so unproductive was that some live sables had been sent to Moscow. There they had been viewed with astonishment as strange animals, and the sables cannot abide that. Another, though minor, cause of the diminished take of sable was, he alleged, that the world is now much worse than it used to be, so that nowadays a hunter will sometimes hide the sable which he has got instead of putting it into the common stock. This also, said he, the sables cannot abide.² A Russian traveller happening once to enter a Gilyak hut in the absence of the owner, observed a freshly killed sable hanging on the wall. Seeing him look at it, the housewife in consternation hastened to muffle the animal in a fur cap, after which it was taken down, wrapt in birch bark, and put away out of sight. Despite the high price he offered for it, the traveller's efforts to buy the animal were

¹ Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 420.

² J. G. Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*, ii. 278.

unavailing. It was bad enough, they told him, that he, a stranger, had seen the dead sable in its skin, but far worse consequences for the future catch of sables would follow if they were to sell him the animal entire.¹ Alaskan hunters preserve the bones of sables and beavers out of reach of the dogs for a year and then bury them carefully, "lest the spirits who look after the beavers and sables should consider that they are regarded with contempt, and hence no more should be killed or trapped."² The Shushwap Indians of British Columbia think that if they did not throw beaver-bones into the river, the beavers would not go into the traps any more, and that the same thing would happen were a dog to eat the flesh or gnaw the bone of a beaver.³ Carrier Indians who have trapped martens or beavers take care to keep them from the dogs; for if a dog were to touch these animals the Indians believe that the other martens or beavers would not suffer themselves to be caught.⁴ A missionary who fell in with an old Carrier Indian asked him what luck he had in the chase. "Oh, don't speak to me about it," replied the Indian, "there are beavers in plenty. I caught one myself immediately after my arrival here, but unluckily a dog got hold of it. You know that after that it has been impossible for me to catch another." "Nonsense," said the missionary, "set your traps as if nothing had happened, and you will see." "That would be useless," answered the Indian in a tone of despair, "quite useless. You don't know the ways of the beaver. If a dog merely touches a beaver, all the other beavers are angry at the owner of the dog and always keep away from his traps." It was in vain that the missionary tried to laugh or argue him out of his persuasion; the man persisted in abandoning his snares and giving up the hunt, because, as he asserted, the beavers were angry with him.⁵ A French traveller,

¹ L. von Schrenck, *Reisen und Forschungen im Amur-lande*, iii. 564.

² W. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 89; *id.*, in *The Yukon Territory* (London, 1898), p. 89.

³ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 92 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

⁴ A. G. Morice, "Notes, archaeological, industrial, and sociological, on the Western Dénés," *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93), p. 108.

⁵ A. G. Morice, *Au pays de l'Ours Noir, chez les sauvages de la Colombie Britannique* (Paris and Lyons, 1897), p. 71.

observing that the Indians of Louisiana did not give the bones of beavers and otters to their dogs, inquired the reason. They told him there was a spirit in the woods who would tell the other beavers and otters, and that after that they would catch no more animals of these species.¹ The Canadian Indians were equally particular not to let their dogs gnaw the bones, or at least certain of the bones, of beavers. They took the greatest pains to collect and preserve these bones, and, when the beaver had been caught in a net, they threw them into the river. To a Jesuit who argued that the beavers could not possibly know what became of their bones, the Indians replied, "You know nothing about catching beavers and yet you will be talking about it. Before the beaver is stone dead, his soul takes a turn in the hut of the man who is killing him and makes a careful note of what is done with his bones. If the bones are given to the dogs, the other beavers would get word of it and would not let themselves be caught. Whereas, if their bones are thrown into the fire or a river, they are quite satisfied; and it is particularly gratifying to the net which caught them."² Before hunting the beaver they offered a solemn prayer to the Great Beaver, and presented him with tobacco; and when the chase was over, an orator pronounced a funeral oration over the dead beavers. He praised their spirit and wisdom. "You will hear no more," said he, "the voice of the chieftains who commanded you and whom you chose from among all the warrior beavers to give you laws. Your language, which the medicine-men understand perfectly, will be heard no more at the bottom of the lake. You will fight no more battles with the otters, your cruel foes. No, beavers! But your skins shall serve to buy arms; we will carry your smoked hams to our

¹ L. Hennepin, *Description de la Louisiane* (Paris, 1683), p. 97 sq.

² *Relations des Jésuites*, 1634, p. 24, ed. 1858. Nets are regarded by the Indians as living creatures who not only think and feel but also eat, speak, and marry wives. See Sagard, *Le Grand Voyage du Pays des Hurons*, p. 256 (p. 178 sq. of the Paris reprint, Librairie

Tross, 1865); S. Hearne, *Journey to the Northern Ocean*, p. 329 sq.; *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 109; *ibid.* 1639, p. 95; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, v. 225; Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, p. 140 sqq. The Hebrews sacrificed and burned incense to their nets (Habakkuk i. 16).

children ; we will keep the dogs from eating your bones, which are so hard."¹

The elan, deer, and elk were treated by the American Indians with the same punctilious respect, and for the same reason. Their bones might not be given to the dogs nor thrown into the fire, nor might their fat be dropped upon the fire, because the souls of the dead animals were believed to see what was done to their bodies and to tell it to the other beasts, living and dead. Hence, if their bodies were ill used, the animals of that species would not allow themselves to be taken, neither in this world nor in the world to come.² The houses of the Indians of Honduras were encumbered with the bones of deer, the Indians believing that if they threw the bones away, the other deer could not be taken.³ Among the Chiquites of Paraguay a sick man would be asked by the medicine-man whether he had not thrown away some of the flesh of the deer or turtle, and if he answered yes, the medicine-man would say, "That is what is killing you. The soul of the deer or turtle has entered into your body to avenge the wrong you did it."⁴ Before the Tzentaes of Southern Mexico and the Kekchis of Guatemala venture to skin a deer which they have killed, they lift up its head and burn copal before it as an offering ; otherwise a certain being named Tzultacca would be angry and send them no more game.⁵ Cherokee hunters ask pardon of the deer they kill. If they failed to do so, they think that the Little Deer, the chief of the deer tribe, who can never die or be wounded, would track the hunter to his home by the blood-drops on the ground and would put the

¹ Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, pp. 175, 178. They will not let the blood of beavers fall on the ground, or their luck in hunting them would be gone (*Relations des Jésuites*, 1633, p. 21). Compare the rule about not allowing the blood of kings to fall on the ground (above, vol. i. p. 354 sq.).

² Hennepin, *Nouveau voyage d'un pays plus grand que l'Europe* (Utrecht, 1698), p. 141 sq.; *Relations des Jésuites*, 1636, p. 109 ; Sagard, *Le Grand Voyage du Pays des Hurons*, p. 255 (p. 178 of the Paris reprint). Not quite con-

sistently the Canadian Indians used to kill every elan they could overtake in the chase, lest any should escape to warn their fellows (Sagard, *l.c.*).

³ Herrera, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, trans. by Stevens, iv. 142.

⁴ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, viii. 339.

⁵ C. Sapper, "Die Gebräuche und religiösen Anschauungen der Kekchí-Indianer," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 195 sq.

spirit of rheumatism into him. Sometimes the hunter, on starting for home, lights a fire in the trail behind him to prevent the Little Deer from pursuing him.¹ Before they went out to hunt for deer, antelope, or elk the Apaches used to resort to sacred caves, where the medicine-men propitiated with prayer and sacrifice the animal gods whose progeny they intended to destroy.² The Indians of Louisiana bewailed bitterly the death of the buffaloes which they were about to kill. More than two hundred of them at a time have been seen shedding crocodile tears over the approaching slaughter of the animals, while they marched in solemn procession, headed by an old man who waved a pocket-handkerchief at the end of a stick as an oriflamme, and by a woman who strutted proudly along, bearing on her back a large kettle which had been recently abstracted from the baggage of some French explorers.³ The Thompson River Indians of British Columbia cherished many superstitious beliefs and observed many superstitious practices in regard to deer. When a deer was killed, they said that the rest of the deer would be well pleased if the hunters butchered the animal nicely and cleanly. To waste venison displeased the animals, who after that would not allow themselves to be shot by the hunter. If a hunter was overburdened and had to leave some of the venison behind, the other deer were better pleased if he hung it up on a tree than if he let it lie on the ground. The guts were gathered and put where the blood had been spilt in butchering the beast, and the whole was covered up with a few fir-boughs. In laying the boughs on the blood and guts the man told the deer not to grieve for the death of their friend and not to take it ill that he had left some of the body behind, for he had done his best to cover it. If he did not cover it, they thought the deer would be sorry or angry and would spoil his luck in the chase. When the head of a deer had to be left behind, they commonly placed it on the branch of a tree, that it might not be contaminated by dogs and women. For the same

¹ J. Mooney, "Cherokee theory and practice of medicine," *American Journal of Folk-lore*, iii. (1890), p. 45 sq.

² J. G. Bourke, "Religion of the

Apache Indians," *Folk-lore*, ii. (1891), p. 438.

³ Hennepin, *Description de l'Louisiane* (Paris, 1683), p. 80 sq.

reason they burned the bones of the slain deer, lest they should be touched by women or gnawed by dogs. And venison was never brought into a hut by the common door, because that door was used by women; it was taken in through a hole made in the back of the hut. No hunter would give a deer's head to a man who was the first or second of a family, for that would make the rest of the deer very shy and hard to shoot. And in telling his friends of his bag he would generally call a buck a doe, and a doe he would call a fawn, and a fawn he would call a hare. This he did that he might not seem to the deer to brag.¹

Indians of the Lower Fraser River regard the porcupine as their elder brother. Hence when a hunter kills one of these creatures he asks his elder brother's pardon, and does not eat of the flesh till the next day.² The Sioux will not stick an awl or needle into a turtle, for they are sure that, if they were to do so, the turtle would punish them at some future time.³ The Canadian Indians would not eat the embryos of the elk, unless at the close of the hunting season; otherwise the mother-elks would be shy and refuse to be caught.⁴ Some of the Indians believed that each sort of animal had its patron or genius who watched over and preserved it. An Indian girl having once picked up a dead mouse, her father snatched the little creature from her and tenderly caressed and fondled it. Being asked why he did so, he said that it was to appease the genius of mice, in order that he might not torment his daughter for eating the mouse. With that he handed the mouse to the girl and she ate it.⁵

The Esquimaux of the Hudson Bay region believe that the reindeer are controlled by a great spirit who resides in a large cave near the end of Cape Chidley. The outward form of the spirit is that of a huge white bear. He obtains and controls the spirit of every reindeer that is slain or dies, and it depends on his good will whether the people shall have a

¹ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 346 sq.

² Fr. Boas, in "Ninth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada,"

Report of the British Association for 1894, p. 459 sq.

³ Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, iii. 230.

⁴ *Relations des Jésuites*, 1634, p. 26.

⁵ Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, v. 443.

supply of reindeer or not. The sorcerer intercedes with this great spirit and prevails on him to send the deer to the hungry Esquimaux. He informs the spirit that the people have in no way offended him, since he, the sorcerer, has taken great care that the whole of the meat was eaten up, and that last spring when the does were returning to him to drop their young, none of the little or embryo fawns were devoured by the dogs. After long incantations the magician announces that the patron of the deer condescends to supply the people with the spirits of the animals in a material form, and that soon there will be plenty in the land. He charges the people to fall on and slay and thereby win the approval of the spirit, who loves to see good people enjoying themselves, knowing that so long as the Esquimaux refrain from feeding their dogs with the unborn young, the spirits of the dead reindeer will return again to his watchful care. The dogs are not allowed to taste the flesh, and until the supply is plentiful they may not gnaw the leg-bones, lest the guardian of the deer should take offence and send no more of the animals. If, unfortunately, a dog should get at the meat, a piece of his tail is cut off or his ear is cropped to let the blood flow.¹ Again, the Central Esquimaux hold that all marine creatures sprang from the fingers of the goddess Sedna, and that therefore an Esquimaux must make atonement for every such animal that he kills. When a seal is brought into the hut, the woman must stop working till it has been cut up. After the capture of a ground seal, walrus, or whale they must rest for three days. Not all sorts of work, however, are forbidden, for they may mend articles made of sealskin, but they may not make anything new. For example, an old tent cover may be enlarged in order to build a larger hut, but it is not allowed to make a new one. Working on new deerskins is strictly forbidden. No skins of this kind obtained in summer may be prepared before the ice has formed and the first seal has been caught with the harpoon. Later on, as soon as the first walrus has been taken, the work must again stop until autumn comes round.

¹ L. M. Turner, "Ethnology of the Ungava district, Hudson Bay Territory," *Eleventh Annual Report of the*

Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, 1894), p. 200 sq.

Hence all families are eager to finish the work on deerskins as fast as possible, for until that is done the walrus season may not begin.¹ The Greenlanders are careful not to fracture the heads of seals or throw them into the sea, but pile them in a heap before the door, that the souls of the seals may not be enraged and scare their brethren from the coast.²

For like reasons, a tribe which depends for its subsistence, chiefly or in part, upon fishing is careful to treat the fish with every mark of honour and respect. The Indians of Peru "adored the fish that they caught in greatest abundance; for they said that the first fish that was made in the world above (for so they named Heaven) gave birth to all other fish of that species, and took care to send them plenty of its children to sustain their tribe. For this reason they worshipped sardines in one region, where they killed more of them than of any other fish; in others, the skate; in others, the dogfish; in others, the golden fish for its beauty; in others, the crawfish; in others, for want of larger gods, the crabs, where they had no other fish, or where they knew not how to catch and kill them. In short, they had whatever fish was most serviceable to them as their gods."³ The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia think that when a salmon is killed its soul returns to the salmon country. Hence they take care to throw the bones into the sea, in order that the soul may reanimate them at the resurrection of the salmon. Whereas if they burned the bones the soul would be lost, and so it would be quite impossible for that salmon to rise from the dead.⁴ In like manner the Ottawa Indians of Canada, believing that the souls of dead fish passed into other bodies of fish, never burned fish bones, for fear of displeasing the souls of the fish, who would come no more to the nets.⁵ The Hurons also refrained from

¹ Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 595. As to the antagonism which these Esquimaux suppose to exist between marine and terrestrial animals, see above, p. 336.

² Crantz, *History of Greenland*, i. 216.

³ Garcilasso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, First Part, bk. i. ch. 10, vol. i. p. 49 sq., Hakluyt Society. Cp. *id.*, vol. ii. p. 148.

⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 61 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

⁵ *Relations des Jésuites*, 1667, p. 12.

throwing fish bones into the fire, lest the souls of the fish should go and warn the other fish not to let themselves be caught, since the Hurons would burn their bones. Moreover, they had men who preached to the fish and persuaded them to come and be caught. A good preacher was much sought after, for they thought that the exhortations of a clever man had a great effect in drawing the fish to the nets. In the Huron fishing village where the French missionary Sagard stayed, the preacher to the fish prided himself very much on his eloquence, which was of a florid order. Every evening after supper, having seen that all the people were in their places and that a strict silence was observed, he preached to the fish. His text was that the Hurons did not burn fish bones. "Then enlarging on this theme with extraordinary unction, he exhorted and conjured and invited and implored the fish to come and be caught and to be of good courage and to fear nothing, for it was all to serve their friends who honoured them and did not burn their bones."¹ The disappearance of herring from the sea about Heligoland in 1530 was attributed by the fishermen to the misconduct of two lads who had whipped a freshly-caught herring and then flung it back into the sea.² A similar disappearance of the herrings from the Moray Firth, in the reign of Queen Anne, was set down by some people to a breach of the Sabbath which had been committed by the fishermen, while others opined that it was due to a quarrel in which blood had been spilt in the sea.³ For Scotch fishermen are persuaded that if blood be drawn in a quarrel on the coast where herring are being caught, the shoal will at once take its departure and not return for that season at least. West Highland fishermen believe that every shoal of herring has its leader which it follows wherever he goes. This leader is twice as big as an ordinary herring, and the fishermen call it the king of herring. When they chance to catch it in their nets they put it back carefully into the sea; for they would esteem it petty treason to destroy the

¹ Sagard, *Le Grand Voyage du Pays des Hurons*, p. 255 sqq. (p. 178 sqq. of the Paris reprint).

this reference I am indebted to my friend W. Robertson Smith.

² Hugh Miller, *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*, ch. xvii. p. 256 sq. (Edinburgh, 1889).

³ Schleiden, *Das Salz*, p. 47. For

royal fish.¹ The natives of the Duke of York Island annually decorate a canoe with flowers and ferns, lade it, or are supposed to lade it, with shell-money, and set it adrift to compensate the fish for their fellows who have been caught and eaten.² It is especially necessary to treat the first fish caught with consideration in order to conciliate the rest of the fish, whose conduct may be supposed to be influenced by the reception given to those of their kind which were the first to be taken. Accordingly the Maoris always put back into the sea the first fish caught, "with a prayer that it may tempt other fish to come and be caught."³

Still more stringent are the precautions taken when the fish are the first of the season. On salmon rivers, when the fish begin to run up the stream in spring, they are received with much deference by tribes who, like the Indians of the Pacific Coast of North America, subsist largely upon a fish diet. To some of these tribes the salmon is what corn is to the European, rice to the Chinese, and seals to the Esquimaux. Plenty of salmon means abundance in the camp and joy at the domestic hearth; failure of the salmon for a single season means famine and desolation, silence in the village, and sad hearts about the fire.⁴ Accordingly in British Columbia the Indians used to go out to meet the first fish as they came up the river. "They paid court to them, and would address them thus: 'You fish, you fish; you are all chiefs, you are; you are all chiefs.'"⁵ Amongst the Thlinket of Alaska the first halibut of the season is carefully handled and addressed as a chief, and a festival is given in his honour, after which the fishing goes on.⁶ Among the tribes of the Lower Fraser River when the first sockeye-salmon of the season has been caught, the fisherman carries it to the chief of his tribe, who delivers it to his wife. She prays, saying to the salmon, "Who has brought you here to make us

¹ Martin's "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 620.

² W. Powell, *Wanderings in a Wild Country*, p. 66 sq.

³ R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, p. 200; A. S. Thomson, *The Story of*

New Zealand, i. 202; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journal Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), p. 109.

⁴ A. G. Morice, *Au pays de l'Ours Noir*, p. 28.

⁵ Lubbock, *Origin of Civilisation*,⁴ p. 277, quoting *Metlakhkallah*, p. 96.

⁶ W. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 413.

happy? We are thankful to your chief for sending you." When she has cut and roasted the salmon according to certain prescribed rules, the whole tribe is invited and partakes of the fish, after they have purified themselves by drinking a decoction of certain plants which is regarded as a medicine for cleansing the people. But widowers, widows, menstruous women, and youths may not eat of this particular salmon. Even later, when the fish have become plentiful and these ceremonies are dispensed with, the same classes of persons are not allowed to eat fresh salmon, though they may partake of the dried fish. The sockeye-salmon must always be looked after carefully. Its bones have to be thrown into the river, after which the fish will revive and return to its chief in the west. Whereas if the fish are not treated with consideration, they will take their revenge, and the careless fisherman will be unlucky.¹ Among the Songish or Lkungen tribe of Vancouver Island it is a rule that on the day when the first salmon have been caught, the children must stand on the beach waiting for the boats to return. They stretch out their little arms and the salmon are heaped on them, the heads of the fish being always kept in the direction in which the salmon are swimming, else they would cease to run up the river. So the children carry them and lay them on a grassy place, carefully keeping the heads of the salmon turned in the same direction. Round the fish are placed four flat stones, on which the plant hog's wort (*Peucedanum leiocarpum*, Nutt.), red paint, and bulrushes are burnt as an offering to the salmon. When the salmon have been roasted each of the children receives one, which he or she is obliged to eat, leaving nothing over. But grown people are not allowed to eat the fish for several days. The bones of the salmon that the children have eaten may not touch the ground. They are kept in dishes, and on the fourth day an old woman, who pretends to be lame, gathers them in a huge basket and throws them into the sea.² The Tsimshian Indians of British Columbia observe certain ceremonies when

¹ Fr. Boas, in "Ninth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada," *Report of the British Association for 1894*, p. 461.

² Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 16 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*).

the first olachen fish of the season are caught. The fish are roasted on an instrument of elder-berry wood, and the man who roasts them must wear his travelling dress, mittens, cape, and so forth. While this is being done the Indians pray that plenty of olachen may come to their fishing-ground. The fire may not be blown up, and in eating the fish they may not cool it by blowing nor break a single bone. Everything must be neat and clean, and the rakes used for catching the fish must be kept hidden in the house.¹ In spring, when the winds blow soft from the south and the salmon begin to run up the Klamath river, the Karoks of California dance for salmon, to ensure a good catch. One of the Indians, called the Kareya or God-man, retires to the mountains and fasts for ten days. On his return the people flee, while he goes to the river, takes the first salmon of the catch, eats some of it, and with the rest kindles the sacred fire in the sweating-house. "No Indian may take a salmon before this dance is held, nor for ten days after it, even if his family are starving." The Karoks also believe that a fisherman will take no salmon if the poles of which his spearing-booth is made were gathered on the river-side, where the salmon might have seen them. The poles must be brought from the top of the highest mountain. The fisherman will also labour in vain if he uses the same poles a second year in booths or weirs, "because the old salmon will have told the young ones about them."² Among the Indians of the Columbia River, "when the salmon make their first appearance in the river, they are never allowed to be cut crosswise, nor boiled, but roasted; nor are they allowed to be sold without the heart being first taken out, nor to be kept over night, but must be all consumed or eaten the day they are taken out of the water. All these rules are observed for about ten days."³ They think that if the heart of a fish were eaten by a stranger at the beginning of the season, they would catch no more fish. Hence, they roast and eat the hearts themselves.⁴ There is a favourite fish of the Ainos

¹ *Id.*, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 51 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*).

² Stephen Powers, *Tribes of Cali-*

fornia, p. 31 sq.

³ Alex. Ross, *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River*, p. 97.

⁴ Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the U.S.*

which appears in their rivers about May and June. They prepare for the fishing by observing rules of ceremonial purity, and when they have gone out to fish, the women at home must keep strict silence or the fish would hear them and disappear. When the first fish is caught he is brought home and passed through a small opening at the end of the hut, but not through the door; for if he were passed through the door, "the other fish would certainly see him and disappear."¹ This may partly explain the custom observed by other savages of bringing game in certain cases into their huts, not by the door, but by the window, the smoke-hole, or by a special opening at the back of the hut.²

With some savages a special reason for respecting the bones of game, and generally of the animals which they eat, is a belief that, if the bones are preserved, they will in course of time be reclothed with flesh, and thus the animal will come to life again. It is, therefore, clearly for the interest of the hunter to leave the bones intact, since to destroy them would be to diminish the future supply of game. Many of the Minnetaree Indians "believe that the bones of those bisons which they have slain and divested of flesh rise again clothed with renewed flesh, and quickened with life, and become fat, and fit for slaughter the succeeding June."³ Hence on the western prairies of America, the skulls of buffaloes may be seen arranged in circles and symmetrical piles, awaiting the resurrection.⁴ After feasting on a dog, the Dacotas carefully collect the bones, scrape, wash, and bury them, "partly, as it is said, to testify to the dog-species, that in feasting upon one of their number no disrespect was meant to the species itself, and partly also from

Exploring Expedition, iv. 324, v. 119, where it is said, "a dog must never be permitted to eat the heart of a salmon; and in order to prevent this, they cut the heart of the fish out before they sell it."

¹ H. C. St. John, "The Ainos," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ii. (1873), p. 253; *id.*, *Notes and Sketches from the Wild Coasts of Nipon*, p. 27 sq.

² Scheffer, *Laponia*, p. 242 sq.; Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae eorumque lingua, vita, et religione pris-*

tina commentatio (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 503; *Revue d'Ethnographie*, ii. 308 sq.; *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vii. (1878), p. 207; Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," in *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 595; A. G. Morice, in *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93), p. 108.

³ James, *Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, i. 257.

⁴ Brinton, *Myths of the New World*,² p. 278.

a belief that the bones of the animal will rise and reproduce another."¹ In sacrificing an animal the Lapps regularly put aside the bones, eyes, ears, heart, lungs, sexual parts (if the animal was a male), and a morsel of flesh from each limb. Then, after eating the rest of the flesh, they laid the bones and the rest in anatomical order in a coffin and buried them with the usual rites, believing that the god to whom the animal was sacrificed would reclothe the bones with flesh and restore the animal to life in Jabme-Aimo, the subterranean world of the dead. Sometimes, as after feasting on a bear, they seem to have contented themselves with thus burying the bones.² Thus the Lapps, expected the resurrection of the slain animal to take place in another world, resembling in this respect the Kamtchatkans, who believed that every creature, down to the smallest fly, would rise from the dead and live underground.³ On the other hand, the North American Indians looked for the resurrection of the animals in the present world. The habit, observed especially by Mongolian peoples, of stuffing the skin of a sacrificed animal, or stretching it on a framework,⁴ points rather to a belief in a resurrection of the latter sort. The objection commonly entertained by primitive peoples to break the bones of the animals which they have eaten or sacrificed

¹ Keating, *Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River*, i. 452.

² E. J. Jessen, *De Finorum Lapponumque Norwegicorum religione pagana tractatus singularis*, pp. 46 sq., 52 sq., 65 (bound with C. Leem's *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae*). Compare Leem's work, pp. 418-420, 428 sq.; Acerbi, *Travels through Sweden, Finland, and Lapland*, ii. 302.

³ Steller, *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, p. 269; Krascheninnikow, *Kamtschatka*, p. 246.

⁴ See Erman, referred to above, p. 397; Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*, i. 274, ii. 182 sq., 214; Vambery, *Das Türkenvolk*, p. 118 sq. When a fox, the sacred animal of the Conchucos in Peru, had been killed, its skin was stuffed and set up (Bastian, *Die Culturländer des alten Amerika*, i. 443). Cp. the *bouphonia*, above, p. 294 sqq.

⁵ At the annual sacrifice of the

White Dog, the Iroquois were careful to strangle the animal without shedding its blood or breaking its bones; the dog was afterwards burned (L. H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois*, p. 210). It is a rule with some of the Australian blacks that in killing the native bear they must not break his bones. They say that the native bear once stole all the water of the river, and that if they were to break his bones or take off his skin before roasting him, he would do so again (Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 447 sqq.). When the Tartars whom Carpini visited killed animals for eating, they might not break their bones but burned them with fire (Carpini, *Historia Mongolorum* (Paris, 1838), cap. iii. § i. 2, p. 620). North American Indians might not break the bones of the animals which they ate at feasts (Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 72). In the warfeast held

may be based either on a belief in the resurrection of the animals, or on a fear of intimidating other creatures of the same species and offending the ghosts of the slain animals. The reluctance of North American Indians to let dogs gnaw the bones of animals¹ is perhaps only a precaution to prevent the bones from being broken.

We have already seen that some rude races believe in a resurrection of men² as well as of beasts, and it is quite

by Indian warriors after leaving home, a whole animal was cooked and had to be all eaten. No bone of it might be broken. After being stripped of the flesh the bones were hung on a tree (*Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, p. 287). On St. Olaf's Day (29th July) the Karels of Finland kill a lamb, without using a knife, and roast it whole. None of its bones may be broken. The lamb has not been shorn since spring. Some of the flesh is placed in a corner of the room for the house-spirits, some is deposited on the field and beside the birch-trees which are destined to be used as May-trees next year (W. Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 160 sq., note). Some of the Esquimaux in skinning a deer are careful not to break a single bone, and they will not break the bones of deer while walrus are being hunted (Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 595 sq.). The Innuits (Esquimaux) of Point Barrow, Alaska, carefully preserve unbroken the bones of the seals which they have caught and return them to the sea, either leaving them in an ice-crack far out from the land or dropping them through a hole in the ice. By doing so they think they secure good fortune in the pursuit of seals (*Report of the International Expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska* (Washington, 1885), p. 40). In this last custom the idea probably is that the bones will be re clothed with flesh and the seals come to life again. The Mosquito Indians of Central America carefully preserved the bones of deer and the shells of eggs, lest the deer or chickens should die or disappear (Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific*

States, i. 741). The Yurucares of Bolivia "carefully put by even small fish bones, saying that unless this is done the fish and game will disappear from the country" (Brinton, *Myths of the New World*,³ p. 278).

¹ *Relations des Jésuites*, 1634, p. 25, ed. 1858; A. Mackenzie, *Voyages through the Continent of America*, p. civ.; J. Dunn, *History of the Oregon Territory*, p. 99; Whympet, in *Journ. Royal Geogr. Soc.* xxxviii. (1868), p. 228; *id.*, in *Transact. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.*, vii. (1869), p. 174; A. P. Reid, "Religious Belief of the Ojibois Indians," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* iii. (1874), p. 111; Fr. Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 596. For more examples see above, pp. 404-408. After a meal the Indians of Costa Rica gather all the bones carefully and either burn them or put them out of reach of the dogs. See W. M. Gabb, *On the Indian Tribes and Languages of Costa Rica* (read before the American Philosophical Society, 20th Aug. 1875), p. 520 (Philadelphia, 1875). The custom of burning the bones to prevent the dogs getting them does not contradict the view suggested in the text. It may be a way of transmitting the bones to the spirit-land. The aborigines of Australia burn the bones of the animals which they eat, but for a different reason; they think that if an enemy got hold of the bones and burned them with charms, it would cause the death of the person who had eaten the animal (*Native Tribes of South Australia*, pp. 24, 196).

² See vol. i. p. 384 sq.

natural that people who entertain such a belief should take care of the bones of their dead in order that the original owners of the bones may have them to hand at the critical moment. Hence in the Mexican territories of Guazacualco and Yluta, where the Indians thought that the dead would rise again, the bones of the departed were deposited in baskets and hung up on trees, that their spirits might not be obliged to grub in the earth for them at the resurrection.¹ On the other hand, the Luritcha tribe of Central Australia, who eat their enemies, take steps to prevent their coming to life again, which might prove very inconvenient, by destroying the bones and especially the skulls of the bodies on which they have banqueted.²

There are traces in folk-tales of the same primitive notion that animals or men may rise from the dead, if only their bones are preserved; not uncommonly the animal or man in the story comes to life lame of a limb, because one of his bones has been eaten, broken, or lost.³ In a Magyar tale, the hero is cut in pieces, but the serpent-king lays the bones together in their proper order, and washes them with water, whereupon the hero revives. His shoulder-blade, however, had been lost, so the serpent-king supplied its place with one of gold and ivory.⁴ Such stories, as Mannhardt has seen, explain why Pythagoras, who claimed to have lived many lives, one after the other, was said to have exhibited his golden leg as a proof of his supernatural pretensions.⁵ Doubtless he explained that at one of his resurrections a leg had been broken or mislaid, and that he had been forced to replace it with one of gold. Similarly, when the murdered Pelops was restored to life, the shoulder which Demeter had eaten was made good with one of ivory.⁶

¹ Herrera, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, trans. by Stevens, iv. 126.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 475.

³ Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen*, pp. 57-74; *id.*, *B.K.* p. 116; Rochholz, *Deutscher Glaube und Brauch*, i. 219 sqq.; J. Curtin, *Myths and Folk-lore of Ireland*, p. 45 sq.; Cosquin, *Contes populaires de Lorraine*, ii. 25; Hartland, "The physicians of

Myddfai," *Archæological Review*, i. 30 sq. In folk-tales, as in primitive custom, the blood is sometimes not allowed to fall on the ground. See Cosquin, *l.c.*

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Germ. Myth.* p. 66.

⁵ Jamblichus, *Vita Pythag.* 92, 135, 140; Porphyry, *Vit. Pythag.* 28.

⁶ Pindar, *Olymp.* i. 37 sqq., with the Scholiast.

The story that one of the members of the mangled Osiris was eaten by fish, and that, when Isis collected his scattered limbs, she replaced the missing member with one of wood,¹ may perhaps belong to the same circle of beliefs.

There is a certain rule observed by savage hunters and fishers which, enigmatical at first sight, may be explained by this savage belief in resurrection. A traveller in America in the early part of this century was told by a half-breed Choctaw that the Indians "had an obscure story, somewhat resembling that of Jacob wrestling with an angel; and that the full-blooded Indians always separate the sinew which shrank, and that it is never seen in the venison exposed for sale; he did not know what they did with it. His elder brother, whom I afterwards met, told me that they eat it as a rarity; but I have also heard, though on less respectable authority, that they refrain from it, like the ancient Jews. A gentleman, who had lived on the Indian frontier, or in the nation, for ten or fifteen years, told me that he had often been surprised that the Indians always detached the sinew; but it had never occurred to him to inquire the reason."² James Adair, who knew the Indians of the South-Eastern States intimately, and whose theories appear not to have distorted his view of the facts, observes that "when in the woods, the Indians cut a small piece out of the lower part of the thighs of the deer they kill, lengthways and pretty deep. Among the great number of venison-hams they bring to our trading houses, I do not remember to have observed one without it. . . . And I have been assured by a gentleman of character, who is now an inhabitant of South Carolina, and well acquainted with the customs of the Northern Indians, that they also cut a piece out of the thigh of every deer they kill, and throw it away; and reckon it such a dangerous pollution to eat it as to occasion sickness and other misfortunes of sundry kinds, especially by spoiling their guns from shooting with proper force and direction."³ In recent years the statement of Adair's informant has been confirmed

¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 18. This is one of the sacred stories which the pious Herodotus (ii. 48) concealed and the pious Plutarch divulged.

² Adam Hodgson, *Letters from North America* (London, 1824), i. 244.

³ Adair, *History of the American Indians*, p. 137 sq.

by the French missionary Petitot, who has also published the "obscure story" to which Hodgson refers. The Loucheux and Hare-skin Indians who roam the bleak steppes and forests that stretch from Hudson's Bay to the Rocky Mountains, and northward to the frozen sea, are forbidden by custom to eat the sinew of the legs of animals. To explain this custom they tell the following "sacred story." Once upon a time a man found a burrow of porcupines, and going down into it after the porcupines he lost his way in the darkness, till a kind giant called "He who sees before and behind" released him by cleaving open the earth. So the man, whose name was "Fireless and Homeless," lived with the kind giant, and the giant hunted elans and beavers for him, and carried him about in the sheath of his flint knife. "But know, my son," said the giant, "that he who uses the sky as his head is angry with me, and has sworn my destruction. If he slays me the clouds will be tinged with my blood; they will be red with it, probably." Then he gave the man an axe made of the tooth of a gigantic beaver, and went forth to meet his foe. But from under the ice the man heard a dull muffled sound. It was a whale which was making this noise because it was naked and cold. Warned by the man, the giant went toward the whale, which took human shape, and rushed upon the giant. It was the wicked giant, the kind giant's enemy. The two struggled together for a long time, till the kind giant cried, "Oh, my son! cut, cut the sinew of the leg." The man cut the sinew, and the wicked giant fell down and was slain. That is why the Indians do not eat the sinew of the leg. Afterwards, one day the sky suddenly flushed a fiery red, so Fireless and Homeless knew that the kind giant was no more, and he wept.¹ This myth, it is almost needless to observe, does not really explain the custom. People do not usually observe a custom because on a particular occasion a mythical being is said to have acted in a certain way. But, on the contrary, they very often invent myths to explain why they practise certain customs. Dismissing, therefore, the story of Fireless

¹ Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Nord-ouest* (Paris, 1886), p. 132 sqq., *Dindjé* (Paris, 1867), pp. 77, 81 sq.; cp. pp. 41, 76, 213, 264.
id., *Traditions indiennes du Canada*

and Homeless as a myth invented to explain why the Indians abstain from eating a particular sinew, it may be suggested¹ that the original reason for observing the custom was a belief that the sinew in question was necessary to reproduction, and that deprived of it the slain animals could not come to life again and stock the steppes and prairies either of the present world or of the spirit land. We have seen that the resurrection of animals is a common article of savage faith, and that when the Lapps bury the skeleton of the male bear in the hope of its resurrection they are careful to bury the genital parts along with it.²

¹ The first part of this suggestion is due to my friend W. Robertson Smith. See his *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*,² p. 380, note 1. The Faleshas, a Jewish sect of Abyssinia, after killing an animal for food, "carefully remove the vein from the thighs with its surrounding flesh" (Halévy, "Travels in Abyssinia," in *Publications of the Society of Hebrew Literature*, second series, vol. ii. p. 220). Caffre men will not eat the sinew of the thigh; "it is carefully cut out and sent to the principal boy at the kraal, who with his companions consider it as their right" (Maclean, *Kafir Laws and Customs*, p. 151). Gallas who pride themselves on their descent will not eat the flesh of the biceps; the reasons assigned for the custom are inconsistent and unsatisfactory (Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost Afrikas: die materielle cultur der Dandkil, Galla und Somali*, p. 154).

² It seems to be a common custom with hunters to cut out the tongues of the animals which they kill. Omaha hunters remove the tongue of a slain buffalo through an opening made in the animal's throat. The tongues thus removed are sacred and may not touch any tool or metal except when they are boiling in the kettles at the sacred tent. They are eaten as sacred food (*Third Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 289 sq.). Indian bear-hunters cut out what they call the bear's little tongue (a fleshy mass under the real tongue) and keep it for good luck in hunting or burn it to determine from

its crackling, etc., whether the soul of the slain bear is angry with them or not (Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, ii. 251 sq.; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, v. 173; Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, pp. 179 sq., 184). In folk-tales the hero commonly cuts out the tongue of the wild beast which he has slain and preserves it as a token. The incident serves to show that the custom was a common one, since folk-tales reflect with accuracy the customs and beliefs of a primitive age. For examples of the incident, see Blade, *Contes populaires recueillis en Agenais*, pp. 12, 14; Dasent, *Tales from the Norse*, p. 133 sq. ("Shortshanks"); Schleicher, *Litauische Märchen*, p. 58; Sepp, *Altbayerischer Sagenschatz*, p. 114; Köhler on Gonzenbach's *Sicilianische Märchen*, ii. 230; Apollodorus, iii. 13. 3; Schol. on Apollonius Rhodius, i. 517; Mannhardt, *A. W. F.* p. 53; Poestion, *Lappländische Märchen*, p. 231 sq.; A. F. Chamberlain, in *Eighth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 35 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1892*); Zingerle, *Kinder und Hausmärchen aus Tirol*, No. 25, p. 127; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 342; Grundtvig, *Dänische Volksmärchen*, First Collection (Leipzig, 1878), übersetzt von Leo, p. 289; Leskien und Brugmann, *Litauische Volkslieder und Märchen*, pp. 405 sq., 409 sq.; Schott, *Walachische Märchen*, No. 10, p. 142; Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wälschtirol*, No. 39, p. 116 sq.; Basile,

Besides the animals which primitive man dreads for their strength and ferocity, and those which he reveres on account of the benefits which he expects from them, there is another class of creatures which he sometimes deems it necessary to

Pentamerone, Liebrecht's German translation, i. 99; Sébillot, *Contes Populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, No. 11, p. 80; Cosquin, *Contes Populaires de Lorraine*, i. p. 61; Haltrich, *Deutsche Volksmärchen aus dem Sachsenlande in Siebenbürgen*, No. 24, p. 104 sqq.; Grimm, *Household Tales*, No. 60. The incident often occurs in the type of tale analysed by Mr. E. S. Hartland in his *Legend of Perseus* (vol. i. pp. 12, 17, 18, etc.; vol. iii. pp. 6, 7, 8, etc.). Perhaps the cutting out of the tongues is a precaution to prevent the slain animals from telling their fate to the live animals, and thus frightening the latter away. The Gilyaks put out the eyes of the seals they have killed in order to prevent the animals from knowing and avenging themselves upon their murderers (L. von Schrenck, *Reisen und Forschungen im Amur-lande*, iii. 546). Tribes of South-Eastern Africa pluck out the right eye of any game they have killed and pour medicine, which has been charmed by magicians, into the socket (J. Macdonald, *Light in Africa*, p. 171). In Laos, hunters cut the tendons of the dead game lest the animals should come to life again and run away (E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos*, p. 23). On the other hand, the tongues of certain animals, as the otter and the eagle, are torn out and sometimes worn round their necks by Thlinket and Haida shamans as a means of conferring superhuman knowledge and power on their possessors (Fr. Boas, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 58, separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*; *id.*, in *Journal of American Folk-lore*, i. (1888), p. 218). In particular, an otter's tongue is supposed to convey a knowledge of "the language of all inanimate objects, of birds, animals, and other living creatures" to the shaman, who wears it in a little bag hung round his neck. See W. H. Dall, "Masks and Labrets,"

Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, 1884), p. 111 sq. Compare *id.*, *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 425; Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska*, p. 176. When a Galla priest sacrifices an animal and decides that the omens are favourable, he cuts out the tongue, sticks his thumb through it, and so flays the animal (Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die Geistige Cultur der Dandkil Galla und Somdi*, p. 47). In certain cases Gallas cut out the tongues of oxen and wear them on their heads as tokens (Paulitschke, *op. cit.* p. 156; *id.*, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die materielle Cultur*, etc., p. 226). In Bohemia a fox's tongue is worn as an amulet to make a timid person bold (Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 54, § 354); in Oldenburg and Belgium it is a remedy for erysipelas (Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 94, § 381; E. Monseur, in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, xxxi. (1895), p. 297 sq.). In Bohemia the tongue of a male snake, if cut from the living animal on St. George's Eve and placed under a person's tongue, will confer the gift of eloquence (Grohmann, *op. cit.* p. 81, § 576). The Homeric Greeks cut out the tongues of sacrificial victims and burned them (Homer, *Od.* iii. 332, 341). According to some accounts, the tongues of the victims were assigned by the Greeks to Hermes, as the god of speech, or to his human representatives the heralds (Schol. on Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 1110; Athenæus, i. p. 16 B; *Paroemiographi Graeci*, ed. Leutsch et Schneidewin, i. 415, No. 100). On the principles of sympathetic magic we might expect that heralds should taste the tongues of sacrificial victims to strengthen their voices. See further H. Gaidoz, "Les langues coupées," *Mélanges*, iii. (1886-87), col. 303-307; E. Monseur, *loc. cit.*

conciliate by worship and sacrifice. These are the vermin that infest the crops. To rid himself of these deadly foes the farmer has recourse to a thousand superstitious devices, of which, though many are meant to destroy or intimidate the vermin, others aim at propitiating them and persuading them by fair means to spare the fruits of the earth. Thus Esthonian peasants, in the Island of Oesel, stand in great awe of the weevil, an insect which is exceedingly destructive to the grain. They give it a fine name, and if a child is about to kill a weevil they say, "Don't do it; the more we hurt him, the more he hurts us." If they find a weevil they bury it in the earth instead of killing it. Some even put the weevil under a stone in the field and offer corn to it. They think that thus it is appeased and does less harm.¹ Amongst the Saxons of Transylvania, in order to keep sparrows from the corn, the sower begins by throwing the first handful of seed backwards over his head, saying, "That is for you, sparrows." To guard the corn against the attacks of leaf-flies (*Erdflöhe*) he shuts his eyes and scatters three handfuls of oats in different directions. Having made this offering to the leaf-flies he feels sure that they will spare the corn. A Transylvanian way of securing the crops against all birds, beasts, and insects, is this: After he has finished sowing, the sower goes once more from end to end of the field imitating the gesture of sowing, but with an empty hand. As he does so he says, "I sow this for the animals; I sow it for everything that flies and creeps, that walks and stands, that sings and springs, in the name of God the Father, etc."² The following is a German way of freeing a garden from caterpillars. After sunset or at midnight the mistress of the house, or another female member of the family, walks all round the garden dragging a broom after her. She must not look behind her, and must keep murmuring, "Good evening, Mother Caterpillar, you shall come with your husband to church." The garden gate is left open till the following morning.³ When the Matabele

¹ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. Heft 2, p. 105 note.

² Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Sieben-*

bürgens, p. 15 sq.

³ E. Krause, "Aberglaubische Kuren und sonstiger Aberglaube in Berlin," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xv. (1883), p. 93.

find caterpillars in their fields they put an ear of corn in a calabash, fill the vessel up with caterpillars, and set it down on a path leading to another village, hoping thus to induce the insects to migrate thither.¹ There is a certain ant whose destructive ravages are dreaded by the people of Nias. Generally they wage war on it by means of traps and other devices; but at the time of the rice-harvest they cease to call the insect by its common name, and refer to it under the title of Sibaia, a good spirit who is supposed to protect the crop from harm.² In South Mirzapur, when locusts threaten to eat up the fruits of the earth, the people catch one, decorate his head with a spot of red lead, salaam to him, and let him go. After these civilities he immediately departs along with his fellows.³

Sometimes in dealing with vermin the farmer aims at hitting a happy mean between excessive rigour on the one hand and weak indulgence on the other; kind but firm, he tempers severity with mercy. An ancient Greek treatise on farming advises the husbandman who would rid his lands of mice to act thus: "Take a sheet of paper and write on it as follows: 'I adjure you, ye mice here present, that ye neither injure me nor suffer another mouse to do so. I give you yonder field' (here you specify the field); 'but if ever I catch you here again, by the Mother of the Gods I will rend you in seven pieces.' Write this, and stick the paper on an unhewn stone in the field before sunrise, taking care to keep the written side up."⁴ In the Ardennes they say that to get rid of rats you should repeat the following words: "*Erat verbum, apud Deum vestrum*. Male rats and female rats, I conjure you, by the great God, to go out of my house, out of all my habitations, and to betake yourselves to such and such a place, there to end your days. *Decretis, reversis et desembarassis virgo potens, clemens, justitiae*." Then write the same words on pieces of paper, fold them up, and place one

¹ L. Deele, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 160.

² E. Modigliani, *Un Viaggio Nias*, p. 626.

³ W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 380.

⁴ *Geoponica*, xiii. 5. According to

the commentator, the field assigned to the mice is a neighbour's, but it may be a patch of waste ground on the farmer's own land. The charm is said to have been employed formerly in the neighbourhood of Paris (De Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 383).

of them under the door by which the rats are to go forth, and the other on the road which they are to take. This exorcism should be performed at sunrise.¹ About two years ago an American farmer was reported to have written a civil letter to the rats, telling them that his crops were short, that he could not afford to keep them through the winter, that he had been very kind to them, and that for their own good he thought they had better leave him and go to some of his neighbours who had more grain. This document he pinned to a post in his barn for the rats to read.² Sometimes the desired object is supposed to be attained by treating with high distinction one or two chosen individuals of the obnoxious species, while the rest are pursued with relentless rigour. In the East Indian island of Bali, the mice which ravage the rice-fields are caught in great numbers, and burned in the same way that corpses are burned. But two of the captured mice are allowed to live, and receive a little packet of white linen. Then the people bow down before them, as before gods, and let them go.³ In the Kangean archipelago, East Indies, when the mice prove very destructful to the rice-crop, the people rid themselves of the pest in the following manner. On a Friday, when the usual service in the mosque is over, four pairs of mice are solemnly united in marriage by the priest. Each pair is then shut up in a miniature canoe about a foot long. These canoes are filled with rice and other fruits of the earth, and the four pairs of mice are then escorted to the sea-shore just as if it were a real wedding. Wherever the procession passes the people beat with all their might on their rice-blocks. On reaching the shore, the canoes, with their little inmates, are launched and left to the mercy of the winds and waves.⁴ In some parts of Bohemia the peasant, though he kills field mice and grey mice without scruple, always spares white mice. If he finds a white mouse he takes it up

¹ Meyrac, *Traditions, Coutumes, Légendes et Contes des Ardennes*, p. 176.

² *American Journal of Folk-lore*, xi. (1898), p. 161.

³ R. van Eck, "Schetsen van het

eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, N.S., viii. (1879), p. 125.

⁴ J. L. van Gennep, "Bijdrage tot de Kennis van den Kangean-Archipel," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xli. (1896), p. 101.

carefully, and makes a comfortable bed for it in the window; for if it died the luck of the house would be gone, and the grey mice would multiply fearfully in the house.¹ When caterpillars invaded a vineyard or field in Syria, the virgins were gathered, and one of the caterpillars was taken and a girl made its mother. Then they bewailed and buried it. Thereafter they conducted the "mother" to the place where the caterpillars were, consoling her, in order that all the caterpillars might leave the garden.² On the first of September, Russian girls "make small coffins of turnips and other vegetables, enclose flies and other insects in them, and then bury them with a great show of mourning."³

On the shore of Delagoa Bay there thrives a small brown beetle which is very destructive to the beans and maize. The Baronga call it *noonoo*. In December or January, when the insects begin to swarm, women are sent to collect them from the bean-stalks in shells. When they have done so, a twin girl is charged with the duty of throwing the insects into a neighbouring lake. Accompanied by a woman of mature years and carrying the beetles in a calabash, the girl goes on her mission without saying a word to any one. At her back marches the whole troop of women, their arms, waists, and heads covered with grass and holding in their hands branches of manioc with large leaves which they wave to and fro, while they chant the words, "*Noonoo*, go away! Leave our fields! *Noonoo*, go away! leave our fields!" The little girl throws her calabash with the beetles into the water without looking behind her, and thereupon the women bellow out obscene songs, which they never dare to utter except on this occasion and at the ceremony for making rain.⁴

Another mode of getting rid of vermin and other noxious

¹ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 60, § 405.

² Lagarde, *Reliquiae juris ecclesiastici antiquissimae*, p. 135. For this passage I am indebted to my friend Prof. W. Robertson Smith, who kindly translated it for me from the Syriac. It occurs in the *Canons of Jacob of Edessa*, of which a German translation has been published

by C. Kayser (*Die Canones Jacob's von Edessa übersetzt und erläutert*, Leipsic, 1886; see p. 25 sq.).

³ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 255.

⁴ H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), p. 419 sq. As to the rain-making ceremony among the Ba-ronga, see vol. i. p. 91 sq.

creatures without hurting their feelings or showing them disrespect is to make images of them. Apollonius of Tyana is said to have freed Antioch from scorpions by making a bronze image of a scorpion and burying it under a small pillar in the middle of the city.¹ Gregory of Tours tells us that the city of Paris used to be free of dormice and serpents, but that in his lifetime, while they were cleaning a sewer, they found a bronze serpent and a bronze dormouse and removed them. "Since then," adds the good bishop, "dormice and serpents without number have been seen in Paris."² When their land was overrun with mice, the Philistines made golden images of the vermin and sent them out of the country in a new cart drawn by two cows, hoping that the real mice would simultaneously depart.³ So when a plague of serpents afflicted the Israelites in the desert, they made a serpent of brass and set it on a pole as a mode of staying the plague.⁴

Some of the Greek gods were worshipped under titles derived from the vermin or other pests which they were supposed to avert or exterminate. Thus we hear of Mouse Apollo,⁵ Locust Apollo,⁶ and Mildew Apollo;⁷ of Locust Hercules and Worm-killing Hercules;⁸ of Foxy Dionysus;⁹ and of Zeus the Fly-catcher or Averter of Flies.¹⁰ If we could trace all these and similar worshipers to their origin, we should probably find that they were originally addressed, not

¹ Malalas, *Chronographia*, p. 264, ed. Dindorf.

² Gregoire de Tours, *Histoire Ecclesiastique des Francs*, viii. 33, Guizot's translation. For more stories of the same sort, see Thiers, *Traité des Superstitions* (Paris, 1679), pp. 306-308.

³ 1 Samuel vi. 4-18. The passage in which the plague of mice is definitely described has been omitted in the existing Hebrew text, but is preserved in the Septuagint (1 Samuel v. 6, καὶ μύσες ῥῆς χώρας αὐτῆς ἀνεφάνησαν μύες). See Prof. A. F. Kirkpatrick on 1 Samuel v. 6.

⁴ Numbers xxi. 6-9.

⁵ Homer, *Iliad*, i. 39, with the Scholia and the comment of Eustathius; Strabo, xiii. 1. 48 and 63; Aelian,

Nat. Anim. xii. 5; Clement of Alexandria, *Protrept.* ii. 39, p. 34, ed. Potter; Pausanias, x. 12. 5.

⁶ Strabo, xiii. 1. 64; Pausanias, i. 24. 8.

⁷ Strabo, xiii. 1. 64; Eustathius, on Homer, *Iliad*, i. 39, p. 34.

⁸ Strabo and Eustathius, *l.c.*

⁹ My friend W. Ridgeway has pointed out that the epithet Bassareus applied to Dionysus (Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 30) appears to be derived from *bassara*, "a fox." See Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 771; W. Ridgeway, in *Classical Review*, x. (1896), p. 21 *sqq.*

¹⁰ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. 75; Pausanias, v. 14. 1, viii. 26. 7; Clement of Alexandria, *Protrept.* ii. 38, p. 33, ed. Potter.

to the high gods as the protectors of mankind, but to the baleful things themselves, the mice, locusts, mildew, and so forth, with the intention of flattering and soothing them, of disarming their malignity, and of persuading them to spare their worshippers. We know that the Romans worshipped the mildew, the farmer's plague, under its own proper name.¹ The ravages committed by mice among the crops both in ancient and modern times are notorious,² and according to a tradition which may be substantially correct the worship of the Mouse Apollo was instituted to avert them.³ The image of a mouse which stood beside Apollo's tripod in the god's temple⁴ may be compared with the golden mice which the Philistines made for the purpose of ridding themselves of the vermin; and the tame mice kept in his sanctuary, together with the white mice which lived under the altar,⁵ would on this hypothesis be parallel to the white mice which the Bohemian peasant still cherishes as the best way of keeping down the numbers of their grey-coated brethren. An Oriental counterpart of the Mouse Apollo is the ancient pillar or rude idol which the Chams of Indo-China call *yang-tikuh* or "god rat," and to which they offer sacrifices whenever rats infest their fields in excessive numbers.⁶ Another epithet applied to Apollo which probably admits of a similar explanation is Wolfish.⁷ Various legends set forth how the god received the title of Wolfish because he exterminated wolves;⁸ indeed this function was definitely attributed to him by the epithet Wolf-slayer.⁹ Arguing from the analogy of the preceding cases, we may suppose that

¹ *Robigo* or personified as *Robigus*. See Varro, *Rerum rusticarum*, i. 1. 6; *id.*, *De lingua latina*, vi. 16; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 905 sqq.; Tertullian, *De spectaculis*, 5; Augustine, *De civitate dei*, iv. 21; Lactantius, *Divin. Instit.* i. 20; Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³ ii. 43 sqq.; W. Warde Fowler, *The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, p. 88 sqq.

² Aristotle, *Hist. Anim.* vi. 37, p. 580 B. 15 sqq.; Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* xvii. 41; W. Warde Fowler in *The Classical Review*, vi. (1892), p. 413.

³ Polemo, cited by a scholiast on Homer, *Iliad*, i. 39 (ed. Bekker).

Compare Eustathius on Homer, *Iliad*, i. 39.

⁴ Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* xii. 5.

⁵ Aelian, *l.c.*

⁶ E. Aymonier, "Les Tchames et leurs religions," *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, xxiv. (1891), p. 236.

⁷ *Δόκεος* or *Δόκος*, Pausanias, i. 19. 3 (with my note), ii. 9. 7, ii. 19. 3, viii. 40. 5; Lucian, *Anacharsis*, 7; Bekker's *Anecdota Graeca*, i. 277, line 10 sq.

⁸ Pausanias, ii. 9. 7; Schol. on Demosthenes, xxiv. 114, p. 736.

⁹ Sophocles, *Electra*, 6.

at first the wolves themselves were propitiated by fair words and sacrifices to induce them to spare man and beast; and that at a later time, when the Greeks, or rather the enlightened portion of them, had outgrown this rude form of worship, they transferred the duty of keeping off the wolves to a beneficent deity who discharged the same useful office for other pests, such as mice, locusts, and mildew. A reminiscence of the direct propitiation of the fierce and dangerous beasts themselves is preserved in the legends told to explain the origin of the Lyceum or Place of Wolves at Athens and of the sanctuary of Wolfish Apollo at Sicyon. It is said that once when Athens was infested by wolves, Apollo commanded sacrifices to be offered on the Place of Wolves and the smell proved fatal to the animals.¹ Similarly at Sicyon, when the flocks suffered heavily from the ravages of wolves, the same god directed the shepherds to set forth meat mixed with a certain bark, and the wolves devoured the tainted meat and perished.² These legends probably reflect in a distorted form an old custom of sacrificing to the wolves, in other words of feeding them to mollify their ferocity and win their favour. We know that such a custom prevailed among the Letts down to comparatively recent times. In the month of December, about Christmas time, they sacrificed a goat to the wolves, with strange idolatrous rites, at a cross-road, for the purpose of inducing the wolves to spare the flocks and herds. After offering the sacrifice they used to brag that no beast of theirs would fall a victim to the ravening maw of a wolf for all the rest of that year, no, not though the pack were to run right through the herd. Sacrifices of this sort are reported to have been secretly offered by the Letts as late as the seventeenth century;³ and if we knew more of peasant life in ancient Greece we might find that on winter days, while Aristotle was expounding his philosophy in the Lyceum or Place of Wolves at Athens, the Attic peasant was still carrying forth, in the crisp frosty air, his offering to the wolves, which all night long had been howling round his sheepfold in a snowy glen of Parnes or Pentelicus.

¹ Schol. on Demosthenes, xxiv. 114, p. 736.

² Pausanias, ii. 9. 7.

³ P. Einhorn, *Reformatio gentis Letticae in Ducatu Curlandiae*, re-

printed in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, vol. ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848), p. 621. The preface of Einhorn's work is dated 17th July 1636.

With some savages a reason for respecting and sparing certain species of animals is a belief that the souls of their dead kinsfolk are lodged in these creatures. Thus the Indians of Cayenne refuse to eat certain large fish, because they say that the soul of some one of their relations might be in the fish, and that hence in eating the fish they might swallow the soul.¹ Once when a Spaniard was out hunting with two Piros Indians of Peru, they passed a deserted house in which they saw a fine jaguar. The Indians drew the Spaniard away, and when he asked why they did not attack the animal, they said: "It was our sister. She died at the last rains. We abandoned the hut and on the second night she came back. It was the beautiful jaguar."² Similarly a missionary remarked of the Chiriguano Indians of Bolivia that they must have some idea of the transmigration of souls; for one day, while he was talking with a woman of the tribe who had left her daughter in a neighbouring village, she started at sight of a fox passing near and exclaimed, "May it not be the soul of my daughter who has died?"³ The Colombian Indians in the district of Popayan will not kill the deer of their forests, and entertain such a respect for these animals that they view with horror and indignation any one who dares to eat venison in their presence. They say that the souls of persons who have led a good life are in the deer.⁴ In like manner the Indians of California formerly refused to eat the flesh of large game, because they held that the bodies of all large animals contained the souls of past generations of men and women. However, the Indians who were maintained at the Spanish missions and received their rations in the form of beef, had to overcome their conscientious scruples in regard to cattle. Once a half-caste, wishing to amuse himself at the expense of the devout, cooked a dish of bear's flesh for them and told them it was beef. They ate heartily of it, but when they learned the trick that had been played on them, they were seized with retchings, which only ended with the reappearance of the

¹ A. Biet, *Voyage de la France Equinoxiale en l'Île de Cayenne* (Paris, 1664), p. 361.

² Ch. Wiener, *Perou et Bolivie* (Paris, 1880), p. 369.

³ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, viii. 335 sqq.

⁴ Fr. Coreal, *Voyages aux Indes occidentales* (Amsterdam, 1722), ii. 132.

obnoxious meat. A reproach hurled by the wild tribes at their brethren who had fallen under European influence was "They eat venison!"¹ Californian Indians have been known to plead for the life of an old grizzly she-bear, because they thought it housed the soul of a dead grandam, whose withered features had borne some likeness to the wrinkled face of the bear.²

The doctrine of the transmigration of souls is viewed with great favour by the negroes of northern Guinea. In different parts of the coast different species of animals are accounted sacred, because they are supposed to be animated by the spirits of the dead. Hence monkeys near Fishtown, snakes at Whydah, and crocodiles near Dix Cove live in the odour of sanctity.³ In the lagoon of Tendo, on the Ivory Coast of West Africa, there is a certain sacred islet covered with impenetrable scrub, on which no native dare set foot. It is peopled only by countless huge bats, which at evening quit the island by hundreds of thousands to fly towards the River Tanoe, which flows into the lagoon. The natives say that these bats are the souls of the dead, who retire during the day to the holy isle and are bound to present themselves every night at the abode of Tano, the great and good fetish who dwells by the river of his name. Paddling past the island the negroes will not look at it, but turn away their heads. A European in crossing the lagoon wished to shoot one of the bats, but his boatmen implored him to refrain, lest he should kill the soul of one of their kinsfolk.⁴ Some of the Chams of Indo-China believe that the souls of the dead inhabit the bodies of certain animals, such as serpents, crocodiles, and so forth, the kind of animal varying with the family. The species of animals most commonly regarded as tenanted by the spirits of the departed are the rodents and active climbing creatures which abound in the country, such as squirrels. According to some people, these small animals are especially the abode of still-born infants or of children who died young. The souls of these little ones appear in dreams to their mourning

¹ Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 215 sq.

² Schoolcraft, *op. cit.* iii. 113.

³ J. L. Wilson, *Western Africa*, p. 210.

⁴ J. C. Reichenbach, "Étude sur le royaume d'Assinie," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), vii. Série, xi. (1890), p. 322 sq.

parents and say: "I inhabit the body of a squirrel. Honour me as such. Make me a present of a flower, a cocoa-nut, a cup of roasted rice," and so on. The parents discharge this pious duty, respect these familiar spirits, ascribe illnesses to their displeasure, pray to them for healing, and on their deathbed commend to their descendants the care of such and such a spirit, as a member of the family.¹

The Igorrots of Cabugatan, in the Philippines, regard the eels in their stream as the souls of their forefathers. Hence instead of catching and eating them they feed them, till the eels become as tame as carp in a pond.² In the Sandwich Islands various people worshipped diverse kinds of animals, such as fowls, lizards, owls, rats, and so forth. If a man who adored sharks happened to have a child still-born, he would endeavour to lodge the soul of the dead infant in the body of a shark. For this purpose he laid the tiny body, together with a couple of roots of taro, some kava, and a piece of sugar-cane, on a mat, recited prayers over it, and then flung the whole into the sea, believing that by virtue of this offering the transmigration of the child's soul into the shark's body would be effected, and that henceforth the voracious monsters would spare all members of the family who might otherwise be exposed to their attacks. In the temples dedicated to sharks there were priests who, morning and evening, addressed prayers to the shark-idol, and rubbed their bodies with water and salt, which, drying on their skin, imparted to it an appearance of being covered with scales. They also wore red stuffs, uttered shrill cries, leaped over the sacred enclosure, and persuaded the credulous islanders that they knew the exact moment when the children thrown into the sea were turned into sharks. For this blissful revelation they were naturally rewarded by the happy parents with a plentiful supply of little pigs, cocoa-nuts, kava, and so on.³ The Pelew Islanders believed that the souls of their forefathers lived in certain species of animals, which accordingly they held sacred and would not injure.

¹ E. Aymonier, "Les Tchames et leurs religions," *Revue de l'histoire des Religions*, xxiv. (1891), p. 267.

² F. Blumentritt, "Der Ahnencultus und die religiösen Anschauungen der

Malaïen des Philippinen-Archipels," *Mittheilungen der Wiener Geogr. Gesellschaft*, 1882, p. 164.

³ L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde*, ii. 595 sq. (Paris, 1829).

For this reason one man would not kill snakes, another would not harm pigeons, and so on; but every one was quite ready to kill and eat the sacred animals of his neighbours.¹ The Kayans of Borneo think that when the human soul departs from the body at death it may take the form of an animal or bird. For example, if a deer were seen browsing near a man's grave, his relations would probably conclude that his soul had assumed the shape of a deer, and the whole family would abstain from eating venison lest they should annoy the deceased.²

Some of the Papuans on the northern coast of New Guinea also believe in the transmigration of souls. They hold that at death the souls of human beings sometimes pass into animals, such as cassowaries, fish, or pigs, and they abstain from eating the animals of the sort in which the spirits of the dead are supposed to have taken up their abode.³ In the Solomon Islands a man at the point of death would gather the members of his family about him and inform them of the particular sort of creature, say a bird or a butterfly, into which he proposed to transmigrate. Henceforth the family would regard that species of animal as sacred and would neither kill nor injure it. If they fell in with a creature of the kind, it might be a bird or a butterfly, they would say, "That is papa," and offer him a cocoa-nut.⁴ In these islands sharks are very often supposed to be ghosts, for dying people frequently announce their intention of being sharks when they have shuffled off their human shape. After that, if any shark remarkable for its size or colour is seen to haunt a certain shore or rock, it is taken to be somebody's ghost, and the name of the deceased is given to it. For example, at Ulawa a dreaded man-eating shark received the name of a dead man and was propitiated with offerings of

¹ K. Semper, *Die Palau-Inseln im Stillen Ocean*, pp. 87 sq., 193. These sacred animals were called *kalids*. A somewhat different account of the *kalids* of the Pelew Islanders is given by Kubary ("Die Religion der Peleuer," in Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde*, i. 5 sqq.).

² C. Hose, "The Natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*,

xxiii. (1894), p. 165.

³ F. S. A. de Clercq, "De West-en Noordkust van Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea," *Tijdschrift van het Kon. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 635.

⁴ Mr. Sleight of Lifu, quoted by Prof. E. B. Tylor, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxviii. (1898), p. 147.

porpoise teeth. At Saa, certain food, for example cocoa-nuts from particular trees, is reserved to feed such a ghost-shark, but men of whom it is positively known that after death they will be in sharks are allowed by anticipation to partake of the shark-food in the sacred place. Other men will sometimes join themselves to their company, and speaking with the voice of a shark-ghost will say, "Give me to eat of that food." If such a man happens to be really possessed of supernatural power, he will in due time become a shark-ghost himself; but it is perfectly possible that he may fail. In Savo not very long ago a certain man had a shark that he used to feed and to which he offered sacrifice. He swam out to it with food, called it by name, and it came to him. Of course it was not a common shark, but a ghost, the knowledge of which had been handed down to him from his ancestors. Alligators also may lodge the souls of dead Solomon Islanders. In the island of Florida a story was told of an alligator that used to come up out of the sea and make itself quite at home in the village in which the man whose ghost it was had lived. It went by the name of the deceased, and though there was one man in particular who had a special connection with it and was said to own it, the animal was on friendly terms with everybody in the place and would even let children ride on its back. But the village where this happened has not yet been identified.¹ In the same island the appearance of anything wonderful is taken as proof of a ghostly presence and stamps the place as sacred. For example, a man planted some cocoa-nut palms and almond trees in the bush and died not long afterwards. After his death there appeared among the trees a great rarity in the shape of a white cuscus. The animal was accordingly assumed to be the ghost of the departed planter and went by his name. The place became sacred, and no one would gather the fruits of the trees there, until two young men, who had been trained in the principles of Christianity, boldly invaded the sanctuary and appropriated the almonds and cocoa-nuts.² It must not be supposed, however, that the choice of transmigration open to a

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 179 sq.

² Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 177.

Solomon Islander is restricted to the animal kingdom; he is free after death to become a vegetable, if he feels so disposed. When a mission-school was established in the island of Ulawa it was observed with surprise that the natives would not eat bananas and had ceased to plant the tree. Inquiry elicited the origin of the restriction, which was recent and well remembered. A man of great influence, dying not long before, had forbidden the eating of bananas after his death, saying that he would be in the banana. The older natives would still mention his name and say, "We cannot eat So-and-so."¹

We are now perhaps in a position to understand the ambiguous behaviour of the Ainos and Gilyaks towards the bear. It has been shown that the sharp line of demarcation which we draw between mankind and the lower animals does not exist for the savage. To him many of the other animals appear as his equals or even his superiors, not merely in brute force but in intelligence; and if choice or necessity leads him to take their lives, he feels bound, out of regard to his own safety, to do it in a way which will be as inoffensive as possible not merely to the living animal, but to its departed spirit and to all the other animals of the same species, which would resent an affront put upon one of their kind much as a tribe of savages would revenge an injury or insult offered to a tribesman. We have seen that among the many devices by which the savage seeks to atone for the wrong done by him to his animal victims one is to show marked deference to a few chosen individuals of the species, for such behaviour is apparently regarded as entitling him to exterminate with impunity all the rest of the species upon which he can lay hands. This principle perhaps explains the attitude, at first sight puzzling and contradictory, of the Ainos towards the bear. The flesh and skin of the bear

¹ Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 33. East Indian evidence of the belief in transmigration into animals is collected by G. A. Wilken ("Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids*, June 1884, p. 988 *sqq.*), who argues that this belief supplies the link between ancestor-worship and totemism. Compare the

same writer's article "Iets over de Papoewas van de Geelvinksbai," p. 24 *sqq.* (separate reprint from *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Ned. Indië*, 5e Volgreeks ii.). Wilken's view on this subject is favoured by Professor E. B. Tylor (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxviii. (1898), p. 146 *sq.*).

regularly afford them food and clothing; but since the bear is an intelligent and powerful animal, it is necessary to offer some satisfaction or atonement to the bear species for the loss which it sustains in the death of so many of its members. This satisfaction or atonement is made by rearing young bears, treating them, so long as they live, with respect, and killing them with extraordinary marks of sorrow and devotion. So the other bears are appeased, and do not resent the slaughter of their kind by attacking the slayers or deserting the country, which would deprive the Ainos of one of their means of subsistence.

Thus the primitive worship of animals assumes two forms, which are in some respects the converse of each other. On the one hand, animals are respected, and are therefore neither killed nor eaten. On the other hand, animals are worshipped because they are habitually killed and eaten. In both forms of worship the animal is revered on account of some benefit, positive or negative, which the savage hopes to receive from it. In the former worship the benefit comes either in the positive form of protection, advice, and help which the animal affords the man, or in the negative one of abstinence from injuries which it is in the power of the animal to inflict. In the latter worship the benefit takes the material form of the animal's flesh and skin. The two forms of worship are in some measure antithetical: in the one, the animal is not eaten because it is revered; in the other, it is revered because it is eaten. But both may be practised by the same people, as we see in the case of the North American Indians, who, while they revere and spare their totem animals, also revere the animals and fish upon which they subsist. The aborigines of Australia have totemism in the most primitive form known to us, but, so far as I am aware, there is no clear evidence that they attempt, like the North American Indians, to conciliate the animals which they kill and eat. The means which the Australians adopt to secure a plentiful supply of game appear to be primarily based not on conciliation, but on sympathetic magic,¹ a principle to which

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 167 sqq.; *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 280. See

above, p. 113 sq., and vol. i. p. 23 sq. However, Collins reports that among the natives of New South Wales the women

the North American Indians also resort for the same purpose.¹ Hence, as the Australians undoubtedly represent a ruder and earlier stage of human progress than the American Indians, it would seem that before hunters think of worshipping the game as a means of ensuring an abundant supply of it, they seek to attain the same end by sympathetic magic. This, again, would show—what there is good reason for believing—that sympathetic magic is one of the earliest means by which man endeavours to adapt the agencies of nature to his needs.

Corresponding to the two distinct types of animal worship, there are two distinct types of the custom of killing the animal god. On the one hand, when the revered animal is habitually spared, it is nevertheless killed—and sometimes eaten—on rare and solemn occasions. Examples of this custom have been already given and an explanation of them offered. On the other hand, when the revered animal is habitually killed, the slaughter of any one of the species involves the killing of the god, and is atoned for on the spot by apologies and sacrifices, especially when the animal is a powerful and dangerous one; and, in addition to this ordinary and everyday atonement, there is a special annual atonement, at which a select individual of the species is slain with extraordinary marks of respect and devotion. Clearly the two types of sacramental killing—the Egyptian and the Aino types, as we may call them for distinction—are liable to be confounded by an observer; and, before we can say to which type any particular example belongs, it is necessary to ascertain whether the animal sacramentally slain belongs to a species which is habitually spared, or to one which is habitually killed by the tribe. In the former case the example belongs to the Egyptian type of sacrament, in the latter to the Aino type.

were "compelled to sit in their canoe, exposed to the fervour of the mid-day sun, hour after hour, chaunting their little song, and inviting the fish beneath them to take their bait" (D. Collins, *An account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, London, 1804, p. 387). This may have been a form of conciliation like that employed by the

American Indians towards the fish and game. But the account is not precise enough to allow us to speak with confidence.

¹ Catlin, *O-Kee-pa*, Folium reservatum; Lewis and Clarke, *Travels to the Source of the Missouri River* (London, 1815), i. 205 sq.

The practice of pastoral tribes appears to furnish examples of both types of sacrament. "Pastoral tribes," says the most learned ethnologist of the day, "being sometimes obliged to sell their herds to strangers who may handle the bones disrespectfully, seek to avert the danger which such a sacrilege would entail by consecrating one of the herd as an object of worship, eating it sacramentally in the family circle with closed doors, and afterwards treating the bones with all the ceremonious respect which, strictly speaking, should be accorded to every head of cattle, but which, being punctually paid to the representative animal, is deemed to be paid to all. Such family meals are found among various peoples, especially those of the Caucasus. When amongst the Abchases the shepherds in spring eat their common meal with their loins girt and their staffs in their hands, this may be looked upon both as a sacrament and as an oath of mutual help and support. For the strongest of all oaths is that which is accompanied with the eating of a sacred substance, since the perjured person cannot possibly escape the avenging god whom he has taken into his body and assimilated."¹ This kind of sacrament is of the Aino or expiatory type, since it is meant to atone to the species for the possible ill-usage of individuals. An expiation, similar in principle but different in details, is offered by the Kalmucks to the sheep, whose flesh is one of their staple foods. Rich Kalmucks are in the habit of consecrating a white ram under the title of "the ram of heaven" or "the ram of the spirit." The animal is never shorn and never sold; but when it grows old and its owner wishes to consecrate a new one, the old ram must be killed and eaten at a feast to which the neighbours are invited. On a lucky day, generally in autumn when the sheep are fat, a sorcerer

¹ A. Bastian, in *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie, und Urgeschichte*, 1870-71, p. 59. J. Reinegg (*Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, Gotha, St. Petersburg, and Hildesheim, 1796-97, ii. 12 sq.) describes what seems to be a sacrament of the Abghazes (Abchases). It takes place in the middle of autumn. A white ox called Ogginn appears from a holy

cave, which is also called Ogginn. It is caught and led about amongst the assembled men (women are excluded) amid joyful cries. Then it is killed and eaten. Any man who did not get at least a scrap of the sacred flesh would deem himself most unfortunate. The bones are then carefully collected, burned in a great hole, and the ashes buried there.

kills the old ram, after sprinkling it with milk. Its flesh is eaten; the skeleton, with a portion of the fat, is burned on a turf altar; and the skin, with the head and feet, is hung up.¹

An example of a sacrament of the Egyptian type is furnished by the Todas, a pastoral people of Southern India, who subsist largely upon the milk of their buffaloes. Amongst them "the buffalo is to a certain degree held sacred" and "is treated with great kindness, even with a degree of adoration, by the people."² They never eat the flesh of the cow buffalo, and as a rule abstain from the flesh of the male. But to the latter rule there is a single exception. Once a year all the adult males of the village join in the ceremony of killing and eating a very young male calf,—seemingly under a month old. They take the animal into the dark recesses of the village wood, where it is killed with a club made from the sacred tree of the Todas (the *tude* or *Millingtonia*). A sacred fire having been made by the rubbing of sticks, the flesh of the calf is roasted on the embers of certain trees, and is eaten by the men alone, women being excluded from the assembly. This is the only occasion on which the Todas eat buffalo flesh.³ The Madi or Moru tribe of Central Africa, whose chief wealth is their cattle, though they also practise agriculture, appear to kill a lamb sacramentally on certain solemn occasions. The custom is thus described by Dr. Felkin: "A remarkable custom is observed at stated times—once a year, I am led to believe. I have not been able to ascertain what exact meaning is attached to it. It appears, however, to relieve the people's minds, for beforehand they evince much sadness, and seem very joyful when the ceremony

¹ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, vi. 632, note. On the Kalmucks as a people of shepherds and on their diet of mutton, see Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des russischen Reichs*, p. 406 sq., cp. 207; B. Bergmann, *Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmücken* (Riga, 1804-5), ii. 80 sqq., 122; Pallas, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs*, i. 319, 325. According to Pallas,

it is only rich Kalmucks who commonly kill their sheep or cattle for eating; ordinary Kalmucks do not usually kill them except in case of necessity or at great merry-makings. It is, therefore, especially the rich who need to make expiation.

² W. E. Marshall, *Travels amongst the Todas*, p. 129 sq. On the Todas, see also above, vol. i. p. 147.

³ Marshall, *op. cit.* pp. 80 sq., 130.

is duly accomplished. The following is what takes place: A large concourse of people of all ages assemble, and sit down round a circle of stones, which is erected by the side of a road (really a narrow path). A very choice lamb is then fetched by a boy, who leads it four times round the assembled people. As it passes they pluck off little bits of its fleece and place them in their hair, or on to some other part of their body. The lamb is then led up to the stones, and there killed by a man belonging to a kind of priestly order, who takes some of the blood and sprinkles it four times over the people. He then applies it individually. On the children he makes a small ring of blood over the lower end of the breast bone, on women and girls he makes a mark above the breasts, and the men he touches on each shoulder. He then proceeds to explain the ceremony, and to exhort the people to show kindness. . . . When this discourse, which is at times of great length, is over, the people rise, each places a leaf on or by the circle of stones, and then they depart with signs of great joy. The lamb's skull is hung on a tree near the stones, and its flesh is eaten by the poor. This ceremony is observed on a small scale at other times. If a family is in any great trouble, through illness or bereavement, their friends and neighbours come together and a lamb is killed: this is thought to avert further evil. The same custom prevails at the grave of departed friends, and also on joyful occasions, such as the return of a son home after a very prolonged absence.¹ The sorrow thus manifested by the people at the annual slaughter of the lamb clearly indicates that the lamb slain is a divine animal, whose death is mourned by his worshippers,² just as the death of the sacred buzzard was mourned by the Californians and the death of the Theban ram by the Egyptians. The smearing each of the worshippers with the blood of the lamb is a form of communion with the divinity;³

¹ R. W. Felkin, "Notes on the Madi or Moru tribe of Central Africa," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, xii. (1882-84), p. 336 sq.

² Mutton appears to be now eaten by the tribe as a regular article of food (Felkin, *op. cit.* p. 307), but this is

not inconsistent with the original sanctity of the sheep.

³ See W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,¹ p. 344 sqq. As to communion by means of an external application, see above, p. 361 sqq.

the vehicle of the divine life is applied externally instead of being taken internally, as when the blood is drunk or the flesh eaten.

The form of communion in which the sacred animal is taken from house to house, that all may enjoy a share of its divine influence, has been exemplified by the Gilyak custom of promenading the bear through the village before it is slain. A similar form of communion with the sacred snake is observed by a Snake tribe in the Punjab. Once a year in the month of September the snake is worshipped by all castes and religions for nine days only. At the end of August the Mirasans, especially those of the snake tribe, make a snake of dough which they paint black and red, and place on a winnowing basket. This basket they carry round the village, and on entering any house they say—

“God be with you all !
May every ill be far !
May our patron's (Gugga's) word thrive !”

Then they present the basket with the snake, saying—

“A small cake of flour :
A little bit of butter :
If you obey the snake,
You and yours shall thrive !”

Strictly speaking, a cake and butter should be given, but it is seldom done. Every one, however, gives something, generally a handful of dough or some corn. In houses where there is a new bride or whence a bride has gone, or where a son has been born, it is usual to give a rupee and a quarter, or some cloth. Sometimes the bearers of the snake also sing—

“Give the snake a piece of cloth,
And he will send a lively bride !”

When every house has been thus visited, the dough snake is buried and a small grave is erected over it. Hither during the nine days of September the women come to worship. They bring a basin of curds, a small portion of which they offer at the snake's grave, kneeling on the ground and touching the earth with their foreheads. Then they go

home and divide the rest of the curds among the children. Here the dough snake is clearly a substitute for a real snake. Indeed, in districts where snakes abound the worship is offered, not at the grave of the dough snake, but in the jungles where snakes are known to be. Besides this yearly worship performed by all the people, the members of the Snake tribe worship in the same way every morning after a new moon. The Snake tribe is not uncommon in the Punjab. Members of it will not kill a snake and they say that its bite does not hurt them. If they find a dead snake, they put clothes on it and give it a regular funeral.¹

Ceremonies closely analogous to this Indian worship of the snake have survived in Europe into recent times, and doubtless date from a very primitive paganism. The best-known example is the "hunting of the wren." By many European peoples—the ancient Greeks and Romans, the modern Italians, Spaniards, French, Germans, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, English, and Welsh—the wren has been designated the king, the little king, the king of birds, the hedge king, and so forth,² and has been reckoned amongst those birds which it is extremely unlucky to kill. In England it is supposed that if any one kills a wren or harries its nest, he will infallibly break a bone or meet with some dreadful misfortune within the year;³ sometimes it is thought that the cows will give bloody milk.⁴ In Scotland the wren is called "the Lady of Heaven's hen," and boys say—

"Malisons, malisons, mair than ten,
That harry the Ladye of Heaven's hen!"⁵

At Saint Donan, in Brittany, people believe that if children touch the young wrens in the nest, they will suffer from the fire of St. Lawrence, that is, from pimples on the face, legs,

¹ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 91, § 555.

² See Ch. Vallancey, *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, iv. (Dublin, 1786), p. 97; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 195 sq., Bohn's ed.; Swainson, *Folk-lore of British Birds*, p. 36; E. Rolland, *Faune populaire de la France*, ii. 288 sqq. The names for it are

βασιλεως, regulus, rex avium (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 90, x. 203), *re di siepe, r-yeselo, roitelat, roi des oiseaux, Zaunkönig*, etc.

³ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 194.

⁴ Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, p. 188.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 186.

and so on.¹ In other parts of France it is believed that if a person kills a wren or harries its nest, his house will be struck by lightning, or that the fingers with which he did the deed will shrivel up and drop off, or at least be maimed, or that his cattle will suffer in their feet.² Notwithstanding such beliefs, the custom of annually killing the wren has prevailed widely both in this country and in France. In the Isle of Man last century the custom was observed on Christmas Eve or rather Christmas morning. On the twenty-fourth of December, towards evening, all the servants got a holiday; they did not go to bed all night, but rambled about till the bells rang in all the churches at midnight. When prayers were over, they went to hunt the wren, and having found one of these birds they killed it and fastened it to the top of a long pole with its wings extended. Thus they carried it in procession to every house chanting the following rhyme—

“We hunted the wren for Robin the Bobbin,
We hunted the wren for Jack of the Can,
We hunted the wren for Robin the Bobbin,
We hunted the wren for every one.”

When they had gone from house to house and collected all the money they could, they laid the wren on a bier and carried it in procession to the parish churchyard, where they made a grave and buried it “with the utmost solemnity, singing dirges over her in the Manks language, which they call her knell; after which Christmas begins.” The burial over, the company outside the church-yard formed a circle and danced to music. About the middle of the nineteenth century the burial of the wren took place in the Isle of Man on St. Stephen’s Day (the twenty-sixth of December). Boys went from door to door with a wren suspended by the legs in the centre of two hoops which crossed each other at right angles and were decorated with evergreens and ribbons. The bearers sang certain lines in which reference was made to boiling and eating the bird. If at the close of the song they received a small coin, they gave in

¹ P. Sébillot, *Traditions et Superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, ii. 214.

² A. Bosquet, *La Normandie*

Romanesque et Merveilleuse, p. 221;

Rolland, *op. cit.* ii. 294 sq.; Sébillot,

l.c.; Swainson, *op. cit.* p. 42.

return a feather of the wren; so that before the end of the day the bird often hung almost featherless. The wren was then buried, no longer in the churchyard, but on the sea-shore or in some waste place. The feathers distributed were preserved with religious care, it being believed that every feather was an effectual preservative from shipwreck for a year, and a fisherman would have been thought very foolhardy who had not one of them.¹

A writer of the eighteenth century says that in Ireland the wren "is still hunted and killed by the peasants on Christmas Day, and on the following (St. Stephen's Day) he is carried about, hung by the leg, in the centre of two hoops, crossing each other at right angles, and a procession made in every village, of men, women, and children, singing an Irish catch, importing him to be the king of all birds."² Down to the present time the "hunting of the wren" still takes place in parts of Leinster and Connaught. On Christmas Day or St. Stephen's Day the boys hunt and kill the wren, fasten it in the middle of a mass of holly and ivy on the top of a broomstick, and on St. Stephen's Day go about with it from house to house, singing—

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze;
Although he is little, his family's great,
I pray you, good landlady, give us a treat."

Money or food (bread, butter, eggs, etc.) were given them, upon which they feasted in the evening.³ In Essex a similar custom used to be observed at Christmas, and the verses sung by the boys were almost identical with those sung in Ireland.⁴ In Pembrokeshire a wren, called

¹ G. Waldron, *Description of the Isle of Man* (reprinted for the Manx Society, Douglas, 1865), p. 49 sqq.; J. Train, *Account of the Isle of Man*, ii. 124 sqq., 141.

² Ch. Vallancey, *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, iv. (Dublin, 1786), p. 97; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 195.

³ G. H. Kinahan, "Notes on Irish Folk-lore," *Folk-lore Record*, iv.

(1881), p. 108; Swainson, *Folk-lore of British Birds*, p. 36 sq.; Rolland, *Faune populaire de la France*, ii. 297; Professor W. Ridgway in *Academy*, 10th May 1884, p. 332; Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 497; L. L. Duncan, "Further Notes from County Leitrim," *Folk-lore*, v. (1894), p. 197.

⁴ Henderson, *Folk-lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 125.

the King, used to be carried about on Twelfth Day in a box with glass windows surmounted by a wheel, from which hung various coloured ribbons. The men and boys who carried it from house to house sang songs, in one of which they wished "joy, health, love, and peace" to the inmates of the house.¹

In the first half of the nineteenth century similar customs were still observed in various parts of the south of France. Thus at Carcassone, every year on the first Sunday of December the young people of the street Saint Jean used to go out of the town armed with sticks, with which they beat the bushes, looking for wrens. The first to strike down one of these birds was proclaimed King. Then they returned to the town in procession, headed by the King, who carried the wren on a pole. On the evening of the last day of the year the King and all who had hunted the wren marched through the streets of the town to the light of torches, with drums beating and fifes playing in front of them. At the door of every house they stopped, and one of them wrote with chalk on the door *vive le roi!* with the number of the year which was about to begin. On the morning of Twelfth Day the King again marched in procession with great pomp, wearing a crown and a blue mantle and carrying a sceptre. In front of him was borne the wren fastened to the top of a pole, which was adorned with a verdant wreath of olive, of oak, and sometimes of mistletoe grown on an oak. After hearing high mass in the parish church of St. Vincent, surrounded by his officers and guards, the King visited the bishop, the mayor, the magistrates, and the chief inhabitants, collecting money to defray the expenses of the royal banquet which took place in the evening and wound up with a dance.² At Entraigues men and boys used to hunt the wren on Christmas Eve. When they caught one alive they presented it to the priest, who, after the midnight mass, set the bird free in the church. At Mirabeau the priest blessed the bird. If the men failed

¹ Swainson, *op. cit.* p. 40 sq.

² Madame Clément, *Histoire des Fêtes civiles et religieuses, etc., de la Belgique Méridionale* (Avesnes, 1846), pp. 466-468; De Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des provinces de*

France, p. 77 sqq.; Rolland, *op. cit.* ii. 295 sq.; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 437 sq. The ceremony was abolished at the revolution of 1789, revived after the restoration, and suppressed again after 1830.

to catch a wren and the women succeeded in doing so, the women had the right to mock and insult the men, and to blacken their faces with mud and soot, when they caught them.¹ At La Ciotat, near Marseilles, a large body of men armed with swords and pistols used to hunt the wren every year about the end of December. When a wren was caught, it was hung on the middle of a pole, which two men carried, as if it were a heavy burden. Thus they paraded round the town; the bird was weighed in a great pair of scales; and then the company sat down to table and made merry.²

The parallelism between this custom of "hunting the wren" and some of those we have considered, especially the Gilyak procession with the bear, and the Indian one with the snake, seems too close to allow us to doubt that they all belong to the same circle of ideas. The worshipful animal is killed with special solemnity once a year; and before or immediately after death, he is promenaded from door to door; that each of his worshippers may receive a portion of the divine virtues that are supposed to emanate from the dead or dying god. Religious processions of this sort must have had a great place in the ritual of European peoples in prehistoric times, if we may judge from the numerous traces of them which have survived in folk-custom. A well-preserved specimen is the following, which survived in the Highlands of Scotland and in St. Kilda down to the latter half of the

¹ Rolland, *op. cit.* ii. 296 sq.

² C. S. Sonnini, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt*, translated from the French (London, 1800), p. 11 sq.; Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 198. The "hunting of the wren" may be compared with a Swedish custom. On the 1st of May children rob the magpies' nest of both eggs and young. These they carry in a basket from house to house in the village and show them to the housewives, while one of the children sings some doggerel lines containing a threat that, if a present is not given, the hens, chickens, and eggs will fall a prey to the magpie. They receive bacon, eggs, milk, etc., upon which they afterwards feast. See L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 237 sq. The resemblance of such

customs to the "swallow song" and "crow song" of the ancient Greeks (on which see Athenaeus, viii. pp. 359, 360) is obvious and has been remarked before now. Probably the Greek swallow-singers and crow-singers carried about dead swallows and crows or effigies of them. The "crow song" is referred to in a Greek inscription found in the south of Russia (ἔξ δεκάδας λευκάδας κεκορώμενα). See *Compte Rendu* of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, St. Petersburg, 1877, p. 276 sqq. In modern Greece it is said to be still customary for children on 1st March to go about the streets singing spring songs and carrying a wooden swallow, which is kept turning on a cylinder. See Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 636.

eighteenth century. "On the evening before New Year's Day, it is usual for the cowherd and the young people to meet together, and one of them is covered with a cow's hide. The rest of the company are provided with staves, to the end of which bits of raw hide are tied. The person covered with the hide runs thrice round the dwelling-house, *deiseil*—i.e. according to the course of the sun; the rest pursue, beating the hide with their staves, and crying [here follows the Gaelic], 'Let us raise the noise louder and louder; let us beat the hide.' They then come to the door of each dwelling-house, and one of them repeats some verses composed for the purpose. When admission is granted, one of them pronounces within the threshold the *beannachadhurlair*, or verses by which he pretends to draw down a blessing upon the whole family [here follows the Gaelic], 'May God bless this house and all that belongs to it, cattle, stones, and timber! In plenty of meat, of bed and body-clothes, and health of men, may it ever abound!' Then each burns in the fire a little bit of hide which is tied to the end of the staff. It is applied to the nose of every person and domestic animal that belongs to the house. This, they imagine, will tend much to secure them from diseases and other misfortunes during the ensuing year. The whole of the ceremony is called *colluinn*, from the great noise which the hide makes."¹ From another authority,² we learn that the hide of which pieces were burned in each house and applied to the inmates was the breast part of a sheep-skin. Formerly, perhaps, pieces of the cow-hide in which the man was clad were detached for this purpose, just as in the Isle of Man a feather of the wren used to be given to each household. Similarly, as we have seen, the human victim whom the Khonds slew as a divinity was taken from house to house, and every one strove to obtain a relic of his sacred person. Such customs are only another form of that communion with

¹ John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 438 sq.; cp. Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, p. 166 sq.; Samuel Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, p. 228 sq. (first American edition, 1810). The custom is clearly referred to in the "Penitential of Theodore,"

quoted by Kemble, *Saxons in England*, i. 525; Elton, *Origins of English History*, p. 411: "*Si quis in Kal. Januar. in cervulo vel vitula vadit, id est in ferarum habitus se communicant, et vestiuntur pellibus pecudum et assument capita bestiarum,*" etc.

² Chambers, *l.c.*

the deity which is attained most completely by eating the body and drinking the blood of the god.

In the "hunting of the wren," and the procession with the man clad in a cow-skin, there is nothing to show that the customs in question have any relation to agriculture. So far as appears, they may date from a time before the invention of husbandry when animals were revered as divine in themselves, not merely as divine because they embodied the corn-spirit; and the analogy of the Gilyak procession of the bear and the Indian procession of the snake is in favour of assigning the corresponding European customs to this very early date. On the other hand, there are certain European processions of animals, or of men disguised as animals, which may perhaps be purely agricultural in their origin;¹ in other words, the animals which figure in them may have been from the first nothing but representatives of the corn-spirit conceived in animal shape. But it is at least equally possible that these processions took their rise before men began to till the ground, and that they only received an agricultural tinge from the environment in which they have so long survived. But the question is an obscure and difficult one, and cannot be here discussed.

¹ Such are the Bohemian and Moravian processions at the Carnival when a man called the Shrovetide Bear, swathed from head to foot in peas-straw and sometimes wearing a bear's mask, is led from house to house. He dances with the women of the house, and collects money and food. Then they go to the ale-house, where all the peasants assemble with their wives. For at the Carnival, especially on Shrove Tuesday, it is necessary that every one should dance, if the flax, the corn, and the vegetables are to grow well. The higher the people leap the better will be the crops (see vol. i. p. 36 sq.). Sometimes the women pull out some of the straw in which the Shrovetide Bear is swathed, and put it in the nests of the geese and fowls, believing that this will make them lay well. See

Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, pp. 49-52; Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 83; W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 431. At Altstadt, in Moravia, a he-goat is led in procession once a year through the town, preceded by a band of music, and is then thrown down from the church tower. Its flesh furnishes a common meal. See W. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 329 sq. Bears and certain other animals were formerly promenaded about both town and country with bits of coloured cloth attached to them. Whoever got one of these bits of cloth or some of the animal's hair was supposed to be thereby protected against sickness and the evil eye. See Thierr, *Traité des Superstitions* (Paris, 1679), p. 315. On similar customs, see W. Mannhardt, *A. W. F.* pp. 183-200.

NOTE A

SWINGING AS A MAGICAL RITE

THE custom of swinging has been practised as a religious or rather magical rite in various parts of the world, but it does not seem possible to explain all the instances of it in the same way. People appear to have resorted to the practice from different motives and with different ideas of the benefit to be derived from it. In the text we have seen that the Letts, and perhaps the Siamese, swing to make the crops grow tall.¹ The same may be the intention of the ceremony whenever it is specially observed at harvest festivals. Among the Buginese and Macassars of Celebes, for example, it used to be the custom for young girls to swing one after the other on these occasions.² At the great Dassera festival of Nepaul, which immediately precedes the cutting of the rice, swings and kites come into fashion among the young people of both sexes. The swings are sometimes hung from boughs of trees, but generally from a cross-beam supported on a framework of tall bamboos.³ Among the Dyaks of Sarawak a feast is held at the end of harvest, when the soul of the rice is secured to prevent the crops from rotting away. On this occasion a number of old women rock to and fro on a rude swing suspended from the rafters.⁴ A traveller in Sarawak has described how he saw many tall swings erected and Dyaks swinging to and fro on them, sometimes ten or twelve men together on one swing, while they chanted in monotonous, dirge-like tones an invocation to the spirits that they would be pleased to grant a plentiful harvest of sago and fruit and a good fishing season.⁵

In the East Indian island of Bengkalis elaborate and costly ceremonies are performed to ensure a good catch of fish. Among the rest an hereditary priestess, who bears the royal title of Djind-

¹ Above, p. 32 sq.

² B. F. Matthes, *Einige Eigentümlichkeiten in den Festen und Gewohnheiten der Makassaren und Buginesen* (Leyden, 1884), p. 1.

³ H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal* (London, 1880), ii. 351.

⁴ Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 194 sq.

⁵ Ch. Brooke, *Ten Years in Sarawak*, ii. 226 sq.

jang Rajah, works herself up by means of the fumes of incense and so forth into that state of mental disorder which commonly passes for a symptom of divine inspiration. In this pious frame of mind she is led by her four handmaids to a swing all covered with yellow and hung with golden bells, on which she takes her seat amid the jingle of the bells. As she rocks gently to and fro in the swing, she speaks in an unknown tongue to each of the sixteen spirits who have to do with the fishing.¹ In order to procure a plentiful supply of game the Tinneh Indians of North-West America perform a magical ceremony which they call "the young man bounding or tied." They pinion a man tightly, and having hung him by the head and heels from the roof of the hut, rock him backwards and forwards.² Thus we see that people swing in order to procure a plentiful supply of fish and game as well as good crops. In such cases the notion seems to be that the ceremony promotes fertility, whether in the vegetable or the animal kingdom; though why it should be supposed to do so I confess myself unable to explain. There seem to be some reasons for thinking that the Indian rite of swinging on hooks run through the flesh of the performer is also resorted to, at least in some cases, from a belief in its fertilising virtue. Thus Hamilton tells us that at Karwar, on the west coast of India, a feast is held at the end of May or beginning of June in honour of the infernal gods, "with a divination or conjuration to know the fate of the ensuing crop of corn." Men were hung from a pole by means of tenter-hooks inserted in the flesh of their backs; and the pole with the men dangling from it was then dragged for more than a mile over ploughed ground from one sacred grove to another, preceded by a young girl who carried a pot of fire on her head. When the second grove was reached, the men were let down and taken off the hooks, and the girl fell into the usual prophetic frenzy, after which she unfolded to the priests the revelation with which she had just been favoured by the terrestrial gods. In each of the groves a shapeless black stone, daubed with red lead to stand for a mouth, eyes, and ears, appears to have represented the indwelling divinity.³ Sometimes this custom

¹ J. S. G. Gramberg, "De Troeboek-visscherij," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxiv. (1887), p. 314 sq.

² E. Petitot, *Monographie der Dindjindjé* (Paris, 1876), p. 38. The same ceremony is performed, oddly enough, to procure the death of an enemy.

³ Hamilton's "Account of the East Indies," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, viii. 360 sq. In general we are merely told that these Indian

devotees swing on hooks in fulfilment of a vow or to obtain some favour of a deity. See Barbosa, *Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the beginning of the Sixteenth Century*, translated by the Hon. H. E. J. Stanley (Hakluyt Society, 1866), p. 95 sq.; Gaspar Balbi's "Voyage to Pegu," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 398; Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes orientales et à la Chine*, i. 244; S. Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, p. 220; W. W. Hunter,

of swinging on hooks, which is known among the Hindoos as *Churuk Pujā*, appears to be intended to propitiate demons. Some Santals asked Mr. V. Ball to be allowed to perform it because their women and children were dying of sickness, and their cattle were being killed by wild beasts; they believed that these misfortunes befell them because the evil spirits had not been appeased.¹ These same Santals celebrate a swinging festival of a less barbarous sort about the month of February. Eight men sit in chairs and rotate round posts in a sort of revolving swing, like the merry-go-rounds which are so dear to children at English fairs.² At the Nauroz and Eed festivals in Dardistan the women swing on ropes suspended from trees.³ During the rainy season in Behar young women swing in their houses, while they sing songs appropriate to the season. The period during which they indulge in this pastime, if a mere pastime it be, is strictly limited; it begins with a festival which usually falls on the twenty-fifth of the month Jeyt and ends with another festival which commonly takes place on the twenty-fifth of the month Asin. No one would think of swinging at any other time of the year.⁴ It is possible that this last custom may be nothing more than a pastime meant to while away some of the tedious hours of the inclement season; but its limitation to a certain clearly-defined portion of the year seems rather to point to a religious or magical origin. Possibly the intention may once have been to drive away the rain. We shall see immediately that swinging is sometimes resorted to for the purpose of expelling the powers of evil. About the middle of March the Hindoos observe a swinging festival of a different sort in honour of the god Krishna, whose image is placed in the seat or cradle of a swing and then, just when the dawn is breaking, rocked gently to and fro several times. The same ceremony is repeated at noon and at sunset.⁵ In the Rigveda the sun is called, by a natural metaphor, "the golden swing in the sky," and the expression helps us to understand a ceremony of Vedic India. A priest sat in a swing and touched with the span of his right hand at once the seat of the swing and the ground. In doing so he said, "The great lord has united himself with the great lady, the god has united himself with the goddess." Perhaps he

Annals of Rural Bengal,⁶ p. 463; *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 76, § 511.

¹ V. Ball, *Jungle Life in India* (London, 1880), p. 232.

² W. W. Hunter, *Annals of Rural Bengal*,⁶ p. 463.

³ G. W. Leitner, *The Languages and Races of Dardistan* (Lahore, 1878), p. 12.

⁴ Sarat Chandra Mitra, "Notes on

two Behari pastimes," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, iii. 95 sq.

⁵ H. H. Wilson, "The religious festivals of the Hindus," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, ix. (1848), p. 98. Compare Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 314; Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 137; W. Crooke, "The Legends of Krishna," *Folk-lore*, xi. (1900), p. 21 sqq.

meant to indicate in a graphic way that the sun had reached that lowest point of its course where it was nearest to the earth.¹ In this connection it is of interest to note that in the Esthonian celebration of St. John's Day or the summer solstice swings play, along with bonfires, the most prominent part. Girls sit and swing the whole night through, singing old songs to explain why they do so. For legend tells of an Esthonian prince who wooed and won an Islandic princess. But a wicked enchanter spirited away the lover to a desert island, where he languished in captivity, till his lady-love contrived to break the magic spell that bound him. Together they sailed home to Esthonia, which they reached on St. John's Day, and burnt their ship, resolved to stray no longer in far foreign lands. The swings in which the Esthonian maidens still rock themselves on St. John's Day are said to recall the ship in which the lovers tossed upon the stormy sea, and the bonfires commemorate the burning of it. When the fires have died out the swings are laid aside and never used again either in the village or at the solitary alehouse until spring comes round once more.² Here it is natural to connect both swings and bonfires with the apparent course of the sun, who reaches the highest and turning point of his orbit on St. John's Day. Bonfires and swings perhaps were originally charms intended to kindle and speed afresh on its heavenly road "the golden swing in the sky."

At Tengaroeng, in Eastern Borneo, the priests and priestesses receive the inspiration of the spirits seated in swings and rocking themselves to and fro. Thus suspended in the air they appear to be in a peculiarly favourable position for catching the divine afflatus. One end of the plank which forms the seat of the priest's swing is carved in the rude likeness of a crocodile's head; the swing of the priestess is similarly ornamented with a serpent's head.³

Again, swings are used for the cure of sickness, but it is the doctor who rocks himself in them, not the patient. In North Borneo the Dyak medicine man will sometimes erect a swing in front of the sick man's house and sway backwards and forwards on it for the purpose of knocking, or driving, or kicking away the disease.⁴ Clearly in his passage through the air the physician is likely to collide with the disease, which is quite sure to be loitering about in the neighbourhood of the patient, and the rude shock thus given to the malady may reasonably be expected to push or hustle it away. At Tengaroeng, in Eastern Borneo, a traveller witnessed a ceremony for the expulsion of an evil spirit in which swinging played

¹ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 444 sq. *Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxvii. (1888), pp. 87-89.

² J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 268 sqq.

³ S. W. Tromp, "Uit de Salasila van Koetci," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-*

⁴ H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 279.

a part. After four men in blue shirts bespangled with stars, and wearing coronets of red cloth decorated with beads and bells, had sought diligently for the devil, grabbing about on the floor on their hands and feet and grunting withal, three hideous hags dressed in faded red petticoats were brought in with great pomp, carried on the shoulders of Malays, and took their seats, amid solemn silence, on the cradle of a swing, the ends of which were carved to represent the head and tail of a crocodile. Not a sound escaped from the crowd of spectators during this awe-inspiring ceremony; they regarded the business as most serious. The venerable dames then rocked to and fro on the swing, fanning themselves languidly with Chinese paper fans. At a later stage of the performance they and three girls discharged burning arrows at a sort of altar of banana leaves, maize, and grass. This completed the discomfiture of the devil.¹

The Athenians in antiquity celebrate an annual festival of swinging. Boards were hung from trees by ropes, and people sitting on them swung to and fro, while they sang songs of a loose or voluptuous character. The swinging went on both in public and private. Various explanations were given of the custom; the most generally received was as follows. When Bacchus came among men to make known to them the pleasures of wine, he lodged with a certain Icarus or Icarius, to whom he revealed the precious secret and bade him go forth and carry the glad tidings to all the world. So Icarus loaded a waggon with wine-skins, and set out on his travels, the dog Maera running beside him. He came to Attica, and there fell in with shepherds tending their sheep, to whom he gave of the wine. They drank greedily, but when some of them fell down dead drunk, their companions thought the stranger had poisoned them with intent to steal the sheep; so they knocked him on the head. The faithful dog ran home and guided his master's daughter Erigone to the body. At sight of it she was smitten with despair and hanged herself on a tree beside her dead father, but not until she had prayed that, unless the Athenians should avenge her sire's murder, their daughters might die the same death as she. Her curse was fulfilled, for soon many Athenian damsels hanged themselves for no obvious reason. An oracle informed the Athenians of the true cause of this epidemic of suicide; so they sought out the bodies of the unhappy pair and instituted the swinging festival to appease Erigone; and at the vintage they offered the first of the grapes to her and her father.²

Thus the swinging festival at Athens was regarded by the

¹ C. Bock, *The Head-hunters of Borneo* (London, 1881), pp. 110-112.

² Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii. 4, p. 34 sqq., ed. Bante; *id.*, *Fabulae*, 130; Servius and Probus on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 389; Festus, s.v. "Oscillantes," p.

194, ed. Müller; Athenaeus, xiv. p. 618 E F; Pollux, iv. 55; Hesychius, s. τν. Ἀλκίρις and Αἰώπα; *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. Αἰώπα, p. 42. 3; Schol. on Homer, *Iliad* xxii. 29. The story of the murder of Icarius is told by a

ancients as an expiation for a suicide or suicides by hanging. This opinion is strongly confirmed by a statement of Varro, that it was unlawful to perform funeral rites in honour of persons who had died by hanging, but that in their case such rites were replaced by a custom of swinging images, as if in imitation of the death they had died.¹ Servius says that the Athenians, failing to find the bodies of Icarus and Erigone on earth, made a pretence of seeking them in the air by swinging on ropes hung from trees; and he seems to have regarded the custom of swinging as a purification by means of air.² This explanation probably comes very near the truth; indeed if we substitute "souls" for "bodies" in the wording of it we may almost accept it as exact. It might be thought that the souls of persons who had died by hanging were, more than the souls of the other dead, hovering in the air, since their bodies were suspended in air at the moment of death. Hence it would be considered needful to purge the air of these vagrant spirits, and this might be done by swinging persons or things to and fro, in order that by their impact they might disperse and drive away the baleful ghosts. Thus the custom would be exactly analogous, on the one hand, to the practice of the Malay medicine-man, who swings to and fro in front of the patient's house in order to chase away the disease, and, on the other hand, to the practice of the Central Australian aborigines who beat the air with their weapons and hands in order to drive the lingering ghost away to the grave.³ At Rome swinging seems to have formed part of the great Latin festival (*Feriae Latinae*), and its origin was traced to a search in the air for the body or even the soul of King Latinus, who had disappeared from earth after the battle with Mezentius, King of Caere.⁴

Yet on the other hand there are circumstances which point to an intimate association, both at Athens and Rome, of these swinging festivals with an intention of promoting the growth of cultivated

scholiast on Lucian (*Dial. Meretr.* vii. 4) to explain the origin of a different festival (*Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xxv. (1870), p. 557 sqq.). As to the swinging festival at Athens see O. Jahn, *Archäologische Beiträge*, p. 324 sq.; Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines*, s.v. "Aiora"; Miss J. E. Harrison, in *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens*, by Mrs. Verrall and Miss J. E. Harrison, p. xxxix. sqq.

¹ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* xii. 603: "*Et Varro ait: Suspendiosis quibus iusta fieri ius non sit, suspensis oscillis veluti per imitationem mortis parentari.*"

² Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 389; *id.*, on *Aen.* vi. 741.

³ See above, vol. i. p. 435.

⁴ Festus, s.v. "Oscillantes," p. 194, ed. Müller. This festival and its origin are also alluded to in a passage of one of the manuscripts of Servius (on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 389), which is printed by Lion in his edition of Servius (vol. ii. 254, note), but not by Thilo and Hagen in their large critical edition of the old Virgilian commentator. "In *Schol. Bob.* p. 256 we are told that there was a reminiscence of the fact that, the bodies of Latinus and Aeneas being undiscoverable, their *animae* were sought in the air" (G. E. M. Marindin, s.v. "Oscilla," *Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*,³ ii. 304).

plants. Such circumstances are the legendary connection of the Athenian festival with Bacchus, the custom of offering the first-fruits of the vintage to Erigone and Icarius,¹ and at Rome the practice of hanging masks on trees at the time of sowing² and in order to make the grapes grow better.³ Perhaps we can reconcile the two apparently discrepant effects attributed to swinging as a means of expiation on the one side and of fertilisation on the other, by supposing that in both cases the intention is to clear the air of dangerous influences, whether these are ghosts of the unburied dead or spiritual powers inimical to the growth of plants. Independent of both appears to be the notion that the higher you swing the higher will grow the crops.⁴ This last is sympathetic magic pure and simple, without any admixture of the ideas of purification or expiation.

In modern Greece and Italy the custom of swinging as a festal rite, whatever its origin may be, is still observed in some places. At the small village of Koukoura in Elis an English traveller observed peasants swinging from a tree in honour of St. George, whose festival it was.⁵ On the Tuesday after Easter the maidens of Seriphos play their favourite game of the swing. They hang a rope from one wall to another of the steep, narrow, filthy street, and putting some clothes on it swing one after the other, singing as they swing. Young men who try to pass are called upon to pay toll in the shape of a penny, a song, and a swing. The words which the youth sings are generally these: "The gold is swung, the silver is swung, and swung too is my love with the golden hair"; to which the girl replies, "Who is it that swings me that I may gild him with my favour, that I may work him a fez all covered with pearls?"⁶ In the Greek island of Karpathos the villagers assemble at a given place on each of the four Sundays before Easter, a swing is erected, and the women swing one after the other, singing death wails such as they chant round the mimic tombs in church on the night of Good Friday.⁷ On Christmas Day peasant girls in some villages of Calabria fasten ropes to iron rings in the ceiling and swing on them, while they sing certain songs prescribed by custom for the occasion. The practice is regarded not merely as an amusement but also as an act of devotion.⁸ The observance of the custom at Christmas, that is, at the winter solstice, suggests that in Calabria as in Esthonia the pastime may originally have been a magical rite designed

¹ Hyginus, *Fab.* 130.

² Probus on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 385.

³ Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 388 sqq.

⁴ See above, p. 33.

⁵ W. G. Clark, *Peloponnesus* (London, 1858), p. 274.

⁶ J. T. Bent, *The Cyclades*, p. 5.

⁷ *Id.*, quoted by Miss J. E. Harrison,

Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens, p. xliii.

⁸ Vincenzo Dorsa, *La tradizione Greco-Latina negli usi e nelle credenze popolari della Calabria Citeriore* (Cosenza, 1884), p. 36. In one village the custom is observed on Ascension Day instead of at Christmas.

to assist the sun in climbing the steep ascent to the top of the summer sky. If this were so, we might surmise that the gold and the golden hair mentioned by youths and maidens of Seriphos as they swing refer to "the golden swing in the sky," in other words to the sun whose golden lamp swings daily across the blue vault of heaven.

NOTE B

THE DOCTRINE OF LUNAR SYMPATHY

IN the text some evidence has been adduced of the sympathetic influence which the waxing or waning moon is popularly supposed to exert on growth, especially on the growth of vegetation. But the doctrine of lunar sympathy does not stop here ; it is applied also to the affairs of man, and various practical rules have been deduced from it which aim at the amelioration and even the indefinite extension of human life. To illustrate this application of the popular theory at length would be out of place here, but a few cases may be mentioned by way of specimen. Thus in some parts of Germany it is commonly believed that whatever is undertaken when the moon is on the increase succeeds well, and that the full moon brings everything to perfection ; whereas business undertaken in the waning of the moon is doomed to failure.¹ Again, in Brittany they think that warts vary with the phases of the moon, growing as it waxes and vanishing away as it wanes.² Accordingly we need not be surprised to find a German superstition, that if you would rid yourself of warts, you should treat them when the moon is on the decrease.³ And a German cure for toothache, earache, headache, and so forth, is to look towards the waning moon and say, "As the moon decreases, so may my pains decrease also."⁴ Again, the periodic restoration of the moon, after its apparent decay, has suggested to some peoples that the orb possesses a recuperative and revivifying energy which may be so directed by men as to stay or even reverse the motion of the wheel of time, and so keep the young for ever young and bring back to the old their lost youth. It is especially the appearance of the new moon, with its promise of fresh life, that has been greeted by ceremonies in which this vain hope finds a

¹ Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 457, § 419.

² Sébillot, *Traditions et Superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, ii. 355.

³ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 387, § 93.

⁴ *Die gestrigelte Rockenphilosophie*, p. 447.

pathetic expression. The Esthonians think that all the misfortune which might befall a man in the course of a month may be forestalled and shifted to the moon, if the man will only say to the new moon, "Good morrow, new moon. I must grow young, you must grow old. My eyes must grow bright, yours must grow dark. I must grow light as a bird, you must grow heavy as iron."¹ An old traveller tells us that at the appearance of every new moon the negroes of the Congo clapped their hands and cried out, sometimes falling on their knees, "So may I renew my life as thou art renewed." But if the sky happened to be cloudy, they did nothing, alleging that the planet had lost its virtue.² On the day when the new moon first appeared, it was a custom with the Indians of San Juan Capistrano, in California, to call together all the young men for the purpose of its celebration. "*Correr la luna!*" shouted one of the old men, "Come, my boys, the moon! the moon!" Immediately the young men began to run about in a disorderly fashion as if they were distracted, while the old men danced in a circle, saying, "As the moon dieth and cometh to life again, so we also, having to die, will again live."³ A similar custom prevails among the Ovambo of South-Western Africa. On the first moonlight night of the new moon young and old, their bodies smeared with white earth, doubtless in imitation of the planet's silvery light, dance to the moon and address to it wishes which they feel sure will be granted.⁴ What the wishes are, the writer who reports the custom has omitted to say, but we may conjecture that among them is a prayer for life and youth.

¹ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 279. Compare Boecler-Kreutzwald, *Der Ehsten abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten*, p. 142 sq.; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 595, note 1.

² Merolla, "Voyage to Congo," in

Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 273.

³ Boscana, "Chinigchinich," in A. Robinson's *Life in California* (New York, 1846), p. 298 sq.

⁴ H. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, p. 319.

NOTE C

OFFERINGS OF FIRST-FRUIITS

IT has been shown¹ that primitive peoples often partake of the new corn sacramentally, because they suppose it to be instinct with a divine spirit or life. At a later age, when the fruits of the earth are conceived as created rather than as animated by a divinity, the new fruits are no longer partaken of sacramentally as the body and blood of a god; but a portion of them is presented as a thank-offering to the divine beings who are believed to have produced them. Sometimes the first-fruits are presented to the king, probably in his character of a god. Till the first-fruits have been offered to the deity or the king, people are not at liberty to eat of the new crops. But, as it is not always possible to draw a sharp line between the sacrament and the sacrifice of first-fruits, it may be well to round off this part of the subject by appending some miscellaneous examples of the latter.

Among the Basutos, when the corn has been threshed and winnowed, it is left in a heap on the threshing-floor. Before it can be touched a religious ceremony must be performed. The persons to whom the corn belongs bring a new vessel to the spot, in which they boil some of the grain. When it is boiled they throw a few handfuls of it on the heap of corn, saying, "Thank you, gods; give us bread to-morrow also!" When this is done the rest is eaten, and the provision for the year is considered pure and fit to eat.² Here the sacrifice of the first-fruits to the gods is the prominent idea, which comes out again in the custom of leaving in the threshing-floor a little hollow filled with grain, as a thank-offering to these powerful beings.³ Still the Basutos retain a lively sense of the sanctity of the corn in itself; for, so long as it is exposed to view, all defiled persons are carefully kept from it. If it is necessary to employ a defiled person in carrying home the harvest, he remains at some distance while the sacks are being filled, and only approaches

¹ Above, p. 318 sq.

² Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 251 sq.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

to place them upon the draught oxen. As soon as the load is deposited at the dwelling he retires, and under no pretext may he help to pour the corn into the baskets in which it is kept.¹ Among the Matabele the ceremony of the first-fruits was very important, for until it had been performed, no one might eat the vegetables of the new season. In the morning all the inhabitants of each town went to the river to wash, and when they returned, a witch-doctor prepared a dish of vegetables mixed with medicine, which he scattered by handfuls among the people. They seized the food and ate it, and after that they were free to partake of the growing crops.² However, the aim of this ceremony, if we may judge from the description, appears to have been, not so much to present the first-fruits to the higher powers, as to purge the new crops from the dangerous taint of sanctity or taboo. The Makalaka worship a god called Shumpaoli, whose image is to be found in the enclosure outside of their huts. The image consists of the head of an axe, a stone from the river, and a twig or long stalk of grass planted between them in the ground. About this god they scatter the first-fruits of their harvest, and when they brew beer they pour some of it on him.³ In Ashantee a harvest festival is held in September when the yams are ripe. During the festival the king eats the new yams, but none of the people may eat them till the close of the festival, which lasts a fortnight. During its continuance the grossest liberty prevails; theft, intrigue, and assault go unpunished, and both sexes abandon themselves to their passions.⁴ Before the Adeli of the Slave Coast may eat of the new yams, the owner of each farm must bring the first yams of his field to the fetish priest, who offers them to the fetish, after which he declares that the harvest may take place. The festival, accompanied by shooting and dancing, lasts several days; it generally falls in August.⁵ The Hovas of Madagascar present the first sheaves of the new grain to the sovereign. The sheaves are carried in procession to the palace from time to time as the grain ripens.⁶ So in Burma, when the *pangati* fruits ripen, some of them used to be taken to the king's palace that he might eat of them; no one might partake of them before the king.⁷

Every year, when they gather their first crops, the Kochs of Assam offer some of the first-fruits to their ancestors, calling to them by name and clapping their hands.⁸ In August, when the

¹ Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 252 sq.

² L. Dede, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 157 sq.

³ L. Dede, *op. cit.* p. 173.

⁴ A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 229 sq.; T. E. Bowdich, *Mission to Ashantee*, p. 226 sq. (ed. 1873).

⁵ L. Conradt, "Das Hinterland der

deutschen Kolonie Togo," *Petermanns Mittheilungen*, xlii. (1896), p. 18.

⁶ J. Cameron, "On the Early Inhabitants of Madagascar," *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, iii. 263.

⁷ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 105.

⁸ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 91.

rice ripens, the Hos offer the first-fruits of the harvest to Sing Bonga, who dwells in the sun. Along with the new rice a white cock is sacrificed; and till the sacrifice has been offered no one may eat the new rice.¹ In Ladakh the peasants offer the first two or three handfuls of the wheat-crop to the spirit who presides over agriculture. These offerings they attach to the tops of the pillars which support the roofs of their houses; and thus the bands of straw and ears of wheat form a primitive sort of capital. Rams' horns are sometimes added to this decoration.² Among the hill tribes near Rajamahall, in India, when the *kosarane* grain is being reaped in November or early in December, a festival is held as a thanksgiving before the new grain is eaten. On a day appointed by the chief a goat is sacrificed by two men to a god called Chitariah Gossaih, after which the chief himself sacrifices a fowl. Then the vassals repair to their fields, offer thanksgiving, make an oblation to Kull Gossaih (who is described as the Ceres of these mountaineers), and then return to their houses to eat of the new *kosarane*. As soon as the inhabitants have assembled at the chief's house—the men sitting on one side and the women on the other—a hog, a measure of *kosarane*, and a pot of spirits are presented to the chief, who in return blesses his vassals, and exhorts them to industry and good behaviour; "after which, making a libation in the names of all their gods, and of their dead, he drinks, and also throws a little of the *kosarane* away, repeating the same pious exclamations." Drinking and festivity then begin, and are kept up for several days. The same tribes have another festival at reaping the Indian corn in August or September. Every man repairs to his fields with a hog, a goat, or a fowl, which he sacrifices to Kull Gossaih. Then, having feasted, he returns home, where another repast is prepared. On this day it is customary for every family in the village to distribute to every house a little of what they have prepared for their feast. Should any person eat of the new *kosarane* or the new Indian corn before the festival and public thanksgiving at the reaping of these crops, the chief fines him a white cock, which is sacrificed to Chitariah.³ In the Central Provinces of India the first grain of the season is always offered to the god Bhimsen or Bhim Deo.⁴ In the Punjab, when sugar-cane is planted, a woman puts on a necklace and walks round the field, winding thread on a spindle;⁵ and when the sugar-cane is cut

¹ Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 198; H. H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, *Ethnographic Glossary*, ii. 104.

² *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. 57, No. 428, quoting Moorcroft and Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces*, i. 317 sq.

³ Thomas Shaw, "The Inhabitants

of the Hills near Rajamahall," *Asiatic Researches*, iv. 56 sq.

⁴ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 60, § 502.

⁵ The practice is curiously unlike the custom of ancient Italy, in most parts of which women were forbidden by law to walk on the highroads twirling a

the first-fruits are offered on an altar, which is built close to the press and is sacred to the sugar-cane god. Afterwards the first-fruits are given to Brahmans. Also, when the women begin to pick the cotton, they go round the field eating rice-milk, the first mouthful of which they spit upon the field toward the west; and the first cotton picked is exchanged at the village shop for its weight in salt, which is prayed over and kept in the house till the picking is finished.¹

In the island of Tjumba, East Indies, a festival is held after harvest. Vessels filled with rice are presented as a thank-offering to the gods. Then the sacred stone at the foot of a palm-tree is sprinkled with the blood of a sacrificed animal; and rice, with some of the flesh, is laid on the stone for the gods. The palm-tree is hung with lances and shields.² The Dyaks of Borneo hold a feast of first-fruits when the paddy or unhusked rice is ripe. The priestesses, accompanied by a gong and drum, go in procession to the farms and gather several bunches of the ripe paddy. These are brought back to the village, washed in cocoa-nut water, and laid round a bamboo altar, which at the harvest festivals is erected in the common room of the largest house. The altar is gaily decorated with white and red streamers, and is hung with the sweet-smelling blossom of the areca palm. The feast lasts two days, during which the village is tabooed; no one may leave it. Only fowls are killed, and dancing and gong-beating go on day and night. When the festival is over the people are free to get in their crops.³ The pounding of the new paddy is the occasion of a harvest festival which is celebrated all over Celebes. The religious ceremonies which accompany the feast were witnessed by Dr. B. F. Matthes in July 1857. Two mats were spread on the ground, each with a pillow on it. On one of the pillows were placed a man's clothes and a sword, on the other a woman's clothes. These were seemingly intended to represent the deceased ancestors. Rice and water were placed before the two dummy figures, which were also sprinkled with the new paddy. Moreover, dishes of rice were set down for the rest of the family and the slaves of the deceased.

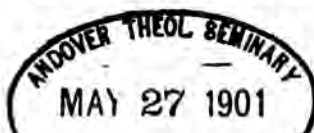
spindle, because this was supposed to injure the crops (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 28). The purpose of the Indian custom may be to ward off evil influences from the field. Compare vol. i. p. 400 sq.

¹ D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Outlines of Panjab Ethnography* (Calcutta, 1883), p. 119.

² Fr. Junghuhn, *Die Battaländer auf Sumatra* (Berlin, 1847), ii. 312.

³ Spenser St. John, *Life in the*

Forests of the Far East,² i. 191. On taboos observed at agricultural operations, see *id.*, i. 185; R. G. Woodthorpe, "Wild Tribes inhabiting the so-called Naga Hills," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xi. (1882), p. 71; *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori (London, 1884), p. 103 sq.; R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,³ p. 165 sq.; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), p. 110.



This was the end of the ceremony.¹ In Minahassa, a district of Celebes, the people have a festival of "eating the new rice." Fowls or pigs are killed; some of the flesh, with rice and palm-wine, is set apart for the gods, and then the eating and drinking begin.² The people of Kobi and Sariputi, two villages on the north-east coast of Ceram, offer the first-fruits of the paddy, in the form of cooked rice, with tobacco and other things, to their ancestors as a token of gratitude. The ceremony is called "feeding the dead."³ In the Tenimber and Timor-laut Islands, East Indies, the first-fruits of the paddy, along with live fowls and pigs, are offered to the *matmate*. The *matmate* are the spirits of their ancestors, which are worshipped as guardian-spirits or household gods. They are supposed to enter the house through an opening in the roof, and to take up their abode temporarily in their skulls, or in images of wood or ivory, in order to partake of the offerings and to help the family. They also assume the form of birds, pigs, crocodiles, turtles, sharks, and so forth.⁴ In Amboyna, after the rice or other harvest has been gathered in, some of the new fruits are offered to the gods, and till this is done, the priests may not eat of them. A portion of the new rice, or whatever it may be, is boiled, and milk of the cocoa-nut is poured on it, mixed with Indian saffron. It is then taken to the place of sacrifice and offered to the god. Some people also pour out oil before the deity; and if any of the oil is left over, they take it home as a holy and priceless treasure, where-with they smear the forehead and breast of sick people and whole people, in the firm conviction that the oil confers all kinds of blessings.⁵ In the Kei Islands, to the south-west of New Guinea, the first-fruits are offered to Lir majoran, the god of husbandry, when the harvest is ripe.⁶ After the rice has been reaped, the people of Nias deck the images of their ancestors with wreaths, and offer to them the first dishful of boiled rice, while they thank them for the blessings they have bestowed on the family.⁷ The Irayas and Catalangans of Luzon, tribes of the Malay stock, but of mixed blood, worship chiefly the souls of their ancestors under the name of *anitos*, to whom they offer the first-fruits of the harvest. The *anitos* are household deities; some of them reside in pots in the corners of the houses; and miniature houses, standing near the

¹ B. F. Matthes, *Beknopt Verslag mijner reizen in de Binnenlanden van Celebes, in de jaren 1857 en 1861*, p. 5.

² N. Graafland, *De Minahassa*, i. 165.

³ J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluit- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 107.

⁴ Riedel, *op. cit.* pp. 281, 296 sq.

⁵ Fr. Valentyn, *Oud en nieuw Oost-*

Indiën, iii. 10.

⁶ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 801.

⁷ Fr. Kramer, "Der Götzendienst der Niasser," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890), p. 482.

family dwelling, are especially sacred to them.¹ When the Bagobos of the Philippines have got in their harvest of rice or maize, they will neither eat of it nor sell so much as a grain till they have made a pretence of feeding all their agricultural implements.²

In certain tribes of Fiji "the first-fruits of the yam harvest are presented to the ancestors in the Nanga [sacred enclosure] with great ceremony, before the bulk of the crop is dug for the people's use, and no man may taste of the new yams until the presentation has been made. The yams thus offered are piled in the Great Nanga, and are allowed to rot there. If any one were impudently bold enough to appropriate them to his own use, he would be smitten with madness. The mission teacher before mentioned told me that when he visited the Nanga he saw among the weeds with which it was overgrown numerous yam vines which had sprung up out of the piles of decayed offerings. Great feasts are made at the presentations of the first-fruits, which are times of public rejoicing, and the Nanga itself is frequently spoken of as the *Mbaki*, or Harvest."³ In other parts of Fiji the practice with regard to the first-fruits seems to have been different, for we are told by another observer that "the first-fruits of the yams, which are always presented at the principal temple of the district, become the property of the priests, and form their revenue, although the pretence of their being required for the use of the god is generally kept up."⁴ In Tana, one of the New Hebrides, the general name for gods appeared to be *aremba*, which meant "a dead man." The spirits of departed ancestors were among the gods of the people. Chiefs who reached an advanced age were deified after their death, addressed by name, and prayed to on various occasions. They were supposed to preside especially over the growth of the yams and fruit-trees. The first-fruits were presented to them. A little of the new fruit was laid on a stone, or on a shelving branch of the tree, or on a rude temporary altar, made of a few sticks lashed together with strips of bark, in the form of a table, with its four feet stuck in the ground. All being quiet, the chief acted as high priest, and prayed aloud as follows: "Compassionate father! here is some food for you; eat it; be kind to us on account of it." Then all the people shouted. This took place about noon, and afterwards the assembled people feasted and danced till midnight or morning.⁵

In Florida, one of the Solomon Islands, the canarium nut is much used in the native cookery, but formerly none could be eaten

¹ C. Semper, *Die Philippinen und ihre Bewohner*, p. 56.

² F. Blumentritt, "Das Stromgebiet des Rio Grande de Mindano," *Petermanns Mittheilungen*, xxxvii. (1891), p. 111.

³ Rev. Lorimer Fison, "The Nanga,

or sacred stone enclosure, of Wainimata, Fiji," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiv. (1885), p. 27.

⁴ J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, p. 252.

⁵ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 318 sq.

till the sacrifice of the first-fruits had been offered to the ghosts of the dead. This was done on behalf of a whole village by a man who inherited a knowledge of the way in which the sacrifice should be offered, and who accordingly had authority to open the season. When he saw that the time had come, he raised a shout early in the morning, then climbed a tree, cracked the nuts, ate some himself, and put some on the stones in his sacred place for the particular ghost whom he worshipped. Then all the people might gather the nuts for themselves. The chief offered food, in which the new nuts were mixed, on the stones of the village sanctuary; and every man who revered a ghost of his own did the same in his private sanctuary.¹ This sacrifice of first-fruits was witnessed by Mr. Woodford at the village of Aola, in the neighbouring island of Guadalcanar. The canarium nuts, or Solomon Island almonds, had been ripe for a week, and Mr. Woodford had expressed a wish to taste them, but he was told that this was quite impossible till the offering to the ghost had been made. As a native put it, "Devil he eat first; all man he eat behind." All the inhabitants of the village adjourned to the sea-shore in groups of ten or twelve to perform the sacrifice. The party to which Mr. Woodford attached himself swept a space clean beneath the spreading branches of a *Barringtonia*, and there constructed half-a-dozen tiny altars, each about six inches square, out of dry sticks. On these altars they laid offerings of yams, taros, bananas, and a little flesh; and a few of the nuts were skinned and set up on sticks round about the altars. Fire was then made by the friction of wood, for matches might not be used for this purpose, though probably every man had a box of them in his bag. With the sacred flame thus produced the altars were kindled and the offerings consumed. When this was done, the women produced large flat cakes baked of a paste of pounded nuts, and these were eaten by all.² In Saa, another of the Solomon Islands, when the yams are ripe, the people fetch some from each garden to offer to the ghosts. Early in the morning all the male members of a family assemble at the sanctuary of the particular ancestral ghosts whom they revere. One of them goes with a yam into the holy place and cries with a loud voice to the ghosts, "This is yours to eat," and with that he sets the yam beside the skull which is in the sanctuary. The others call quietly upon all the ancestors and present their yams, which are many in number, because one from each garden is given to each of the ghosts. Moreover, if any man has a relic of the dead at home, such as a head, or bones, or hair, he takes back a yam to his house and places it beside the head or whatever it may be. In the same island, as in Florida, the new canarium nuts may not be

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 132 sq.

² C. M. Woodford, *A Naturalist*

among the Head-hunters, being an Account of Three Visits to the Solomon Islands (London, 1890), pp. 26-28.

eaten until the first-fruits have been offered to the ghosts. Moreover, the first flying-fish of the season must be sacrificed to these spirits of the dead before the living are allowed to partake of the fish. The ghosts to whom the flying-fish are offered have the form of sharks. Some of them have sanctuaries ashore, where images of sharks are set up; and the flying-fish are laid before these images. Other shark-ghosts have no place on shore; so the fish offered to them are taken out to sea and shredded into the water, while the names of the ghosts are called out.¹

In some of the Kingsmill Islands the god most commonly worshipped was called Tubuériki. He was represented by a flat coral stone, of irregular shape, about three feet long by eighteen inches wide, set up on end in the open air. Leaves of the cocoa-nut palm were tied about it, considerably increasing its size and height. The leaves were changed every month, that they might be always fresh. The worship paid to the god consisted in repeating prayers before the stone, and laying beside it a portion of the food prepared by the people for their own use. This they did at their daily meals, at festivals, and whenever they specially wished to propitiate the deity. The first-fruits of the season were always offered to him. Every family of distinction had one of these stones which was considered rather in the light of a family altar than as an idol.²

The following is a description of the festival of first-fruits as it was celebrated in Tonga in the days when a European flag rarely floated among the islands of the Pacific. "*Inachi*. This word means literally a share or portion of anything that is to be, or has been, distributed out: but in the sense here mentioned it means that portion of the fruits of the earth, and other eatables, which is offered to the gods in the person of the divine chief Tooitonga, which allotment is made once a year, just before the yams in general are arrived at a state of maturity; those which are used in this ceremony being planted sooner than others, and, consequently, they are the first-fruits of the yam season. The object of this offering is to ensure the protection of the gods, that their favour may be extended to the welfare of the nation generally, and in particular to the productions of the earth, of which yams are the most important. The time for planting most kinds of yams is about the latter end of July, but the species called *caho-caho*, which is always used in this ceremony, is put in the ground about a month before, when, on each plantation, there is a small piece of land chosen and fenced in, for the purpose of growing a couple of yams of the above description. As soon as they have arrived at a state of maturity, the *How* [King] sends a messenger to Tooitonga, stating that the yams

¹ R. H. Codrington, *The Melan-
esians*, p. 138.

² Horatio Hale, *United States Ex-
ploring Expedition, Ethnology and
Philology*, p. 97.

for the *inachi* are fit to be taken up, and requesting that he would appoint a day for the ceremony; he generally fixes on the tenth day afterwards, reckoning the following day for the first. There are no particular preparations made till the day before the ceremony; at night, however, the sound of the conch is heard occasionally in different parts of the islands, and as the day of the ceremony approaches, it becomes more frequent, so that the people of almost every plantation sound the conch three or four times, which, breaking in upon the silence of the night, has a pleasing effect, particularly at Vavaoo, where the number of woods and hills send back repeated echoes, adding greatly to the effect. The day before the ceremony the yams are dug up, and ornamented with a kind of ribbon prepared from the inner membrane of the leaf of a species of pandanus, and dyed red. . . . The sun has scarcely set when the sound of the conch begins again to echo through the island, increasing as the night advances. At the Mooa [capital] and all the plantations the voices of men and women are heard singing *Nifo boa tegger gnaobe, booa gnaobe*, Rest thou, doing no work; thou shalt not work. This increases till midnight, men generally singing the first part of the sentence, and the women the last: it then subsides for three or four hours, and again increases as the sun rises. Nobody, however, is seen stirring out in the public roads till about eight o'clock, when the people from all quarters of the island are seen advancing towards the Mooa, and canoes from all the other islands are landing their men; so that all the inhabitants of Tonga seem approaching by sea and land, singing and sounding the conch. At the Mooa itself the universal bustle of preparation is seen and heard; and the different processions entering from various quarters of men and women, all dressed up in new *gnatoos*, ornamented with red ribbons and wreaths of flowers, and the men armed with spears and clubs, betoken the importance of the ceremony about to be performed. Each party brings in its yams in a basket, which is carried in the arms with great care by the principal vassal of the chief to whom the plantation may belong. The baskets are deposited in the *malá*¹ (in the Mooa), and some of them begin to employ themselves in slinging the yams, each upon the centre of a pole about eight or nine feet long, and four inches diameter. The proceedings are regulated by attending *matabooles*.² The yams being all slung, each pole is carried by two men upon their shoulders, one walking before the other, and the yam hanging between them, ornamented with red ribbons. The procession begins to move towards the grave of the last Tooitonga (which is

¹ The *malá* is "a piece of ground, generally before a large house, or chief's grave, where public ceremonies are principally held" (Mariner, *Tonga*

Islands, Vocabulary).

² The *mataboule* is "a rank next below chiefs or nobles" (*ibid.*).

generally in the neighbourhood, or the grave of one of his family will do), the men advancing in a single line, every two bearing a yam, with a slow and measured pace, sinking at every step, as if their burden were of immense weight. In the meantime the chiefs and matabooles are seated in a semicircle before the grave, with their heads bowed down, and their hands clasped before them." The procession then marched round the grave twice or thrice in a great circle, the conchs blowing and the men singing. Next the yams, still suspended from the poles, were deposited before the grave, and their bearers sat down beside them. One of the *matabooles* of Tooitonga now addressed the gods generally, and afterwards particularly, mentioning the late Tooitonga, and the names of several others. He thanked them for their divine bounty in favouring the land with the prospect of so good a harvest, and prayed that their beneficence might be continued in future. When he had finished, the men rose and resumed their loads, and after parading two or three times round the grave, marched back to the *maldi*, singing and blowing the conchs as before. The chiefs and *matabooles* soon followed to the same place, where the yams had been again deposited. Here the company sat down in a great circle, presided over by Tooitonga. Then the other articles that formed part of the *Inachi* were brought forward, consisting of dried fish, mats, etc., which, with the yams, were divided into shares. About a fourth was allotted to the gods, and appropriated by the priests; about a half fell to the king; and the remainder belonged to Tooitonga. The materials of the *Inachi* having been carried away, the company set themselves to drink *cava*, and a *mataboole* addressed them, saying that the gods would protect them, and grant them long lives, if they continued to observe the religious ceremonies and to pay respect to the chiefs.¹

The Samoans used to present the first-fruits to the spirits (*aitus*) and chiefs.² For example, a family whose god was in the form of an eel presented the first-fruits of their taro plantations to the eel.³ In Tahiti "the first fish taken periodically on their shores, together with a number of kinds regarded as sacred, were conveyed to the altar. The first-fruits of their orchards and gardens were also *taumaha*, or offered, with a portion of their live stock, which consisted of pigs, dogs, and fowls, as it was supposed death would be inflicted on the owner or the occupant of the land from which the god should not receive such acknowledgment."⁴ In Huahine, one of the Society Islands, the first-fruits were presented to the god Tani. A poor person was expected to bring two of the earliest

¹ W. Mariner, *Account of the Natives of the Tenga Islands* (London, 1818), ii. 196-203.

² Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United*

States Exploring Expedition, ii. 133.

³ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 70 sq.

⁴ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 350.

fruits gathered, of whatever kind; a *raatira* had to bring ten, and chiefs and princes had to bring more, according to their rank and riches. They carried the fruits to the temple, where they threw them down on the ground, with the words, "Here, Tani, I have brought you something to eat."¹ The chief gods of the Easter Islanders were Make-Make and Haua. To these they offered the first of all the produce of the ground.² Amongst the Maoris the offering of the first-fruits of the sweet potatoes to Pani, son of Rongo, the god of sweet potatoes, was a solemn religious ceremony.³

It has been affirmed that the old Prussians offered the first-fruits of their crops and of their fishing to the god Curcho, but doubt rests on the statement.⁴ In Attica the first-fruits of the vintage were presented to Icarius and Erigone.⁵ The Romans sacrificed the first ears of corn to Ceres, and the first of the new wine to Liber; and until the priests had offered these sacrifices, the people might not eat the new corn nor drink the new wine.⁶

The Thompson River Indians of British Columbia used to offer the first berries of the season to the earth, or more generally to the mountains. The offering was made by an old grey-haired person, who danced and held out the fruit towards the mountain-tops. The rest of the people painted their faces red and danced for some time.⁷ When the ears of maize were formed, the Quiches of Central America gathered the first-fruits and carried them to the priests; moreover, they baked loaves or cakes, which they offered to the idol who guarded their fields, but afterwards these cakes were given to the poor or the infirm to eat.⁸ The chief solemnity of the Natchez, an Indian tribe on the Lower Mississippi, was the Harvest Festival or the Festival of New Fire. An early account of this ceremony has been already submitted to the reader,⁹ but it may not be amiss to add here for comparison the later description by Chateaubriand, which differs from the other in some particulars, and lays stress on the sacrifice rather than on the sacrament of first-fruits. According to Chateaubriand, then, when the time for the festival drew near, a crier went through the villages calling upon the people to prepare new vessels and new garments, to wash their houses, and to burn the old grain, the old garments, and the old utensils in a

¹ Tyerman and Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 284.

² Geiseler, *Die Oester-Insel* (Berlin, 1883), p. 31.

³ E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), p. 110.

⁴ Hartknoch, *Alt und neues Preussen*, p. 161; id., *Dissertationes historicae de variis rebus Prussicis*, p. 163 (appended to his edition of Dusburg's *Chronicon Prussiae*). Cp. W. Mann-

hardt, *Die Kordamonen*, p. 27.

⁵ Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 130.

⁶ Festus, s.v. "Sacrificia," p. 319, ed. Müller; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 8.

⁷ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. p. 345.

⁸ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, ii. 566.

⁹ Above, p. 332 sqq.

common fire. He also proclaimed an amnesty to criminals. Next day he appeared again, commanding the people to fast for three days, to abstain from all pleasures, and to make use of the medicine of purification. Thereupon all the people took some drops extracted from a root which they called the "root of blood." It was a kind of plantain and distilled a red liquor which acted as a violent emetic. During their three days' fast the people kept silence. At the end of it the crier proclaimed that the festival would begin on the following day. So next morning, as soon as it began to grow light in the sky, the people streamed from all quarters towards the temple of the Sun. The temple was a large building with two doors, one opening to the east, the other to the west. On this morning the eastern door of the temple stood open. Facing the eastern door was an altar, placed so as to catch the first beams of the rising sun. An image of a *chouchouacha* (a small marsupial) stood upon the altar; on its right was an image of a rattlesnake, on its left an image of a marmoset. Before these images a fire of oak-bark burned perpetually. Once a year only, on the eve of the Harvest Festival, was the sacred flame suffered to die out. To the right of the altar, on the morning of this holy day, stood the great chief, who took his title and traced his descent from the Sun. To the left of the altar stood his wife. Round them were grouped, according to their ranks, the war chiefs, the sachems, the heralds, and the young braves. In front of the altar were piled bundles of dry reeds, stacked in concentric rings.

The high priest, standing on the threshold of the temple, kept his eyes fixed on the eastern horizon. Before presiding at the festival he had to plunge thrice into the Mississippi. In his hands he held two pieces of dry wood which he kept rubbing slowly against each other, muttering magic words. At his side two acolytes held two cups filled with a kind of black sherbet. All the women, their backs turned to the east, each leaning with one hand on her rude mattock and supporting her infant with the other, stood in a great semicircle at the gate of the temple. Profound silence reigned throughout the multitude while the priest watched attentively the growing light in the east. As soon as the diffused light of dawn began to be shot with beams of fire, he quickened the motion of the two pieces of wood which he held in his hands; and at the moment when the upper edge of the sun's disc appeared above the horizon, fire flashed from the wood and was caught in tinder. At the same instant the women outside the temple faced round and held up their infants and their mattocks to the rising sun.

The great chief and his wife now drank the black liquor. The priests kindled the circle of dried reeds; fire was set to the heap of oak-bark on the altar, and from this sacred flame all the hearths of the village were rekindled. No sooner were the circles of reeds

consumed than the chief's wife came forth from the temple and placing herself at the head of the women marched in procession to the harvest-fields, whither the men were not allowed to follow them. They went to gather the first sheaves of maize and returned to the temple bearing them on their heads. Some of the sheaves they presented to the high priest, who laid them on the altar. Others they used to bake the unleavened bread which was to be eaten in the evening. The eastern door of the sanctuary was now closed, and the western door was opened.

When day began to decline, the multitude assembled once more at the temple, this time at its western gate, where they formed a great crescent, with the horns turned towards the west. The unleavened bread was held up and presented to the setting sun, and a priest struck up a hymn in praise of his descending light. When darkness had fallen the whole plain twinkled with fires, round which the people feasted; and the sounds of music and revelry broke the silence of night.¹

¹ Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, pp. 130-136 (Michel Lévy, Paris, 1870).

END OF VOL. II

THE GOLDEN BOUGH

A STUDY
IN MAGIC AND RELIGION

BY

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CHAPTER III—(*continued*)

§ 13. *Transference of Evil*

THE custom of killing the god has now been proved to have been practised by peoples in the hunting, pastoral, and agricultural stages of society, and the various reasons for observing it have been explained. One aspect of the custom still remains to be noticed. The accumulated misfortunes and sins of the whole people are sometimes laid upon the dying god, who is supposed to bear them away for ever, leaving the people innocent and happy. The notion that we can transfer our guilt and pains and griefs to some other being who will bear them in our stead is familiar to the savage mind. It arises from a very obvious confusion between the physical and the mental. Because it is possible to transfer a load of wood, stones, or what not, from our own back to the back of another, the savage fancies that it is equally possible to transfer the burden of his pains and sins and sorrows to another, who will suffer them in his stead. Upon this idea he acts, and the result is an endless number of often very unamiable devices for putting off upon some one else the trouble which a man shrinks from bearing himself. Such devices are amongst the most familiar facts in folk-lore; but for the benefit of readers who are not professed students of folk-lore, some illustrations may be given.

It is not necessary that the evil should be transferred from the culprit or sufferer to a person; it may equally well be transferred to an animal or a thing, though in the last case the thing is often only a vehicle to

convey the trouble to the first person who touches it. In some of the East Indian islands they think that epilepsy can be cured by striking the patient on the face with the leaves of certain trees and then throwing them away. The disease is believed to have passed into the leaves, and to have been thrown away with them.¹ When an Atkhan of the Aleutian Islands had committed a grave sin and desired to unburden himself of his guilt, he proceeded as follows. Having chosen a time when the sun was clear and unclouded, he picked up certain weeds and carried them about his person. Then he laid them down, and calling the sun to witness, cast his sins upon them, after which, having eased his heart of all that weighed upon it, he threw the weeds into the fire, and fancied that thus he cleansed himself of his guilt.² In Vedic times a younger brother who married before his elder brother was thought to have sinned in so doing, but there was a ceremony by which he could purge himself of his sin. Fetters of reed-grass were laid on him in token of his guilt, and when they had been washed and sprinkled they were flung into a foaming torrent, which swept them away, while the evil was bidden to vanish with the foam of the stream.³ An Arab cure for melancholy or madness caused by love is to put a dish of water on the sufferer's head, drop melted lead into it, and then bury the lead in an open field; thus the mischief that was in the man goes away.⁴ Amongst the Miotse of China, when the eldest son of the house attains the age of seven years, a ceremony called "driving away the devil" takes place. The father makes a kite of straw and lets it fly away in the desert, bearing away all evil with it.⁵ Dyak priestesses expel ill-luck from a house by hewing and slashing the air in every corner of it with wooden swords, which they afterwards wash in the river, to let the ill-luck float away down stream. Sometimes they sweep misfortune out of the house with

¹ J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik-en kroes-harige rassen tusschen Selbes en Papua*, pp. 266 sq., 305, 357 sq.; cp. *id.*, pp. 141, 340.

² Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska*, p. 158.

³ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 322.

⁴ This I learned from my friend W. Robertson Smith, who mentioned as his authority David of Antioch, *Tazyin*, in the story "Orwa."

⁵ R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, p. 29 sq.

brooms made of the leaves of certain plants and sprinkled with rice-water and blood. Having swept it clean out of every room and into a toy-house made of bamboo, they set the little house with its load of bad luck adrift on the river. The current carries it away out to sea, where it shifts its baleful cargo to a certain kettle-shaped ship, which floats in mid-ocean and receives in its capacious hold all the ills that flesh is heir to. Well would it be with mankind if the evils remained for ever tossing far away on the billows; but, alas, they are dispersed from the ship to the four winds, and settle again, and yet again, on the weary Dyak world. On Dyak rivers you may see many of the miniature houses, laden with manifold misfortunes, bobbing up and down on the current, or sticking fast in the thickets that line the banks.¹ To cure toothache some of the Australian blacks apply a heated spear-thrower to the cheek. The spear-thrower is then cast away, and the toothache goes with it in the shape of a black stone called *karriitch*. Stones of this kind are found in old mounds and sandhills. They are carefully collected and thrown in the direction of enemies in order to give them toothache.² In Mirzapur a mode of transferring disease is to fill a pot with flowers and rice and bury it in a pathway covered up with a flat stone. Whoever touches this is supposed to contract the disease. The practice is called *chalauiwa*, or "passing on" the malady. This sort of thing goes on daily in Upper India. Often while walking of a morning in the bazaar you will see a little pile of earth adorned with flowers in the middle of the road. Such a pile usually contains some scabs or scales from the body of a small-pox patient, which are placed there in the hope that some one may touch them, and by catching the disease may relieve the sufferer.³

In the western district of the island of Timor, when men or women are making long and tiring journeys, they fan themselves with leafy branches, which they afterwards throw

¹ C. Hupe, "Korte Verhandeling over de Godsdienst, Zeden enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1846, dl. iii. p. 149 sq.; F. Grabowsky, "Die Theogonie der Dajaken auf Borneo," *Internationales Archiv*

für Ethnographie, v. (1892), p. 131.

² J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 59.

³ W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 106.

away on particular spots where their forefathers did the same before them. The fatigue which they felt is thus supposed to have passed into the leaves and to be left behind. Others use stones instead of leaves.¹ Similarly in the Babar Archipelago tired people will strike themselves with stones, believing that they thus transfer to the stones the weariness which they felt in their own bodies. They then throw away the stones in places which are specially set apart for the purpose.² A like belief and practice in many distant parts of the world have given rise to those cairns or heaps of sticks and leaves which travellers often observe beside the path, and to which every passing native adds his contribution in the shape of a stone, or stick, or leaf. Thus in the Solomon and Banks Islands the natives are wont to throw sticks, stones, or leaves upon a heap at a place of steep descent, or where a difficult path begins, saying, "There goes my fatigue." The act is not a religious rite, for the thing thrown on the heap is not an offering to spiritual powers, and the words which accompany the act are not a prayer. It is nothing but a magical ceremony for getting rid of fatigue, which the simple savage fancies he can embody in a stick, leaf, or stone, and so cast it from him.³ An early Spanish missionary to Nicaragua, observing that along the paths there were heaps of stones on which the Indians as they passed threw grass, asked them why they did so. "Because we think," was the answer, "that thereby we are kept from weariness and hunger, or at least that we suffer less from them."⁴ In Guatemala also piles of stones may be seen at the partings of ways and on the tops of cliffs and mountains. Every passing Indian used to gather a handful of grass, rub his legs with it, spit on it, and deposit it with a small stone on the pile, firmly persuaded that by so doing he would restore their flagging vigour to his weary limbs.⁵ Here

¹ J. G. F. Riedel, "Die Landschaft Dawan oder West-Timor," *Deutsche Geographische Blätter*, x. 231.

² *Id.*, *De sluik-en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 340.

³ R. H. Codrington, *The Melaneseans*, p. 186.

⁴ Oviedo, *Histoire du Nicaragua* (Paris, 1840), p. 42 sq. (Ternaux-Compans, *Voyages, Relations et Mémoires originaux*, etc.).

⁵ Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, ii. 564; compare

the rubbing of the limbs with the grass, like the Babar custom of striking the body with a stone, was doubtless a mode of extracting the fatigue from them as a preliminary to throwing it away. Similarly on the plateau between Lakes Tanganyika and Nyassa the native carriers, before they ascend a steep hill with their loads, will pick up a stone, spit on it, rub the calves of their legs with it, and then deposit it on one of those small piles of stones which are commonly to be found at such spots in this part of Africa. A recent English traveller, who noticed the custom, was informed that the carriers practise it "to make their legs light,"¹ in other words, to extract the fatigue from them. On the banks of the Kei river in Southern Africa, about seventy years ago, another English traveller noticed some heaps of stones. On inquiring what they meant, he was told by his guides that when a Caffre felt weary he had but to add a stone to the heap to regain fresh vigour.² From other accounts of the Caffre custom we learn that these cairns are generally on the sides or tops of mountains, and that before a native deposits his stone on the pile he spits on it.³ The practice of spitting on the stone which the weary wayfarer lays on the pile is probably a mode of transferring his fatigue the more effectually to the material vehicle which is to rid him of it. We have seen that the practice prevails among the Indians of Guatemala and the natives of the Tanganyika plateau, and it appears to be observed also in similar circumstances in Corea, where the cairns are to be

iii. 486. Indians of Guatemala, when they cross a pass for the first time, still commonly add a stone to the cairn which marks the spot. See C. Sapper, "Die Gebräuche und religiösen Anschauungen der Kekchi-Indianer," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 197.

¹ F. F. R. Boileau, "The Nyasa-Tanganyika Plateau," *The Geographical Journal*, xiii. (1899), p. 589. In the same region Mr. L. Declé observed many trees or rocks on which were placed little heaps of stones or bits of wood, to which in passing each of his men added a fresh stone or bit of wood or a tuft of grass. "This," says Mr. Declé,

"is a tribute to the spirits, the general precaution to ensure a safe return" (*Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 289). A similar practice prevails among the Wanyamwezi (*ibid.* p. 345). Compare Grant, *A Walk across Africa*, p. 133 sq.

² Cowper Rose, *Four Years in Southern Africa* (London, 1829), p. 147.

³ S. Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, p. 211 sq.; Callaway, *Religious System of the Amasutu*, i. 66; D. Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas* (Edinburgh, 1875), p. 146 sq. Compare Lichtenstein, *Reisen im südlichen Africa*, i. 411.

found especially on the tops of passes.¹ From the primitive point of view nothing can be more natural than that the cairns or the heaps of sticks and leaves to which the tired traveller adds his contribution should stand at the top of passes and, in general, on the highest points of the road. The wayfarer who has toiled, with aching limbs and throbbing temples, up a long and steep ascent, is aware of a sudden alleviation as soon as he has reached the summit; he feels as if a weight had been lifted from him, and to the savage, with his concrete mode of thought, it seems natural and easy to cast the weight from him in the shape of a stone or stick, or a bunch of leaves or of grass. Hence it is that the piles which represent the accumulated weariness of many foot-sore and heavy-laden travellers are to be seen wherever the road runs highest in the lofty regions of Bolivia, Tibet, Bhootan, and Burma,² in the passes of the Andes and the Himalayas, as well as in Corea, Caffraria, Guatemala, and Melanesia.

But it is not mere bodily fatigue which the savage fancies he can rid himself of in this easy fashion. Unable clearly to distinguish the immaterial from the material, the abstract from the concrete, he is assailed by vague terrors, he feels himself exposed to some ill-defined danger on the scene of any great crime or great misfortune. The place to him seems haunted ground. The thronging memories that crowd upon his mind, if they are not mistaken by him for goblins and phantoms, oppress his fancy with a leaden weight. His impulse is to flee from the dreadful spot,

¹ W. Gowland, "Dolmen and other Antiquities of Corea," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), p. 328 sq.; Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours*, i. 147, ii. 223. Both writers speak as if the practice were to spit on the cairn rather than on the particular stone which the traveller adds to it; indeed, Mrs. Bishop omits to notice the custom of adding to the cairns. Mr. Gowland says that almost every traveller carries up at least one stone from the valley and lays it on the pile.

² D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Peru and Bolivia," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*, ii. (1870), p. 237 sq.; G. C. Musters,

"Notes on Bolivia," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, xlvii. (1877), p. 211; T. T. Cooper, *Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce* (London, 1871), p. 275; J. A. H. Louis, *The Gates of Thibet, a Bird's Eye View of Independent Sikkhim, British Bhootan, and the Doorgs* (Calcutta, 1894), p. 111 sq.; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 483. So among the Mrus of Aracan, every man who crosses a hill, on reaching the crest, plucks a fresh young shoot of grass and lays it on a pile of the withered deposits of former travellers (T. H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India*, p. 232 sq.).

to shake off the burden that seems to cling to him like a nightmare. This, in his simple sensuous way, he thinks he can do by casting something at the horrid place and hurrying by. For will not the contagion of misfortune, the horror that clutched at his heart-strings, be diverted from himself into the thing? will it not gather up in itself all the evil influences that threatened him, and so leave him to pursue his journey in safety and peace? Some such train of thought, if these gropings and fumbings of a mind in darkness deserve the name of thought, seems to explain the custom, observed by wayfarers in many lands, of throwing sticks or stones on places where something horrible has happened or evil deeds have been done. When Lieutenant Younghusband was travelling across the great desert of Gobi his caravan descended, towards dusk on a June evening, into a long depression between the hills, which was notorious as a haunt of robbers. His guide, with a terror-stricken face, told how not long before nine men out of a single caravan had been murdered, and the rest left in a pitiable state to continue their journey on foot across the awful desert. A horseman, too, had just been seen riding towards the hills. "We had accordingly to keep a sharp look-out, and when we reached the foot of the hills, halted, and, taking the loads off the camels, wrapped ourselves up in our sheepskins and watched through the long hours of the night. Day broke at last, and then we silently advanced and entered the hills. Very weird and fantastic in their rugged outline were they, and here and there a cairn of stones marked where some caravan had been attacked, and as we passed these each man threw one more stone on the heap."¹ In the Norwegian district of Tellemarken a cairn is piled up wherever anything fearful has happened, and every passer-by must throw another stone on it, or some evil will befall him.² In Sweden and the Esthonian island of Oesel the same custom is practised on scenes of clandestine or illicit love, with the strange addition in Oesel that when a man has lost his cattle he will go to such a spot, and, while he flings a stick or stone on it,

¹ F. E. Younghusband, "A Journey (1888), p. 494.

across Central Asia," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, x.

² F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, p. 274 sq.

will say, "I bring thee wood. Let me soon find my lost cattle."¹ Far from these northern lands, the Dyaks of Batang Lupar keep up an observance of the same sort in the forests of Borneo. Beside their paths may be seen heaps of sticks or stones which are called "lying heaps." Each heap is in memory of some man who told a stupendous lie or disgracefully failed in carrying out an engagement, and everybody who passes adds a stick or stone to the pile, saying as he does so, "For So-and-so's lying heap."²

But, as might perhaps have been anticipated, it is on scenes of murder and sudden death that this rude method of averting or diverting evil is most commonly practised. The custom that every passer-by must cast a stone or stick on the spot where some one has come to a violent end, whether by murder or otherwise, has been observed in practically the same form in such many and diverse parts of the world as Ireland, France, Spain, Sweden, Germany, Bohemia, Lesbos, Morocco, Armenia, Arabia, India, North America, Venezuela, Bolivia, Celebes, and New Zealand.³ Sometimes the scene of the murder or death may also be the grave of the victim, but it need not always be so, and in Europe, where the dead are buried in consecrated ground, the two places would seldom coincide. However, the custom of throwing stones or sticks on a grave

¹ F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, p. 274; Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat*, vii. (1872), p. 73.

² Spenser St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*,² i. 88.

³ A. C. Haddon, "A Batch of Irish Folk-lore," *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893), pp. 357, 360; Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, ii. 75, 77; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 309; Hylten-Cavallius, quoted by Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, p. 274; K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, ii. 65; K. Müllenhoff, *Sagen, Märchen und Lieder der Herzogthümer Schleswig, Holstein und Lauenburg*, p. 125; A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 113; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 85; A. Treichel, "Reisighäufung und Steinhäufung an Mordstellen," *Am Ur-Quelle*, vi. (1896), p.

220; Georgeakis et Pineau, *Folk-lore de Lesbos*, p. 323; Leared, *Morocco and the Moors*, p. 105 sq.; Haxthausen, *Transkaukasien*, i. 222; W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 167; J. Bricknell, *The Natural History of North Carolina* (Dublin, 1737), p. 380; J. Adair, *History of the American Indians*, p. 184; K. Martin, *Bericht über eine Reise nach Nederlandsch West-Indien*, Erster Theil (Leyden, 1887), p. 166; G. C. Musters, "Notes on Bolivia," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, xlvii. (1877), p. 211; B. F. Matthes, *Einige Eigenthümlichkeiten in den Festen und Gewohnheiten der Makassaren und Büginesen*, p. 25 (separate reprint from *Travaux de la 6e Session du Congrès International des Orientalistes à Leide*, vol. ii.); R. A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, p. 186.

has undoubtedly been observed by passers-by in many parts of the world, and that, too, even when the graves are not those of persons who have come to a violent end. Thus we are told that the people of Unalashka, one of the Aleutian Islands, bury their dead on the summits of hills and raise a little hillock over the grave. "In a walk into the country one of the natives who attended me pointed out several of these receptacles of the dead. There was one of them by the side of the road leading from the harbour to the village over which was raised a heap of stones. It was observed that every one who passed it added one to it."¹ The Roumanians of Transylvania think that a dying man should have a burning candle in his hand, and that any one who dies without a light has no right to the ordinary funeral ceremonies. The body of such an unfortunate is not laid in holy ground, but is buried wherever it may be found. His grave is marked only by a heap of dry branches, to which each passer-by is expected to add a handful of twigs or a thorny bough.² The Hottentot god or hero Heitsi-eibib, as the reader is already aware, died several times and came to life again. When the Hottentots pass one of his numerous graves they throw a stone, a bush, or a fresh branch on it for good luck.³ Near the former mission-station of Blyde-uitzigt in Cape Colony there was a spot called Devil's Neck where, in the opinion of the Bushmen, the devil was interred. To hinder his resurrection stones were piled in heaps about the place. When a Bushman, travelling in the company of a missionary, came in sight of the spot he seized a stone and hurled it at the grave, remarking that if he did not do so his neck would be twisted round so that he would have to look backwards for the term of his natural life.⁴ Stones are cast by passers-by on the graves of murderers in some parts of Senegambia.⁵ In Syria deceased robbers are not buried like

¹ Cook, *Voyages* (London, 1809), vi. 479.

² E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, i. 311, 318.

³ H. Lichtenstein, *Reisen im Südlichen Africa*, i. 349 sq.; Sir James E. Alexander, *Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa*, i. 166; C. J. Anderson, *Lake Ngami*, p. 327; W.

H. I. Bleek, *Reynard the Fox in South Africa*, p. 76; Th. Hahn, *Tsumi-Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*, p. 56.

⁴ Th. Hahn, "Die Buschmänner," *Globus*, xviii. 141.

⁵ Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, ii. 195, referring to Rafflenel,

honest folk, but left to rot where they lie; and a pile of stones is raised over the mouldering corpse. Every one who passes such a pile must fling a stone at it, on pain of incurring God's malison.¹ Between sixty and seventy years ago an Englishman was travelling from Sidon to Tyre with a couple of Musalmans. When he drew near Tyre his companions picked up some small stones, armed him in the same fashion, and requested him to be so kind as to follow their example. Soon afterwards they came in sight of a conical heap of pebbles and stones standing in the road, at which the two Musalmans hurled stones and curses with great vehemence and remarkable volubility. When they had discharged this pious duty to their satisfaction, they explained that the missiles and maledictions were directed at a celebrated robber and murderer, who had been knocked on the head and buried there some half a century before.²

In these latter cases it may perhaps be thought that the sticks and stones serve no other purpose than to keep off the angry and dangerous ghost who might be supposed to haunt either the place of death or the grave. Yet when we remember that precisely the same customs are practised in circumstances which exclude the supposition of a ghost—for example, on spots defiled by moral turpitude without any shedding of blood, or again by weary travellers whose only thought is of rest—we shall probably incline to reject this obvious explanation and to seek one which will apply to all the cases we have been considering. That explanation appears to be supplied by the primitive view of death and the dead as the sources of a dangerous pollution which infects all who come near them. To rid himself of that pollution, which, as usual, he conceives in a concrete form, the savage seeks to gather it up in a material vehicle and leave it behind him on the hazardous spot, while, having thus cast care away, he hastens forward with a lighter heart. This explanation falls in exactly with the tradition as to the

Nouveau Voyage dans le pays des nègres (Paris, 1856), i. 93 sq.

¹ Eijüb Abēla, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss abergläubischer Gebräuche in Syrien," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen*

Palaestina-Vereins, vii. (1884), p. 102.

² Note by G. P. Badger, on *The Travels of Ludovico di Varthema*, translated by J. W. Jones (Hakluyt Society, 1863), p. 45.

origin of those cairns which were to be seen by wayside images of Hermes in ancient Greece, and to which every passer-by added a stone. It was said that when Hermes was tried by the gods for the murder of Argus all the gods flung stones at him as a means of freeing themselves from the pollution contracted by bloodshed; the stones thus thrown made a great heap, and the custom of rearing such heaps at wayside images of Hermes continued ever afterwards.¹ At all events this mode of interpreting the custom appears preferable to the one which has generally found favour with European travellers and writers. Imperfectly acquainted for the most part with the notions which underlie primitive magic, but very familiar with the religious conception of a deity who requires sacrifice of his worshippers, they are apt to interpret the missiles in question as cheap and easy offerings presented by pious but frugal worshippers to ghosts or spirits whose favour they desire to win.² Whether a likely mode of conciliating a ghost or spirit is to throw sticks and stones at him is a question about which opinions might perhaps differ. It is difficult to speak with confidence about the tastes of spiritual beings, but as a rule they bear a remarkable likeness to those of mere ordinary mortals, and it may be said without fear of contradiction that few of the latter would be gratified by being set up as a common target to be shied at with sticks and stones by everybody who passed within range. Yet it is quite possible that a ceremony, which at first was purely magical, may in time have a religious gloss or interpretation put on it even by those

¹ *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. 'Ερμῆος, p. 375 sq.; Eustathius on Homer, *Odyssey*, xvi. 471. As to the heaps of stones see Cornutus, *De natura deorum*, 16; Babrius, *Fabulae*, xlviii. 1 sq.; Suidas, s.v. 'Ερμῆος; Schol. on Nicander, *Ther.* 150. The method of execution by stoning may perhaps have been resorted to in order to avoid the pollution which would be entailed by contact with the guilty and dying man.

² See, for example, O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle*, p. 214; G. M. Dawson, "Notes on the Shuswap People of British

Columbia," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, ix. (1891), section ii. p. 38; F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, pp. 267 sq., 273 sq., 276, 278 sq.; R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, p. 48. Mr. E. S. Hartland explains the practice as an act of ceremonial union with the spirit of the cairn (*Legend of Perseus*, ii. 228). Some of these writers have made a special study of the practices in question. See F. Liebrecht, "Die geworfenen Steine," *Zur Volkskunde*, pp. 267-284; R. Andree, "Steinhaufen," *Ethnogr. Parallelen und Vergleiche*, pp. 46-58.

who practise it; and this seems in fact to have sometimes happened to the particular custom under consideration. Certainly some people accompany the throwing of the stone on the pile with the presentation of useful articles, which can hardly serve any other purpose than that of propitiating some local spirits. Thus travellers in Sikhim and Bhootan offer flour and wine, as well as stones, at the cairns; and they also burn incense and recite incantations.¹ Indians of Guatemala offered, according to their means, a little cotton, salt, cacao, or chili.² They now burn copal and sometimes dance on the tops of the passes where the cairns are to be seen, but perhaps these devotions may be paid to the crosses which at the present day are generally set up in such situations.³ In Bolivia the Indian will squirt out the juice of his coca-quid, or throw the quid itself on the cairn, to which he adds a stone; occasionally he goes so far as to stick feathers or a leathern sandal or two on the pile. In passing the cairns he will sometimes pull a hair or two out of his eyebrows or eyelashes and puff them away towards the sun.⁴ In Sweden a piece of money is sometimes thrown on a cairn instead of a stick or stone.⁵ In the jungles of Mirzapur the cairn which marks the spot where a man has been killed by a tiger, and to which each passer-by contributes a stone, is commonly in charge of a Baiga or aboriginal priest, who offers upon it a cock, a pig, or some spirits, and occasionally lights a little lamp at the shrine.⁶ Prayers, too, are sometimes offered at these piles. In Laos heaps of stones may be seen beside the path, on which the passenger will deposit a pebble, a branch, or a leaf, while he beseeches the Lord of the Diamond to bestow on him good luck and long life.⁷ Tibetan travellers mutter a prayer at the cairns on the tops

¹ J. A. H. Louis, *The Gates of Thibet*, p. 111 sq.

² Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, ii. 564.

³ C. Sapper, "Die Gebräuche und religiösen Anschauungen der Kekchí-Indianer," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, viii. (1895), p. 197 sq.

⁴ D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*,

ii. (1870), p. 237 sq.; G. C. Musters, "Notes on Bolivia," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, xlvii. (1877), p. 211.

⁵ F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, p. 274.

⁶ W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 167.

⁷ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos*, p. 198.

of passes to which they add a few stones gathered by them on the ascent.¹ A native of South-Eastern Africa who places a small stone on a cairn is wont to say as he does so, "Cairn, grant me strength and prosperity."² In the same circumstances the Hottentot prays for plenty of cattle,³ and the Caffre that his journey may be prosperous, that he may have strength to accomplish it, and that he may obtain an abundant supply of food by the way.⁴ It is said that sick Bushmen used to go on pilgrimage to the cairn called the Devil's Neck and pray to the spirit of the place to heal them, while they rubbed the sick part of their body and cried "Woe! woe!" On special occasions, too, they resorted thither and implored the spirit's help.⁵ Such customs seem to indicate the gradual transformation of an old magical ceremony into a religious rite with its characteristic features of prayer and sacrifice. Yet behind these later accretions, as we may perhaps regard them, it seems possible in many, if not in all, cases to discern the nucleus to which they have attached themselves, the original idea which they tend to conceal, and in time to transmute. That idea is the transference of evil from man to a material substance which he can cast from him like an outworn garment.

Animals are often employed as the vehicle for carrying away or transferring the evil. A Guinea negro, who happens to be unwell, will sometimes tie a live chicken round his neck, so that it lies on his breast. When the bird flaps its wings

¹ T. T. Cooper, *Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce* (London, 1871), p. 275.

² J. Macdonald, "Manners, Customs, etc., of South African Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 126.

³ Sir James E. Alexander, *Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa*, i. 166.

⁴ S. Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, p. 211 sq. When the Bishop of Capetown once passed a heap of stones on the top of a mountain in the Amapondo country he was told that "it was customary for every traveller to add one to the heap that it might have a favourable influence on his journey, and enable him to arrive

at some kraal while the pot is yet boiling" (J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 217). Here there is no mention of a prayer. Similarly a Basuto on a journey, when he fears that the friend with whom he is going to stay may have eaten up all the food before his guest's arrival, places a stone on a cairn to avert the danger (Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 272). The reason alleged for the practice in these cases is probably equivalent to the one assigned by the Melanesians and others; by ridding the traveller of his fatigue it enables him to journey faster and so to reach his destination before supper is over.

⁵ Th. Hahn, "Die Buschmänner," *Globus*, xviii. 141. As to the cairn in question, see above, p. 9.

or cheeps, the man thinks it a good sign, supposing the chicken to be afflicted with the very pain from which he hopes soon to be released, or which he would otherwise have to endure.¹ When a Moor has a headache, he will sometimes take a lamb or a goat and beat it till it falls down, believing that the headache will thus be transferred to the animal.² After an illness, a Bechuana king seated himself upon an ox which lay stretched on the ground. The native doctor next poured water on the king's head till it ran down over his body. Then the head of the ox was held in a vessel of water till the animal expired; whereupon the doctor declared, and the people believed, that the ox died of the king's disease, which had been transferred to it from the king.³ Amongst the Malagasy the vehicle for carrying away evils is called a *faditra*. "The *faditra* is anything selected by the *sikidy* [divining-board] for the purpose of taking away any hurtful evils or diseases that might prove injurious to an individual's happiness, peace, or prosperity. The *faditra* may be either ashes, cut money, a sheep, a pumpkin, or anything else the *sikidy* may choose to direct. After the particular article is appointed, the priest counts upon it all the evils that may prove injurious to the person for whom it is made, and which he then charges the *faditra* to take away for ever. If the *faditra* be ashes, it is blown, to be carried away by the wind. If it be cut money, it is thrown to the bottom of deep water, or where it can never be found. If it be a sheep, it is carried away to a distance on the shoulders of a man, who runs with all his might, mumbling as he goes, as if in the greatest rage against the *faditra* for the evils it is bearing away. If it be a pumpkin, it is carried on the shoulders to a little distance, and there dashed upon the ground with every appearance of fury and indignation."⁴ A Malagasy was informed by a diviner that he was doomed to a bloody death, but that possibly he might avert his fate by

¹ J. Smith, *Trade and Travels in the Gulph of Guinea* (London, 1851), p. 77.

² Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 117.

³ John Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey*, ii. 207 sq.

⁴ W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, i. 422 sq.; cp. *id.*, pp. 232, 435, 436 sq.; Sibree, *The Great African Island*, p. 303 sq. As to divination by the *sikidy*, see Sibree, "Divination among the Malagasy," *Folk-lore*, iii. (1892), pp. 193-226.

performing a certain rite. Carrying a small vessel full of blood upon his head, he was to mount upon the back of a bullock; while thus mounted, he was to spill the blood upon the bullock's head, and then send the animal away into the wilderness, whence it might never return.¹

The Battas of Sumatra have a ceremony which they call "making the curse to fly away." When a woman is childless, a sacrifice is offered to the gods of three grasshoppers, representing a head of cattle, a buffalo, and a horse. Then a swallow is set free, with a prayer that the curse may fall upon the bird and fly away with it.² At the cleansing of a leper and of a house suspected of being tainted with leprosy, the Jews let a bird fly away.³ Among the Majhwar, a Dravidian race of South Mirzapur, if a man has died of a contagious disease, such as cholera, the village priest walks in front of the funeral procession with a chicken in his hands, which he lets loose in the direction of some other village as a scapegoat to carry the infection away. None but another very experienced priest would afterwards dare to touch or eat such a chicken.⁴ In Morocco most wealthy Moors keep a wild boar in their stables, in order that the jinn and evil spirits may be diverted from the horses and enter into the boar.⁵ Amongst the Burghers or Badagas of the Neilgherry Hills in Southern India, when a death has taken place, the sins of the deceased are laid upon a buffalo calf. A set form of confession of sins, the same for every one, is recited aloud, then the calf is set free, and is never afterwards used for common purposes. "The idea of this ceremony is that the sins of the deceased enter the calf, or that the task of his absolution is laid on it. They say that the calf very soon disappears, and that it is never after heard of."⁶

¹ W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 374; Sibree, *The Great African Island*, p. 304; *Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine*, iii. 263.

² Ködding, "Die Batakschen Götter," *Allgemeine Missions - Zeitschrift*, xii. (1885), p. 478.

³ Leviticus xiv. 7, 53. For a similar use in Arabia see Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentumes*, p. 156; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,² p. 422.

⁴ W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iii. 434.

⁵ A. Leared, *Morocco and the Moors* (London, 1876), p. 301.

⁶ H. Harkness, *Singular Aboriginal Race of the Neilgherry Hills*, p. 133; Metz, *The Tribes inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills*, p. 78; Jagor, "Ueber die Badagas im Nilgiri - Gebirge," *Verhandl. d. Berlin. Gesell. f. Anthrop.* (1876), p. 196 sq. For the custom

Again, men sometimes play the part of scapegoat by diverting to themselves the evils that threaten others. When a Cinghalese is dangerously ill, and the physicians can do nothing, a devil-dancer is called in, who by making offerings to the devils, and dancing in the masks appropriate to them, conjures these demons of disease, one after the other, out of the sick man's body and into his own. Having thus successfully extracted the cause of the malady, the artful dancer lies down on a bier, and shamming death, is carried to an open place outside the village. Here, being left to himself, he soon comes to life again, and hastens back to claim his reward.¹ In 1590 a Scotch witch of the name of Agnes Sampson was convicted of curing a certain Robert Kers of a disease "laid upon him by a westland warlock when he was at Dumfries, whilk sickness she took upon herself, and kept the same with great groaning and torment till the morn, at whilk time there was a great din heard in the house." The noise was made by the witch in her efforts to shift the disease, by means of clothes, from herself to a cat or dog. Unfortunately the attempt partly miscarried. The disease missed the animal and hit Alexander Douglas of Dalkeith, who dwined and died of it, while the original patient, Robert Kers, was made whole.² The Dyaks believe that certain men possess in themselves the power of neutralising bad omens. So, when evil omens have alarmed a farmer for the safety of his crops, he takes a small portion of his farm produce to one of these wise men, who eats it raw for a small consideration, "and thereby appropriates to himself the evil omen, which in him becomes innocuous, and thus delivers the other from the ban of the *pemali* or taboo."³

In Travancore, when a rajah is near his end, they seek out a holy Brahman, who consents to take upon himself the

of letting a bullock go loose after a death, compare also Grierson, *Bihar Peasant Life*, p. 409; Ibbetson, *Settlement Report of the Panipat, Tahsil, and Karnal Parganah of the Karnal District* (Allahabad, 1883), p. 137. In the latter case it is said that the animal is let loose "to become a pest." Perhaps the older idea was that the animal carried away death from the survivors. The idea of sin is not primitive.

¹ A. Grünwedel, "Sinhalesische Masken," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vi. (1893), p. 85 sq.

² Dalrymple, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 104 sq. I have modernised the spelling.

³ J. Perham, "Sea Dyak Religion," *Journ. Straits Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 10 (December 1882), p. 232.

sins of the dying man in consideration of the sum of ten thousand rupees. Thus prepared to immolate himself on the altar of duty as a vicarious sacrifice for sin, the saint is introduced into the chamber of death, and closely embraces the dying rajah, saying to him, "O King, I undertake to bear all your sins and diseases. May your Highness live long and reign happily." Having thus, with a noble devotion, taken to himself the sins of the sufferer, and likewise the rupees, he is sent away from the country and never more allowed to return.¹ Closely akin to this is the old Welsh custom known as "sin-eating." According to Aubrey, "In the County of Hereford was an old Custome at funeralls to hire poor people, who were to take upon them all the sinnes of the party deceased. One of them, I remember, lived in a cottage on Rosse-high way (he was a long, leane, ugly, lamentable poor raskal). The manner was that when the Corps was brought out of the house and layd on the Biere; a Loafe of bread was brought out, and delivered to the Sinne-eater over the corps, as also a Mazar-bowle of maple (Gossips bowle) full of beer, which he was to drinke up, and sixpence in money, in consideration whereof he took upon him (ipso facto) all the Sinnes of the Defunct, and freed him (or her) from walking after they were dead. . . . I believe this custom was heretofore used over all Wales. . . . In North Wales the Sinne-eaters are frequently made use of; but there, instead of a Bowle of Beere, they have a bowle of Milke."² According to a letter dated February 1, 1714-15, "within the memory of our fathers, in Shropshire, in those villages adjoyning to Wales, when a person dyed, there was notice given to an old sire (for so they called him), who presently repaired to the place where the deceased lay, and stood before the door of the house, when some of the family came out and furnished him with a cricket, on which he sat down facing the door. Then they gave him a groat, which he put in his pocket; a crust of bread, which he eat; and a full bowle of ale, which he drank off at a draught. After this he got up from the cricket and pronounced, with a com-

¹ S. Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, p. 136.

² Aubrey, *Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme* (Folk-lore Society, 1881), "p. 35 sq.

posed gesture, the ease and rest of the soul departed for which he would pawn his own soul. This I had from the ingenious John Aubrey, Esq."¹ In recent years some doubt has been thrown on Aubrey's account of the custom.² The practice, however, is reported to have prevailed in a valley not far from Llandebie to a recent period. An instance was said to have occurred about fifty years ago.³

Aubrey's statement is moreover supported by the analogy of similar customs in India. When the Rajah of Tanjore died in 1801, some of his bones and the bones of the two wives, who were burned with his corpse, were ground to powder and eaten, mixed with boiled rice, by twelve Brahmans. It was believed that the sins of the deceased passed into the bodies of the Brahmans, who were paid for the service.⁴ A Brahman, resident in a village near Raipur, stated that he had eaten food (rice and milk) out of the hand of the dead Rajah of Bilaspur, and that in consequence he had been placed on the throne for the space of a year. At the end of the year he had been given presents and then turned out of the territory and forbidden apparently to return. He was an outcast among his fellows for having eaten out of a dead man's hand.⁵ A similar custom is believed to obtain in the hill states about Kangra, and to have given rise to a caste of "outcaste" Brahmans. At the funeral of a Rani of Chamba rice and ghee were eaten out of the hands of the corpse by a Brahman paid for the purpose. Afterwards a stranger, who had been caught outside the Chamba territory, was given the costly wrappings of the corpse, then told to depart and never show his face in the

¹ Bagford's letter in Leland's *Collectanea*, i. 76, quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 246 sq., Bohn's ed.

² In the *Academy*, 13th Nov. 1875, p. 505, Mr. D. Silvan Evans stated that he knew of no such custom anywhere in Wales; and Miss Burne knows no example of it in Shropshire (Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folklore*, p. 307 sq.).

³ The authority for the statement is a Mr. Moggridge, reported in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, second series, iii. 330. But Mr. Moggridge did not

speak from personal knowledge, and as he appears to have taken it for granted that the practice of placing bread and salt upon the breast of a corpse was a survival of the custom of "sin-eating," his evidence must be received with caution. He repeated his statement, in somewhat vaguer terms, at a meeting of the Anthropological Institute, 14th December 1875. See *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* v. (1876), p. 423 sq.

⁴ DuBois, *Mœurs des Peuples de l'Inde*, ii. 32.

⁵ R. Richardson, in *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 84, § 674.

country again.¹ In Oude when an infant was killed it used to be buried in the room where it had been born. On the thirteenth day afterwards the priest had to cook and eat his food in that room. By doing so he was supposed to take the whole sin upon himself and to cleanse the family from it.² At Utch Kurgan in Turkistan Mr. Schuyler saw an old man who was said to get his living by taking on himself the sins of the dead, and thenceforth devoting his life to prayer for their souls.³

In Tahiti, where the bodies of chiefs and persons of rank were embalmed and preserved above ground in special sheds or houses erected for them, a priest was employed at the funeral rites who bore the title of the "corpse-praying priest." His office was singular. When the house for the dead had been prepared, and the corpse placed on the platform or bier, the priest ordered a hole to be made in the floor, near the foot of the platform. Over this he prayed to the god by whom it was supposed that the soul of the deceased had been called away. The purport of his prayer was that all the dead man's sins, especially the one for which his soul had been required of him, might be deposited there, that they might not attach in any degree to the survivors, and that the anger of the god might be appeased. He next addressed the corpse, usually saying, "With you let the guilt now remain." The pillar or post of the corpse, as it was called, was then planted in the hole, and the hole filled up. As soon as the ceremony of depositing the sins in the hole was over, all who had touched the body or the garments of the deceased, which were buried or destroyed, fled precipitately into the sea, to cleanse themselves from the pollution which they had contracted by touching the corpse. They also cast into the sea the garments they had worn while they were performing the last offices to the dead. Having finished their ablutions, they gathered a few pieces of coral from the bottom of the sea, and returning with them to the house, addressed the corpse, saying, "With you may the pollution

¹ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 86, § 674, ii. p. 93, § 559. Some of these customs have been already referred to in a different connection. See above,

vol. ii. p. 30 39.

² *Panjab Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 179, § 745.

³ E. Schuyler, *Turkistan*, ii. 28.

be." So saying they threw down the coral on the top of the hole which had been dug to receive the sins and the defilement of the dead.¹ In this instance the sins of the departed, as well as the pollution which the primitive mind commonly associates with death, are not borne by a living person, but buried in a hole. Yet the fundamental idea—that of the transference of sins—is the same in the Tahitian as in the Welsh and Indian customs; whether the vehicle or receptacle destined to catch and draw off the evil be a person, an animal, or a thing, is for the purpose in hand a matter of little moment.²

The examples of the transference of evil hitherto adduced have been mostly drawn from the customs of savage or barbarous peoples. But similar attempts to shift the burden of disease, misfortune, and sin from one's self to another person, or to an animal or thing, have been common also among the civilised nations of Europe, both in ancient and modern times. A Roman cure for fever was to pare the patient's nails, and stick the parings with wax on a neighbour's door before sunrise; the fever then passed from the sick man to his neighbour.³ Similar devices must have been resorted to by the Greeks; for in laying down laws for his ideal state, Plato thinks it too much to expect that men should not be alarmed at finding certain wax figures adhering to their doors or to the tombstones of their parents, or lying at cross-roads.⁴ Among the ruins of the great sanctuary of Aesculapius, which have been excavated of late years in an open valley among the mountains of Epidaurus, inscriptions have been found recording the miraculous cures which the god of healing performed for his faithful worshippers. One

¹ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 401 *sqq.*

² The Welsh custom of "sin-eating" has been interpreted by Mr. E. S. Hartland as a modification of an older custom of eating the corpse. See his article, "The Sin-eater," *Folk-lore*, iii. (1892), 145-157; *Legend of Perseus*, ii. 291 *sqq.*, iii. p. ix. I cannot think his interpretation probable or borne out by the evidence. The Burgher custom of transferring the sins of the dead to a calf which is then let loose and never used again (above, p. 15), the Tahitian custom of burying

the sins of a person whose body is carefully preserved by being embalmed, and the Travancore custom of transferring the sins of a Rajah before his death, establish the practice of transferring sins in cases where there can be no question of eating the corpse. The original intention of such practices was perhaps not so much to take away the sins of the deceased as to rid the survivors of the dangerous pollution of death. This comes out to some extent in the Tahitian custom.

³ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 86.

⁴ Plato, *Laws*, xi. 12, p. 933 n.

of them tells how a certain Pandarus, a Thessalian, was freed from the letters which, as a former slave or prisoner of war, he bore tattooed or branded on his brow. He slept in the sanctuary with a fillet round his head, and in the morning he discovered to his joy that the marks of shame—the blue or scarlet letters—had been transferred from his brow to the fillet. By and by there came to the sanctuary a wicked man, also with brands or tattoo marks on his face, who had been charged by Pandarus to pay his debt of gratitude to the god, and had received the cash for the purpose. But the cunning fellow thought to cheat the god and keep the money all to himself. So when the god appeared to him in a dream and asked anxiously after the money, he boldly denied that he had it, and impudently prayed the god to remove the ugly marks from his own brazen brow. He was told to tie the fillet of Pandarus about his head, then to take it off, and look at his face in the water of the sacred well. He did so, and sure enough he saw on his forehead the marks of Pandarus in addition to his own.¹ In the fourth century of our era Marcellus of Bordeaux prescribed a cure for warts, which has still a great vogue among the superstitious in various parts of Europe. Doubtless it was an old traditional remedy in the fourth, and will long survive the expiry of the nineteenth century. You are to touch your warts with as many little stones as you have warts; then wrap the stones in an ivy leaf, and throw them away in a thoroughfare. Whoever picks them up will get the warts, and you will be rid of them.² A similar cure for warts, with such trifling variations as the substitution of peas or barley for pebbles, and a rag or a piece of paper for an ivy leaf, has been prescribed in modern times in Italy, France, England, and Scotland.³

¹ Ἐφημερίς ἀρχαιολογική, 1883, col. 213, 214.

² Marcellus, *De medicamentis*, xxxiv. 102. A similar cure is described by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xxii. 149); you are to touch the warts with chick-peas on the first day of the moon, wrap the peas in a cloth, and throw them away behind you. But Pliny does not say that the warts will be transferred to the person who picks up the peas. On this subject see further J. Hardy,

"Wart and wen cures," *Folk-lore Record*, i. (1878), pp. 216-228.

³ Zanetti, *La medicina delle nostre donne*, p. 224 sq.; Thiers, *Traité des Superstitions* (Paris, 1679), p. 321; B. Souché, *Croyances présages et traditions diverses*, p. 19; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 248, § 576; Harland and Wilkinson, *Lancashire Folk-lore*, p. 157; G. W. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 41; W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 49.

Another favourite way of passing on your warts to somebody else is to make as many knots in a string as you have warts ; then throw the string away or place it under a stone. Whoever treads on the stone or picks up the thread will get the warts instead of you ; sometimes to complete the transference it is thought necessary that he should undo the knots.¹ Or you need only place the knotted thread before sunrise in the spout of a pump ; the next person who works the pump will be sure to get your warts.² Equally effective methods are to rub the troublesome excrescences with down or fat, or to bleed them on a rag, and then throw away the down, the fat, or the bloody rag. The person who picks up one or other of these things will be sure to release you from your warts by involuntarily transferring them to himself.³ People in the Orkney Islands will sometimes wash a sick man, and then throw the water down at a gateway, in the belief that the sickness will leave the patient and be transferred to the first person who passes through the gate.⁴ A Bavarian cure for fever is to write upon a piece of paper, "Fever, stay away, I am not at home," and to put the paper in somebody's pocket. The latter then catches the fever, and the patient is rid of it.⁵ Or the sufferer may cure himself by sticking a twig of the elder-tree in the ground without speaking. The fever then adheres to the twig, and whoever pulls up the twig will catch the disease.⁶ A Bohemian prescription for the same malady is this. Take an empty pot, go with it to a cross-road, throw it down, and run away. The first person who kicks against the pot will catch your fever, and you will be cured.⁷ In Oldenburg they say that when a person lies sweating with fever, he should take a piece of money to himself in bed. The money is

¹ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sage aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 71, § 85 ; E. Monseur, *Le Folklore Wallon*, p. 29 ; H. Zahler, *Die Krankheit im Volksglauben des Simmenthals* (Bern, 1898), p. 93 ; R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 306.

² A. Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. 483.

³ Thiers, Souché, Strackerjan, Monseur, *ll. cc.*

⁴ Ch. Rogers, *Social Life in Scotland*, iii. 226.

⁵ G. Lammert, *Volksmedizin und medizinischer Aberglaube in Bayern*, p. 264.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 263.

⁷ J. G. Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 167, § 1180.

afterwards thrown away on the street, and whoever picks it up will catch the fever, but the original patient will be rid of it.¹

Often in Europe, as among savages, an attempt is made to transfer a pain or malady from a man to an animal. Grave writers of antiquity recommended that, if a man be stung by a scorpion, he should sit upon an ass with his face to the tail, or whisper in the animal's ear, "A scorpion has stung me"; in either case, they thought, the pain would be transferred from the man to the ass.² Many cures of this sort are recorded by Marcellus. For example, he tells us that the following is a remedy for toothache. Standing booted under the open sky on the ground, you catch a frog by the head, spit into its mouth, ask it to carry away the ache, and then let it go. But the ceremony must be performed on a lucky day and at a lucky hour.³ In Cheshire the ailment known as aphtha or thrush, which affects the mouth or throat of infants, is not uncommonly treated in much the same manner. A young frog is held for a few moments with its head inside the mouth of the sufferer, whom it is supposed to relieve by taking the malady to itself. "I assure you," said an old woman who had often superintended such a cure, "we used to hear the poor frog whooping and coughing, mortal bad, for days after; it would have made your heart ache to hear the poor creature coughing as it did about the garden."⁴ Again Marcellus tells us that if the foam from a mule's mouth, mixed with warm water, be drunk by an asthmatic patient, he will at once recover, but the mule will die.⁵ An ancient cure for the gripes, recorded both by Pliny and Marcellus, was to put a live duck to the belly of the sufferer; the pains passed from the man into the bird, to which they proved fatal.⁶ According to the same writers a

¹ L. Strackerjan, *op. cit.* i. 71, § 85.

² *Geoponica*, xlii. 9, xv. 1; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 155. The authorities for these cures are respectively Apuleius and Democritus. The latter is probably not the atomic philosopher. See *Archæological Review*, i. 180, note.

³ Marcellus, *De medicamentis*, xii. 24.

⁴ W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 35 sq.

⁵ Marcellus, *De Medicamentis*, xvii. 18.

⁶ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 61; Marcellus, *De Medicamentis*, xxvii. 33. The latter writer mentions (*op. cit.* xxviii. 123) that the same malady might similarly be transferred to a live frog.

stomachic complaint of which the cause was unknown might be cured by applying a blind puppy to the suffering part for three days. The secret disorder thus passed into the puppy; it died, and a post-mortem examination of its little body revealed the cause of the disease from which the man had suffered and of which the dog had died.¹ Once more, Marcellus advises that when a man was afflicted with a disorder of the intestines the physician should catch a live hare, take the huckle-bone from one of its feet and the down from the belly, then let the hare go, pronouncing as he did so the words, "Run away, run away, little hare, and take away with you the intestine pain." Further, the doctor was to fashion the down into thread, with which he was to tie the huckle-bone to the patient's body, taking great care that the thread should not be touched by any woman.² A Northamptonshire and Devonshire cure for a cough is to put a hair of the patient's head between two slices of buttered bread and give the sandwich to a dog. The animal will thereupon catch the cough and the patient will lose it.³ Sometimes an ailment is transferred to an animal by sharing food with it. Thus in Oldenburg, if you are sick of a fever you set a bowl of sweet milk before a dog and say, "Good luck, you hound! may you be sick and I be sound!" Then when the dog has lapped some of the milk, you take a swig at the bowl; and then the dog must lap again, and then you must swig again; and when you and the dog have done it the third time, he will have the fever and you will be quit of it. A peasant woman in Abbehausen told her pastor that she suffered from fever for a whole year and found no relief. At last somebody advised her to give some of her food to a dog and a cat. She did so and the fever passed from her into the animals. But when she saw the poor sick beasts always before her, she wished it undone. Then the fever left the cat and the dog and returned to her.⁴ A Bohemian cure for fever is to go out into the forest before the sun is up and look for a snipe's nest. When you have

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 64; Marcellus, *De Medicamentis*, xxviii. 132.

² Marcellus, *De Medicamentis*, xxix.

³ 35-

⁴ W. Henderson, *Folk-lore of the*

Northern Counties, p. 143; W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 35.

⁴ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, i. 72, § 86.

found it, take out one of the young birds and keep it beside you for three days. Then go back into the wood and set the snipe free. The fever will leave you at once. The snipe has taken it away. So in Vedic times the Hindoos of old sent consumption away with a blue jay. They said, "O consumption, fly away, fly away with the blue jay! With the wild rush of the storm and the whirlwind, oh, vanish away!"¹ In Oldenburg they sometimes hang up a goldfinch or a turtle-dove in the room of a consumptive patient, hoping that the bird may draw away the malady from the sufferer to itself.² A prescription for a cough in Sunderland is to shave the patient's head and hang the hair on a bush. When the birds carry the hair to their nests, they will carry the cough with it.³ In the Mark of Brandenburg a cure for headache is to tie a thread thrice round your head and then hang it in a loop from a tree; if a bird flies through the loop, it will take your headache away with it.⁴ A Bohemian remedy for jaundice is as follows. Take a living tench, tie it to your bare back and carry it about with you for a whole day. The tench will turn quite yellow and die. Then throw it into running water, and your jaundice will depart with it.⁵ In the village of Llandegla in Wales there is a church dedicated to the virgin martyr St. Tecla, where the falling sickness is, or used to be, cured by being transferred to a fowl. The patient first washed his limbs in a sacred well hard by, dropped fourpence into it as an offering, walked thrice round the well, and thrice repeated the Lord's prayer. Then the fowl, which was a cock or a hen according as the patient was a man or a woman, was put into a basket and carried round first the well and afterwards the church. Next the sufferer entered the church and lay down under the communion table till break of day. After that he offered sixpence and departed, leaving the fowl in

¹ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 166, § 1173, quoting Kuhn's translation of *Rig-veda*, x. 97. 13. A slightly different translation of the verse is given by H. Grassmann, who here follows R. Roth (*Rig-veda übersetzt*, vol. ii, p. 379).

² L. Strackerjan, *op. cit.* i. 72, § 87.

³ Henderson, *Folk-lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 143.

⁴ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 384, § 62.

⁵ Grohmann, *op. cit.* p. 230, § 1663.

the church. If the bird died, the sickness was supposed to have been transferred to it from the man or woman, who was now rid of the disorder. As late as 1855 the old parish clerk of the village remembered quite well to have seen the birds staggering about from the effects of the fits which had been transferred to them.¹

Often the sufferer seeks to shift his burden of sickness or ill-luck to some inanimate object. In Athens there is a little chapel of St. John the Baptist built against an ancient column. Fever patients resort thither, and by attaching a waxed thread to the inner side of the column believe that they transfer the fever from themselves to the pillar.² In the Mark of Brandenburg they say that if you suffer from giddiness you should strip yourself naked and run thrice round a flax-field after sunset; in that way the flax will get the giddiness and you will be rid of it.³ Sometimes an attempt is made to transfer the mischief, whatever it may be, to the moon. In Oldenburg a peasant related how he rid himself of a bony excrescence by stroking it thrice crosswise in the name of the Trinity, and then making a gesture as if he were seizing the deformity and hurling it towards the moon. In the same part of Germany a cure for warts is to stand in the light of a waxing moon so that you cannot see your own shadow, then hold the disfigured hand towards the moon, and stroke it with the other hand in the direction of the luminary. Some say that in doing this you should pronounce these words, "Moon, free me from these vermin."⁴

But perhaps the thing most commonly employed in Europe as a receptacle for sickness and trouble of all sorts is a tree or bush. The modes of transferring the mischief to it are many. For example, the Esthonians say that you ought not to go out of the house on a spring morning before you have eaten or drunk; for if you do, you may chance to hear one of "the sounds which are not heard in winter," such as the song of a bird, and that would be unlucky. They think

¹ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 375; W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 46.

² B. Schmidt, *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen*, p. 82.

³ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 386.

⁴ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, i. 74, § 91.

that if you thus let yourself be deceived or outwitted, as they call it, by a bird, you will be visited by all sorts of ill-luck during the year; indeed it may very well happen that you will fall sick and die before another spring comes round. However, there is a way of averting the evil. You have merely to embrace a tree or go thrice round it, biting into the bark each time or tearing away a strip of the bark with your teeth. Thus the bad luck passes from you to the tree, which accordingly withers away.¹ On St. George's Day, South Slavonian lads and lasses climb thrice up and down a cornel-tree, saying, "My laziness and sleepiness to you, cornel-tree, but health and booty (?) to me." Then as they wend homewards they turn once more towards the tree and call out, "Cornel-tree! cornel-tree! I leave you my laziness and sleepiness."² The same people attempt to cure fever by transferring it to a dwarf elder-bush. Having found such a bush with three shoots springing from the root, the patient grasps the points of the three shoots in his hand, bends them down to the ground, and fastens them there with a stone. Under the arch thus formed he creeps thrice; then he cuts off or digs up the three shoots, saying, "In three shoots I cut three sicknesses out. When these three shoots grow young again, may the fever come back."³ A Bulgarian cure for fever is to run thrice round a willow-tree at sunrise, crying, "The fever shall shake thee, and the sun shall warm me."⁴ In the Greek island of Karpathos the priest ties a red thread round the neck of a sick person. Next morning the friends of the patient remove the thread and go out to the hillside, where they tie the thread to a tree, thinking that they thus transfer the sickness to the tree.⁵ Italians attempt to cure fever in like manner by fastening it to a tree. The sufferer ties a thread round his left wrist at night, and hangs the thread on a tree next morning. The fever is thus believed to be tied up to the tree, and the patient to be rid of it; but he must be careful not to pass by that tree again, otherwise the fever

¹ F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äussern Leben der Ehsten*, p. 451 sq.

² F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 35 sq.

³ Krauss, *op. cit.* p. 39.

⁴ A. Strauss, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipzig, 1898), p. 400, cp. p. 401.

⁵ *Blackwood's Magazine*, February 1886, p. 239.

would break loose from its bonds and attack him afresh.¹ An old French remedy for fever was to bind the patient himself to a tree and leave him there for a time; some said the ceremony should be performed fasting and early in the morning, that the cord or straw rope with which the person was bound to the tree should be left there to rot, and that the sufferer should bite the bark of the tree before returning home.² In Bohemia the friends of a fever patient will sometimes carry him head foremost, by means of straw ropes, to a bush, on which they dump him down. Then he must jump up and run home. The friends who carried him also flee, leaving the straw ropes and likewise the fever behind them on the bush.³ Sometimes the sickness is transferred to the tree by making a knot in one of its boughs. Thus in Mecklenburg a remedy for fever is to go before sunrise to a willow-tree and tie as many knots in one of its branches as the fever has lasted days; but going and coming you must be careful not to speak a word.⁴ A Flemish cure for the ague is to go early in the morning to an old willow, tie three knots in one of its branches, say, "Good-morrow, Old One, I give thee the cold; good-morrow, Old One," then turn and run away without looking round.⁵ In Rhenish Bavaria the cure for gout is similar. The patient recites a spell or prayer while he stands at a willow-bush holding one of its boughs. When the mystic words have been spoken, he ties a knot in the bough and departs cured. But all his life long he must never go near that willow-bush again, or the gout will come back to him.⁶ In Sonnenberg, if you would rid yourself of gout you should go to a young fir-tree and tie a knot in one of its twigs, saying, "God greet thee, noble fir. I bring thee my gout. Here will I tie a knot and bind my gout into it. In the name," etc.⁷

¹ Zanetti, *La medicina delle nostre donne*, p. 73.

² Thiers, *Traité des Superstitions* (Paris, 1679), p. 323 sq.

³ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 167, § 1178. A Belgian cure of the same sort is reported by J. W. Wolf (*Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 223 (wrongly numbered 219), § 256).

⁴ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, i. 74, § 90.

⁵ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 979.

⁶ Bavaria, *Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iv. 2. p. 406.

⁷ A. Schleicher, *Völkstümliches aus Sonnenberg*, p. 150; A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 283, § 82.

Not far from Marburg, at a place called Neu-hof, there is a wood of birches. Thither on a morning before sunrise, in the last quarter of the moon, bands of gouty people may often be seen hobbling in silence. Each of them takes his stand before a separate tree and pronounces these solemn words: "Here stand I before the judgment bar of God and tie up all my gout. All the disease in my body shall remain tied up in this birch-tree." Meanwhile the good physician ties a knot in a birch-twigg, repeating thrice, "In the name of the Father," etc.¹ Another way of transferring gout from a man to a tree is this. Pare the nails of the sufferer's fingers and clip some hairs from his legs. Bore a hole in an oak, stuff the nails and hair in the hole, stop up the hole again, and smear it with cow's dung. If, for three months thereafter, the patient is free of gout, you may be sure the oak has it in his stead.² A German cure for toothache is to bore a hole in a tree and cram some of the sufferer's hair into it.³ In these cases, though no doubt the tree suffers the pangs of gout or toothache respectively, it does so with a sort of stoical equanimity, giving no outward and visible sign of the pains that rack it inwardly. It is not always so, however. The tree cannot invariably suppress every symptom of its suffering. It may hide its toothache, but it cannot so easily hide its warts. In Cheshire if you would be rid of warts, you have only to rub them with a piece of bacon, cut a slit in the bark of an ash-tree, and slip the bacon under the bark. Soon the warts will disappear from your hand, only however to reappear in the shape of rough excrescences or knobs on the bark of the tree.⁴ At Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire, there used to be certain oak-trees which were long celebrated for the cure of ague. The transference of the malady to the tree was simple but painful. A lock of the sufferer's hair was pegged into an oak; then by a sudden wrench he left his hair and his ague behind him in the tree.⁵

It seems clear that, though you may stow away your pain or sickness in a tree, there is a considerable risk of

¹ W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*, p. 88 sq.

² C. Meyer, *Der Aberglaube des Mittelalters*, p. 104.

³ H. Zahler, *Die Krankheit im Volksglauben des Simmenthals*, p. 94.

⁴ W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 38.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 39.

its coming out again. To obviate this danger common prudence suggests that you should plug or bung up the hole as tight as you can. And this, as we should naturally expect, is often done. A German cure for toothache or headache is to wrap some of the sufferer's cut hair and nails in paper, make a hole in the tree, stuff the parcel into it, and stop up the hole with a plug made from a tree which has been struck by lightning.¹ In Bohemia they say that, if you feel the fever coming on, you should pull out some of your hair, tear off a strip of a garment you are wearing, and bore a hole in a willow-tree. Having done so, you put the hair and the rag in the hole and stop it up with a wedge of hawthorn. Then go home without looking back, and if a voice calls to you, be sure not to answer. When you have complied with this prescription, the fever will cease.² In Oldenburg a common remedy for fever is to bore a hole in a tree, breathe thrice into the hole, and then plug it up. Once a man who had thus shut up his fever in a tree was jeered at by a sceptical acquaintance for his credulity. So he went secretly to the tree and drew the stopper, and out came that fever and attacked the sceptic.³ Sometimes they say that the tree into which you thus breathe your fever or ague should be a hollow willow, and that in going to the tree you should be careful not to utter a word, and not to cross water.⁴ Again, we read of a man who suffered acute pains in his arm. So "they beat up red corals with oaken leaves, and having kept them on the part affected till suppuration, they did in the morning put this mixture into an hole bored with an auger in the root of an oak, respecting the east, and stop up this hole with a peg made of the same tree; from thenceforth the pain did altogether cease, and when they took out the amulet immediately the torments returned sharper than before."⁵ These facts seem to put it beyond the reach of reasonable

¹ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 490.

² Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 165, § 1160.

³ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 74 sq., § 89.

⁴ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 979.

⁵ T. J. Pettigrew, *On Superstitions connected with the History and Practice of Medicine and Surgery* (London, 1844), p. 77; W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 37.

doubt that the pain or malady is actually in the tree and waiting to come out, if only it gets the chance.

Often the patient, without troubling to bore a hole in the tree, merely knocks a wedge, a peg, or a nail into it, believing that he thus pegs or nails the sickness or pain into the wood. Thus a Bohemian cure for fever is to go to a tree and hammer a wedge into it with the words "There, I knock you in, that you may come no more out to me."¹ A German way of getting rid of toothache is to go in silence before sunrise to a tree, especially a willow-tree, make a slit in the bark on the north side of the tree, or on the side that looks towards the sunrise, cut out a splinter from the place thus laid bare, poke the splinter into the aching tooth till blood comes, then put back the splinter in the tree, fold down the bark over it, and tie a string round the trunk, that the splinter may grow into the trunk as before. As it does so, your pain will vanish; but you must be careful not to go near the tree afterwards, or you will get the toothache again. And any one who pulls the splinter out will also get the toothache. He has in fact uncorked the toothache which was safely bottled up in the tree, and he must take the natural consequence of his rash act.² A simpler plan, practised in Persia as well as in France and Germany, is merely to scrape the aching tooth with a nail or a twig till it bleeds, and then hammer the nail or the twig into a tree. In the Vosges, in Voigtland, and probably elsewhere, it is believed that any person who should draw out such a nail or twig would get the toothache.³ An old lime-tree at Evessen, in Brunswick, is studded with nails of various shapes, including screw-nails, which have been driven into it by persons who suffered from aching teeth.⁴ In the Mark of Brandenburg they say that the ceremony should be per-

¹ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 167, § 1182.

² L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, i. 73, § 89; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 490.

³ L. F. Sauv  , *Le Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 40; A. Meyrac, *Traditions, Coutumes, L  gendes et*

Contes des Ardennes, p. 174; A. Schleicher, *V  lkst  mliches aus Sonnenberg*, p. 149; J. A. E. K  hler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., in *Voigtlande*, p. 414; A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebr  uche aus Th  ringen*, p. 283, § 79; H. Zahler, *Die Krankheit im Volksglauben des Simmenthals*, p. 93.

⁴ R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 307.

formed when the moon is on the wane, and that the bloody nail should be knocked, without a word being spoken, into the north side of an oak-tree, where the sun cannot shine on it; after that the person will have no more toothache so long as the tree remains standing.¹ Here it is plainly implied that the toothache is bottled up in the tree. If further proof were needed that in such cases the malady is actually transferred to the tree and stowed away in its trunk, it would be afforded by the belief that if the tree is cut down the toothache will return to the original sufferer.² Fresh confirmation is furnished by a comparison of these European customs with their parallels in India. Thus the Majhwars, a Dravidian tribe in the hill country of South Mirzapur, believe that all disease is due to ghosts, but that ghosts, when they become troublesome, can be shut up in a certain tree, which grows on a little islet in a very deep pool of the Sukandar, a tributary of the Kanhar river. Accordingly, when the country is infested by ghosts, in other words when disease is raging, a skilful wizard seeks for a piece of deer-horn in the jungle. When he has found it, he hammers it with a stone into the tree and thus shuts up the ghost. The tree is covered with hundreds of such pieces of horn.³ Again, when a new settlement is being made in some parts of the North-Western Provinces of India, it is deemed necessary to apprehend and lay by the heels the local deities, who might otherwise do a deal of mischief to the intruders on their domain. A sorcerer is called in to do the business. For days he marches about the place mustering the gods to the tuck of drum. When they are all assembled, two men known as the Earthman and the Leafman, who represent the gods of the earth and of the trees respectively, become full of the spirit, being taken possession of bodily by the local deities. In this exalted state they shout and caper about in a fine frenzy, and their seemingly disjointed ejaculations, which are really the divine voice speaking through them, are interpreted by the sorcerer.

¹ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 384, § 66.

² H. Zahler, *loc. cit.*

³ W. Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes*

of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, iii. 436 sq.; compare *id.*, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 24.

When the critical moment has come, the wizard rushes in between the two incarnations of divinity, clutches at the spirits which are hovering about them in the air, and pours grains of sesame through their hands into a perforated piece of the wood of the sacred fig-tree. Then without a moment's delay he plasters up the hole with a mixture of clay and cow-dung, and carefully buries the piece of wood on the spot which is to be the shrine of the local deities. Needless to say that the gods themselves are bunged up in the wood and are quite incapable of doing further mischief, provided always that the usual offerings are made to them at the shrine where they live in durance vile.¹ In this case the source of mischief is imprisoned, not in a tree, but in a piece of one; but the principle is clearly the same. Similarly in Corea an English lady observed at a cross-road a small log with several holes like those of a mouse-trap, one of which was plugged up doubly with bungs of wood. She was told that a demon, whose ravages spread sickness in a family, had been inveigled by a sorceress into that hole and securely bunged up. It was thought proper for all passers-by to step over the incarcerated devil, whether to express their scorn and abhorrence of him, or more probably as a means of keeping him down, just as you may see a courageous and public-spirited passenger sitting on the head of a prostrate cab-horse which has fallen on the slippery pavement.²

From knocking the mischief into a tree or a log it is only a step to knocking it into a stone, a door-post, a wall, or such like. At the head of Glen Mor, near Port Charlotte, in Islay, there may be seen a large boulder, and it is said that whoever drives a nail into this stone will thereafter be secure from attacks of toothache. A farmer in Islay told an inquirer some years ago how a passing stranger once cured his grandmother of toothache by driving a horse-nail into the lintel of the kitchen door, warning her at the same time to keep the nail there, and if it should come loose just to tap it with a hammer till it had a grip again. She had

¹ W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 62 sq.

² Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours*, ii. 143 sq.

no more toothache for the rest of her life.¹ In Brunswick it is open to any one to nail his toothache either into a wall or into a tree, as he thinks fit; the pain is cured quite as well in the one way as in the other.² A Bohemian who fears he is about to have an attack of fever will snatch up the first thing that comes to hand and nail it to the wall. That keeps the fever from him.³ As in Europe we nail toothache or fever to a wall, so in Morocco they nail devils. A house in Mogador having been infested with devils, who threw stones about it in a way that made life a burden to the inmates, a holy man was called in to exorcise them, which he did effectually by pronouncing an incantation and driving a nail into the wall; at every stroke of the hammer a hissing sound announced that another devil had received his quietus.⁴ In modern Egypt numbers of people suffering from headache used to knock a nail into the great wooden door of the old south gate of Cairo, for the purpose of charming away the pain. A holy and miraculous personage, invisible to mortal eyes, was supposed to have one of his stations at this gate.⁵ Not far from Neuenkirchen, in Oldenburg, there is a farmhouse to which, while the Thirty Years' War was raging, the plague came lounging along from the neighbouring town in the shape of a bluish vapour. Entering the house it popped into a hole in the door-post of one of the rooms. The farmer saw his chance, and quick as thought he seized a peg and hammered it into the hole, so that the plague could not possibly get out. After a time, however, thinking the danger was past, he drew out the peg. Alas! with the peg came creeping and curling out of the hole the blue vapour once more. The plague thus let loose seized on every member of the family in that unhappy house and left not one of them alive.⁶

The simple ceremony, in which to this day the super-

¹ R. C. Maclagan, "Notes on folk-lore objects collected in Argyleshire," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 158.

² R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 307.

³ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 116, § 1172.

⁴ A. Leared, *Morocco and the Moors*,

p. 275 sqq.

⁵ Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (Paisley and London, 1895), ch. x. p. 240.

⁶ L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 120, § 428a. A similar story is told of a house in Neuenburg (*op. cit.* ii. 182, § 512c).

stitution of European peasants sees a sovereign remedy for plague and fever and toothache, has come down to us from a remote antiquity; for in days when as yet Paris and London were not, when France still revered the Druids as the masters of all knowledge, human and divine, and when our own country was still covered with virgin forests, the home of savage beasts and savage men, the same ceremony was solemnly performed from time to time by the highest magistrate at Rome, to stay the ravages of pestilence or retrieve disaster that threatened the foundations of the national life. In the fourth century before our era the city of Rome was desolated by a great plague which raged for three years, carrying off some of the highest dignitaries and a great multitude of common folk. The historian who records the calamity informs us that when a banquet had been offered to the gods in vain, and neither human counsels nor divine help availed to mitigate the violence of the disease, it was resolved for the first time in Roman history to institute dramatical performances as an appropriate means of appeasing the wrath of the celestial powers. But even this novel spectacle failed to amuse or touch, to move to tears or laughter the sullen gods. The plague still raged, and at the very moment when the actors were playing their best in the circus beside the Tiber, the yellow river rose in angry flood and drove players and spectators, wading and splashing through the fast-deepening waters, away from the show. It was clear that the gods spurned plays as well as prayers and banquets; and in the general consternation it was felt that some more effectual measure should be taken to put an end to the scourge. Old men remembered that a plague had once been stayed by the knocking of a nail into a wall; and accordingly the Senate resolved that now in their extremity, when all other means had failed, a supreme magistrate should be appointed for the sole purpose of performing this solemn ceremony. The appointment was made, the nail was knocked, and the plague ceased, sooner or later.¹ What better proof could be given of the saving virtue of a nail?

¹ Livy, viii. 1-3. The plague raged from 365 to 363 B.C., when it was happily stayed in the manner described in the text.

Twice more within the same century the Roman people had recourse to the same venerable ceremony as a cure for public calamities with which the ordinary remedies, civil and religious, seemed unable to cope. One of these occasions was a pestilence ;¹ the other was a strange mortality among the leading men, which public opinion traced, rightly or wrongly, to a series of nefarious crimes perpetrated by noble matrons, who took their husbands off by poison. The crimes, real or imaginary, were set down to frenzy, and nothing could be thought of so likely to minister to minds diseased as the knocking of a nail into a wall. Search among the annals of the city proved that in a season of civil discord, when the state had been rent by party feud, the same time-honoured remedy, the same soothing balm had been applied with the happiest results to the jarring interests and heated passions of the disputants. Accordingly the old nostrum was tried once more, and again success appeared to justify the experiment.²

If the Romans in the fourth century before Christ thus deemed it possible to rid themselves of pestilence, frenzy, and sedition by hammering them into a wall, even as French and German peasants still rid themselves of fever and toothache by knocking them into a tree, their prudent ancestors appear to have determined that so salutary a measure should not be restricted in its scope to meeting special and urgent emergencies as they arose, but should regularly diffuse its benefits over the community by anticipating and, as it were, nipping in the bud evils which, left unchecked, might grow to dangerous proportions. This, we may conjecture, was the original intention of an ancient Roman law which ordained that the highest magistrate of the republic should knock in a nail every year on the thirteenth day of September. The law might be seen, couched in old-fashioned language, engraved on a tablet which was fastened to a wall of the temple of Capitoline Jupiter ; and although the place where the nails were driven in is nowhere definitely stated by classical writers, there are some grounds for thinking that it may have been the same wall on which the law that

¹ Livy, ix. 28. This happened in the year 313 B.C.

² Livy, viii. 18. These events took place in 331 B.C.

sanctioned the custom was exhibited. Livy tells us that the duty of affixing the nail, at one time discharged by the consuls, was afterwards committed to dictators, whose higher rank consorted better with the dignity and importance of the function. At a later time the custom fell into abeyance, and the ancient ceremony was revived only from time to time in seasons of grave peril or extraordinary calamity, which seemed to attest the displeasure of the gods at modern ways and disposed men to bethink them of ancestral lore and to walk in the old paths.¹

In antiquity the annual practice of hammering a nail into a wall was not confined to Rome. It was observed also at Vulsinii, in Etruria, where the nails thus fixed in the temple of the goddess Nortia served as a convenient means of recording and numbering the years.² To Roman antiquaries of a later period it seemed, naturally enough, that such a practice had indeed no other object than that of marking the flight of time in ages when writing was but little used.³ Yet a little reflection will probably convince us that this, though it was doubtless a useful consequence of the custom, can hardly have been its original intention. For it will scarcely be disputed that the annual observance of the custom cannot be wholly dissociated from its occasional observance in seasons of great danger or calamity, and that whatever explanation we give of the one ought to apply to the other also. Now it is plain that if we start from the annual observance and regard it as no more than a time-

¹ Livy, vii. 3. Livy says nothing as to the place where the nails were affixed; but from Festus (p. 56 ed. Müller) we learn that it was the wall of a temple, and as the date of the ceremony was also the date of the dedication of the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol (Plutarch, *Publicola*, 14), we may fairly conjecture that this temple was the scene of the rite. It is the more necessary to call attention to the uncertainty which exists on this point because modern writers, perhaps misunderstanding the words of Livy, have commonly stated as a fact what is at best only a more or less probable hypothesis.

² Livy, vii. 3. Festus speaks (p. 56 ed. Müller) of "the annual nail, which was fixed in the walls of temples for the purpose of numbering the years," as if the practice were common. From Cicero's passing reference to the custom ("*Ex hoc die clavum anni movebis*," *Epist. ad Atticum*, v. 15. 1) we see that it was matter of notoriety. Hence we may safely reject Mommsen's theory, which Mr. Warde Fowler is disposed to accept (*The Roman Festivals of the period of the Republic*, p. 234 sq.), that the supposed annual custom never existed except in the brains of Roman Dryadusts.

³ See Livy and Festus, *ll. cc.*

keeper or mode of recording the years, we shall never reach an adequate explanation of the occasional observance. If the nails were merely ready reckoners of the years, how could they come to be used as supreme remedies for pestilence, frenzy, and sedition, resorted to by the state in desperate emergencies when all the ordinary resources of policy and religion had failed? On the other hand, if we start from the occasional observance and view it, in accordance with modern analogies, as a rude attempt to dispose of intangible evils as if they were things that could be handled and put away out of sight, we can readily understand how such an attempt, from being made occasionally, might come to be repeated annually for the sake of wiping out all the old troubles and misfortunes of the past year and enabling the community to start afresh, unencumbered by a fardel of ills, at the beginning of a new year. Fortunately we can show that the analogy which is thus assumed to exist between the Roman custom and modern superstition is not a merely fanciful one; in other words, it can be proved that the Romans, like modern clowns, did believe in the possibility of nailing down trouble, in a literal and physical sense, into a material substance. Pliny tells us that an alleged cure for epilepsy or the falling sickness was to drive an iron nail into the ground on the spot which was first struck by the patient's head as he fell.¹ In the light of the modern instances which have come before us, we can hardly doubt that the cure was supposed to consist in actually nailing the disease into the earth in such a way that it could not get up and attack the sufferer again. Precisely parallel is a Suffolk cure for ague. You must go by night alone to a cross-road, and just as the clock strikes the midnight hour you must turn yourself about thrice and drive a tenpenny nail up to the head into the ground. Then walk away backwards from the spot before the clock is done striking twelve, and you will miss the ague; but the next person who passes over the nail will catch the malady in your stead.² Here it is plainly assumed that the ague of which the patient is relieved has been left by him nailed down into the earth at the cross-road, and we may fairly

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 63.

² *County Folk-lore, Suffolk*, edited by Lady E. C. Gurdon, p. 14.

suppose that a similar assumption underlay the Roman cure for epilepsy. Further, we seem to be now justified in holding that originally, when a Roman dictator sought to stay a plague, to restore concord, or to terminate an epidemic of madness by knocking a nail into a wall, he was doing for the commonwealth exactly what any private man might do for an epileptic patient by knocking a nail into the ground on the spot where his poor friend had collapsed. In other words, he was hammering the plague, the discord, or the madness into a hole from which it could not get out to afflict the community again.¹

§ 14. *Expulsion of Evils*

In the foregoing section the primitive principle of the transference of ills to another person, animal, or thing was explained and illustrated. A consideration of the means taken, in accordance with this principle, to rid individuals of their troubles and distresses led us to believe that at Rome similar means had been adopted to free the whole community, at a single blow of the hammer, from diverse evils that afflicted it. I now propose to show that such attempts to dismiss at once the accumulated sorrows of a people are by no means rare or exceptional, but that on the contrary they have been made in many lands, and that from being occasional they tend to become periodic and annual.

It needs some effort on our part to realise the frame of mind which prompts these attempts. Bred in a philosophy which strips nature of personality and reduces it to the unknown cause of an orderly series of impressions on our senses, we find it hard to put ourselves in the place of the savage, to whom the same impressions appear in the guise of spirits or the handiwork of spirits. For ages the army of spirits, once so near, has been receding further and further from us, banished by the magic wand of science from hearth and home, from ruined cell and ivied tower, from

¹ The analogy of the Roman custom to modern superstitious practices has been rightly pointed out by Mr. E. S. Hartland (*Folk-lore*, iv. (1893), pp. 457, 464; *Legend of Perseus*, ii. 188), but

I am unable to accept his general explanation of these and some other practices as modes of communion with a divinity.

haunted glade and lonely mere, from the riven murky cloud that belches forth the lightning, and from those fairer clouds that pillow the silver moon or fret with flakes of burning red the golden eve. The spirits are gone even from their last stronghold in the sky, whose blue arch no longer passes, except with children, for the screen that hides from mortal eyes the glories of the celestial world. Only in poets' dreams or impassioned flights of oratory is it given to catch a glimpse of the last flutter of the standards of the retreating host, to hear the beat of their invisible wings, the sound of their mocking laughter, or the swell of angel music dying away in the distance. Far otherwise is it with the savage. To his imagination the world still teems with those motley beings whom a more sober philosophy has discarded. Fairies and goblins, ghosts and demons, still hover about him both waking and sleeping. They dog his footsteps, dazzle his senses, enter into him, harass and deceive and torment him in a thousand freakish and mischievous ways. The mishaps that befall him, the losses he sustains, the pains he has to endure, he commonly sets down, if not to the magic of his enemies, to the spite or anger or caprice of the spirits. Their constant presence wearies him, their sleepless malignity exasperates him; he longs with an unspeakable longing to be rid of them altogether, and from time to time, driven to bay, his patience utterly exhausted, he turns fiercely on his persecutors and makes a desperate effort to chase the whole pack of them from the land, to clear the air of their swarming multitudes, that he may breathe more freely and go on his way unmolested, at least for a time. Thus it comes about that the endeavour of primitive people to make a clean sweep of all their troubles generally takes the form of a grand hunting out and expulsion of devils or ghosts. They think that if they can only shake off these their accursed tormentors, they will make a fresh start in life, happy and innocent; the tales of Eden and the old poetic golden age will come true again.

Hence, before we review some examples of these spirit-hunts, it may be well to adduce evidence of the deep hold which a belief in the omnipresence and malignity of spirits has upon the primitive mind. The reader will be better

able to understand the savage remedy when he has an inkling of the nature of the evil which it is designed to combat. In citing the evidence I shall for the most part reproduce the exact words of my authorities lest I should incur the suspicion of deepening unduly the shadows in a gloomy picture.

Thus in regard to the aborigines of Australia we are told that "the number of supernatural beings, feared if not loved, that they acknowledge is exceedingly great; for not only are the heavens peopled with such, but the whole face of the country swarms with them; every thicket, most watering-places, and all rocky places abound with evil spirits. In like manner, every natural phenomenon is believed to be the work of demons, none of which seem of a benign nature, one and all apparently striving to do all imaginable mischief to the poor blackfellow."¹ "The negro," says another writer, "is wont to regard the whole world around him as peopled with invisible beings, to whom he imputes every misfortune that happens to him, and from whose harmful influence he seeks to protect himself by all kinds of magic means."² The Bantu negroes of Western Africa "regard their god as the creator of man, plants, animals, and the earth, and they hold that having made them, he takes no further interest in the affair. But not so the crowd of spirits with which the universe is peopled, they take only too much interest and the Bantu wishes they would not and is perpetually saying so in his prayers, a large percentage whereof amounts to, 'Go away, we don't want you.' 'Come not into this house, this village, or its plantations.'" Almost all these subordinate spirits are malevolent.³

Speaking of the spirits which the Indians of Guiana attribute to all objects in nature, Mr. E. F. im Thurn observes that "the whole world of the Indian swarms with these beings. If by a mighty mental effort we could for a moment revert to a similar mental position, we should find ourselves everywhere surrounded by a host of possibly hurtful beings,

¹ A. Oldfield, "The aborigines of Australia," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S., iii. (1865), p. 228.

Eingebornen von Liberia," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, i. (1888), p. 85.

² J. Büttikoffer, "Einiges über die" ³ Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 442 sq.

so many in number that to describe them as innumerable would fall ridiculously short of the truth. It is not therefore wonderful that the Indian fears to move beyond the light of his camp-fire after dark, or, if he is obliged to do so, carries a fire-brand with him that he may at least see among what enemies he walks; nor is it wonderful that occasionally the air round the settlement seems to the Indian to grow so full of beings, that a peaiman [sorcerer], who is supposed to have the power of temporarily driving them away, is employed to effect a general clearance of these beings, if only for a time."¹ Very different from the life of these Indians of the Guiana forests is the life of the Esquimaux on the desolate shores of Labrador; yet they too live in like bondage to the evil creatures of their own imagination. "All the affairs of life are supposed to be under the control of spirits, each of which rules over a certain element, and all of which are under the direction of a greater spirit. Each person is supposed to be attended by a special guardian, who is malignant in character, ever ready to seize upon the least occasion to work harm upon the individual whom it accompanies. As this is an evil spirit, its good offices and assistance can be obtained by propitiation only. The person strives to keep the good will of the evil spirit by offerings of food, water, and clothing." "Besides this class of spirits, there are the spirits of the sea, the land, the sky (for be it understood that the Eskimo know nothing of the air), the winds, the clouds, and everything in nature. Every cove of the seashore, every point, island, and prominent rock has its guardian spirit. All are of the malignant type and to be propitiated only by acceptable offerings from persons who desire to visit the locality where it is supposed to reside. Of course some of the spirits are more powerful than others, and these are more to be dreaded than those able to inflict less harm. These minor spirits are under the control of the great spirit, whose name is Tung ak. This one great spirit is more powerful than all the rest besides. The lesser spirits are immediately under his control and ever ready to obey his command. The shaman (or conjuror) alone is supposed to be able to deal with the Tung ak. While the shaman does not profess

¹ E. F. im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, p. 356 sq.

to be superior to the Tung ak, he is able to enlist his assistance and thus be able to control all the undertakings his profession may call for. This Tung ak is nothing more or less than death, which ever seeks to torment and harass the lives of people that their spirits may go to dwell with him."¹

Brighter at first sight and more pleasing is the mythology of the islanders of the Pacific, as the picture of it is drawn for us by one who seems to have felt the charm of those beliefs which it was his mission to destroy. "By their rude mythology," he says, "each lovely island was made a sort of fairy-land, and the spells of enchantment were thrown over its varied scenes. The sentiment of the poet that

' Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep,'

was one familiar to their minds; and it is impossible not to feel interested in a people who were accustomed to consider themselves surrounded by invisible intelligences, and who recognised in the rising sun—the mild and silver moon—the shooting star—the meteor's transient flame—the ocean's roar—the tempest's blast, or the evening breeze—the movements of mighty spirits. The mountain's summit, and the fleecy mists that hang upon its brows—the rocky defile—the foaming cataract—and the lonely dell—were all regarded as the abode or resort of these invisible beings."² Yet the spiritual powers which compassed the life of the islanders on every side appear to have been far from friendly to man. Speaking of their beliefs touching the souls of the dead, the same writer says that the Polynesians "imagined they lived in a world of spirits, which surrounded them night and day, watching every action of their lives, and ready to avenge the slightest neglect, or the least disobedience to their injunctions, as proclaimed by their priests. These dreaded beings were seldom thought to resort to the habitations of men on errands of benevolence."³ The Tahitians, when they were

¹ L. M. Turner, "Ethnology of the Ungava district, Hudson Bay Territory," *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington,

1894), p. 193 sq.

² W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 331.

³ W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 406.

visited by Captain Cook, believed that "sudden deaths and all other accidents are effected by the immediate action of some divinity. If a man only stumble against a stone and hurt his toe, they impute it to an *Eatooa*; so that they may be literally said, agreeably to their system, to tread enchanted ground."¹ "The Maori gods," says a well-informed writer, "were demons, whose evil designs could only be counteracted by powerful spells and charms; these proving effectual, sacrifices and offerings were made to soothe the vanquished spirits and appease their wrath." "The gods in general appeared in the whirlwind and lightning, answering their votaries in the clap of thunder. The inferior beings made themselves visible in the form of lizards, moths, butterflies, spiders, and even flies; when they spoke it was in a low whistling tone. They were supposed to be so numerous as to surround the living in crowds, *kei te muia nga wairua penei nga wairoa*, 'the spirits throng like mosquitoes,' ever watching to inflict evil."² Again, we are informed that the popular religion of the Pelew Islanders "has reference to the gods (*kalitlis*) who may be useful or harmful to men in all their doings. Their imagination peoples the sea, the wood, the earth with numerous gods, and whatever a man undertakes, be it to catch fish or fell a tree, he must first propitiate the deities, or rather guard himself against their spiteful anger, which can only be done by means of certain spells and incantations. The knowledge of these incantations is limited to a very few persons, and forms in fact the secret of the arts and industries which are plied in the islands. A master of his craft is not he who can build a good house or a faultless canoe, but he who possesses the *golay* or magic power to ban the tree-gods, that they may not prove hurtful to the workmen and to the people who afterwards use the things. All these gods of the earth, the woods, the mountains, the brooks are very mischievous and dangerous, and most diseases are caused by them. Hence the persons who possess the magic power are dreaded, frequently employed, and well paid; but in extreme cases they are regarded as sorcerers and treated accordingly. If one of

¹ Cook, *Voyages* (London, 1809), vi. 152.

² R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,² p. 104.

them builds a house for somebody and is dissatisfied with his remuneration, he stirs up the tree-god to avenge him. So the inhabitants of the house he has built fall sick, and if help is not forthcoming they die."¹ Of the Mortlock Islanders we are told that "their imagination peopled the whole of nature with spirits and deities, of whom the number was past finding out."²

Among the tribes who inhabit the south-eastern coasts of New Guinea "a death in a village is the occasion of bringing plenty of ghosts to escort their new companion, and perhaps fetch some one else. All night the friends of the deceased sit up and keep the drums going to drive away the spirits. When I was sleeping one night at Hood Bay, a party of young men and boys came round with sticks, striking the fences and posts of houses all through the village. This I found was always done when any one died, to drive back the spirits to their own quarters on the adjacent mountain tops. But it is the spirits of the inland tribes, the aborigines of the country, that the coast tribes most fear. The road from the interior to Port Moresby passed close to our house, and the natives told us that the barking of our English dog at night had frightened the evil spirits so effectually that they had had no ghostly visitors since we came. I was camping out one night in the bush with some coast natives, at a time when a number of the natives of the interior were hunting in the neighbourhood; noticing that the men with me did not go to sleep, I asked if they were afraid of the mountain men. 'No,' they replied, 'but the whole plain is full of the spirits who come with them.' All calamities are attributed to the power and malice of these evil spirits. Drought and famine, storm and flood, disease and death are all supposed to be brought by 'Vata' and his hosts."³ The inhabitants of Timor, an island to the south-west of New Guinea, revere the lord of heaven, the sun, the mistress of the earth, and the spirits of the

¹ J. Kubary, "Die Religion der Pelauer," in Bastian's *Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde*, i. 46.

geographischen Gesellschaft in Hamburg 1878-79, p. 36.

² J. Kubary, "Die Bewohner der Mortlock-Inseln," *Mittheilungen der*

³ W. G. Lawes, "Notes on New Guinea and its inhabitants," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1880, p. 615.

dead. "These last dwell, some with the mistress of the earth under ground, others on graves, others in stones and springs and woods, some on mountains and some in the habitations of their kinsfolk, where they take up their abode in the middle of the principal post of the house or in copper cymbals, in swords and pikes. Others again assume the shape of pigs and deer and bees; men who have fallen in battle love especially to turn into bees, that they may roam over the earth at will. The ghosts who reside with the mistress of the earth are male and female, and their offspring swarm by myriads in the air, so that the people think you cannot stir without striking against one of them. According to their whim of the moment the ghosts are good or bad." "All diseases which are not due to infection or transmitted by inheritance are ascribed to the mistress of the earth, to the ghosts, and to their wicked offspring, who inflict them as punishments for insults and injuries, for insufficient food, for the killing of deer and of wild pigs, in which the ghosts take up their abode temporarily, and also for the sale of cymbals, swords and pikes, in which a ghost had settled."¹ The natives of Amboyna think that "woods, mountains, trees, stones, indeed the whole universe, is inhabited by a multitude of spirits, of whom many are the souls of the dead."² In Bolang Mongondo, a district of Celebes, "all calamities, great and small, of whatever kind and by whatever name they are called, that befall men and animals, villages, gardens and so forth, are attributed to evil or angry spirits. The superstition is indescribably great. The smallest wound, the least indisposition, the most trifling adversity in the field, at the fishing, on a journey or what not, is believed by the natives to be traceable to the anger of their ancestors. The superstition cripples every effort to remedy the calamities except by sacrifice. There is perhaps no country the inhabitants of which know so little about simples as Bolang Mongondo. What a native of Bolang Mongondo calls medicine is nothing but sacrifice, magic, and talismans. And the method of curing a sick man always

¹ J. G. F. Riedel, "Die Landschaft Dawan oder West-Timor," *Deutsche Geogr. Blätter*, x. 278 sq.

² G. W. W. C. van Hoëvell, *Ambon en meer bepaaldelijk de Oeliasers*, p. 148.

consists in the use of magic, or in the propitiation of angry ancestral spirits by means of offerings, or in the banishment of evil spirits. The application of one or other of these three methods depends again on the decision of the sorcerer, who plays a great part in every case of sickness."¹ In the island of Bali "all the attention paid to the sick has its root solely in the excessive superstition of these islanders, which leads them to impute every unpleasantness in life, every adversity to the influence of evil spirits or of men who are in some way in league with them. The belief in witches and wizards is everywhere great in the Indies, but perhaps nowhere is it so universal and so strong as in Bali."² In Java, we are told, it is not merely great shady trees that are believed to be the abode of spirits. "In other places also, where the vital energy of nature manifests itself strikingly and impressively, a feeling of veneration is stirred, as on the sea-shore, in deep woods, on steep mountain sides. All such spots are supposed to be the abode of spirits of various kinds, whose mighty power is regarded with reverence and awe, whose anger is dreaded, and whose favour is hoped for. But wherever they dwell, whether in scenes of loveliness that move the heart, or in spots that affect the mind with fright and horror, the nature and disposition of these spirits appear not to differ. They are a source of fear and anxiety in the one case just as much as in the other. To none of them did I ever hear moral qualities ascribed. They are mighty, they are potentates, and therefore it is well with him who has their favour and ill with him who has it not; this holds true of them all." "The number of the spirits is innumerable and inconceivable. All the phenomena of nature, which we trace to fixed laws and constant forces, are supposed by the Javanese to be wrought by spirits."³ The natives of the valley of the Barito in Borneo hold that "the air is filled with countless *hantoes* (spirits). Every object has such a

¹ N. P. Wilken en J. A. Schwarz, "Het heidendom en de Islam in Bolaang Mongondou," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-genootschap*, xi. (1867), p. 259.

eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift van Nederlandsch Indië*, August 1880, p. 83.

³ S. E. Harthoorn, "De Zending op Java en meer bepaald die van Malang," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, iv. (1860), p. 116 sq.

² R. van Eck, "Schetsen van het

spirit which watches over it and seeks to defend it from danger. It is these spirits especially that bring sickness and misfortune on men, and for that reason offerings are often made to them and also to the powerful *Sangsangs* (angels), whereas the supreme God, the original fountain of all good, is neglected."¹ Of the Battas of Sumatra we are told that "the key-note of their religious mood is fear of the unknown powers, a childish feeling of dependence, the outcome of a belief in supernatural influences to which man is constantly exposed, in wonders and witchcraft, which hamper his free action. They feel themselves continually surrounded by unseen beings and dependent on them for everything." "Every misfortune bespeaks the ill-will of the hostile spirits. The whole world is a meeting-place of demons, and most of the phenomena of nature are an expression of their power. The only means of remedying or counteracting their baleful influence is to drive away the spirits by means of certain words, as well as by the use of amulets and the offering of sacrifices to the guardian spirits."² To the same effect another authority on the religion of the Battas remarks that "the common man has only a very dim and misty notion of his triune god, and troubles himself far more about the legions of spirits which people the whole world around him, and against which he must always be protected by magic spells."³ The Mantras, an aboriginal race of the Malay Peninsula, "find or put a spirit everywhere, in the air they breathe, in the land they cultivate, in the forests they inhabit, in the trees they cut down, in the caves of the rocks. According to them, the demon is the cause of everything that turns out ill. If they are sick, a demon is at the bottom of it; if an accident happens, it is still the spirit who is at work; thereupon the demon takes the name of the particular evil of which he is supposed to be the cause.

¹ C. A. L. M. Schwaner, *Borneo, Beschrijving van het stroomgebied van den Barito* (Amsterdam, 1853-54), i. 176.

² J. B. Neumann, "Het Pane- en Bila-stroomgebied," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, iii. Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 2, p. 287.

³ B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kennt-

niss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. (1883), p. 508. The persons of the Batta Trinity are Bataraguru, Sori, and Balabulan. The most fundamental distinction between the persons of the Trinity appears to be that one of them is allowed to eat pork, while the others are not (*ibid.* p. 505).

Hence the demon being assumed as the author of every ill, all their superstitions resolve themselves into enchantments and spells to appease the evil spirit, to render mild and tractable the fiercest beasts."¹ To the mind of the Kamtchatkan every corner of earth and heaven seemed full of spirits, whom he revered and dreaded more than God.²

In India from the earliest times down to the present day the real religion of the common folk appears always to have been a belief in a vast multitude of spirits, of whom many, if not most, are mischievous and harmful. As in Europe beneath a superficial layer of Christianity a faith in magic and witchcraft, in ghosts and goblins has always survived and even flourished among the weak and ignorant, so it has been and so it is in the East. Brahmanism, Buddhism, Islam may come and go, but the belief in magic and demons remains unshaken through them all, and, if we may judge of the future from the past, is likely to survive the rise and fall of other historical religions. For the great faiths of the world, just in so far as they are the outcome of superior intelligence, of purer morality, of extraordinary fervour of aspiration after the ideal, fail to touch and move the common man. They make claims upon his intellect and his heart to which neither the one nor the other is capable of responding. The philosophy they teach is too abstract, the morality they inculcate too exalted for him. The keener minds embrace the new philosophy, the more generous spirits are fired by the new morality; and as the world is led by such men, their faith sooner or later becomes the professed faith of the multitude. Yet with the common herd, who compose the great bulk of every people, the new religion is accepted only in outward show, because it is impressed upon them by their natural leaders whom they cannot choose but follow. They yield a dull assent to it with their lips, but in their heart they never really abandon their old superstitions; in these they cherish a faith such as they cannot repose in the creed which they nominally profess; and to these, in the trials and emergencies of life, they have recourse as to in-

¹ Borie, "Notice sur les Mantras, tribu sauvage de la peninsule Malaise," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land-*

en Volkenkunde, x. (1860), p. 434.

² S. Krascheninnikow, *Beschreibung des Landes Kamtschatka*, p. 215.

fallible remedies, when the promises of the higher faith have failed them, as indeed such promises are apt to do.

To establish for India in particular the truth of the propositions which I have just advanced, it may be enough to cite the evidence of two writers of high authority, one of whom deals with the most ancient form of Indian religion known to us, while the other describes the popular religion of the Hindoos at the present day. "According to the creed of the Vedic ages," says Professor Oldenberg, "the whole world in which man lives is animated. Sky and earth, mountain, forest, trees and beasts, the earthly water and the heavenly water of the clouds,—all is filled with living spiritual beings, who are either friendly or hostile to mankind. Unseen or embodied in visible form, hosts of spirits surround and hover about human habitations,—bestial or misshapen goblins, souls of dead friends and souls of foes, sometimes as kindly guardians, oftener as mischief-makers, bringing disease and misfortune, sucking the blood and strength of the living. A soul is attributed even to the object fashioned by human hands, whose functions are felt to be friendly or hostile. The warrior pays his devotion to the divine war-chariot, the divine arrow, the drum; the ploughman to the ploughshare; the gambler to the dice; the sacrificer, about whom naturally we have the most exact information, reveres the stone that presses out the juice of the Soma, the straw on which the gods recline, the post to which the sacrificial victim is bound, and the divine doors through which the gods come forth to enjoy the sacrifice. At one time the beings in whose presence man feels himself are regarded by him as really endowed with souls; at another time, in harmony with a more advanced conception of the world, they are imagined as substances or fluids invested with beneficent or maleficent properties: belief oscillates to and fro between the one mode of thought and the other. The art of turning to account the operations of these animated beings, the play of these substances and forces, is magic rather than worship in the proper sense of the word. The foundations of this faith and magic are an inheritance from the remotest past, from a period, to put it shortly, of shamanistic faith in spirits and souls, of shamanistic

magic. Such a period has been passed through by the forefathers of the Indo-Germanic race as well as by other peoples."¹

Coming down to the Hindoos of the present day, we find that their attitude towards the spiritual world is described as follows by Professor Monier Williams. "The plain fact undoubtedly is that the great majority of the inhabitants of India are, from the cradle to the burning-ground, victims of a form of mental disease which is best expressed by the term demonophobia. They are haunted and oppressed by a perpetual dread of demons. They are firmly convinced that evil spirits of all kinds, from malignant fiends to merely mischievous imps and elves, are ever on the watch to harm, harass, and torment them, to cause plague, sickness, famine, and disaster, to impede, injure, and mar every good work."² Elsewhere the same writer has expressed the same view somewhat more fully. "In fact," he says, "a belief in every kind of demoniacal influence has always been from the earliest times an essential ingredient in Hindu religious thought. The idea probably had its origin in the supposed peopling of the air by spiritual beings—the personifications or companions of storm and tempest. Certainly no one who has ever been brought into close contact with the Hindus in their own country can doubt the fact that the worship of at least ninety per cent of the people of India in the present day is a worship of fear. Not that the existence of good deities presided over by one Supreme Being is doubted; but that these deities are believed to be too absolutely good to need propitiation; just as in ancient histories of the Slav races, we are told that they believed in a white god and a black god, but paid adoration to the last alone, having, as they supposed, nothing to apprehend from the beneficence of the first or white deity. The simple truth is that evils of all kinds, difficulties, dangers and disasters, famines, diseases, pestilences and death, are thought by an ordinary Hindu to proceed from demons, or, more properly speaking, from devils, and from devils alone. These malignant beings are held, as we have seen, to possess

¹ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 39 sq.

² Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 210 sq.

varying degrees of rank, power, and malevolence. Some aim at destroying the entire world, and threaten the sovereignty of the gods themselves. Some delight in killing men, women, and children, out of a mere thirst for human blood. Some take a mere mischievous pleasure in tormenting, or revel in the infliction of sickness, injury, and misfortune. All make it their business to mar or impede the progress of good works and useful undertakings."¹

It would be easy but tedious to illustrate in detail this general account of the dread of demons which prevails among the inhabitants of India at the present day. A very few particular statements must suffice. Thus, we are told that the Oraons, a Dravidian race in Bengal, "acknowledge a Supreme God, adored as Dharmi or Dharmesh, the Holy One, who is manifest in the sun, and they regard Dharmesh as a perfectly pure, beneficent being, who created us and would in his goodness and mercy preserve us, but that his benevolent designs are thwarted by malignant spirits whom mortals must propitiate, as Dharmesh cannot or does not interfere, if the spirit of evil once fastens upon us. It is, therefore, of no use to pray to Dharmesh or to offer sacrifices to him; so though acknowledged, recognised, and revered, he is neglected, whilst the malignant spirits are adored." Again, it is said of these Oraons that, "as the sole object of their religious ceremonies is the propitiation of the demons who are ever thwarting the benevolent intentions of Dharmesh, they have no notion of a service of thanksgiving." Once more, after giving a list of Oraon demons, the same writer goes on: "Besides this superstitious dread of the spirits above named, the Oraon's imagination tremblingly wanders in a world of ghosts. Every rock, road, river, and grove is haunted."² In Travancore "the minor superstitions connected with demon-worship are well-nigh innumerable; they enter into all the feelings, and are associated with the whole life of these people. Every disease, accident, or misfortune is attributed to the agency of the devils, and great caution is exercised to avoid arousing their fury."³ With regard to the inhabitants of Ceylon we are told that "the

¹ Monier Williams, *op. cit.* p. 230 sq.

³ S. Mateer, *The Land of Charity*,

² Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, pp. 207.
256, 257, 258.

fiends which they conceive to be hovering around them are without number. Every disease or trouble that assails them is produced by the immediate agency of the demons sent to punish them: while, on the other hand, every blessing or success comes directly from the hands of the beneficent and supreme God. To screen themselves from the power of the inferior deities, who are all represented as wicked spirits, and whose power is by no means irresistible, they wear amulets of various descriptions; and employ a variety of charms and spells to ward off the influence of witchcraft and enchantments by which they think themselves beset on all sides." "It is probable that, by degrees, intercourse with Europeans will entirely do away these superstitious fears, as the Cinglese of the towns have already made considerable progress in subduing their gloomy apprehensions. Not so the poor wretched peasants who inhabit the more mountainous parts of the country, and live at a distance from our settlements. These unhappy people have never for a moment their minds free from the terror of those demons who seem perpetually to hover around them. Their imaginations are so disturbed by such ideas, that it is not uncommon to see many driven to madness from this cause. Several Cinglese lunatics have fallen under my own observation; and upon inquiring into the circumstances which had deprived them of their reason, I universally found that their wretched state was to be traced solely to the excess of their superstitious fears. The spirits of the wicked subordinate demons are the chief objects of fear among the Ceylonese; and impress their minds with much more awe than the more powerful divinities who dispense blessings among them. They indeed think that their country is in a particular manner delivered over to the dominion of evil spirits."¹

In Eastern as well as Southern Asia the same view of nature as pervaded by a multitude of spirits, mostly mischievous and malignant, has survived the nominal establishment of a higher faith. "In spite of their long conversion, their sincere belief in, and their pure form of, Buddhism, which expressly repudiates and forbids such

¹ R. Percival, *Account of the Island of Ceylon*, second edition (London, 1805), pp. 211-213.

worship, the Burmans and Taleins (or Mons) have in a great measure kept their ancient spirit or demon worship. With the Taleins this is more especially the case. Indeed, with the country population of Pegu the worship, or it should rather be said the propitiation, of the 'nats' or spirits, enters into every act of their ordinary life, and Buddha's doctrine seems kept for sacred days and their visits to the kyoung (monastery) or to the pagoda."¹ Or, as another writer puts it, "the propitiating of the nats is a question of daily concern to the lower class Burman, while the worship at the pagoda is only thought of once a week. For the nat may prove destructive and hostile at any time, whereas the acquisition of *koothoh* [merit] at the pagoda is a thing which may be set about in a business-like way, and at proper and convenient times."² But the term worship, we are informed, hardly conveys a proper notion of the attitude of the Burmese towards the nats or spirits. "Even the Karens and Kachins, who have no other form of belief, do not regard them otherwise than as malevolent beings who must be looked up to with fear, and propitiated by regular offerings. They do not want to have anything to do with the nats; all they seek is to be let alone. The bamboo pipes of spirit, the bones of sacrificial animals, the hatchets, swords, spears, bows and arrows that line the way to a Kachin village, are placed there not with the idea of attracting the spirits, but of preventing them from coming right among the houses in search of their requirements. If they want to drink, the rice spirit has been poured out, and the bamboo stoop is there in evidence of the libation; the blood-stained skulls of oxen, pigs, and the feathers of fowls show that there has been no stint of meat offerings; should the nats wax quarrelsome, and wish to fight, there are the axes and dahs with which to commence the fray. Only let them be grateful, and leave their trembling worshippers in peace and quietness."³ Similarly the Lao or Laosians of Siam, though they are nominally Buddhists, and have monks and pagodas with images

¹ Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 221 sq.

² Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, i. 276 sq.

³ Shway Yoe, *op. cit.* i. 278. "To

the Burman," says Bastian, "the whole world is filled with nats. Mountains, rivers, waters, the earth, etc., have all their nat" (*Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 497).

of Buddha, are said to pay more respect to spirits or demons than to these idols.¹ "The desire to propitiate the good spirits and to exorcise the bad ones is the prevailing influence upon the life of a Laosian. With *phées* [evil spirits] to right of him, to left of him, in front of him, behind him, all round him, his mind is haunted with a perpetual desire to make terms with them, and to ensure the assistance of the great Buddha, so that he may preserve both body and soul from the hands of the spirits."² In Corea, "among the reasons which render the shaman a necessity are these. In Korean belief, earth, air, and sea are peopled by demons. They haunt every umbrageous tree, shady ravine, crystal spring, and mountain crest. On green hill-slopes, in peaceful agricultural valleys, in grassy dells, on wooded uplands, by lake and stream, by road and river, in north, south, east, and west, they abound, making malignant sport of human destinies. They are on every roof, ceiling, fireplace, kang, and beam. They fill the chimney, the shed, the living-room, the kitchen—they are on every shelf and jar. In thousands they waylay the traveller as he leaves his home, beside him, behind him, dancing in front of him, whirring over his head, crying out upon him from earth, air, and water. They are numbered by *thousands of billions*, and it has been well said that their ubiquity is an unholy travesty of the Divine Omnipresence. This belief, and it seems to be the only one he has, keeps the Korean in a perpetual state of nervous apprehension, it surrounds him with indefinite terrors, and it may truly be said of him that he 'passes the time of his sojourning here in fear.' Every Korean home is subject to demons, here, there, and everywhere. They touch the Korean at every point in life, making his well-being depend on a continual series of acts of propitiation, and they avenge every omission with merciless severity, keeping him under this yoke of bondage from birth to death." "Koreans attribute every ill by which they are afflicted to demoniacal influence. Bad luck in any transaction, official malevolence, illness, whether sudden or prolonged, pecuniary misfortune, and loss of power or position, are due to the malignity of

¹ Pallegoix, *Description du royaume Thai ou Siam*, i. 42.

² C. Bock, *Temples and Elephants*, p. 198.

demons. It is over such evils that the *Pan-su* [shaman] is supposed to have power, and to be able to terminate them by magical rites, he being possessed by a powerful demon, whose strength he is able to wield."¹

When we come westward, we find that the same belief in the omnipresence and mischievous power of spirits has prevailed from ancient times to the present day. Few people seem to have suffered more from the persistent assaults of demons than the ancient Babylonians, and the demons that preyed on them were of a particularly cruel and malignant sort, devouring the flesh and sucking the blood of their victims and not sparing the gods themselves. These baleful beings lurked in remote places, in graves, in the shadow of ruins, on the tops of mountains, in the wilderness. They glided noiselessly like serpents, entering houses through holes and crevices. To them all manner of evil was ascribed. Their presence was felt not merely in the terrible winds that swept the land, in the fevers bred of the marshes, and in the diseases engendered by the damp heat of summer. All the petty annoyances of life—a sudden fall, an unlucky word, a headache, a petty quarrel, and so forth—were set down to the agency of fiends; and all the fierce emotions that rend the mind—love, hate, jealousy, and madness—were equally the work of these invisible tormentors. Men and women stood in constant danger of them. Even the animals were not safe from their attacks. They drove birds out of their nests and struck down lambs and bulls. To forestall their assaults was impossible. They entered a man's dwelling, they roamed the streets, they made their way into food and drink. There was no place, however small, which they could not invade, none so large that they could not fill. Almost every part of the human frame was menaced by a special fiend. One demon assailed the head, another the neck, another the hands, another the hips, and so on. Indeed, they threatened the whole world with destruction, and there was none that could deliver from them save only the mighty god Marduk.² In Egypt the jinn,

¹ Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours*, ii. 227 sq., 229. I have taken the liberty of changing the writer's "daemon" into "demon."

² M. Jastrow, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 260 sq.; A. Jeremias, s.v. "Marduk," Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Myth.* ii. 2352 sq.

a class of spiritual beings intermediate between angels and men, are believed to pervade the solid matter of the earth as well as the firmament, and they inhabit rivers, ruined houses, wells, baths, ovens, and so forth. So thickly do they swarm that in pouring water or other liquids on the ground an Egyptian will commonly exclaim or mutter "*Destoor!*" thereby asking the permission or craving the pardon of any jinn who might chance to be there, and who might otherwise resent being suddenly soused with water or less savoury fluids. So too when people light a fire, let down a bucket into a well, or perform other necessary functions, they will say "Permission!" or "Permission, ye blessed!"¹ Again, in Egypt it is not considered proper to sweep out a house at night, lest in doing so you should knock against a jinn, who might avenge the insult.²

The earliest of the Greek philosophers, Thales, held that the world is full of gods or spirits;³ and the same primitive creed was expounded by one of the latest Pagan thinkers of antiquity. Porphyry declared that demons appeared in the likeness of animals, that every house and every body was full of them, and that forms of ceremonial purification, such as beating the air and so forth, had no other object but that of driving away the importunate swarms of these invisible but dangerous beings. He explained that evil spirits delighted in food, especially in blood and impurities, that they settled like flies on us at meals, and that they could only be kept at a distance by ceremonial observances, which were directed, not to pleasing the gods, but simply and solely to beating off devils.⁴ His theory of religious purification seems faithfully to reflect the creed of the savage on this subject,⁵ but a philosopher is perhaps the last person whom we should expect to find acting as a mirror of savagery. It is less surprising to meet with the same venerable doctrine, the same

¹ Lane, *Manners and Customs of the modern Egyptians* (Paisley and London, 1895), chap. x. p. 231 sq.

² C. B. Klunzinger, *Bilder aus Oberägypten, der Wüste und dem Rothen Meere*, p. 382; cp. *ibid.* p. 374 sq.

³ Aristotle, *De anima*, i. 5. 17; Diogenes Laertius, i. 1. 27.

⁴ Porphyry, quoted by Eusebius, *Præparatio Evangelii*, iv. 23.

⁵ Elsewhere I have attempted to show that a particular class of purifications—those observed by mourners—is intended to protect the living from the disembodied spirits of the dead (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886), p. 64 sqq.).

world-wide superstition in the mouth of a mediæval abbot ; for we know that a belief in devils has the authority of the founder of Christianity, and is sanctioned by the teaching of the church. No Esquimaux on the frozen shores of Labrador, no Indian in the sweltering forests of Guiana, no cowering Hindoo in the jungles of Bengal, could well have a more constant and abiding sense of the presence of malignant demons everywhere about him than had Abbot Richalm, who ruled over the Cistercian monastery of Schönthal in the first half of the thirteenth century. In the curious work to which he gave the name of *Revelations*, he set forth how he was daily and hourly infested by devils, whom, though he could not see, he heard, and to whom he imputed all the ailments of his flesh and all the frailties of his spirit. If he felt squeamish, he was sure that the feeling was wrought in him by demoniacal agency. If puckers appeared on his nose, if his lower lip drooped, the devils had again to answer for it ; a cough, a cold in the head, a hawking and spitting, could have none but a supernatural and devilish origin. If, pacing in his orchard on a sunny autumn morning, the portly abbot stooped to pick up the mellow fruit that had fallen in the night, the blood that mounted to his purple face was sent coursing thither by his invisible foes. If the abbot tossed on his sleepless couch, while the moonlight, streaming in at the window, cast the shadows of the stanchions like black bars on the floor of his cell, it was not the fleas and so forth that kept him awake, oh no. "Vermin," said he sagely, "do not really bite" ; they seem to bite, indeed, but it is all the work of devils. If a monk snored in the dormitory, the unseemly noise proceeded not from him, but from a demon lurking in his person. Especially dangerous were the demons of intoxication. These subtle fiends commonly lodged at the taverns in the neighbouring town, but on feast days they were apt to slip through the monastery gates and glide unseen among the monks seated at the refectory table, or gathered round the roaring fire on the hearth, while the bleak wind whistled in the abbey towers, and a more generous vintage than usual glowed and sparkled in the flagons. If at such times a jolly, rosy-faced brother appeared to the carnal eye and ear to grow obstreperous or maudlin, to speak

thick or to reel and stagger in his gait, be sure it was not the fiery spirit of the grape that moved the holy man ; it was a spirit of quite a different order. Holding such views on the source of all bodily and mental indisposition, it was natural enough that the abbot should prescribe remedies which are not to be found in the pharmacopœia, and which would be asked for in vain at an apothecary's. They consisted chiefly of holy water and the sign of the cross ; this last he recommended particularly as a specific for flea-bites.¹

It is easy to suggest that the abbot's wits were unsettled, that he suffered from hallucinations, and so forth. This may have been so ; yet a mode of thought like his seems to be too common over a great part of the world to allow us to attribute it purely to mental derangement. In the Middle Ages, when the general level of knowledge was low, it seems probable that a state of mind like Richalm's may have been shared by multitudes even of educated people, who have not however, like him, left a monument of their folly to posterity. At the present day, owing to the advance and spread of knowledge, it might be difficult to find any person of acknowledged sanity holding the abbot's opinions on the subject of demons ; but in remote parts of Europe a little research might show that the creed of Porphyry and Richalm is still held, with but little variation, by the mass of the people. Thus we are told that the Roumanians of Transylvania "believe themselves to be surrounded on all sides by whole legions of evil spirits. These devils are furthermore assisted by *ismejus* (another sort of dragon), witches, and goblins, and to each of these dangerous beings are ascribed particular powers on particular days and at certain places. Many and curious are therefore the means by which the Roumanians endeavour to counteract these baleful influences ; and a whole complicated study, about as laborious as the mastering of an unknown language, is required in order to teach an unfortunate peasant to steer clear of the dangers by which he supposes himself to be beset on all sides."²

¹ C. Meyer, *Der Aberglaube des Mittelalters* (Bâle, 1884), pp. 109-111, 191 sq.

² E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, i. 328. The superstitions of

the Roumanians of Transylvania have been collected by W. Schmidt in his tract *Das Jahr und seine Tage in Meinung und Brauch der Rumänen Siebenbürgens* (Hermannstadt, 1866).

We can now understand why those general clearances of evil, to which from time to time the savage resorts, should commonly take the form of a forcible expulsion of devils. In these evil spirits primitive man sees the cause of many if not of most of his troubles, and he fancies that if he can only deliver himself from them, things will go better with him. The public attempts to expel the accumulated ills of a whole community may be divided into two classes, according as the expelled evils are immaterial and invisible or are embodied in a material vehicle or scapegoat. The former may be called the direct or immediate expulsion of evils; the latter the indirect or mediate expulsion, or the expulsion by scapegoat. We begin with examples of the former.

In the island of Rook, between New Guinea and New Britain, when any misfortune has happened, all the people run together, scream, curse, howl, and beat the air with sticks to drive away the devil (*Marsdba*), who is supposed to be the author of the mishap. From the spot where the mishap took place they drive him step by step to the sea, and on reaching the shore they redouble their shouts and blows in order to expel him from the island. He generally retires to the sea or to the island of Lottin.¹ The natives of New Britain ascribe sickness, drought, the failure of crops, and in short all misfortunes, to the influence of wicked spirits. So at times when many people sicken and die, as at the beginning of the rainy season, all the inhabitants of a district, armed with branches and clubs, go out by moonlight to the fields, where they beat and stamp on the ground with wild howls till morning, believing that this drives away the devils.² Among the Dieri tribe of Central Australia, when a serious illness occurs, the medicine-men expel Cootchie or the devil by beating the ground in and outside of the camp with the stuffed tail of a kangaroo, until they have chased the demon away to some distance from the camp.³ In some South African tribes it is a general rule that no common man may meddle with spirits, whether good or bad, except

¹ Paul Reina, "Ueber die Bewohner der Insel Rook," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, N.F., iv. 356.

² R. Parkinson, *Im Bismarck-Archipel*, p. 142.

³ S. Gason, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), p. 170.

to offer the customary sacrifices. Demons may haunt him and make his life a burden to him, but he must submit to their machinations until the matter is taken up by the proper authorities. A baboon may be sent by evil spirits and perch on a tree within gunshot, or regale itself in his maize-field; but to fire at the beast would be worse than suicide. As long as a man remains a solitary sufferer, he has little chance of redress. It is supposed that he has committed some crime, and that the ancestors in their wrath have sent a demon to torment him. But should his neighbours also suffer; should the baboon from choice or necessity (for men do sometimes pluck up courage to scare the brutes) select a fresh field for its depredations, or the roof of another man's barn for its perch, the case begins to wear a different complexion. The magicians now deal with the matter seriously. One man may be haunted for his sins by a demon, but a whole community infested by devils is another matter. To shoot the baboon, however, would be useless; it would merely enrage the demon and increase the danger. The first thing to do is to ascertain the permanent abode of the devil. It is generally a deep pool with overhanging banks and dark recesses. There the villagers assemble with the priests and magicians at their head, and set about pelting the demon with stones, men, women, and children all joining in the assault, while they load the object of their fear and hate with the foulest abuse. Drums too are beaten, and horns blown at intervals, and when everybody has been worked up to such a frenzy of excitement that some even fancy they see the imp dodging the missiles, he suddenly takes to flight, and the village is rid of him for a time. After that, the crops may be protected and baboons killed with impunity.¹

When a village has been visited by a series of disasters or a severe epidemic, the inhabitants of Minahassa in Celebes lay the blame upon the devils who are infesting the village and who must be expelled from it. Accordingly, early one

¹ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, pp. 100-102. The writer, who describes the ceremony at first hand, remarks that "there is no periodic purging of devils, nor are more spirits than one expelled at a time." He adds:

"I have noticed frequently a connection between the quantity of grain that could be spared for making beer, and the frequency of gatherings for the purging of evils."

morning all the people, men, women, and children, quit their homes, carrying their household goods with them, and take up their quarters in temporary huts which have been erected outside the village. Here they spend several days, offering sacrifices and preparing for the final ceremony. At last the men, some wearing masks, others with their faces blackened, and so on, but all armed with swords, guns, pikes, or brooms, steal cautiously and silently back to the deserted village. Then, at a signal from the priest, they rush furiously up and down the streets and into and under the houses (which are raised on piles above the ground), yelling and striking on walls, doors, and windows, to drive away the devils. Next, the priests and the rest of the people come with the holy fire and march nine times round each house and thrice round the ladder that leads up to it, carrying the fire with them. Then they take the fire into the kitchen, where it must burn for three days continuously. The devils are now driven away, and great and general is the joy.¹ The Alfoors of Halmahera attribute epidemics to the devil who comes from other villages to carry them off. So, in order to rid the village of the disease, the sorcerer drives away the devil. From all the villagers he receives a costly garment and places it on four vessels, which he takes to the forest and leaves at the spot where the devil is supposed to be. Then with mocking words he bids the demon abandon the place.² In the Kei Islands to the south-west of New Guinea, the evil spirits, who are quite distinct from the souls of the dead, form a mighty host. Almost every tree and every cave is the lodging-place of one of these fiends, who are moreover extremely irascible and apt to fly out on the smallest provocation. To speak loudly in passing their

¹ [P. N. Wilken], "De godsdienst en godsdienstplegtigheden der Alfoeren in de Menahassa op het eiland Celebes," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, December 1849, pp. 392-394; *id.*, "Bijdragen tot de kennis van de zeden en gewoonten der Alfoeren in de Minahassa," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, vii. (1863), p. 149 *sqq.*; J. G. F. Riedel, "De Minahassa in 1825," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volken-*

kunde, xviii. (1872), p. 521 *sq.* Wilken's first and fuller account is reprinted in Graafland's *De Minahassa*, i. 117-120.

² Riedel, "Galela und Tobeloresen," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xvii. (1885), p. 82; G. A. Wilken, "Het Shamanisme bij de Volken van de Indischen Archipel," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxvii. (1887), p. 484.

abode, to ease nature near a haunted tree or cave is enough to bring down their wrath on the offender, and he must either appease them by an offering or burn the scrapings of a buffalo's horn or the hair of a Papuan slave, in order that the smell may drive the foul fiends away. The spirits manifest their displeasure by sending sickness and other calamities. Hence in times of public misfortune, as when an epidemic is raging, and all other remedies have failed, the whole population go forth with the priest at their head to a place at some distance from the village. Here at sunset they erect a couple of poles with a cross-bar between them, to which they attach bags of rice, wooden models of pivot-guns, gongs, bracelets, and so on. Then, when everybody has taken his place at the poles and a death-like silence reigns, the priest lifts up his voice and addresses the spirits in their own language as follows: "Ho! ho! ho! ye evil spirits who dwell in the trees, ye evil spirits who live in the grottoes, ye evil spirits who lodge in the earth, we give you these pivot-guns, these gongs, etc. Let the sickness cease and not so many people die of it." Then everybody runs home as fast as their legs can carry them.¹

In the island of Nias, when a man is seriously ill and other remedies have been tried in vain, the sorcerer proceeds to exorcise the devil who is causing the illness. A pole is set up in front of the house, and from the top of the pole a rope of palm-leaves is stretched to the roof of the house. Then the sorcerer mounts the roof with a pig, which he kills and allows to roll from the roof to the ground. The devil, anxious to get the pig, lets himself down hastily from the roof by the rope of palm-leaves, and a good spirit, invoked by the sorcerer, prevents him from climbing up again. If this remedy fails, it is believed that other devils must still be lurking in the house. So a general hunt is made after them. All the doors and windows in the house are closed, except a single dormer-window in the roof. The men, shut up in the house, hew and slash with their swords right and left to the

¹ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 834 sq. A brief

account of the custom had previously been given by Riedel (*De sluit- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 239).

clash of gongs and the rub-a-dub of drums. Terrified at this onslaught, the devils escape by the dormer-window, and sliding down the rope of palm-leaves take themselves off. As all the doors and windows, except the one in the roof, are shut, the devils cannot get into the house again. In the case of an epidemic the proceedings are similar. All the gates of the village, except one, are closed; every voice is raised, every gong and drum beaten, every sword brandished. Thus the devils are driven out and the last gate is shut behind them. For eight days thereafter the village is in a state of siege, no one being allowed to enter it.¹ The means adopted in Nias to exclude an epidemic from a village which has not yet been infected by it are somewhat similar; but as they exhibit an interesting combination of religious ritual with the purely magical ceremony of exorcism, it may be worth while to describe them. When it is known that a village is suffering from the ravages of a dangerous malady, the other villages in the neighbourhood take what they regard as effective measures for securing immunity from the disease. Some of these measures commend themselves to us as rational and others do not. In the first place, quarantine is established in each village, not only against the inhabitants of the infected village, but against all strangers; no person from outside is allowed to enter. In the second place, a feast is made by the people for one of their idols who goes by the name of *Fangeroe wocho*, or Protector from sickness. All the people of the village must participate in the sacrifice and bear a share of the cost. The principal idol, crowned with palm-leaves, is set up in front of the chief's house, and all the inhabitants who can do so gather about it. The names of those who cannot attend are mentioned, apparently as a substitute for their attendance in person. While the priest is reciting the spells for the

¹ Nieuwenhuisen en Rosenberg, "Verslag omtrent het eiland Nias," *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxx. (Batavia, 1863), p. 116 sq.; Rosenberg, *Der Malayische Archipel*, p. 174 sq. Cp. Chatelin, "Godsdienst en Bijgeloof der Niassers," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en*

Volkenkunde, xxvi. 139; E. Modigliani, *Un viaggio a Nias*, pp. 195, 382. The Dyaks also drive the devil at the point of the sword from a house where there is sickness. See Hupe, "Korte verhandeling over de godsdienst, zeden, enz. der Dajakkers," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië*, 1846, dl. iii. p. 149.

banishment of the evil spirits, all persons present come forward and touch the image. A pig is then killed and its flesh furnishes a common meal. The mouth of the idol is smeared with the bloody heart of the pig, and a dishful of the cooked pork is set before him. Of the flesh thus consecrated to the idol none but priests and chiefs may partake. Idols called *daha*, or branches of the principal idol, are also set up in front of all the other houses in the village. Moreover, bogies made of black wood with white eyes, to which the broken crockery of the inhabitants has freely contributed, are placed at the entrances of the village to scare the demon and prevent him from entering. All sorts of objects whitened with chalk are also hung up in front of the houses to keep the devil out. When eight days have elapsed, it is thought that the sacrifice has taken effect, and the priest puts an end to the quarantine. All boys and men now assemble for the purpose of expelling the evil spirit. Led by the priest, they march four times, with a prodigious noise and uproar, from one end of the village to the other, slashing the air with their knives and stabbing it with their spears to frighten the devil away. If all these efforts prove vain, and the dreaded sickness breaks out, the people think it must be because they have departed from the ways of their fathers by raising the price of victuals and pigs too high or by enriching themselves with unjust gain. Accordingly a new idol is made and set up in front of the chief's house; and while the priest engages in prayer, the chief and the magnates of the village touch the image, vowing as they do so to return to the old ways and cursing all such as may refuse their consent or violate the new law thus solemnly enacted. Then all present betake themselves to the river and erect another idol on the bank. In presence of this latter idol the weights and measures are compared, and any that exceed the lawful standard are at once reduced to it. When this has been done, they rock the image to and fro to signify, or perhaps rather to ensure, thereby that he who does not keep the new law shall suffer misfortune, or fall sick, or be thwarted in some way or other. Then a pig is killed and eaten on the bank of the river. The feast being over, each family contributes a certain sum in token that

they make restitution of their unlawful gains. The money thus collected is tied in a bundle, and the priest holds the bundle up towards the sky and down towards the earth to satisfy the god of the upper and the god of the nether world that justice has now been done. After that he either flings the bag of money into the river or buries it in the ground beside the idol. In the latter case the money naturally disappears, and the people explain its disappearance by saying that the evil spirit has come and fetched it.¹ A method like that which at the present day the people of Nias adopt for the sake of conjuring the demon of disease was employed in antiquity by the Caunians of Asia Minor to banish certain foreign gods whom they had imprudently established in their country. All the men of military age assembled under arms, and with spear-thrusts in the air drove the strange gods step by step from the land and across the boundaries.²

When cholera has broken out in a Burmese village the able-bodied men scramble on the roofs and lay about them with bamboos and billets of wood, while all the rest of the population, old and young, stand below and thump drums, blow trumpets, yell, scream, beat floors, walls, tin pans, everything to make a din. This uproar, repeated on three successive nights, is thought to be very effective in driving away the cholera demons.³ When small-pox first appeared amongst the Kumis of South-Eastern India, they thought it was a devil come from Arracan. The villages were placed in a state of siege, no one being allowed to leave or enter them. A monkey was killed by being dashed on the ground, and its body was hung at the village gate. Its blood, mixed with small river pebbles, was sprinkled on the houses, the threshold of every house was swept with the monkey's tail, and the fiend was adjured to depart.⁴ In Japan the old-fashioned method of staying an epidemic is to expel the demon of the plague from every

¹ Fr. Kramer, "Der Götzendienst der Niasser," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890), pp. 486-488.

² Herodotus, i. 172.

³ Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 233; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, i. 282, ii. 105 sqq.; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 98.

⁴ Lewin, *Wild Tribes of South-Eastern India*, p. 226.

house into which he has entered. The treatment begins with the house in which the malady has appeared in the mildest form. First of all a Shinto priest makes a preliminary visit to the sick-room and extracts from the demon a promise that he will depart with him at his next visit. The day after he comes again, and, seating himself near the patient, beseeches the evil spirit to come away with him. Meanwhile red rice, which is used only on special occasions, has been placed at the sufferer's head, a closed litter made of pine boughs has been brought in, and four men equipped with flags or weapons have taken post in the four corners of the room to prevent the demon from seeking refuge there. All are silent but the priest. The prayer being over, the sick man's pillow is hastily thrown into the litter, and the priest cries, "All right now!" At that the bearers double with it into the street, the people within and without beat the air with swords, sticks, or anything that comes to hand, while others assist in the cure by banging away at drums and gongs. A procession is now formed in which only men take part, some of them carrying banners, others provided with a drum, a bell, a flute, a horn, and all of them wearing fillets and horns of twisted straw to keep the demon away from themselves. As the procession starts an old man chants, "What god are you bearing away?" To which the others respond in chorus, "The god of the pest we are bearing away!" Then to the music of the drum, the bell, the flute, and the horn the litter is borne through the streets. During its passage all the people in the town who are not taking part in the ceremony remain indoors, every house along the route of the procession is carefully closed, and at the cross-roads swordsmen are stationed, who guard the street by hewing the air to right and left with their blades, lest the demon should escape by that way. The litter is thus carried to a retired spot between two towns and left there, while all who escorted it thither run away. Only the priest remains behind for half an hour to complete the exorcism and the cure. The bearers of the litter spend the night praying in a temple. Next day they return home, but not until they have plunged into a cold bath in the open air to prevent the demon from following them. The same litter serves to convey the evil

spirit from every house in the town.¹ In Corea, when a patient is recovering from the small-pox, a farewell dinner is given in honour of the departing spirit of the disease. Friends and relations are invited, and the spirit's share of the good things is packed on the back of a hobby-horse and despatched to the boundary of the town or village, while respectful farewells are spoken and hearty good wishes uttered for his prosperous journey to his own place.² In Tonquin also a banquet is sometimes given to the demon of sickness to induce him to go quietly away from the house. The most honourable place at the festive board is reserved for the fiend; prayers, caresses, and presents are lavished on him; but if he proves obdurate, they assail him with coarse abuse and drive him from the house with musket-shots.³

At Great Bassam, in Guinea, the French traveller Hecquard witnessed the exorcism of the evil spirit who was believed to make women barren. The women who wished to become mothers offered to the fetish wine-vessels or statuettes representing women suckling children. Then being assembled in the fetish hut, they were sprinkled with rum by the priest, while young men fired guns and brandished swords to drive away the demon.⁴ The Gallas try to drive away fever by firing guns, shouting, and lighting great fires.⁵ When sickness was prevalent in a Huron village, and all other remedies had been tried in vain, the Indians had recourse to the ceremony called *Lonouyroya*, "which is the principal invention and most proper means, so they say, to expel from the town or village the devils and evil spirits

¹ This description is taken from a newspaper-cutting, which was sent to me from the west of Scotland in October 1890, but without the name or date of the paper. The account, which is headed "Exorcism of the pest demon in Japan," purports to be derived from a series of notes on medical customs of the Japanese, which were contributed by Dr. C. H. H. Hall, of the U.S. Navy, to the *Sei-I Kwai Medical Journal*.

² Masanao Koike, "Zwei Jahren in Korea," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, iv. (1891), p. 10; Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours*, ii. 240.

³ *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, xvi. 206. It will be noticed that in this and the preceding case the principle of expulsion is applied for the benefit of an individual, not of a whole community. Yet the method of procedure in both is so similar to that adopted in the cases under consideration that I have allowed myself to cite them.

⁴ Hecquard, *Reise an die Küste und in das Innere von West Afrika*, p. 43.

⁵ Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die materielle Cultur der Dandkil, Galla und Somäl*, p. 177.

which cause, induce, and import all the maladies and infirmities which they suffer in body and mind." Accordingly, one evening the men would begin to rush like madmen about the village, breaking and upsetting whatever they came across in the wigwams. They threw fire and burning brands about the streets, and all night long they ran howling and singing without cessation. Then they all dreamed of something, a knife, dog, skin, or whatever it might be, and when morning came they went from wigwam to wigwam asking for presents. These they received silently, till the particular thing was given them which they had dreamed about. On receiving it they uttered a cry of joy and rushed from the hut, amid the congratulations of all present. The health of those who received what they had dreamed of was believed to be assured; whereas those who did not get what they had set their hearts upon regarded their fate as sealed.¹

¹ Sagard, *Le Grand Voyage du Pays des Hurons*, p. 279 sqq. (195 sq. of the Paris reprint). Compare *Relations des Jésuites*, 1639, pp. 88-92 (Canadian reprint), from which it appears that each man demanded the subject of his dream in the form of a riddle, which the hearers tried to solve. The custom of asking riddles at certain seasons or on certain special occasions is curious and has not yet, so far as I know, been explained. Perhaps enigmas were originally circumlocutions adopted at times when for certain reasons the speaker was forbidden the use of direct terms. They appear to be especially employed in the neighbourhood of a dead body. Thus in Bolang Mongondo (Celebes) riddles may never be asked except when there is a corpse in the village. See N. P. Wilken en J. A. Schwarz, "Allerlei over het land en volk van Bolaäng Mongondou," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xi. (1867), p. 357. In the Aru archipelago, while a corpse is unconfined, the watchers propound riddles to each other, or rather they think of things which the others have to guess. See Riedel, *De stuik-en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 267 sq. In Brittany after a burial, when the rest have gone to

partake of the funeral banquet, old men remain behind in the graveyard, and having seated themselves on mallows, ask each other riddles. See A. de Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 199. In Vedic times the priests proposed enigmas to each other at the great sacrifice of a horse. See H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 475. Among Turkish tribes of Central Asia girls publicly propound riddles to their wooers, who are punished if they cannot read them. See H. Vambery, *Das Türkenvolk*, p. 232 sq. Among the Alfours of Central Celebes riddles may only be asked during the season when the fields are being tilled and the crops are growing. People meeting together at this time occupy themselves with asking riddles and telling stories. As soon as some one has found the answer to a riddle, they all cry out, "Make our rice to grow, make fat ears to grow both in the valleys and on the heights." But during the months which elapse between harvest and the preparation of new land for tillage the propounding of enigmas is strictly forbidden. The writer who reports the custom conjectures that the cry "Make our rice to grow" is addressed to the souls of the ancestors. See A. C.

The observance of such ceremonies, from being occasional, tends to become periodic. It comes to be thought desirable to have a general riddance of evil spirits at fixed times, usually once a year, in order that the people may make a fresh start in life, freed from all the malignant influences which have been long accumulating about them. Some of the Australian blacks annually expelled the ghosts of the dead from their territory. The ceremony was witnessed by the Rev. W. Ridley on the banks of the River Barwan. "A chorus of twenty, old and young, were singing and beating time with boomerangs. . . . Suddenly, from under a sheet of bark darted a man with his body whitened by pipeclay, his head and face coloured with lines of red and yellow, and a tuft of feathers fixed by means of a stick two feet above the crown of his head. He stood twenty minutes perfectly still, gazing upwards. An aboriginal who stood by told me he was looking for the ghosts of dead men. At last he began to move very slowly, and soon rushed to and fro at full speed, flourishing a branch as if to drive away some foes invisible to us. When I thought this pantomime must be almost over, ten more, similarly adorned, suddenly appeared from behind the trees, and the whole party joined in a brisk conflict with their mysterious assailants. . . . At last, after some rapid evolutions in which they put forth all their strength, they rested from the exciting toil which they had kept up all night and for some hours after sunrise; they seemed satisfied that the ghosts were driven away for twelve months. They were performing the same ceremony at every station along the river, and I am told it is an annual custom."¹

Certain seasons of the year mark themselves naturally out as appropriate moments for a general expulsion of devils. Such a moment occurs towards the close of an Arctic winter, when the sun reappears on the horizon after an absence of weeks or months. Accordingly, at Point Barrow, the most northerly extremity of Alaska, and nearly of America, the

Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoet," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendeling-*

genootschap, xxxix. (1895), p. 142 sq.

¹ The Rev. W. Ridley, in J. D. Lang's *Queensland*, p. 441; cp. Ridley, *Kamilaroi*, p. 149.

Esquimaux choose the moment of the sun's reappearance to hunt the mischievous spirit *Tuñá* from every house. The ceremony was witnessed some years ago by the members of the United States Polar Expedition, who wintered at Point Barrow. A fire was built in front of the council-house, and an old woman was posted at the entrance to every house. The men gathered round the council-fire, while the young women and girls drove the spirits out of every house with their knives, stabbing viciously under the bunk and deer-skins, and calling upon *Tuñá* to be gone. When they thought he had been driven out of every hole and corner, they thrust him down through the hole in the floor and chased him into the open air with loud cries and frantic gestures. Meanwhile the old woman at the entrance of the house made passes with a long knife in the air to keep him from returning. Each party drove the spirit towards the fire and invited him to go into it. All were by this time drawn up in a semicircle round the fire, when several of the leading men made specific charges against the spirit; and each after his speech brushed his clothes violently, calling on the spirit to leave him and go into the fire. Two men now stepped forward with rifles loaded with blank cartridges, while a third brought a vessel of urine and flung it on the flames. At the same time one of the men fired a shot into the fire; and as the cloud of steam rose it received the other shot, which was supposed to finish *Tuñá* for the time being.¹ In late autumn, when storms rage over the land and break the icy fetters by which the frozen sea is as yet but slightly bound, when the loosened floes are driven against each other and break with loud crashes, and when the cakes of ice are piled in wild disorder one upon another, the Esquimaux of Baffin Land fancy they hear the voices of the spirits who people the mischief-laden air. Then the spirits of the dead knock wildly at the huts, which they cannot enter, and woe to the hapless wight whom they catch; he soon sickens and dies. Then the phantom of a huge hairless dog pursues the real dogs, which expire in convulsions and cramps at sight of him. All the countless spirits of evil are abroad, striving

¹ *Report of the International Polar Expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska* (Washington, 1885), p. 42 sq.

to bring sickness and death, foul weather and failure in hunting on the Esquimaux. Most dreaded of all these spectral visitants are Sedna, mistress of the nether world, and her father, to whose share dead Esquimaux fall. While the other spirits fill the air and the water, she rises from under ground. It is then a busy season for the wizards. In every house you may hear them singing and praying, while they conjure the spirits, seated in a mystic gloom at the back of the hut, which is dimly lit by a lamp burning low. The hardest task of all is to drive away Sedna, and this is reserved for the most powerful enchanter. A rope is coiled on the floor of a large hut in such a way as to leave a small opening at the top, which represents the breathing hole of a seal. Two enchanters stand beside it, one of them grasping a spear as if he were watching a seal-hole in winter, the other holding the harpoon-line. A third sorcerer sits at the back of the hut chanting a magic song to lure Sedna to the spot. Now she is heard approaching under the floor of the hut, breathing heavily; now she emerges at the hole; now she is harpooned and sinks away in angry haste, dragging the harpoon with her, while the two men hold on to the line with all their might. The struggle is severe, but at last by a desperate wrench she tears herself away and returns to her dwelling in Adlivun. When the harpoon is drawn up out of the hole it is found to be splashed with blood, which the enchanters proudly exhibit as a proof of their prowess. Thus Sedna and the other evil spirits are at last driven away, and next day a great festival is celebrated by old and young in honour of the event. But they must still be cautious, for the wounded Sedna is furious and will seize any one she may find outside of his hut; so they all wear amulets on the top of their hoods to protect themselves against her. These amulets consist of pieces of the first garments that they wore after birth.¹

The Iroquois inaugurated the new year in January, February, or March (the time varied) with a "festival of dreams" like that which the Hurons observed on special

¹ Fr. Boas, "The Eskimo," *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada for 1887*, vol. v. (Montreal, 1888), sect. ii. 36 sq.; *id.*, "The

Central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 603 sq.

occasions.¹ The whole ceremonies lasted several days, or even weeks, and formed a kind of saturnalia. Men and women, variously disguised, went from wigwam to wigwam smashing and throwing down whatever they came across. It was a time of general licence; the people were supposed to be out of their senses, and therefore not to be responsible for what they did. Accordingly, many seized the opportunity of paying off old scores by belabouring obnoxious persons, drenching them with ice-cold water, and covering them with filth or hot ashes. Others seized burning brands or coals and flung them at the heads of the first persons they met. The only way of escaping from these persecutors was to guess what they had dreamed of. On one day of the festival the ceremony of driving away evil spirits from the village took place. Men clothed in the skins of wild beasts, their faces covered with hideous masks, and their hands with the shell of the tortoise, went from hut to hut making frightful noises; in every hut they took the fuel from the fire and scattered the embers and ashes about the floor with their hands. The general confession of sins which preceded the festival was probably a preparation for the public expulsion of evil influences; it was a way of stripping the people of their moral burdens, that these might be collected and cast out. This New Year festival is still celebrated by some of the heathen Iroquois, though it has been shorn of its former turbulence. A conspicuous feature in the ceremony is now the sacrifice of the White Dog, but this appears to have been added to the festival in comparatively modern times, and does not figure in the oldest descriptions of the ceremonies. We shall return to it later on.² A great annual festival of

¹ Above, p. 68 sq.

² Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, vi. 82 sqq.; Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York*, iv. 201 sq.; L. H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois*, p. 207 sqq.; Mrs. E. A. Smith, "Myths of the Iroquois," *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1883), p. 112 sqq.; Horatio Hale, "Iroquois sacrifice of the White Dog," *American Antiquarian*, vii. 7 sqq.;

W. M. Beauchamp, "Iroquois White Dog feast," *ibid.* p. 235 sqq. "They had one day in the year which might be called the Festival of Fools; for in fact they pretended to be mad, rushing from hut to hut, so that if they ill-treated any one or carried off anything, they would say next day, 'I was mad; I had not my senses about me.' And the others would accept this explanation and exact no vengeance" (L. Hennepin, *Description de la Louisiane*, Paris, 1683, p. 71 sq.).



the Cherokee Indians was the Propitiation, "Cementation," or Purification festival. "It was celebrated shortly after the first new moon of autumn, and consisted of a multiplicity of rigorous rites, fastings, ablutions, and purifications. Among the most important functionaries on the occasion were seven exorcisers or cleansers, whose duty it was, at a certain stage of the proceedings to drive away evil, and purify the town. Each one bore in his hand a white rod of sycamore. 'The leader, followed by others, walked around the national heptagon, and coming to the treasure or store-house to the west of it, they lashed the eaves of the roofs with their rods. The leader then went to another house, followed by the others, singing, and repeated the same ceremony until every house was purified.' This ceremony was repeated daily during the continuance of the festival. In performing their ablutions they went into the water and allowed their old clothes to be carried away by the stream, by which means they supposed their impurities removed."¹

In September the Incas of Peru celebrated a festival called Situa, the object of which was to banish from the capital and its vicinity all disease and trouble. The festival fell in September because the rains begin about this time, and with the first rains there was generally much sickness. As a preparation for the festival the people fasted on the first day of the moon after the autumnal equinox. Having fasted during the day, and the night being come, they baked a coarse paste of maize. This paste was made of two sorts. One was kneaded with the blood of children aged five to ten years, the blood being obtained by bleeding the children between the eyebrows. These two kinds of paste were baked separately, because they were for different uses. Each family assembled at the house of the eldest brother to celebrate the feast; and those who had no elder brother went to the house of their next relation of greater age. On the same night all who had fasted during the day washed their bodies, and taking a little of the blood-kneaded paste, rubbed it over their head, face, breast, shoulders, arms, and legs. They did this in order that the paste might take away

¹ Squier's notes upon Bartram's from the MS. of Mr. Payne. See *Creek and Cherokee Indians*, p. 78. above, vol. ii. p. 329, note 1.

all their infirmities. After this the head of the family anointed the threshold with the same paste, and left it there as a token that the inmates of the house had performed their ablutions and cleansed their bodies. Meantime the High Priest performed the same ceremonies in the temple of the Sun. As soon as the Sun rose, all the people worshipped and besought him to drive all evils out of the city, and then they broke their fast with the paste that had been kneaded without blood. When they had paid their worship and broken their fast, which they did at a stated hour, in order that all might adore the Sun as one man, an Inca of the blood royal came forth from the fortress, as a messenger of the Sun, richly dressed, with his mantle girded round his body, and a lance in his hand. The lance was decked with feathers of many hues, extending from the blade to the socket, and fastened with rings of gold. He ran down the hill from the fortress brandishing his lance, till he reached the centre of the great square, where stood the golden urn, like a fountain, that was used for the sacrifice of the fermented juice of the maize. Here four other Incas of the blood royal awaited him, each with a lance in his hand, and his mantle girded up to run. The messenger touched their four lances with his lance, and told them that the Sun bade them, as his messengers, drive the evils out of the city. The four Incas then separated and ran down the four royal roads which led out of the city to the four quarters of the world. While they ran, all the people, great and small, came to the doors of their houses, and with great shouts of joy and gladness shook their clothes, as if they were shaking off dust, while they cried, "Let the evils be gone. How greatly desired has this festival been by us. O Creator of all things, permit us to reach another year, that we may see another feast like this." After they had shaken their clothes, they passed their hands over their heads, faces, arms, and legs, as if in the act of washing. All this was done to drive the evils out of their houses, that the messengers of the Sun might banish them from the city; and it was done not only in the streets through which the Incas ran, but generally in all quarters of the city. Moreover, they all danced, the Inca himself amongst them, and bathed in the rivers and

fountains, saying that their maladies would come out of them. Then they took great torches of straw, bound round with cords. These they lighted, and passed from one to the other, striking each other with them, and saying, "Let all harm go away." Meanwhile the runners ran with their lances for a quarter of a league outside the city, where they found four other Incas ready, who received the lances from their hands and ran with them. Thus the lances were carried by relays of runners for a distance of five or six leagues, at the end of which the runners washed themselves and their weapons in rivers, and set up the lances, in sign of a boundary within which the banished evils might not return.¹

The negroes of Guinea annually banish the devil from all their towns with much ceremony. At Axim, on the Gold Coast, this annual expulsion is preceded by a feast of eight days, during which mirth and jollity reign, and "a perfect lampooning liberty is allowed, and scandal so highly exalted, that they may freely sing of all the faults, villanies, and frauds of their superiors as well as inferiors, without punishment, or so much as the least interruption." On the eighth day they hunt out the devil with a dismal cry, running after him and pelting him with sticks, stones, and whatever comes to hand. When they have driven him far enough out of the town, they all return. In this way he is expelled from more than a hundred towns at the same time. To make sure that he does not return to their houses, the women wash and scour all their wooden and earthen vessels, "to free them from all uncleanness and the devil."² The ceremony as it

¹ Garcilasso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, pt. i. bk. vii. ch. 6, vol. ii. p. 228 *sqq.*, Markham's translation; Molina, "Fables and Rites of the Incas," in *Rites and Laws of the Incas* (Hakluyt Society, 1873), p. 20 *sqq.*; Acosta, *History of the Indies*, bk. v. ch. 28, vol. ii. p. 375 *sq.* (Hakluyt Society, 1880). The accounts of Garcilasso and Molina are somewhat discrepant, but this may be explained by the statement of the latter that "in one year they added, and in another they reduced the number of ceremonies, according to circum-

stances." Molina places the festival in August, Garcilasso and Acosta in September. According to Garcilasso there were only four runners in Cuzco; according to Molina there were four hundred. Acosta's account is very brief. In the description given in the text features have been borrowed from all three accounts, where these seemed consistent with each other.

² Bosman's "Guinea," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, xvi. 402. Cp. Pierre Bouche, *La Côte des Esclaves*, p. 395.

is practised at Gatto, in Benin, has been described by an English traveller. He says: "It was about this time that I witnessed a strange ceremony, peculiar to this people, called the time of the 'grand devils.' Eight men were dressed in a most curious manner, having a dress made of bamboo about their bodies, and a cap on the head, of various colours and ornamented with red feathers taken from the parrot's tail; round the legs were twisted strings of shells, which made a clattering noise as they walked, and the face and hands of each individual were covered with a net. These strange beings go about the town, by day and by night, for the term of one month, uttering the most discordant and frightful noises; no one durst venture out at night for fear of being killed or seriously maltreated by these fellows, who are then especially engaged in driving the evil spirits from the town. They go round to all the chief's houses, and in addition to the noise they make, perform some extraordinary feats in tumbling and gymnastics, for which they receive a few cowries."¹ At Onitsha, on the Niger, Mr. J. C. Taylor witnessed the celebration of New Year's Day by the negroes. It fell on the twentieth of December 1858. Every family brought a firebrand out into the street, threw it away, and exclaimed as they returned, "The gods of the new year! New Year has come round again." Mr. Taylor adds, "The meaning of the custom seems to be that the fire is to drive away the old year with its sorrows and evils, and to embrace the new year with hearty reception."² Of all Abyssinian festivals that of Mascal or the Cross is celebrated with the greatest pomp. The eve of the festival witnesses a ceremony which doubtless belongs to the world-wide class of customs we are dealing with. At sunset a discharge of firearms takes place from all the principal houses. "Then every one provides himself with a torch, and during the early part of the night bonfires are kindled, and the people parade the town, carrying their lighted torches in their hands. They go through their houses too, poking a light into every dark

¹ *Narrative of Captain James Fawcner's Travels on the Coast of Benin, West Africa* (London, 1837), p. 102 sq.

² S. Crowther and J. C. Taylor, *The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger*, p. 320.

corner in the hall, under the couches, in the stables, kitchen, etc., as if looking for something lost, and calling out, 'Akho, akhoky! turn out the spinage, and bring in the porridge; Mascall is come!' . . . After this they play, and poke fun and torches at each other."¹

Sometimes the date of the annual expulsion of devils is fixed with reference to the agricultural seasons. Among the Hos of North-Eastern India the great festival of the year is the harvest home, held in January, when the granaries are full of grain, and the people, to use their own expression, are full of devilry. "They have a strange notion that at this period men and women are so overcharged with vicious propensities, that it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the person to let off steam by allowing for a time full vent to the passions." The ceremonies open with a sacrifice to the village god of three fowls, two of which must be black. Along with them are offered flowers of the Palas-tree, bread made from rice-flour, and sesamum seeds. These offerings are presented by the village priest, who prays that during the year about to begin they and their children may be preserved from all misfortune and sickness, and that they may have seasonable rain and good crops. Prayer is also made in some places for the souls of the dead. At this time an evil spirit is supposed to infest the place, and to get rid of it men, women, and children go in procession round and through every part of the village with sticks in their hands, as if beating for game, singing a wild chant, and shouting vociferously, till they feel assured that the evil spirit must have fled. Then they give themselves up to feasting and drinking rice-beer, till they are in a fit state for the wild debauch which follows. The festival now "becomes a saturnale, during which servants forget their duty to their masters, children their reverence for parents, men their respect for women, and women all notions of modesty, delicacy, and gentleness; they become raging bacchantes." Usually the Hos are quiet and reserved in manner, decorous and gentle to women. But during this festival "their nature appears to undergo a temporary change. Sons and daughters revile their parents in gross language, and parents

¹ Mansfield Parkyns, *Life in Abyssinia*, p. 285 sqq.

their children ; men and women become almost like animals in the indulgence of their amorous propensities." The Mundaris, kinsmen and neighbours of the Hos, keep the festival in much the same manner. "The resemblance to a Saturnale is very complete, as at this festival the farm labourers are feasted by their masters, and allowed the utmost freedom of speech in addressing them. It is the festival of the harvest home ; the termination of one year's toil, and a slight respite from it before they commence again."¹

Amongst some of the Hindoo Koosh tribes, as among the Hos and Mundaris, the expulsion of devils takes place after harvest. When the last crop of autumn has been got in, it is thought necessary to drive away evil spirits from the granaries. A kind of porridge called *mool* is eaten, and the head of the family takes his matchlock and fires it into the floor. Then, going outside, he sets to work loading and firing till his powder-horn is exhausted, while all his neighbours are similarly employed. The next day is spent in rejoicings. In Chitral this festival is called "devil-driving."² On the other hand the Khonds of India expel the devils at seed-time instead of at harvest. At this time they worship Pitteri Pennu, the god of increase and of gain in every shape. On the first day of the festival a rude car is made of a basket set upon a few sticks, tied upon bamboo rollers for wheels. The priest takes this car first to the house of the lineal head of the tribe, to whom precedence is given in all ceremonies connected with agriculture. Here he receives a little of each kind of seed and some feathers. He then takes the car to all the other houses in the village, each of which contributes the same things. Lastly, the car is conducted to a field without the village, attended by all the young men, who beat each other and strike the air violently with long sticks. The seed thus carried out is called the share of the "evil spirits, spoilers of the seed." "These are considered to be driven out with the car ; and when it and its contents

¹ Dalton, *Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 196 sq. We have seen (vol. ii. p. 326 sqq.) that among the Pundos of South Africa the harvest festival of first-fruits

is in like manner a period of licence and debauchery.

² Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 103.

are abandoned to them, they are held to have no excuse for interfering with the rest of the seed-corn." Next day each household kills a hog over the seed for the year, and prays to Pitteri Pennu. The elders then feast upon the hogs. The young men are excluded from the repast, but enjoy the privilege of waylaying and pelting with jungle-fruit their elders as they return from the feast. Upon the third day the lineal head of the tribe goes out and sows his seed, after which all the rest may do so.¹

The people of Bali, an island to the east of Java, have periodical expulsions of devils upon a great scale. Generally the time chosen for the expulsion is the day of the "dark moon" in the ninth month. When the demons have been long unmolested the country is said to be "warm," and the priest issues orders to expel them by force, lest the whole of Bali should be rendered uninhabitable. On the day appointed the people of the village or district assemble at the principal temple. Here at a cross-road offerings are set out for the devils. After prayers have been recited by the priests, the blast of a horn summons the devils to partake of the meal which has been prepared for them. At the same time a number of men step forward and light their torches at the holy lamp which burns before the chief priest. Immediately afterwards, followed by the bystanders, they spread in all directions and march through the streets and lanes crying, "Depart! go away!" Wherever they pass, the people who have stayed at home hasten, by a deafening knocking on doors, beams, rice-blocks, and so on, to take their share in the expulsion of devils. Thus chased from the houses, the fiends flee to the banquet which has been set out for them; but here the priest receives them with curses which finally drive them from the district. When the last devil has taken his departure, the uproar is succeeded by a dead silence, which lasts during the next day also. The

¹ W. Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India*, p. 357 sq. Possibly this case belongs more strictly to the class of mediate expulsions, the devils being driven out upon the car. Perhaps, however, the car with its contents is regarded rather as a bribe to induce

them to go than as a vehicle in which they are actually carted away. Anyhow it is convenient to take this case along with those other expulsions of demons which are the accompaniment of an agricultural festival.

devils, it is thought, are anxious to return to their old homes, and in order to make them think that Bali is not Bali but some desert island, no one may stir from his own abode for twenty-four hours. Even ordinary household work, including cooking, is discontinued. Only the watchmen may show themselves in the streets. Wreaths of thorns and leaves are hung at all the entrances to warn strangers from entering. Not till the third day is this state of siege raised, and even then it is forbidden to work at the rice-fields or to buy and sell in the market. Most people still stay at home, striving to while away the time with cards and dice.¹

The Shans of Southern China annually expel the fire-spirit. The ceremony was witnessed by the English Mission under Colonel Sladen on the thirteenth of August 1868. Bullocks and cows were slaughtered in the market-place; the meat was all sold, part of it was cooked and eaten, while the rest was fired out of guns at sundown. The pieces of flesh which fell on the land were supposed to become mosquitoes, those which fell in the water were believed to turn into leeches. In the evening the chief's retainers beat gongs and blew trumpets; and when darkness had set in torches were lit, and a party, preceded by the musicians, searched the central court for the fire-spirit, who is supposed to lurk about at this season with evil intent. They then ransacked all the rooms and the gardens, throwing the light of the torches into every nook and corner where the evil spirit might find a hiding-place.² In some parts of Fiji an annual ceremony took place which has much the aspect of an expulsion of devils. The time of its celebration was determined by the appearance of a certain fish or sea-slug (*balolo*) which swarms out in dense shoals from the coral reefs on a single day of the

¹ R. van Eck, "Schetsen van het eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, N.S., viii. (1879), pp. 58-60. Van Eck's account is reprinted in J. Jacobs's *Eenigen tijd onder de Baliërs* (Batavia, 1883), p. 190 sqq. According to another writer, each village may choose its own day for expelling the devils, but the ceremony must always be performed at the new moon. A necessary preliminary is to

mark exactly the boundaries of the village territory, and this is done by stretching the leaves of a certain palm across the roads at the boundaries. See F. A. Liefcrinck, "Bijdrage tot de kennis van het eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890), p. 246 sq.

² J. Anderson, *Mandalay to Momien* (London, 1876), p. 308.

year, usually in the last quarter of the moon in November. The appearance of the sea-slugs was the signal for a general feast at those places where they were taken. An influential man ascended the tree and prayed to the spirit of the sky for good crops, fair winds, and so on. Thereupon a tremendous clatter, with drumming and shouting, was raised by all the people in their houses for about half an hour. This was followed by a dead quiet for four days, during which the people feasted on the sea-slug. All this time no work of any kind might be done, not even a leaf plucked nor the offal removed from the houses. If a noise was made in any house, as by a child crying, a forfeit was at once exacted by the chief. At daylight on the expiry of the fourth night the whole town was in an uproar; men and boys scampered about, knocking with clubs and sticks at the doors of the houses and crying "Sinariba." This concluded the ceremony.¹

On the last night of the year there is observed in most Japanese houses a ceremony called "the exorcism of the evil spirit." It is performed by the head of the family. Clad in his finest robes, with a sword, if he has the right of bearing one, at his waist, he goes through all the rooms at the hour of midnight, carrying in his left hand a box of roasted beans on a lacquered stand. From time to time he dips his right hand into the box and scatters a handful of beans on a mat, pronouncing a cabalistic form of words of which the meaning is, "Go forth, demons! Enter riches!"² According to another account, the ceremony takes place on the night before the beginning of spring, and the roasted beans are flung against the walls as well as on the floors of the houses.³ On the third day of the tenth month in every year the Hak-Ka, a native race in the province of Canton, sweep their houses and turn the accumulated filth out of doors, together with three sticks of incense and some mock money made of

¹ *U.S. Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, by H. Hale, p. 67 sq.; Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, iii. 90 sq. According to the latter, the sea-slug was eaten by the men alone, who lived during the four days in the temple,

while the women and boys remained shut up in their houses.

² A. Humbert, *Le Japon illustré* (Paris, 1870), ii. 326.

³ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, v. 367.

paper. At the same time they call out, "Let the devil of poverty depart! Let the devil of poverty depart!" By performing this ceremony they hope to preserve their homes from penury.¹ Among some of the Hindoos of the Punjab on the morning after Diwali or the festival of lamps, at which the souls of ancestors are believed to visit the house, the oldest woman of the family takes a corn-sieve or winnowing basket and a broom, to both of which magical virtues are ascribed, and beats them in every corner of the house, exclaiming, "God abide and poverty depart!" The sieve is then carried out of the village, generally to the east or north, and being thrown away is supposed to bear away with it the poverty and distress of the household. Or the woman flings all the sweepings and rubbish out of doors, saying, "Let all dirt and wretchedness depart from here, and all good fortune come in."² The Persians used annually to expel the demons or goblins (*Dives*) from their houses in the month of December. For this purpose the Magi wrote certain words with saffron on a piece of parchment or paper and then held the writing over a fire into which they threw cotton, garlic, grapes, wild rue, and the horn of an animal that had been killed on the sixteenth of September. The spell thus prepared was nailed or glued to the inside of the door, and the door was painted red. Next the priest took some sand and spread it out with a knife, while he muttered certain prayers. After that he strewed the sand on the floor, and the enchantment was complete. The demons now immediately vanished, or at least were deprived of all their malignant power.³

In Tonquin a *theekydaw* or general expulsion of malevolent spirits commonly took place once a year, especially if there was a great mortality amongst men or cattle, "the cause of which they attribute to the malicious spirits of such men as have been put to death for treason, rebellion, and conspiring the death of the king, general, or princes, and that in revenge of the punishment they have suffered, they are bent to

¹ Eitel, "Les Hak-ka," *L'Anthropologie*, iv. (1893), p. 175 sq.

² *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 146 sq., § 792; D. C. J. Ibbetson, *Outlines of Panjab Ethnography*, p. 119; W. Crooke, *Introduction to the*

Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India, p. 307.

³ John Richardson, *Dictionary of Persian, Arabic, and English*, New Edition (London, 1829), p. liii.

destroy everything and commit horrible violence. To prevent which their superstition has suggested to them the institution of this theekydaw as a proper means to drive the devil away, and purge the country of evil spirits." The day appointed for the ceremony was generally the twenty-fifth of February, one month after the beginning of the new year, which fell on the twenty-fifth of January. The intermediate month was a season of feasting, merry-making of all kinds, and general licence. During the whole month the great seal was kept shut up in a box, face downwards, and the law was, as it were, laid asleep. All courts of justice were closed; debtors could not be seized; small crimes, such as petty larceny, fighting, and assault, escaped with impunity; only treason and murder were taken account of and the malefactors detained till the great seal should come into operation again. At the close of the saturnalia the wicked spirits were driven away. Great masses of troops and artillery having been drawn up with flying colours and all the pomp of war, "the general beginneth then to offer meat offerings to the criminal devils and malevolent spirits (for it is usual and customary likewise amongst them to feast the condemned before their execution), inviting them to eat and drink, when presently he accuses them in a strange language, by characters and figures, etc., of many offences and crimes committed by them, as to their having disquieted the land, killed his elephants and horses, etc., for all which they justly deserved to be chastised and banished the country. Whereupon three great guns are fired as the last signal; upon which all the artillery and muskets are discharged, that, by their most terrible noise the devils may be driven away; and they are so blind as to believe for certain, that they really and effectually put them to flight."¹

¹ Baron, "Description of the Kingdom of Tonqueen," Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 673, 695 sq.; cp. Richard, "History of Tonquin," *ibid.* p. 746. The account of the ceremony by Tavernier (whom Baron criticises very unfavourably) is somewhat different. According to him, the expulsion of wicked souls at the New Year is combined with sacrifice to the honoured dead. "At the beginning of every

year they have a great solemnity in honour of the dead, who were in their lives renowned for their noble actions and valour, reckoning rebels among them. They set up several altars, some for sacrifices, others for the names of the persons they design to honour; and the king, princes, and mandarins are present at them, and make three profound reverences to the altars when the sacrifices are finished;

In Cambodia the expulsion of evil spirits took place in March. Bits of broken statues and stones, considered as the abode of the demons, were collected and brought to the capital. Here as many elephants were collected as could be got together. On the evening of the full moon volleys of musketry were fired and the elephants charged furiously to put the devils to flight.¹ In Siam the banishment of demons is annually carried into effect on the last day of the old year. A signal gun is fired from the palace; it is answered from the next station, and so on from station to station, till the firing has reached the outer gate of the city. Thus the demons are driven out step by step. As soon as this is done a consecrated rope is fastened round the circuit of the city walls to prevent the banished demons from returning. The rope is made of tough couch-grass and is painted in alternate stripes of red, yellow, and blue.² According to a more recent account, the Siamese ceremony takes place at the New Year holidays, which are three in number, beginning with the first of April. For the feasting which accompanies these holidays a special kind of cake is made, "which is as much in demand as our own Shrove-Tuesday pancakes or our Good-Friday hot cross-buns. The temples are thronged with women and children making offerings to Buddha and his priests. The people inaugurate their New Year with numerous charitable and religious deeds. The rich entertain the monks, who recite appropriate prayers and chants. Every departed soul returns to the bosom of his family during these three days, freed from any fetters that may have bound him in the regions of indefin-

but the king shoots five times against the altars where the rebel names are; then the great guns are let off, and the soldiers give volleys of small shot, to put the souls to flight. The altars and papers made use of at the sacrifices are burnt, and the bonzes and sages go to eat the meat made use of at the sacrifice" (Tavernier, in John Harris's *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, vol. i. (London, 1744), p. 823).

¹ Aymonier, *Notice sur le Cambodge*, p. 62.

² Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen*

Asien, iii. 237, 298, 314, 529 sq.; Pallegoix, *Royaume Thai ou Siam*, i. 252. Bastian (p. 314); with whom Pallegoix seems to agree, distinctly states that the expulsion takes place on the last day of the year. Yet both state that it occurs in the fourth month of the year. According to Pallegoix (i. 253) the Siamese year is composed of twelve lunar months, and the first month usually begins in December. Hence the expulsion of devils would commonly take place in March, as in Cambodia.

able locality. On the third day the religious observances terminate, and the remaining hours are devoted to 'the world, the flesh, and the devil.' Gambling is not confined to the licensed houses, but may be indulged in anywhere. Games of chance hold powerful sway in every house as long as the licence to participate in them lasts. Priests in small companies occupy posts at regular intervals round the city wall, and spend their time in chanting away the evil spirits. On the evening of the second day, the ghostly visitors from the lower realms lose the luxury of being exorcised with psalms. Every person who has a gun may fire it as often as he pleases, and the noise thus made is undoubtedly fearful enough in its intensity to cause any wandering traveller from the far-off fiery land to retrace his steps with speed. The bang and rattle of pistols, muskets, shot-guns, and rifles cease not till the break of day, by which time the city is effectually cleared of all its infernal visitors."¹ From this account we learn that among the spirits thus banished are the souls of the dead, who revisit their living friends once a year.

A similar belief and a similar custom prevail in Japan. There, too, the souls of the departed return to their old homes once a year, and a festival called the Feast of Lanterns is made to welcome them. They come at evening on the thirteenth day of the seventh month of the old calendar, which falls towards the end of August. It is needful to light them on their way. Accordingly bamboos with pretty coloured lanterns attached to them are fastened on the tombs, and being thickly set they make an illumination on the hills, where the burying-grounds are generally situated. Lamps of many hues or rows of tapers are also lit and set out in front of the houses and in the gardens, and small fires are kindled in the streets, so that the whole city is in a blaze of light. After the sun has set, a great multitude issues from the town, for every family goes forth to meet its returning dead. When they come to the spot where they believe the souls to be, they welcome the unseen visitors and invite them to rest after their journey, and to partake of refreshments, which they offer to them. Having allowed the souls time enough to satisfy their hunger and

¹ E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 135 sq.

recover from their fatigue, they escort them by torchlight, chatting gaily with them, into the city and to the houses where they lived and died. These are also illuminated with brilliant lanterns; a banquet is spread on the tables; and the places of the dead, who are supposed to absorb the ethereal essence of the food, are laid for them as if they were alive. After the repast the living go from house to house to visit the souls of their dead friends and neighbours; and thus they spend the night running about the town. On the evening of the third day of the festival, which is the fifteenth day of the month, the time has come for the souls to return to their own place. Fires again blaze in the streets to light them on the road; the people again escort them ceremoniously to the spot where they met them two days before; and in some places they send the lanterns floating away on rivers or the sea in miniature boats, which are laden with provisions for the spirits on their way to their long home. But there is still a fear that some poor souls may have lagged behind, or even concealed themselves in a nook or corner, loth to part from the scenes of their former life and from those they love. Accordingly steps are taken to hunt out these laggards and send them packing after their fellow-ghosts. With this intention the people throw stones on the roofs of their houses in great profusion; and going through every room armed with sticks they deal swashing blows all about them in the empty air to chase away the lingering souls. This they do, we are told, out of a regard for their own comfort quite as much as from the affection they bear to the dead; for they fear to be disturbed by unseasonable apparitions if they suffered the airy visitors to remain in the house.¹

Thus in spite of the kindly welcome given to the souls, the fear which they inspire comes out plainly in the pains taken to ensure their departure; and this fear justifies us in including such forced departures among the ceremonies for the expulsion of evils with which we are here concerned.

¹ Charlevoix, *Histoire et description generale du Japon* (Paris, 1736), i. 128 sq.; C. P. Thunberg, *Voyages au Japon* (Paris, 1796), iv. 18-20; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, v.

364; Beaufort, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886), p. 102; A. Morgan, in *Journal of American Folk-lore*, x. (1897), p. 244 sq.

It may be remembered that the annual banishment of ghosts has been practised by savages so low in the scale of humanity as the Australian aborigines.¹ At the other end of the scale it was observed in classical antiquity by the civilised Greeks and Romans. The Athenians believed that at the festival of the Anthesteria the souls of the dead came back from the nether world and went about the city. Accordingly ropes were fastened round the temples to keep out the wandering ghosts; and with a like intention the people smeared the doors of their houses with pitch, apparently thinking that any rash spirits who might attempt to enter would stick fast in the pitch and be glued, like so many flies, to the door. But at the end of the festival the souls were bidden to depart in these words: "Out of the door with you, souls. The Anthesteria is over."² Yet for the entertainment of the unseen guests during their short stay earthenware pots full of boiled food appear to have been everywhere prepared throughout the city; but probably

¹ Above, p. 70.

² Hesychius, *s.v.* μαρὰ ἡμέραι· τοῦ Ἀνθεστηριῶνος μηνός, ἐν αἷς τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν κατοικημένων ἀνέειναι ἔδδκουν. Photius, *Lexicon*, *s.v.* Θύραζε Κῆρες· οὐκέτ' Ἀνθεστήρια . . . τινὲς δὲ οὕτως τὴν παροιμίαν φασί· θύραζε Κῆρες οὐκέτ' Ἀνθεστήρια· ὡς κατὰ τὴν πόλιν τοῖς Ἀνθεστηρίοις τῶν ψυχῶν περιερχομένων. *Id.*, *s.v.* μαρὰ ἡμέραι· ἐν τοῖς Χουσίς· Ἀνθεστηριῶνος μηνός, ἐν ᾧ δοκοῦσιν αἱ ψυχαὶ τῶν τελευτησάντων ἀνέειναι, ῥάμνῳ ἔωθεν ἱμασύντο καὶ πύττη τὰς θύρας ἔχρουν. Pollux, viii. 141: περισχάνισαι τὰ ἱερὰ εἰλεγὼν ἐν ταῖς ἀποφράσι καὶ τὸ παραφράσαι. As to the closing of the temples, see further Athenaeus, x. 49, p. 447 C. At childbirth also the Greeks smeared pitch on their houses to keep out the demons (εἰς ἀπέλασιν τῶν δαιμόνων) who attack women at such times (Photius, *Lexicon*, *s.v.* ῥάμνος). To this day the Bulgarians try to keep wandering ghosts from their houses by painting crosses with tar on the outside of their doors, while on the inside they hang a tangled skein composed of countless broken threads. The ghost cannot enter until he has counted all the threads, and before he has done

the sum the cock crows and the poor soul must return to the grave. See A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipsic, 1898), p. 454. As to the Anthesteria, see E. Rohde, *Psyche*, p. 216 sqq., who rightly adopts Hesychius's second explanation of Κῆρες. The reasons given by August Mommsen for rejecting that explanation betray an imperfect acquaintance with popular superstition (*Feste der Stadt Athen im Altertum*, Leipsic, 1898, p. 386, note 1). The Thompson River Indians of British Columbia used to bar their houses against ghosts by means not unlike those adopted by the Athenians at the Anthesteria. When a death had happened, they hung a string of deer-hoofs across the inside of the house, and an old woman often pulled at the string to make the hoofs rattle. This kept the ghost out. They also placed branches of juniper at the door or burned them in the fire for the same purpose. See James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 332. Compare the old Prussian custom (vol. i. p. 351).

these were placed in the street outside the houses, in order to give the ghosts no excuse for entering and disturbing the inmates. No priest would eat of the food thus offered to the dead,¹ but prowling beggars probably had no such scruples. Similarly when the Sea Dyaks of Sarawak celebrate their great Festival of Departed Spirits at intervals which vary from one to three or four years, food is prepared for the dead and they are summoned from their far-off home to partake of it; but it is put outside at the entrance of the house. And before the general arrival of the souls, while the people are busy brewing the drink for the feast, each family takes care to hang an earthenware pot full of the liquor outside of the single room which it occupies in the large common house, lest some thirsty soul should arrive prematurely from the other world, and, forcing his way into the domestic circle, should not merely slake his thirst but carry off one of the living.² During three days in May the Romans held a festival in honour of the ghosts. The temples were shut, doubtless to keep out the ghostly swarms; but, as in Japan, every house seems to have been thrown open to receive the spirits of its own departed. When the reception was over, each head of a family arose at dead of night, washed his hands, and having made with fingers and thumb certain magic signs to ward off ghosts, he proceeded to throw black beans over his shoulder without looking behind him. As he did so, he said nine times, "With these beans I redeem me and mine"; and the ghosts, following unseen at his heels, picked up the beans and left him and his alone. Then he dipped his hands again in water, clashed bronze vessels together to make a din, and begged the ghosts to depart from his house, saying nine times, "Go forth, paternal shades!" After that he looked behind him, and the ceremony was over—the ghosts had taken their leave for another year.³

¹ Schol. on Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 218.

² J. Perham, "Sea Dyak religion," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 14, December 1884, pp. 296-298.

³ Ovid, *Fasti*, v. 419-486; Varro,

quoted by Nonius Marcellus, p. 135 (p. 142 ed. Quicherat), s.v. "Lemures"; Festus, p. 87 ed. Müller, s.v. "Fabam." Ovid, who is our chief authority for the ceremony, speaks as if the festival lasted only one day (the ninth of May). But we know from the inscribed

Annual expulsions of demons, witches, or evil influences are not unknown in Europe at the present day. Amongst the heathen Wotyaks, a Finnish people of Eastern Russia, all the young girls of the village assemble on the last day of the year or on New Year's Day armed with sticks, the ends of which are split in nine places. With these they beat every corner of the house and yard, saying, "We are driving Satan out of the village." Afterwards the sticks are thrown into the river below the village, and as they float down stream Satan goes with them to the next village, from which he must be driven out in turn. In some villages the expulsion is managed otherwise. The unmarried men receive from every house in the village groats, flesh, and brandy. These they take to the fields, light a fire under a fir-tree, boil the groats, and eat of the food they have brought with them, after pronouncing the words, "Go away into the wilderness, come not into the house." Then they return to the village and enter every house where there are young women. They take hold of the young women and throw them into the snow, saying, "May the spirits of disease leave you." The remains of the groats and the other food are then distributed among all the houses in proportion to the amount that each contributed, and each family consumes its share. According to a Wotyak of the Malmыз district the young men throw into the snow whomever they find in the houses, and this is called "driving out Satan"; moreover some of the boiled groats are cast into the fire with the words, "O god, afflict us not with sickness and pestilence, give us not up as a prey to the spirits of the wood." But the most antique form of the ceremony is that observed by the Wotyaks of the Kasan Government. First of all a sacrifice is offered to the Devil at noon. Then all the men assemble on horseback in the centre of the village, and decide with which house they shall begin. When this question, which often gives rise to hot disputes, is settled, they tether their horses to the paling, and arm themselves with whips, clubs of lime-wood, and bundles of lighted twigs. The lighted twigs are believed to have the greatest terrors

calendars that it lasted three days. See *W. Warde Fowler, The Roman Festivals of the period of the Republic*, p. 106 sqq.

for Satan. Thus armed, they proceed with frightful cries to beat every corner of the house and yard, then shut the door, and spit at the ejected fiend. So they go from house to house, till the Devil has been driven from every one. Then they mount their horses and ride out of the village, yelling wildly and brandishing their clubs in every direction. Outside of the village they fling away the clubs and spit once more at the Devil.¹ The Cheremiss, another Finnish people of Eastern Russia, chase Satan from their dwellings by beating the walls with cudgels of lime-wood. When he has fled to the wood, they pelt the trees with some of the cheese-cakes and eggs which furnished the feast.²

In Albania on Easter Eve the young people light torches of resinous wood and march in procession, swinging them, through the village. At last they throw the torches into the river, crying, "Ha, Kore! we throw you into the river, like these torches, that you may never return."³ In some villages of Calabria the month of March is inaugurated with the expulsion of the witches. It takes place at night to the sound of the church bells, the people running about the streets and crying, "March is come." They say that the witches roam about in March, and the ceremony is repeated every Friday evening during the month.⁴ In the Tyrol the expulsion of witches takes place on the famous Walpurgis Night, which is the night of the first of May. On a Thursday at midnight bundles are made up of resinous splinters, black and red spotted hemlock, caper-spurge, rosemary, and twigs of the sloe. These are kept and burned on May Day by men who must first have received plenary absolution from the Church. On the last three days of April all the houses are cleansed and fumigated with juniper berries and rue. On May Day, when the evening bell has rung and the twilight is falling, the ceremony of "burning out the witches," as it is called, begins. Men and boys make a racket with whips, bells, pots, and pans; the women

¹ Max Buch, *Die Wotjaken*, p. 153 sq.

² Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte*, ii. 94.

³ J. G. von Hahn, *Albanesische*

Studien, i. 160. Cp. above, vol. ii. p. 108.

⁴ Vincenzo Dorsa, *La tradizione greco-latina negli usi e nelle credenze popolari della Calabria Citeriore*, p. 42 sq.

carry censers ; the dogs are unchained and run barking and yelping about. As soon as the church-bells begin to ring, the bundles of twigs, fastened on poles, are set on fire and the incense is ignited. Then all the house-bells and dinner-bells are rung, pots and pans are clashed, dogs bark, every one must make a noise. And amid this hubbub all scream at the pitch of their voices,

"Witch flee, flee from here,
Or it will go ill with thee."

Then they run seven times round the houses, the yards, and the village. So the witches are smoked out of their lurking-places and driven away.¹ The custom of expelling the witches on Walpurgis Night is still, or used some thirty or forty years ago to be, observed in many parts of Bavaria and among the Germans of Bohemia. Thus in the Böhmerwald Mountains, which divide Bavaria from Bohemia, all the young fellows of the village assemble after sunset on some height, especially at a cross-road, and crack whips for a while in unison with all their strength. This drives away the witches ; for so far as the sound of the whips is heard, these maleficent beings can do no harm. The peasants believe firmly in the efficacy of this remedy. A yokel will tell his sons to be sure to crack their whips loudly and hit the witches hard ; and to give more sting to every blow the whip-lashes are knotted. On returning to the village the lads often sing songs and collect contributions of eggs, lard,

¹ Von Alpenburg, *Mythen und Sagen Tirols*, p. 260 sq. Compare J. E. Waldfreund, "Volksgebräuche und Aberglauben," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. (1855), p. 339. A Westphalian form of the expulsion of evil is the driving out the *Süntevögel*, *Sunnenvögel*, or *Sommervögel*, i.e. the butterfly. On St. Peter's Day, 22nd February, children go from house to house knocking on them with hammers and singing doggerel rhymes in which they bid the *Sommervögel* to depart. Presents are given to them at every house. Or the people of the house themselves go through all the rooms, knocking on all

the doors, to drive away the *Sunnenvögel*. If this ceremony is omitted, it is thought that various misfortunes will be the consequence. The house will swarm with rats, mice, and other vermin, the cattle will be sick, the butterflies will multiply at the milk-bowls, etc. See Woeste, *Volksüberlieferungen in der Grafschaft Mark*, p. 24 ; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 87 ; A. Kuhn, *Westfälische Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen*, ii. pp. 119-121, §§ 366-374 ; Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste, Volksbräuche*, etc., p. 21 sq. ; Jahn, *Die deutschen Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht*, pp. 94-96.

bread, and butter. In some places, while the young fellows are cracking their whips the herdsmen wind their horns, whose long-drawn notes, heard far-off in the silence of night, are very effectual for banning the witches. In other places, again, the youth blow upon so-called shawms made of peeled willow-wood in front of every house, especially in front of such houses as are suspected of harbouring a witch.¹ At Brunnen, in Switzerland, the boys go about in procession on Twelfth Night, carrying torches and lanterns, and making a great noise with horns, cow-bells, whips, and so forth. This is said to frighten away the two female spirits of the wood, Strudeli and Strätteli.² In Labruguière, also, a canton of Southern France, the evil spirits are expelled at the same season. The canton lies in the picturesque and little known region of the Black Mountains, which form a sort of link between the Pyrenees and the Cevennes, and have preserved in their remote recesses certain types of life which have long disappeared elsewhere. On the eve of Twelfth Day the inhabitants rush through the streets jangling bells, clattering kettles, and doing everything to make a discordant noise. Then by the light of torches and blazing faggots they set up a prodigious hue and cry, an ear-splitting uproar, hoping thereby to chase all the wandering ghosts and devils from the town.³

§ 15. *Scapegoats*

Thus far we have dealt with that class of the general expulsion of evils which I have called direct or immediate. In this class the evils are invisible, at least to common eyes, and the mode of deliverance consists for the most part in beating the empty air and raising such a hubbub as may scare the mischievous spirits and put them to flight. It remains to illustrate the second class of expulsions, in which the evil influences are embodied in a visible form or are at least supposed to be loaded upon a material medium,

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 272, iii. 302 sq., 934; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Das festliche Jahr*, p. 137.

² Usener, "Italische Mythen,"

Rheinisches Museum, N.F., xxx. (1875), p. 198.

³ A. de Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes, et Traditions des Provinces de France*, pp. 81, 85.

which acts as a vehicle to draw them off from the people, village, or town.

The Pomos of California celebrate an expulsion of devils every seven years, at which the devils are represented by disguised men. "Twenty or thirty men array themselves in harlequin rig and barbaric paint, and put vessels of pitch on their heads; then they secretly go out into the surrounding mountains. These are to personify the devils. A herald goes up to the top of the assembly-house, and makes a speech to the multitude. At a signal agreed upon in the evening the masqueraders come in from the mountains, with the vessels of pitch flaming on their heads, and with all the frightful accessories of noise, motion, and costume which the savage mind can devise in representation of demons. The terrified women and children flee for life, the men huddle them inside a circle, and, on the principle of fighting the devil with fire, they swing blazing firebrands in the air, yell, whoop, and make frantic dashes at the marauding and bloodthirsty devils, so creating a terrific spectacle, and striking great fear into the hearts of the assembled hundreds of women, who are screaming and fainting and clinging to their valorous protectors. Finally the devils succeed in getting into the assembly-house, and the bravest of the men enter and hold a parley with them. As a conclusion of the whole farce, the men summon courage, the devils are expelled from the assembly-house, and with a prodigious row and racket of sham fighting are chased away into the mountains."¹ In spring, as soon as the willow-leaves were full grown on the banks of the river, the Mandan Indians celebrated their great annual festival, one of the features of which was the expulsion of the devil. A man, painted black to represent the devil, entered the village from the prairie, chased and frightened the women, and acted the part of a buffalo bull in the buffalo dance, the object of which was to ensure a plentiful supply of buffaloes during the ensuing year. Finally he was chased from the village, the women pursuing him with hisses and gibes, beating him with sticks, and pelting him with dirt.² Some

¹ S. Powers, *Tribes of California*, Indians, i. 166 sqq.; id., *O-kee-pa, a Religious Ceremony, and other Customs of the Mandans*, p. 159.

² G. Catlin, *North American* of the Mandans.

of the native tribes of Central Queensland believe in a noxious being called Molonga, who prowls unseen and would kill men and violate women if certain ceremonies were not performed. These ceremonies last for five nights and consist of dances, in which only men, fantastically painted and adorned, take part. On the fifth night Molonga himself, personified by a man tricked out with red ochre and feathers and carrying a long feather-tipped spear, rushes forth from the darkness at the spectators and makes as if he would run them through. Great is the excitement, loud are the shrieks and shouts, but after another feigned attack the demon vanishes in the gloom.¹ On the last night of the year the palace of the Kings of Cambodia is purged of devils. Men painted as fiends are chased by elephants about the palace courts. When they have been expelled, a consecrated thread of cotton is stretched round the palace to keep them out.² The Kasyas, a hill tribe of Assam, annually expel the demons. The ceremony takes place in a fixed month of the year, and part of it consists in a struggle between two bands of men who stand on opposite sides of a stream, each side tugging at the end of a rope which is stretched across the water. In this contest, which resembles the game of "French and English" or "the Tug of War," the men on one side probably represent the demons.³ Some-

¹ W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 120-125.

² Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 172. Cp. above, p. 85.

³ A. Bastian, in *Verhandl. d. Berlin. Gesellsch. f. Anthropol.* 1881, p. 151; cp. *id.*, *Völkerstämme am Brahmaputra*, p. 6 sq. Amongst the Chukmas of South-East India the body of a priest is conveyed to the place of cremation on a car; ropes are attached to the car, the people divide themselves into two equal bodies and pull at the ropes in opposite directions. "One side represents the good spirits; the other, the powers of evil. The contest is so arranged that the former are victorious. Sometimes, however, the young men representing the demons are inclined to pull too vigorously, but a

stick generally quells this unseemly ardour in the cause of evil" (Lewin, *Wild Tribes of South-Eastern India*, p. 185). The contest is like that between the angels and devils depicted in the frescoes of the Campo Santo at Pisa. In Burma a similar contest takes place at the funeral of a holy man; but there the original meaning of the ceremony appears to be forgotten. See Sangermano, *Description of the Burmese Empire* (ed. 1885), p. 98; Forbes, *British Burma*, p. 216 sq.; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 334 sq., 342. Sometimes ceremonies of this sort are instituted for a different purpose. Thus in Burma the contest is used as a rain-charm; "a rain party and a drought party tug against each other, the rain party being allowed the victory" (*Folk-lore Journal*, i. (1883) p. 214). In the Timor-laut Islands

times in an Esthonian village a rumour will get about that the Evil One himself has been seen in the place. Instantly the whole village is in an uproar, and the entire population, armed with sticks, flails, and scythes, turns out to give him chase. They generally expel him in the shape of a wolf or

when the people want a rainy wind from the west, the population of the village, men, women, and children, divide into two parties and pull against each other at the ends of a long bamboo. But the party at the eastern end must pull the harder, in order to draw the desired wind out of the west (Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 282). According to another writer, while the contest only takes place in these islands when rain is wanted, it is closely connected with that ceremony for the fertilisation of the earth which has been already described (vol. ii. p. 205 sq.). The men and women appear to take opposite sides, and their motions are significant of the union of the sexes. See Van Hoevell, "Leti-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890), p. 207. In Corea about the fifteenth day of the first month villages engage in the same kind of contest with each other, and it is thought that the village which wins will have a good harvest. Both men and women pull at the rope; the women load their skirts with stones to increase the strength of their pull. See A. C. Haddon, *The Study of Man*, citing Stewart Culin, *Korean Games*, p. 35. The Roocooyen Indians of French Guiana play at the "Tug of War" as a sort of interlude during the ceremonial tortures of the youth. See H. Coudreau, *Chez nos Indiens: quatre années dans la Guyane Française* (Paris, 1895), p. 234. The Cingalese perform it as a ceremony in honour of the goddess Patiné (Forbes, *Eleven Years in Ceylon*, London, 1840, i. 358). We have seen that the Esquimaux practise it to procure good weather in winter (vol. ii. p. 103 sq.). In November, when the fishing-season is over, the Kamtchatkans used to divide into two parties, one of which tried to pull a

birch-tree by a strap through the smoke-hole into their subterranean winter dwelling, while the other party outside, pulling at the other end of the tree, endeavoured to hinder them. If the party in the house succeeded, they raised shouts of joy and set up a grass effigy of a wolf, which they preserved carefully throughout the year, believing that it espoused their young women and prevented them from giving birth to twins. See Steller, *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, p. 327. These instances make it probable that wherever the game is played only at certain definite seasons it was in its origin a magical ceremony intended to work some good to the community. Thus in the North-West Provinces of India it is played on the 14th of the light half of the month Kuár (Sir H. M. Elliot, *Memoirs on the history, etc., of the races of the North-Western Provinces of India*, i. 235); and at Ludlow in Shropshire, Presteign in Radnorshire, and Pontefract in Yorkshire it used to be played on Shrove Tuesday. See Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 92; Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-lore*, pp. 319-321. The custom has been discussed by Prof. A. C. Haddon, *Study of Man*, pp. 270-276. His view that the custom was intended to secure a good harvest appears not to cover all the cases. In Normandy at the Carnival desperate contests used to take place between neighbouring villages for the possession of a large leathern ball stuffed with bran and called the *soule*. It was thought that the victorious village would have a better crop of apples that year. See J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 153 sqq. Compare Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 86 sqq.; and as to the game of *soule*, see Guerry, in *Mémoires des Antiquaires de France*, viii. (1829), pp. 459-61.

a cat, occasionally they brag that they have beaten the devil to death.¹ At Carmona, in Andalusia, on one day of the year, boys are stripped naked and smeared with glue in which feathers are stuck. Thus disguised, they run from house to house, the people trying to avoid them and to bar their houses against them.² The ceremony is probably a relic of an annual expulsion of devils.

Often, however, the expelled demons are not represented at all, but are understood to be present invisibly in the material and visible vehicle which conveys them away. Here, again, it will be convenient to distinguish between occasional and periodical expulsions. We begin with the former.

The vehicle which conveys away the demons may be of various kinds. A common one is a little ship or boat. Thus, in the southern district of the island of Ceram, when a whole village suffers from sickness, a small ship is made and filled with rice, tobacco, eggs, and so forth, which have been contributed by all the people. A little sail is hoisted on the ship. When all is ready, a man calls out in a very loud voice, "O all ye sicknesses, ye small-poxes, agues, measles, etc., who have visited us so long and wasted us so sorely, but who now cease to plague us, we have made ready this ship for you and we have furnished you with provender sufficient for the voyage. Ye shall have no lack of food nor of betel-leaves nor of areca nuts nor of tobacco. Depart, and sail away from us directly; never come near us again; but go to a land which is far from here. Let all the tides and winds waft you speedily thither, and so convey you thither that for the time to come we may live sound and well, and that we may never see the sun rise on you again." Then ten or twelve men carry the vessel to the shore, and let it drift away with the land-breeze, feeling convinced that they are free from sickness for ever, or at least till the next time. If sickness attacks them again, they are sure it is not the same sickness, but a different one, which in due time they dismiss in the same manner. When the demon-laden bark is lost to sight, the bearers return to the

¹ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 278.

² *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 174.

village, whereupon a man cries out, "The sicknesses are now gone, vanished, expelled, and sailed away." At this all the people come running out of their houses, passing the word from one to the other with great joy, beating on gongs and on tinkling instruments.¹

Similar ceremonies are commonly resorted to in other East Indian islands. Thus in Timor-laut, to mislead the demons who are causing sickness, a small proa, containing the image of a man and provisioned for a long voyage, is allowed to drift away with wind and tide. As it is being launched, the people cry, "O sickness, go from here; turn back; what do you here in this poor land?" Three days after this ceremony a pig is killed, and part of the flesh is offered to Dudilaa, who lives in the sun. One of the oldest men says, "Old sir, I beseech you, make well the grandchildren, children, women, and men, that we may be able to eat pork and rice and to drink palm-wine. I will keep my promise. Eat your share, and make all the people in the village well." If the proa is stranded at any inhabited spot, the sickness will break out there. Hence a stranded proa excites much alarm amongst the coast population, and they immediately burn it, because demons fly from fire.² In the island of Buro the proa which carries away the demons of disease is about twenty feet long, rigged out with sails, oars, anchor, and so on, and well stocked with provisions. For a day and a night the people beat gongs and drums, and rush about to frighten the demons. Next morning ten stalwart young men strike the people with branches, which have been previously dipped in an earthen pot of water. As soon as they have done so, they run down to the beach, put the branches on board the proa, launch another boat in great haste, and tow the disease-burdened bark far out to sea. There they cast it off, and one of them calls out, "Grandfather Smallpox, go away—go willingly away—go visit another land; we have made you food ready for the voyage we have now nothing more to give." When they have

¹ François Valentyn, *Oud-en nieuw Ost-Indien*, iii. 14. Backer (*L'Archipel Indien*, p. 377 sq.) copies from Valentyn.

² Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 304 sq.

landed, all the people bathe together in the sea.¹ In this ceremony the reason for striking the people with the branches is clearly to rid them of the disease-demons, which are then supposed to be transferred to the branches. Hence the haste with which the branches are deposited in the proa and towed away to sea. So in the inland districts of Ceram, when small-pox or other sickness is raging, the priest strikes all the houses with consecrated branches, which are then thrown into the river, to be carried down to the sea;² exactly as amongst the Wotyaks of Russia the sticks which have been used for expelling the devils from the village are thrown into the river, that the current may sweep the baleful burden away. In Amboyna, for a similar purpose, the whole body of the patient is rubbed with a live white cock, which is then placed on a little proa and committed to the waves;³ and in the Babar archipelago the bark which is to carry away to sea the sickness of a whole village contains a bowl of ashes taken from every kitchen in the village, and another bowl into which all the sick people have spat.⁴ The plan of putting puppets in the boat to represent sick persons, in order to lure the demons after them, is not uncommon.⁵ In Selangor, one of the native states in the Malay Peninsula, the ship employed in the export of disease is, or used to be, a model of a special kind of Malay craft called a *lanchang*. This was a two-masted vessel with galleries fore and aft, armed with cannon, and used by Malay rajahs on the coast of Sumatra. So gallant a ship would be highly acceptable to the spirits, and to make it still more beautiful in their

¹ Riedel, *op. cit.* p. 25 sq.

² *Ibid.* p. 141.

³ *Ibid.* p. 78.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 357.

⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 266, 304 sq., 327, 357; H. Ling Roth, *Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, i. 284. For other examples of sending away plague-laden boats in this region, see Riedel, *op. cit.* pp. 181, 210; Van Eck, "Schotsen van het eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, N.S., viii. (1879), p. 104; Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 147; Hupe, "Korte verhandeling over de godsdienst, zeden, enz. der Dajakkers,"

Tijdschrift voor Nederlands Indië, 1846, dl. iii. 150; Campen, "De godsdienst-begrippen der Halmaherasche Alfoeren," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxvii. (1882), p. 441; *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 12, pp. 229-231; Van Hasselt, *Volksbeschrijving van Midden-Sumatra*, p. 98; C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 835; H. Ling Roth, "Low's natives of Sarawak," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxii. (1893), p. 25.

eyes it was not uncommonly stained yellow with turmeric or saffron, for among the Malays yellow is the royal colour. Some years ago a very fine model of a *lanchang*, with its cargo of sickness, was towed down the river to sea by the Government steam launch. A common spell uttered at the launching of one of these ships runs as follows :—

“ Ho, elders of the upper reaches,
 Elders of the lower reaches,
 Elders of the dry land,
 Elders of the river-flats,
 Assemble ye, O people, lords of hill and hill-foot,
 Lords of cavern and hill-locked basin,
 Lords of the deep primeval forest,
 Lords of the river-bends,
 Come on board this *lanchang*, assembling in your multitudes.
 So may ye depart with the ebbing stream,
 Depart on the passing breeze,
 Depart in the yawning earth,
 Depart in the red-dyed earth.
 Go ye to the ocean which has no wave,
 And the plain where no green herb grows,
 And never return hither.
 But if ye return hither,
 Ye shall be consumed by the curse.
 At sea ye shall get no drink,
 Ashore ye shall get no food,
 But gape in vain about the world.”¹

The practice of sending away diseases in boats is known outside the limits of the Malay region. Thus when the people of Tikopia, a small island in the Pacific, to the north of the New Hebrides, were attacked by an epidemic cough, they made a little canoe and adorned it with flowers. Four sons of the principal chiefs carried it on their shoulders all round the island, accompanied by the whole population, some of whom beat the bushes, while others uttered loud cries. On returning to the spot from which they had set out, they launched the canoe on the sea.² In the Nicobar Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, when there is much sickness in a village or no fish are caught, the blame is laid upon the spirits. They must be propitiated with offerings. All relations and

¹ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 433-435.

² J. Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour*

du monde et à la recherche de La Pérouse, sur la corvette Astrolabe, v. 311.

friends are invited, a huge pig is roasted, and the best of it is eaten, but some parts are offered to the shades. The heap of offerings remains in front of the house till it is carried away by the rising tide. Then the priests, their faces redlined with paint and swine's blood, pretend to catch the demon of disease, and after a hand-to-hand tussle, force him into a model boat, made of leaves and decked with garlands, which is then towed so far to sea that neither wind nor tide is likely to drive it back to the shore.¹ In Annam, when the population of a village has been decimated by cholera, they make a raft and lade it with offerings of money and food, such as a sucking pig, bananas, and oranges. Sticks of incense also smoke on the floating altar; and when all is ready and earnest prayers have been uttered, the raft is abandoned to the current of the river. The people hope that the demon of cholera, allured and gratified by these offerings, will float away on the raft and trouble them no more.²

Often the vehicle which carries away the collected demons or ills of a whole community is an animal or scapegoat. In the Central Provinces of India, when cholera breaks out in a village, every one retires after sunset to his house. The priests then parade the streets, taking from the roof of each house a straw, which is burnt with an offering of rice, ghee, and turmeric, at some shrine to the east of the village. Chickens daubed with vermilion are driven away in the direction of the smoke, and are believed to carry the disease with them. If they fail, goats are tried, and last of all pigs.³ When cholera is very bad among the Bhars, Mallans, and Kurmis of India, they take a goat or a buffalo—in either case the animal must be a female, and as black as possible—then having tied some grain, cloves, and red lead in a yellow cloth on its back they turn it out of the village. The animal is con-

¹ Roepstorff, "Ein Geisterboot der Nicobaresen," *Verhandl. der Berlin. Gesellsch. f. Anthropologie* (1881), p. 401; W. Svoboda, "Die Bewohner des Nikobaren-Archipels," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vi. (1893), p. 10 sq.

² P. Denjoy, "Annam, Médecins et Sorciers, Remèdes et Superstitions,"

etc., *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, v. (1894), p. 409 sq. For Siamese applications of the same principle to the cure of individuals, see Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 295 sq., 485 sq.

³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 48, § 418.

ducted beyond the boundary and not allowed to return.¹ Sometimes the buffalo is marked with a red pigment and driven to the next village, where he carries the plague with him.² The people of the city and cantonments of Sagar being afflicted with a violent influenza, "I had an application from the old Queen Dowager of Sagar to allow of a noisy religious procession for the purpose of imploring deliverance from this great calamity. Men, women, and children in this procession were to do their utmost to add to the noise by 'raising their voices in psalmody,' beating upon their brass pots and pans with all their might, and discharging firearms where they could get them. Before the noisy crowd was to be driven a buffalo, which had been purchased by general subscription, in order that every family might participate in the merit. They were to follow it out eight miles, where it was to be turned loose for any man who would take it. If the animal returned, the disease must return with it, and the ceremony be performed over again. . . . It was, however, subsequently determined that the animal should be a goat; and he was driven before the crowd accordingly. I have on several occasions been requested to allow of such noisy ceremonies in cases of epidemics."³ Once, when influenza was raging in Pithuria, a man had a small carriage made, after a plan of his own, for a pair of scapegoats, which were harnessed to it and driven to a wood at some distance, where they were let loose. From that hour the disease entirely ceased in the town. The goats never returned; had they done so, "the disease must have come back with them."⁴ The idea of the scapegoat is not uncommon in the hills of the Eastern Ghats. In 1886, during a severe outbreak of small-pox, the people of Jeypur made *puja* to a goat, marched it to the Ghats, and let it loose on the plains.⁵ In Southern Konkan, on the appearance of cholera, the villagers went in procession from the temple to the extreme boundaries of the

¹ *Id.*, iii. p. 81, § 373.

² W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 91. Bulls are used as scapegoats for cholera in Cashmeer (H. G. M. Murray-Aynsley, in *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893), p. 398 sq.).

³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 215 sq., § 1127.

⁴ *Id.*, ii. p. 215, § 1123.

⁵ F. Fawcett, "On the Saoras (or Savaras)," *Journal of the Anthropol. Soc. of Bombay*, i. 213, note.

village, carrying a basket of cooked rice covered with red powder, a wooden doll representing the pestilence, and a cock. The head of the cock was cut off at the village boundary, and the body was thrown away. When cholera had thus been transferred from one village to another, the second village observed the same ceremony and passed on the scourge to its neighbours, and so on through a number of villages.¹ Among the Korwas of Mirzapur, when cholera has broken out, the priest offers a black cock or, if the disease is very malignant, a black goat at the shrine of the local deity, and then drives the animal away in the direction of some other village. But it has not gone far before he overtakes it, kills it, and eats it; which he may do with perfect safety in virtue of his sacred office. Again, when cholera is raging among the Pataris, an aboriginal Dravidian race of South Mirzapur, the wizard and the village elders feed a black cock with grain and drive it beyond the boundaries, ordering the fowl to take the disease away with it. A little oil, red lead, and a spangle worn by a woman on her forehead are usually fastened to the bird's head before it is let loose. The cost of purchasing the cock is defrayed by public subscription. When such a bird of ill-omen appears in a village, the priest takes it to the shrine of the local deity and sacrifices it there; but sometimes he merely bows before it at the shrine and passes it on to some other village. If disease attacks their cattle, the Kharwars of Northern India take a black cock and put red lead on its head, antimony on its eyes, a spangle on its forehead, and a pewter bangle on its leg; thus arrayed they let it loose, calling out to the disease, "Mount on the fowl and go elsewhere into the ravines and thickets; destroy the sin." Perhaps, as has been suggested, this tricking out of the bird with women's ornaments may be a relic of some grosser form of expiation in which a human being was sacrificed or banished.² Charms of this sort in India no doubt date from a remote antiquity. They were known in the Vedic ages; for a ritual text describes the ceremony

¹ *Journ. Anthropol. Soc. Bombay*, i. 37.

² W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of*

Northern India, p. 109 sq.; *id.*, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iii. 445.

of letting loose against a hostile army a white-footed ewe in which the power of disease was believed to be incarnate.¹ In 1857, when the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru were suffering from a plague, they loaded a black llama with the clothes of the plague-stricken people, sprinkled brandy on the clothes, and then turned the animal loose on the mountains, hoping that it would carry the pest away with it.²

Occasionally the scapegoat is a man. Some of the aboriginal tribes of China, as a protection against pestilence, select a man of great muscular strength to act the part of scapegoat. Having besmeared his face with paint, he performs many antics with the view of enticing all pestilential and noxious influences to attach themselves to him only. He is assisted by a priest. Finally the scapegoat, hotly pursued by men and women beating gongs and tom-toms, is driven with great haste out of the town or village.³ A Hindoo cure for the murrain is to hire a man of the Chamar caste, turn his face away from the village, brand him with a red-hot sickle, and let him go out into the jungle taking the murrain with him. He must not look back.⁴ In the territory of Kumaon, lying on the southern slopes of the Western Himalayas, the custom of employing a human scapegoat appears to have taken a somewhat peculiar form in the ceremony known as Barat. First of all a thick rope of grass is stretched from the top of a cliff to the valley beneath, where it is made fast to posts driven into the ground. Next a wooden saddle, with a very sharp ridge and unpadded, is attached by thongs to the cable, along which it runs in a deep groove. A man now seats himself on the saddle and is strapped to it, while sand-bags or heavy stones are suspended from his feet to secure his balance. Then, after various ceremonies have been performed and a kid sacrificed, he throws himself as far back in the saddle as he can go, and is started off to slide down the rope into the valley. Away he shoots at an ever-increasing speed; the saddle

¹ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 498. *of the Ethnological Society of London*, ii. 237.

² J. H. Gray, *China*, ii. 306.

³ D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru," *Journal* ⁴ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 75, § 598.

under him, however well greased, emits volumes of smoke during the greater part of his progress ; and he is nearly senseless when he reaches the bottom. Here men are waiting to catch him and run forward with him some distance in order to break gradually the force of his descent. This ceremony, regarded as a propitiation of Mahadeva, is performed as a means of delivering a community from present or impending calamity. Thus, for example, it was performed when cholera was raging at Almora, and the people traced the immunity they enjoyed to the due observance of the rite. Each district has its hereditary Badi, as the performer is called ; he is supported by annual contributions in grain from the inhabitants, as well as by special payments for each performance. When the ceremony is over, the grass rope is cut up and distributed among the villagers, who hang the pieces as charms at the eaves of their houses ; and they preserve the hair of the Badi for a similar purpose. Yet while his severed locks bring fertility to other people's lands, he entails sterility on his own ; and it is firmly believed that no seed sown by his hand could ever sprout. Formerly the rule prevailed that, if a Badi had the misfortune to fall from the rope in the course of his flying descent, he was immediately despatched with a sword by the spectators. The rule has naturally been abolished by the English government ; but its former observance seems to indicate that the custom of letting a man slide down a rope as a charm to avert calamity is only a mitigation of an older custom of putting him to death.¹

The mediate expulsion of evils by means of a scapegoat or other material vehicle, like the immediate expulsion of them in invisible form, tends to become periodic, and for a like reason. Thus every year, generally in March, the people of Leti, Moa, and Lakor send away all their diseases to sea. They make a proa about six feet long, rig it with sails, oars, rudder, etc., and every family deposits in it some rice, fruit, a fowl, two eggs, insects that ravage the fields, and so on. Then they let it drift away to sea, saying, "Take away from here all kinds of sickness, take them to other islands, to other lands, distribute them in places that lie

¹ *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. pp. 55, 74 sq., 77, 88 417. 499, 516.

eastward, where the sun rises."¹ The Biajas of Borneo annually send to sea a little bark laden with the sins and misfortunes of the people. The crew of any ship that falls in with the ill-omened bark at sea will suffer all the sorrows with which it is laden.² Every year, at the beginning of the dry season, the Nicobar islanders carry the model of a ship through their villages. The devils are chased out of the huts, and driven on board the little ship, which is then launched and suffered to sail away with the wind.³ At Sucla-Tirtha, in India, an earthen pot containing the accumulated sins of the people is (annually?) set adrift on the river. Legend says that the custom originated with a wicked priest who, after atoning for his guilt by a course of austerities and expiatory ceremonies, was directed to sail upon the river in a boat with white sails. If the white sails turned black, it would be a sign that his sins were forgiven him. They did so, and he joyfully allowed the boat to drift with his sins to sea.⁴ Amongst many of the aboriginal tribes of China, a great festival is celebrated in the third month of every year. It is held by way of a general rejoicing over what the people believe to be a total annihilation of the ills of the past twelve months. This annihilation is supposed to be effected in the following way. A large earthenware jar filled with gunpowder, stones, and bits of iron is buried in the earth. A train of gunpowder, communicating with the jar, is then laid; and a match being applied, the jar and its contents are blown up. The stones and bits of iron represent the ills and disasters of the past year, and the dispersion of them by the explosion is believed to remove the ills and disasters themselves. The festival is attended with much revelling and drunkenness.⁵ On New Year's Day people in Corea seek to rid themselves of all their distresses by painting images on paper, writing against them their troubles of body or mind, and afterwards giving the papers to a boy to burn. Another method of effecting the same object at the same season is to make rude dolls of

¹ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 393.

² Bastian, *Der Mensch in der*

Geschichte, ii. 93.

³ *Id.*, ii. 91.

⁴ *Asiatic Researches*, ix. 96 sq.

⁵ J. H. Gray, *China*, ii. 306 sq.

straw, stuff them with a few copper coins, and throw them into the street. Whoever picks up such an effigy gets all the troubles and thereby relieves the original sufferer.¹ Mr. George Bogle, the English envoy sent to Tibet by Warren Hastings, witnessed the celebration of the Tibetan New Year's Day at Teshu Lumbo, the capital of the Teshu Lama. "The figure of a man, chalked upon paper, was laid upon the ground. Many strange ceremonies, which to me who did not understand them appeared whimsical, were performed about it; and a great fire being kindled in a corner of the court, it was at length held over it, and being formed of combustibles, vanished with much smoke and explosion. I was told it was a figure of the devil."² At Old Calabar, in Guinea, the devils are expelled once every two years. A number of figures called *nabikems* are made of sticks and bamboos, and fixed indiscriminately about the town. Some of them represent human beings, others birds, crocodiles, and so on. After three or four weeks the devils are expected to take up their abode in these figures. When the night comes for their general expulsion, the people feast and sally out in parties, beating at empty corners, and shouting with all their might. Shots are fired, the *nabikems* are torn up with violence, set in flames, and flung into the river. The orgies last till daybreak, and the town is considered to be rid of evil influences for two years to come.³ From another account of the same custom as it is practised at Creek Town, in Calabar, we learn that the images—large grotesque figures carved of wood—are set up in the houses, and that the spirits are believed to huddle among the rags and gew-gaws with which the effigies are bedizened. No sooner are these spirit-traps disposed of, by being hurled into the river, than fresh images are made and set up in the houses to be afterwards treated in the same fashion when the next general expulsion of spirits takes place.⁴ On the evening of Easter Sunday the gypsies of Southern Europe take a wooden vessel like a band-box, which rests cradle-wise on two cross pieces

¹ Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours*, ii. 56.

Western Africa, p. 162.

² Bogle and Manning, *Tibet*, edited by C. R. Markham, p. 106 sq.

⁴ Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 494 sq. Compare

³ T. J. Hutchinson, *Impressions of*

J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 105 sqq.

of wood. In this they place herbs and simples, together with the dried carcass of a snake, or lizard, which every person present must first have touched with his fingers. The vessel is then wrapt in white and red wool, carried by the oldest man from tent to tent, and finally thrown into running water, not, however, before every member of the band has spat into it once, and the sorceress has uttered some spells over it. They believe that by performing this ceremony they dispel all the illnesses that would otherwise have afflicted them in the course of the year; and that if any one finds the vessel and opens it out of curiosity, he and his will be visited by all the maladies which the others have escaped.¹

On one day of the year some of the people of the Western Himalayas take a dog, intoxicate him with spirits and bhang or hemp, and having fed him with sweatmeats, lead him round the village and let him loose. They then chase and kill him with sticks and stones, and believe that, when they have done so, no disease or misfortune will visit the village during the year.² In some parts of Breadalbane it was formerly the custom on New Year's Day to take a dog to the door, give him a bit of bread, and drive him out, saying, "Get away, you dog! Whatever death of men or loss of cattle would happen in this house to the end of the present year, may it all light on your head!"³ It appears that the white dogs annually sacrificed by the Iroquois at their New Year Festival are, or have been, regarded as scapegoats. According to Mr. J. V. H. Clark, who witnessed the ceremony in January 1841, on the first day of the festival all the fires in the village were extinguished, the ashes scattered to the winds, and a new fire was kindled with flint and steel. On a subsequent day, men dressed in fantastic costumes went round the village, gathering the sins of the people. When the morning of the last day of the festival was come, two white dogs, decorated with red paint, wampum, feathers, and ribbons, were led out. They were soon

¹ H. von Wlislöcki, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Zigeuner*, p. 65 sq.

² E. T. Atkinson, "Notes on the History of Religion in the Himalaya of the North-West Provinces," *Journal of*

the Asiatic Society of Bengal, liii. pt. i. (1884), p. 62.

³ *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, from the MSS. of John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, edited by Alex. Allardyce (Edinburgh, 1888), ii. 439.

strangled, and hung on a ladder. Firing and yelling succeeded, and half an hour later the animals were taken into a house, "where the people's sins were transferred to them." The carcasses were afterwards burnt on a pyre of wood.¹ According to the Rev. Mr. Kirkland, who wrote last century, the ashes of the pyre upon which one of the white dogs was burnt were carried through the village and sprinkled at the door of every house.² Formerly, however, as we have seen, the Iroquois expulsion of evils was immediate and not by scapegoat.³ On the Day of Atonement, which was the tenth day of the seventh month, the Jewish high-priest laid both his hands on the head of a live goat, confessed over it all the iniquities of the Children of Israel, and, having thereby transferred the sins of the people to the beast, sent it away into the wilderness.⁴

The scapegoat upon whom the sins of the people are periodically laid, may also be a human being. At Onitsha, on the Niger, two human beings used to be annually sacrificed to take away the sins of the land. The victims were purchased by public subscription. All persons who, during the past year, had fallen into gross sins, such as incendiarism, theft, adultery, witchcraft, and so forth, were expected to contribute 28 *ngugas*, or a little over £2. The money thus collected was taken into the interior of the country and expended in the purchase of two sickly persons "to be offered as a sacrifice for all these abominable crimes—one for the land and one for the river." A man from a neighbouring

¹ W. M. Beauchamp, "The Iroquois White Dog Feast," *American Antiquarian*, vii. 237.

² *Ibid.* p. 236; T. Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York*, iv. 202.

³ Above, p. 72 sq.

⁴ Leviticus xvi. The word translated "scapegoat" in the Authorised Version is *Azazel*, which appears rather to be the name of a bad angel or demon, to whom the goat was sent away. There is some ground for thinking that the animal was killed by being thrown over a certain crag that overhangs a rocky chasm not far from Jerusalem. See *Encyclopædia Biblica*, ed. T. K.

Cheyne and J. S. Black, s.v. "Azazel."

Modern Jews sacrifice a white cock on the eve of the Day of Atonement, nine days after the beginning of their New Year. The father of the family knocks the cock thrice against his own head, saying, "Let this cock be a substitute for me, let it take my place, let death be laid upon this cock, but a happy life bestowed on me and on all Israel." Then he cuts its throat and dashes the bird violently on the ground. The intestines are thrown on the roof of the house. The flesh of the cock was formerly given to the poor. See Buxtorf, *Synagoga Judaica*, ch. xxv. p. 508 sqq.

town was hired to put them to death. On the twenty-seventh of February 1858 the Rev. J. C. Taylor witnessed the sacrifice of one of these victims. The sufferer was a woman, about nineteen or twenty years of age. They dragged her alive along the ground, face downwards, from the king's house to the river, a distance of two miles, the crowds who accompanied her crying, "Wickedness! wickedness!" The intention was "to take away the iniquities of the land. The body was dragged along in a merciless manner, as if the weight of all their wickedness was thus carried away."¹ In Siam it used to be the custom on one day of the year to single out a woman broken down by debauchery, and carry her on a litter through all the streets to the music of drums and hautboys. The mob insulted her and pelted her with dirt; and after having carried her through the whole city, they threw her on a dunghill or a hedge of thorns outside the ramparts, forbidding her ever to enter the walls again. They believed that the woman thus drew upon herself all the malign influences of the air and of evil spirits.² The Battas of Sumatra offer either a red horse or a buffalo as a public sacrifice to purify the land and obtain the favour of the gods. Formerly, it is said, a man was bound to the same stake as the buffalo, and when they killed the animal, the man was driven away; no one might receive him, converse with him, or give him food.³ Doubtless he was supposed to carry away the sins and misfortunes of the people.

Human scapegoats, as we shall see presently, were well known in classical antiquity, and even in mediæval Europe the custom seems not to have been wholly extinct. In the town of Halberstadt, in Thüringen, there was a church said to have been founded by Charlemagne. In this church every year they chose a man, who was believed to be stained with heinous sins. On the first day of Lent he was brought to the church, dressed in mourning garb, with his head muffled

¹ S. Crowther and J. C. Taylor, *The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger*, pp. 343-345. Cp. J. F. Schön and S. Crowther, *Journals*, p. 48 sq. The account of the custom by J. Africanus B. Horton (*West African Countries and Peoples*, p. 185 sq.) is taken entirely

from Taylor.

² Turpin, "History of Siam," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, ix. 579.

³ Ködding, "Die Bataksche Götter," *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, xii. (1885), pp. 476, 478.

up. At the close of the service he was turned out of the church. During the forty days of Lent he perambulated the city barefoot, neither entering the churches nor speaking to any one. The canons took it in turn to feed him. After midnight he was allowed to sleep in the streets. On the day before Good Friday, after the consecration of the holy oil, he was readmitted to the church and absolved from his sins. The people gave him money. He was called Adam, and was now believed to be in a state of innocence.¹ At Entlebuch, in Switzerland, down to the close of last century, the custom of annually expelling a scapegoat was preserved in the ceremony of driving "Posterli" from the village into the lands of the neighbouring village. "Posterli" was represented by a lad disguised as an old witch or as a goat or an ass. Amid a deafening noise of horns, clarionets, bells, whips, and so forth, he was driven out. Sometimes "Posterli" was represented by a puppet, which was drawn on a sledge and left in a corner of the neighbouring village. The ceremony took place on the Thursday evening of the last week but one before Christmas.²

Sometimes the scapegoat is a divine animal. The people of Malabar share the Hindoo reverence for the cow, to kill and eat which "they esteem to be a crime as heinous as homicide or wilful murder." Nevertheless "the Bramans transfer the sins of the people into one or more Cows, which are then carry'd away, both the Cows and the Sins where-with these Beasts are charged, to what place the Braman shall appoint."³ When the ancient Egyptians sacrificed a bull, they invoked upon its head all the evils that might otherwise befall themselves and the land of Egypt, and thereupon they either sold the bull's head to the Greeks or cast it into the river.⁴ Now, it cannot be said that in the times known to us the Egyptians worshipped bulls in general, for they seem to have commonly killed and eaten them.⁵ But a good many circumstances point to the

¹ Aeneas Sylvius, *Opera* (Bâle, 1571), p. 423 sq.

² H. Usener, "Italische Mythen," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xxx. (1875), p. 198.

³ J. Thomas Phillips, *Account of the*

Religion, Manners, and Learning of the People of Malabar, pp. 6, 12 sq.

⁴ Herodotus, ii. 39.

⁵ Herodotus, ii. 38-41; Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, iii. 403 sqq. (ed. 1878).



conclusion that originally all cattle, bulls as well as cows, were held sacred by the Egyptians. For not only were all cows esteemed holy by them and never sacrificed, but even bulls might not be sacrificed unless they had certain natural marks; a priest examined every bull before it was sacrificed; if it had the proper marks, he put his seal on the animal in token that it might be sacrificed; and if a man sacrificed a bull which had not been sealed, he was put to death. Moreover, the worship of the black bulls Apis and Mnevis, especially the former, played an important part in Egyptian religion; all bulls that died a natural death were carefully buried in the suburbs of the cities, and their bones were afterwards collected from all parts of Egypt and buried in a single spot; and at the sacrifice of a bull in the great rites of Isis all the worshippers beat their breasts and mourned.¹ On the whole, then, we are perhaps entitled to infer that bulls were originally, as cows were always, esteemed sacred by the Egyptians, and that the slain bull upon whose head they laid the misfortunes of the people was once a divine scapegoat. It seems not improbable that the lamb annually slain by the Madis of Central Africa is a divine scapegoat, and the same supposition may partly explain the Zuni sacrifice of the turtle.²

Lastly, the scapegoat may be a divine man. Thus, in November the Gonds of India worship Ghansyam Deo, the protector of the crops, and at the festival the god himself is said to descend on the head of one of the worshippers, who is suddenly seized with a kind of fit and, after staggering about, rushes off into the jungle, where it is believed that, if left to himself, he would die mad. However, they bring him back, but he does not recover his senses for one or two days. The people think that one man is thus singled out as a scapegoat for the sins of the rest of the village.³ In the temple of the Moon the Albanians of the Eastern Caucasus kept a number of sacred slaves, of whom many were inspired and prophesied. When one of these men exhibited more than usual symptoms of inspiration or insanity, and wandered solitary up and down the woods, like the Gond in the jungle,

¹ Herodotus, *l.c.*

² See vol. ii. pp. 371 *sqq.*, 439 *sq.*

³ *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p.

54, § 335.

the high priest had him bound with a sacred chain and maintained him in luxury for a year. At the end of the year he was anointed with unguents and led forth to be sacrificed. A man whose business it was to slay these human victims and to whom practice had given dexterity, advanced from the crowd and thrust a sacred spear into the victim's side, piercing his heart. From the manner in which the slain man fell, omens were drawn as to the welfare of the commonwealth. Then the body was carried to a certain spot where all the people stood upon it as a purificatory ceremony.¹ This last circumstance clearly indicates that the sins of the people were transferred to the victim, just as the Jewish priest transferred the sins of the people to the scapegoat by laying his hand on the animal's head; and since the man was believed to be possessed by the divine spirit, we have here an undoubted example of a man-god slain to take away the sins and misfortunes of the people.

In Tibet the ceremony of the scapegoat presents some remarkable features. The Tibetan new year begins with the new moon, which appears about the fifteenth of February. For twenty-three days afterwards the government of Lhasa, the capital, is taken out of the hands of the ordinary rulers and entrusted to the monk of the Debang monastery who offers to pay the highest sum for the privilege. The successful bidder is called the Jalno, and he announces his accession to power in person, going through the streets of Lhasa with a silver stick in his hand. Monks from all the neighbouring monasteries and temples assemble to pay him homage. The Jalno exercises his authority in the most arbitrary manner for his own benefit, as all the fines which he exacts are his by purchase. The profit he makes is about ten times the amount of the purchase money. His

¹ Strabo, xi. 4. 7. For the custom of standing upon a sacrificed victim, compare Demosthenes, *Or.* xxiii. 68, p. 642; Pausanias, iii. 20. 9. With the practice of anointing the victim we may compare the treatment which Plato proposes in jest to accord to such poets as write clever but dangerous verses. He would worship bards of that sort as sacred, but would

anoint their heads with unguent, wreath them with wool, and send them away to some other city (*Republic*, iii. p. 398 A). Dio Chrysostom, who refers to this passage of Plato, tells us that what the philosopher proposed to do to the poets was what women did to swallows (*Or.* liii. vol. ii. p. 165, ed. Dindorf). Both these passages were pointed out to me by my friend Dr. Henry Jackson.

men go about the streets in order to discover any conduct on the part of the inhabitants that can be found fault with. Every house in Lhasa is taxed at this time, and the slightest fault is punished with unsparing rigour by fines. This severity of the Jalno drives all working classes out of the city till the twenty-three days are over. Meantime, all the priests flock from the neighbourhood into the city in such multitudes, that the streets are incarnadined with their red cloaks. All day long, from before the peep of dawn till after darkness has fallen, these red-cloaked lamas hold services in the dim incense-laden air of the great Machin-dranath temple, the cathedral of Lhasa; and thither they crowd thrice a day to receive their doles of tea and soup and money. The cathedral is a vast building, standing in the centre of the city, and surrounded by bazaars and shops. The idols in it are richly inlaid with gold and precious stones. Twenty-four days after the Jalno has ceased to have authority, he assumes it again, and for ten days acts in the same arbitrary manner as before. On the first of the ten days the priests assemble as before at the cathedral, pray to the gods to prevent sickness and other evils among the people, "and, as a peace-offering, sacrifice one man. The man is not killed purposely, but the ceremony he undergoes often proves fatal.¹ Grain is thrown against his head, and his face is painted half white, half black." Thus grotesquely disguised, and carrying a coat of skin on his arm, he is called the King of the Years, and sits daily in the market-place, where he helps himself to whatever he likes and goes about shaking a black yak's tail over the people, who thus transfer their bad luck to him. On the tenth day, all the troops in Lhasa march to the great temple and form in line before it. The King of the Years is brought forth from the temple and receives small donations from the assembled multitude. He then ridicules the Jalno, saying to him, "What we perceive through the five senses is no illusion. All you teach is untrue," and the like. The Jalno, who represents the Grand Lama for the time being, contests these heretical opinions; the dispute waxes warm, and at last both agree to decide the

¹ The ceremony referred to is perhaps the one performed on the tenth day, as described in the text.

questions at issue by a cast of the dice, the Jalno offering to change places with the scapegoat should the throw be against him. If the King of the Years wins, much evil is prognosticated; but if the Jalno wins, there is great rejoicing, for it proves that his adversary has been accepted by the gods as a victim to bear all the sins of the people of Lhasa. Fortune, however, always favours the Jalno, who throws sixes with unvarying success, while his opponent turns up only ones. Nor is this so extraordinary as at first sight it might appear; for the Jalno's dice are marked with nothing but sixes and his adversary's with nothing but ones. When he sees the finger of Providence thus plainly pointed against him, the King of the Years is terrified and flees away upon a white horse, with a white dog, a white bird, salt, and so forth, which have all been provided for him by the government. His face is still painted half white and half black, and he still wears his leathern coat. The whole populace pursues him, hooting, yelling, and firing blank shots in volleys after him. Thus driven out of the city, he is detained for seven days in the great chamber of horrors at the Samyas monastery, surrounded by monstrous and terrific images of devils and skins of huge serpents and wild beasts. Thence he goes away into the mountains of Chetang, where he has to remain an outcast for several months or a year in a narrow den. If he dies before the time is out, the people say it is an auspicious omen; but if he survives, he may return to Lhasa and play the part of scapegoat over again the following year.¹

¹ "Report of a Route Survey by Pundit — from Nepal to Lhasa," etc., *Journal Royal Geogr. Soc.* xxxviii. (1868), pp. 167, 170 sq.; "Four Years' Journeying through Great Tibet, by one of the Trans-Himalayan Explorers," *Proceed. Royal Geogr. Soc.* N.S. vii. (1885), p. 67 sq.; L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet* (London, 1895), pp. 504 sqq., 512 sq.; J. L. Dutreuil de Rhins, *Mission Scientifique dans la Haute Asie 1890-1895: Récit du Voyage* (Paris, 1897), p. 257 sq. The accounts supplement each other, though they differ in some particulars. I have endeavoured to combine them. Accord-

ing to the last of the accounts referred to, which however rests on second-hand information, at one point of the ceremonies the troops march thrice round the temple and fire numerous volleys of musketry to drive away the demons. With the like intent they discharge a great cannon, said to be a thousand years old, which bears the inscription, "I am the destroyer of rebellion." The same account speaks of a "dance of axes" performed by young people, a festival of lanterns, an exhibition of bas-reliefs in butter, a horse-race, a foot-race, and a solemn blessing of the people by the Grand Lama.

This quaint ceremonial, still annually observed in the secluded capital of Buddhism—the Rome of Asia—is particularly interesting because it exhibits, in a clearly marked religious stratification, a series of divine redeemers themselves redeemed, of vicarious sacrifices vicariously atoned for, of gods undergoing a process of fossilisation, who, while they retain the privileges, have disburdened themselves of the pains and penalties of divinity. In the Jalno we may without undue straining discern a successor of those temporary kings, those mortal gods, who purchase a short lease of power and glory at the price of their lives. That he is the temporary substitute of the Grand Lama is certain; that he is, or was once, liable to act as scapegoat for the people is made nearly certain by his offer to change places with the real scapegoat—the King of the Years—if the arbitrament of the dice should go against him. It is true that the conditions under which the question is now put to the hazard have reduced the offer to an idle form. But such forms are no mere mushroom growths, springing up of themselves in a night. If they are now lifeless formalities, empty husks devoid of significance, we may be sure that they once had a life and a meaning; if at the present day they are blind alleys leading nowhere, we may be certain that in former days they were paths that led somewhere, if only to death. That death was the goal to which of old the Tibetan scapegoat passed after his brief period of licence in the marketplace, is a conjecture that has much to commend it. Analogy suggests it; the blank shots fired after him, the statement that the ceremony often proves fatal, the belief that his death is a happy omen, all confirm it. We need not wonder then that the Jalno, after paying so dear to act as deputy-deity for a few weeks, should have preferred to die by deputy rather than in his own person when his time was up. The painful but necessary duty was accordingly laid on some poor devil, some social outcast, some wretch with whom the world had gone hard, who readily agreed to throw away his life at the end of a few days if only he might have his fling in the meantime. For observe that while the time allowed to the original deputy—the Jalno—

was measured by weeks, the time allowed to the deputy's deputy was cut down to days, ten days according to one authority, seven days according to another. So short a rope was doubtless thought a long enough tether for so black or sickly a sheep; so few sands in the hour-glass, slipping so fast away, sufficed for one who had wasted so many precious years. Hence in the jack-pudding who now masquerades with motley countenance in the market-place of Lhasa, sweeping up misfortune with a black yak's tail, we may fairly see the substitute of a substitute, the vicar of a vicar, the proxy on whose back the heavy burden was laid when it had been lifted from nobler shoulders. But the clue, if we have followed it aright, does not stop at the Jalno; it leads straight back to the pope of Lhasa himself, the Grand Lama, of whom the Jalno is merely the temporary vicar. The analogy of many customs in many lands points to the conclusion that, if this human divinity stoops to resign his ghostly power for a time into the hands of a substitute, it is, or rather was once, for no other reason than that the substitute might die in his stead. Thus through the mist of ages unilluminated by the lamp of history, the tragic figure of the pope of Buddhism—God's vicar on earth for Asia—looms dim and sad as the man-god who bore his people's sorrows, the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep.

The foregoing survey of the custom of publicly expelling the accumulated evils of a village or town or country suggests a few general observations. In the first place, it will not be disputed that what I have called the immediate and the mediate expulsions of evil are identical in intention; in other words, that whether the evils are conceived of as invisible or as embodied in a material form, is a circumstance entirely subordinate to the main object of the ceremony, which is simply to effect a total clearance of all the ills that have been infesting a people. If any link were wanting to connect the two kinds of expulsion, it would be furnished by such a practice as that of sending the evils away in a litter or a boat. For here, on the one hand, the evils are invisible and intangible; and, on the other hand, there is a visible and tangible vehicle to convey them away. And a scapegoat is nothing more than such a vehicle.

In the second place, when a general clearance of evils is resorted to periodically, the interval between the celebrations of the ceremony is commonly a year, and the time of year when the ceremony takes place usually coincides with some well-marked change of season—such as the beginning or end of winter in the arctic and temperate zones, and the beginning or end of the rainy season in the tropics. The increased mortality which such climatic changes are apt to produce, especially amongst ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-housed savages, is set down by primitive man to the agency of demons, who must accordingly be expelled. Hence, in the tropical regions of New Britain and Peru, the devils are or were driven out at the beginning of the rainy season; hence, on the dreary coasts of Baffin Land, they are banished at the approach of the bitter arctic winter. When a tribe has taken to husbandry, the time for the general expulsion of devils is naturally made to agree with one of the great epochs of the agricultural year, as sowing, or harvest; but, as these epochs themselves often coincide with changes of season, it does not follow that the transition from the hunting or pastoral to the agricultural life involves any alteration in the time of celebrating this great annual rite. Some of the agricultural communities of India and the Hindoo Koosh, as we have seen, hold their general clearance of demons at harvest, others at sowing-time. But, at whatever season of the year it is held, the general expulsion of devils commonly marks the beginning of the new year. For, before entering on a new year, people are anxious to rid themselves of the troubles that have harassed them in the past; hence it comes about that amongst so many people the beginning of the new year is inaugurated with a solemn and public banishment of evil spirits.

In the third place, it is to be observed that this public and periodic expulsion of devils is commonly preceded or followed by a period of general licence, during which the ordinary restraints of society are thrown aside, and all offences, short of the gravest, are allowed to pass unpunished. In Guinea and Tonquin the period of licence precedes the public expulsion of demons; and the suspension of the ordinary government in Lhasa previous to the expulsion of

the scapegoat is perhaps a relic of a similar period of universal licence. Amongst the Hos the period of licence follows the expulsion of the devil. Amongst the Iroquois it hardly appears whether it preceded or followed the banishment of evils. In any case, the extraordinary relaxation of all ordinary rules of conduct on such occasions is doubtless to be explained by the general clearance of evils which precedes or follows it. On the one hand, when a general riddance of evil and absolution from all sin is in immediate prospect, men are encouraged to give the rein to their passions, trusting that the coming ceremony will wipe out the score which they are running up so fast. On the other hand, when the ceremony has just taken place, men's minds are freed from the oppressive sense, under which they generally labour, of an atmosphere surcharged with devils; and in the first revulsion of joy they overleap the limits commonly imposed by custom and morality. When the ceremony takes place at harvest-time, the elation of feeling which it excites is further stimulated by the state of physical wellbeing produced by an abundant supply of food.¹

¹ In the Dassera festival, as celebrated in Nepaul, we seem to have another instance of the annual expulsion of demons preceded by a time of licence. The festival occurs at the beginning of October and lasts ten days. "During its continuance there is a general holiday among all classes of the people. The city of Kathmandu at this time is required to be purified, but the purification is effected rather by prayer than by water-cleansing. All the courts of law are closed, and all prisoners in jail are removed from the precincts of the city. . . . The Kalendar is cleared, or there is a jail-delivery always at the Dassera of all prisoners." This seems a trace of a period of licence. At this time "it is a general custom for masters to make an annual present, either of money, clothes, buffaloes, goats, etc., to such servants as have given satisfaction during the past year. It is in this respect, as well as in the feasting and drinking which goes on, something like our 'boxing-time' at Christmas." On

the seventh day at sunset there is a parade of all the troops in the capital, including the artillery. At a given signal the regiments begin to fire, the artillery takes it up, and a general firing goes on for about twenty minutes, when it suddenly ceases. This probably represents the expulsion of the demons. "The grand cutting of the rice-crops is always postponed till the Dassera is over, and commences all over the valley the very day afterwards." See the description of the festival in Oldfield's *Sketches from Nipal*, ii. 342-351. On the Dassera in India, see Dubois, *Mœurs, Institutions et Cérémonies des Peuples de l'Inde*, ii. 329 sqq. Amongst the Wasuahili of East Africa New Year's Day was formerly a day of general licence, "every man did as he pleased. Old quarrels were settled, men were found dead on the following day, and no inquiry was instituted about the matter" (Ch. New, *Life, Wanderings, and Labours in Eastern Africa*, p. 65). An annual period of anarchy and licence, lasting

Fourthly, the employment of a divine man or animal as a scapegoat is especially to be noted; indeed, we are here directly concerned with the custom of banishing evils only in so far as these evils are believed to be transferred to a god who is afterwards slain. It may be suspected that the custom of employing a divine man or animal as a public scapegoat is much more widely diffused than appears from the examples cited. For, as has already been pointed out, the custom of killing a god dates from so early a period of human history that in later ages, even when the custom continues to be practised, it is liable to be misinterpreted. The divine character of the animal or man is forgotten, and he comes to be regarded merely as an ordinary victim. This is especially likely to be the case when it is a divine man who is killed. For when a nation becomes civilised, if it does not drop human sacrifices altogether, it at least selects as victims only such wretches as would be put to death at any rate. Thus, as in the Sacaeen festival at Babylon, the killing of a god may come to be confounded with the execution of a criminal.

If we ask why a dying god should be chosen to take upon himself and carry away the sins and sorrows of the people, it may be suggested that in the practice of using the divinity as a scapegoat we have a combination of two customs which were at one time distinct and independent. On the one hand we have seen that it has been customary to kill the human or animal god in order to save his divine life from being weakened by the inroads of age. On the other hand we have seen that it has been customary to have a general expulsion of evils and sins once a year. Now, if it occurred to people to combine these two customs, the result would be the employment of the dying god as a scapegoat. He was killed, not originally to take away sin, but to save the divine life from the degeneracy of old age; but, since he had to be killed at any rate, people may have thought that they might as well seize the opportunity to lay

three days, is reported by Borelli to be observed by some of the Gallas (Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas: die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Soma*, p. 158). In Ashantee the

annual festival of the new yams is a time of general licence. See Note C, "Offerings of First-fruits," vol. ii. p. 459.

upon him the burden of their sufferings and sins, in order that he might bear it away with him to the unknown world beyond the grave.

The use of the divinity as a scapegoat clears up the ambiguity which, as we saw, appears to hang about the European folk-custom of "carrying out Death."¹ Grounds have been shown for believing that in this ceremony the so-called Death was originally the spirit of vegetation, who was annually slain in spring, in order that he might come to life again with all the vigour of youth. But, as I pointed out, there are certain features in the ceremony which are not explicable on this hypothesis alone. Such are the marks of joy with which the effigy of Death is carried out to be buried or burnt, and the fear and abhorrence of it manifested by the bearers. But these features become at once intelligible if we suppose that the Death was not merely the dying god of vegetation, but also a public scapegoat, upon whom were laid all the evils that had afflicted the people during the past year. Joy on such an occasion is natural and appropriate; and if the dying god appears to be the object of that fear and abhorrence which are properly due not to himself, but to the sins and misfortunes with which he is laden, this arises merely from the difficulty of distinguishing or at least of marking the distinction between the bearer and the burden. When the burden is of a baleful character, the bearer of it will be feared and shunned just as much as if he were himself instinct with those dangerous properties of which, as it happens, he is only the vehicle. Similarly we have seen that disease-laden and sin-laden boats are dreaded and shunned by East Indian peoples.² Again, the view that in these popular customs the Death is a scapegoat as well as a representative of the divine spirit of vegetation derives some support from the circumstance that its expulsion is always celebrated in spring and chiefly by Slavonic peoples. For the Slavonic year began in spring;³ and thus, in one of its aspects, the ceremony of "carrying out Death" would be an example of the widespread custom of expelling the

¹ See above, vol. ii. p. 107 sq.

³ H. Usener, "Italische Mythen," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F. (1875), xxx. 194.

² Above, pp. 98, 106.

accumulated evils of the past year before entering on a new one.

We are now prepared to notice the use of the scapegoat in classical antiquity. Every year on the fourteenth of March a man clad in skins was led in procession through the streets of Rome, beaten with long white rods, and driven out of the city. He was called Mamurius Veturius,¹ that is, "the old Mars,"² and as the ceremony took place on the day preceding the first full moon of the old Roman year (which began on the first of March), the skin-clad man must have represented the Mars of the past year, who was driven out at the beginning of a new one. Now Mars was originally not a god of war but of vegetation. For it was to Mars that the Roman husbandman prayed for the prosperity of his corn and his vines, his fruit-trees and his copses;³ it was to Mars that the priestly college of the Arval Brothers, whose business it was to sacrifice for the growth of the crops,⁴ addressed their petitions almost exclusively;⁵ and it was to Mars, as we saw,⁶ that a horse was sacrificed in October to secure an abundant harvest. Moreover, it was to Mars, under his title of "Mars of the woods" (*Mars Silvanus*) that farmers offered sacrifice for the welfare of their cattle.⁷ We have already seen that cattle are commonly supposed to be under the special patronage of tree-gods.⁸ Once more, the consecration

¹ Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iii. 29, iv. 36. Lydus places the expulsion on the Ides of March, that is 15th March. But this seems to be a mistake. See Usener, "Italische Mythen," *Rheinisches Museum*, xxx. 209 sqq. Again, Lydus does not expressly say that Mamurius Veturius was driven out of the city, but he implies it by mentioning the legend that his mythical prototype was beaten with rods and expelled the city. Lastly, Lydus only mentions the name Mamurius. But the full name Mamurius Veturius is preserved by Varro, *Ling. Lat.* vi. 45; Festus, ed. Müller, p. 131; Plutarch, *Numa*, 13. Mr. W. Warde Fowler is disposed to be sceptical as to the antiquity of the ceremony of expelling Mamurius. See his *Roman Festivals of the period of the Republic*, pp. 44-50.

² Usener, *op. cit.* p. 212 sq.; Roscher, *Apollon und Mars*, p. 27; Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³ i. 360; Vaniček, *Griechisch-lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, p. 715. The three latter scholars take Veturius as = *annuus*, because *vetus* is etymologically equivalent to *eros*. But, as Usener argues, it seems quite unallowable to take the Greek meaning of the word instead of the Latin.

³ Cato, *De agri cult.* 141.

⁴ Varro, *De lingua latina*, v. 85.

⁵ See the song of the Arval Brothers in *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, ed. Henzen, p. 26 sq.; Wordsworth, *Fragments and Specimens of Early Latin*, p. 158.

⁶ Vol. ii. p. 315 sq.

⁷ Cato, *De agri cult.* 83.

⁸ Above, vol. i. pp. 192 sqq., 230.

of the vernal month of March to Mars seems to point him out as the deity of the sprouting vegetation. Thus the Roman custom of expelling the old Mars at the beginning of the new year in spring is identical with the Slavonic custom of "carrying out Death," if the view here taken of the latter custom is correct. The similarity of the Roman and Slavonic customs has been already remarked by scholars, who appear, however, to have taken Mamurius Veturius and the corresponding figures in the Slavonic ceremonies to be representatives of the old year rather than of the old god of vegetation.¹ It is possible that ceremonies of this kind may have come to be thus interpreted in later times even by the people who practised them. But the personification of a period of time is too abstract an idea to be primitive.² However, in the Roman, as in the Slavonic, ceremony, the representative of the god appears to have been treated not only as a deity of vegetation but also as a scapegoat. His expulsion implies this; for there is no reason why the god of vegetation, as such, should be expelled the city. But it is otherwise if he is also a scapegoat; it then becomes necessary to drive him beyond the boundaries, that he may carry his sorrowful burden away to other lands. And, in fact, Mamurius Veturius appears to have been driven away to the land of the Oscans, the enemies of Rome.³

¹ Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³ i. 360; Roscher, *Apollon und Mars*, p. 49; *id.*, *Lexikon d. griech. und röm. Mythologie*, ii. 2408 sq.; Usener, *op. cit.* The ceremony also closely resembles the Highland New Year ceremony described above, vol. ii. p. 447.

² But the Biyārs, a mixed tribe of North-Western India, observe an annual ceremony which they call "burning the old year." The old year is represented by a stake of the wood of the cotton-tree, which is planted in the ground at an appointed place outside of the village, and then burned on the day of the full moon in the month of Pūs. Fire is first put to it by the village priest, and then all the people follow his example, parch stalks of barley in the fire, and afterwards eat them. Next day they throw the ashes of the burnt wood in the air; and on the

morrow the festival ends with a regular saturnalia, at which decency and order are forgotten. See W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, ii. 137 sq. Compare, *id.*, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 392.

³ Propertius, v. 2. 61 sq.; Usener, *op. cit.* p. 210. One of the functions of the Salii or dancing priests, who during March went up and down the city dancing, singing, and clashing their swords against their shields (Livy, i. 20; Plutarch, *Numa*, 13; Dionysius Halicarn. *Antiq.* ii. 70), may have been to rout out the evils or demons from all parts of the city, as a preparation for transferring them to the scapegoat Mamurius Veturius. Similarly, as we have seen (above, p. 108), among the Iroquois, men in fantastic

The ancient Greeks were also familiar with the use of a human scapegoat. In Plutarch's native town of Chaeronea a ceremony of this kind was performed by the chief magistrate at the Town Hall, and by each householder at his own home. It was called the "expulsion of hunger." A slave was beaten with rods of the *agnus castus*, and turned out of doors with the words, "Out with hunger, and in with wealth and health."

costume went about collecting the sins of the people as a preliminary to transferring them to the scapegoat dogs. We have had many examples of armed men rushing about the streets and houses to drive out demons and evils of all kinds. The blows which were showered on Mamurius Veturius seem to have been administered by the Salii (Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* vii. 188; Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 24. 3; Preller, *Rom. Myth.*³ i. 360, note 1; Roscher, *Apollon und Mars*, p. 49). The reason for beating the scapegoat will be explained presently. As priests of Mars, the god of agriculture, the Salii probably had also certain agricultural functions. They were named from the remarkable leaps which they made. Now we have seen (vol. i. p. 36 *sq.*) that dancing and leaping high are common sympathetic charms to make the crops grow high. Was it one of the functions of the Salii to dance and leap on the fields at the spring or autumn sowing, or at both? The dancing processions of the Salii took place in October as well as in March (Marquardt, *Sacralwesen*,² p. 436 *sq.*), and the Romans sowed both in spring and autumn (Columella, ii. 9. 6 *sq.*). In their song the Salii mentioned Saturnus or Saeturnus, the god of sowing (Festus, p. 325, ed. Müller; *Saeturnus* is an emendation of Ritschl's; see Wordsworth, *Fragments and Specimens of Early Latin*, p. 405). The weapons borne by the Salii, while effective against demons in general, may have been especially directed against the demons who steal the seed-corn or the ripe grain. Compare the Khond and Hindoo Koosh customs described above, p. 79 *sq.* In Western Africa the field labours of tilling and sowing are sometimes accompanied by dances

of armed men on the field. See Labat, *Voyage du Chevalier des Marchais en Guinée, Isles voisines et à Cayenne*, ii. p. 99 of the Paris ed., p. 80 of the Amsterdam ed.; Olivier de Sanderval, *De l'Atlantique au Niger par le Foulah-Djallon* (Paris, 1883), p. 230. In Calicut (Southern India) "they plough the land with oxen as we do, and when they sow the rice in the field they have all the instruments of the city continually sounding and making merry. They also have ten or twelve men clothed like devils, and these unite in making great rejoicing with the players on the instruments, in order that the devil may make that rice very productive" (Varthema, *Travels* (Hakluyt Soc. 1863), p. 166 *sq.*). The resemblance of the Salii to the sword-dancers of Northern Europe has been pointed out by K. Müllenhoff ("Ueber den Schwerttanz," in *Festgaben für Gustav Homeyer*, Berlin, 1871). In England the Morris Dancers who accompanied the procession of the plough through the streets on Plough Monday (the first Monday after Twelfth Day) sometimes wore swords (Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 505, Bohn's ed.), and sometimes they "wore small bunches of corn in their hats, from which the wheat was soon shaken out by the ungainly jumping which they called dancing. . . . Bessy rattled his box and danced so high that he showed his worsted stockings and corduroy breeches" (Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 94). It is to be observed that in the "Lord of Mistrule," who reigned from Christmas till Twelfth Night (see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 497 *sqq.*), we have a clear trace of one of those periods of general licence and suspension of ordinary government which so commonly occur at the end

When Plutarch held the office of chief magistrate of his native town he performed this ceremony at the Town Hall, and he has recorded the discussion to which the custom afterwards gave rise.¹ The ceremony closely resembles the Japanese, Hindoo, and Highland customs already described.²

But in civilised Greece the custom of the scapegoat took darker forms than the innocent rite over which the amiable and pious Plutarch presided. Whenever Marseilles, one of the busiest and most brilliant of Greek colonies, was ravaged by a plague, a man of the poorer classes used to offer himself as a scapegoat. For a whole year he was maintained at the public expense, being fed on choice and pure food. At the expiry of the year he was dressed in sacred garments, decked with holy branches, and led through the whole city, while prayers were uttered that all the evils of the people might fall on his head. He was then cast out of the city.³ The Athenians regularly maintained a number of degraded and useless beings at the public expense; and when any calamity, such as plague, drought, or famine, befell the city, they sacrificed two of these outcasts as scapegoats. One of the victims was sacrificed for the men and the other for the women. The former wore round his neck a string of black, the latter a string of white figs. Sometimes, it seems, the victim slain on behalf of the women was a woman. They were led about the city and then sacrificed, apparently by being stoned to death outside the city.⁴ But such sacrifices were not confined to extraordinary occasions of public calamity; it appears that every year, at the festival of the

of the old year or beginning of the new one in connection with a general expulsion of evils. The fact that this period of licence immediately preceded the procession of the Morris Dancers on Plough Monday seems to indicate that the functions of these dancers were like those which I have attributed to the Salii. But the parallel cannot be drawn out here. Cp. meantime Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, pp. 31, 39. The Salii were said to have been founded by *Morrius*, King of Veii (Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 285). *Morrius* seems to be etymologically the same with *Mamurius* and

Mars (Usener, "Italische Mythen," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xxx. p. 213). Can the English *Morris* (in *Morris* dancers) be the same?

¹ Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* vi. 8.

² See above, pp. 82 sq., 108.

³ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iii. 57, following Petronius.

⁴ Helladius, in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 534 A, ed. Bekker; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 734, and on *Knights*, 1136; Hesychius, s.v. *φαρμακοί*; cp. Suidas, s.vv. *κάθαρμα*, *φαρμακός*, and *φαρμακοίς*; Lysias, *Orat.* vi. 53. That they were stoned is an inference from Harpocration. See next note.

Thargelia in May, two victims, one for the men and one for the women, were led out of Athens and stoned to death.¹ The city of Abdera in Thrace was publicly purified once a year, and one of the burghers, set apart for the purpose, was stoned to death as a scapegoat or vicarious sacrifice for the life of all the others.²

From the Lover's Leap, a white bluff at the southern end of their island, the Leucadians used annually to hurl a criminal into the sea as a scapegoat. But to lighten his fall they fastened live birds and feathers to him, and a flotilla of small boats waited below to catch him and convey him beyond the boundary. Probably these humane precautions were a mitigation of an earlier custom of flinging the scapegoat into the sea to drown, just as in Kumaon the custom of letting a man slide down a rope from the top of a cliff appears to be a modification of an older practice of putting him to death. The Leucadian ceremony took place at the time of a sacrifice to Apollo, who had a temple or sanctuary on the spot.³ As practised by the Greeks of Asia Minor in the sixth century B.C., the custom of the scapegoat was as follows. When a city suffered from plague, famine, or other public calamity, an ugly or deformed person was chosen to take upon himself all the evils which afflicted the community. He was brought to a suitable place, where dried figs, a barley loaf, and cheese were put into his hand. These he ate. Then he was beaten seven times upon his genital organs with squills and branches of the wild fig and other wild trees. Afterwards he was burned on a pyre built of the wood of forest trees ;

¹ Harpocration, *s.v.* *φαρμακός*, who says δύο ἄνδρας Ἀθήνησιν ἐξήγον καθάρσια ἐσομένους τῆς πόλεως ἐν τοῖς Θαργηλίοις, ἕνα μὲν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνδρῶν, ἕνα δὲ ὑπὲρ τῶν γυναικῶν. He does not expressly state that they were put to death ; but as he says that the ceremony was an imitation of the execution of a mythical Pharmacus who was stoned to death, we may infer that the victims were killed by being stoned. Suidas (*s.v.* *φάρμακος*) copies Harpocration.

² Ovid, *Ibis*, 467 sq.

³ *Aut te devoteat certis Abdera diebus*

Saxaque devotum grandine plura petant,"

with the scholiast's note, quoted by J. Töpffer, *Beiträge zur griechischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Berlin, 1897), p. 132. The scholiast refers to Callimachus as his authority.

³ Strabo, x. 2. 9. According to the manuscript reading in Photius's *Lexicon*, *s.v.* *Λευκάτης*, the priests flung themselves into the sea ; but the reading has been altered by the editors. As to the Kumaon ceremony see above, p. 104 sq.

and his ashes were cast into the sea.¹ A similar custom appears to have been annually celebrated by the Asiatic Greeks at the harvest festival of the Thargelia.²

In the ritual just described the scourging of the victim with squills, branches of the wild fig, and so forth, cannot have been intended to aggravate his sufferings, otherwise any stick would have been good enough to beat him with. The true meaning of this part of the ceremony has been explained by W. Mannhardt.³ He points out that the ancients attributed to squills a magical power of averting evil influences, and accordingly hung them up at the doors of their houses and made use of them in purificatory rites.⁴ Hence the Arcadian custom of whipping the image of Pan with squills at a festival, or whenever the hunters returned empty-handed,⁵ must have been meant, not to punish the god, but to purify him from the harmful influences which were impeding him in the exercise of his divine functions as a god who should supply the hunter with game. Similarly the object of beating the human scapegoat on the genital organs with squills and so on, must have been to release his reproductive energies from any restraint or spell under which they might be laid by demoniacal or other malignant agency; and as the Thargelia at which he was annually sacrificed was an early harvest festival,⁶ we must recognise in him a representative of the creative and fertilising god of vegetation. The representative of the god was annually slain for the purpose I have indicated, that of maintaining the divine life in perpetual vigour, untainted by the weakness of age; and before he was put to death it was not unnatural to stimulate his reproductive powers in order that these might be transmitted in full activity to his successor, the new god or new embodiment of the old god,

¹ Tzetzes, *Chiliades*, v. 726-761. Tzetzes's authority is the satirical poet Hipponax.

² This may be inferred from the verse of Hipponax, quoted by Athenaeus, ix. p. 370 B, where for *φαρμάκου* we should perhaps read *φαρμακῶν* with Schneide-
win (*Poetae Lyrici Graeci*,³ ed. Bergk, ii. 763).

³ See his *Mytholog. Forschungen*, p.

113 sqq., especially 123 sq., 133.

⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xx. 101; Dioscorides, *De mat. med.* ii. 202; Lucian, *Necyom.* 7; *id.*, *Alexander*, 47; Theophrastus, *Superstitious Man*.

⁵ Theocritus, vii. 106 sqq. with the scholiast.

⁶ Cp. Aug. Mommsen, *Heortologie*, 414 sqq.; W. Mannhardt, *A.W.F.* p. 215.

who was doubtless supposed immediately to take the place of the one slain.¹ Similar reasoning would lead to a similar treatment of the scapegoat on special occasions, such as drought or famine. If the crops did not answer to the expectation of the husbandman, this would be attributed to some failure in the generative powers of the god whose function it was to produce the fruits of the earth. It might be thought that he was under a spell or was growing old and feeble. Accordingly he was slain in the person of his representative, with all the ceremonies already described, in order that, born young again, he might infuse his own youthful vigour into the stagnant energies of nature. On the same principle we can understand why Mamurius Veturius was beaten with rods, why the slave at the Chaeronean ceremony was beaten with the *agnus castus* (a tree to which magical properties were ascribed),² why the effigy of Death in some parts of Europe is assailed with sticks and stones, and why at Babylon the criminal who played the god was scourged before he was crucified. The purpose of the scourging was not to intensify the agony of the divine sufferer, but on the contrary to dispel any malignant influences by which at the supreme moment he might conceivably be beset.

The interpretation here given of the custom of beating the human scapegoat with certain plants is supported by many analogies. With the same intention some of the Brazilian Indians beat themselves on the genital organs with an aquatic plant, the white *aninga*, three days before or after the new moon.³ We have already had examples of the custom of beating sick people with the leaves of certain plants or with branches in order to rid them of noxious influences.⁴ Some of the Dravidian tribes of Northern India, who attribute epilepsy, hysteria, and similar maladies

¹ At certain sacrifices in Yucatan blood was drawn from the genitals of a human victim and smeared on the face of the idol. See De Landa, *Relation des choses de Yucatan*, ed. Brasseur de Bourbourg (Paris, 1864), p. 167. Was the original intention of this rite to transfuse into the god a fresh supply of reproductive energy?

² Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* ix. 26.

³ De Santa-Anna Nery, *Folk-lore Brésilien* (Paris, 1889), p. 253.

⁴ Above, pp. 2, 98 *sq.* Compare Plutarch, *Parallela*, 35, where a woman is represented as going from house to house striking sick people with a hammer and bidding them be whole.

to demoniacal possession, endeavour to cure the sufferer by thrashing him soundly with a sacred iron chain, which is believed to have the effect of immediately expelling the demon.¹ When a herd of camels refuses to drink, the Arabs will sometimes beat the male beasts on the back to drive away the jinn who are riding them and frightening the females.² In Bikol, the south-western part of Luzon, it was generally believed that if the evil spirit Aswang were not properly exorcised he took possession of the bodies of the dead and tormented them. Hence to deliver a corpse from his clutches the native priestesses used to beat it with a brush or whisk made of the leaves of the aromatic China orange, while they chanted a certain song, throwing their bodies into contortions and uttering shrill cries, as if the evil spirit had entered into themselves. The soul of the deceased, thus delivered from the cruel tyranny of Aswang, was then free to roam at pleasure along the charming lanes or in the thick shade of the forest.³

Sometimes it appears that a beating is administered for the purpose of ridding people of a ghost who may be clinging too closely to their persons; in such cases the blows, though they descend on the bodies of the living, are really aimed at the spirit of the dead, and have no other object than to drive it away, just as a coachman will flick the back of a horse with his whip to rid the beast of a fly. At a funeral in the island of Halmahera, before the coffin is lowered into the grave, all the relations whip themselves on the head and shoulders with wands made of plants which are believed to possess the power of keeping off evil spirits. The intention of the custom is said to be to bring back their own spectres or souls and to prevent them from following the ghost; but this may fairly be interpreted to mean that the blows are directed to brushing off the ghost, who would otherwise abstract the soul of the person

¹ W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, pp. 61, 100; *id.*, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, iii. 333, 441, 445.

² A. Certeux et E. H. Carnoy, *L'Algérie Traditionnelle* (Paris and

Algiers, 1884), p. 189.

³ H. Kern, "Een Spanisch schrijver over den godsdienst der heidensche Bikollers," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlvii. (1897), p. 232 sq. The Spanish authority is Father José Castaño.

on whose body he was allowed to settle. This interpretation is strongly confirmed by the practice, observed by the same people on the same occasion, of throwing the trunk of a banana-tree into the grave, and telling the dead man that it is a companion for him; for this practice is expressly intended to prevent the deceased from feeling lonely, and so coming back to fetch away a friend.¹ The Bannanas of Senegambia think that the soul of a dead infant becomes for a time a wandering and maleficent spirit. Accordingly when a baby dies, all the uncircumcised children of the same sex in the village run about the streets in a band, each armed with three or four supple rods. Some of them enter every house to beg, and while they are doing so, one of the troop, propping himself against the wall with his hands, is lashed by another of the children on his back or legs till the blood flows. Each of the children takes it in turn to be thus whipped. The object of the whipping, we are told, "appears to be to preserve the uncircumcised child from being carried off by its comrade who has just died."² The severe scourgings inflicted on each other by some South American Indians at ceremonies connected with the dead may be similarly intended to chase away the dangerous ghost, who is conceived as sticking like a leech or a bur to the skin of the living.³

At the autumn festival in Peru people used to strike each other with torches, saying, "Let all harm go away."⁴ Indians of the Quixos, in South America, before they set out on a long hunting expedition, cause their wives to whip them with nettles, believing that this renders them fleet, and helps them to overtake the peccaries. They resort to the same proceeding as a cure for sickness.⁵ The Roocooyen

¹ J. M. van Baarda, "Ile de Halmaheira," *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, Quatrième Série, iii. (1892), p. 545. The custom of throwing a banana-trunk into the grave has been already noticed (vol. ii. p. 345).

² *Revue d'Ethnographie*, iii. (1885), p. 395 sq.

³ R. Schomburgk, *Reisen in Britisch-Guiana*, ii. 457 sqq.; Bernau,

Missionary Labours in British Guiana, p. 52; Von Martius, *Zur Ethnographie Amerika's*, p. 694 sq.; J. Crevaux, *Voyages dans l'Amérique du Sud*, p. 548.

⁴ Acosta, *History of the Indies*, vol. ii. p. 375 (Hakluyt Society). See above, p. 76.

⁵ Osculati, *Esplorazione delle regioni equatoriali lungo il Napo ed il fiume delle Amazzoni* (Milan, 1854), p. 118.

Indians of French Guiana train up young people in the way they should go by causing them to be stung by ants and wasps; and at the ceremony held for this purpose the grown-up people improve the occasion by allowing themselves to be whacked by the chief with a stick over the arms, the legs, and the chest. They appear to labour under an impression that this conveys to them all sorts of moral and physical excellences. One of the tribe, ambitious of acquiring the European virtues, begged a French traveller to be so kind as to give him a good hiding. The traveller did his best to gratify him, and the face of the Indian beamed with gratitude as the blows fell on his naked back.¹ The Delaware Indians had two sovereign remedies for sin; one was an emetic, the other a thrashing. In the latter case, the remedy was administered by means of twelve different sticks, with which the sinner was belaboured from the soles of his feet up to his neck. In both cases the sins were supposed to be expelled from the body, and to pass out through the throat.² At Mowat in New Guinea small boys are beaten lightly with sticks during December "to make them grow strong and hardy."³

In some parts of Eastern and Central Europe a similar custom is very commonly observed in spring. On the first of March the Albanians strike men and beast with cornel branches, believing that this is very good for their health.⁴ In March the Greek peasants of Cos switch their cattle, saying, "It is March, and up with your tail!" They think that the ceremony benefits the animals, and brings good luck. It is never observed at any other time of the year.⁵ In some parts of Mecklenburg it is customary to beat the cattle before sunrise on the morning of Good Friday with rods of buckthorn, which are afterwards concealed in some secret place where neither sun nor moon can shine on them. The belief is that though the blows light upon the animals,

¹ H. Coudreau, *Chez nos Indiens : quatre années dans la Guyane Française* (Paris, 1895), p. 544.

² G. H. Loskiel, *History of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians in North America* (London, 1794), p. 37.

³ E. Beardmore, "The natives of

Mowat, Daudai, New Guinea," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890), p. 464.

⁴ J. G. v. Hahn, *Albanesische Studien* (Jena, 1854), i. 155.

⁵ W. H. D. Rouse, "Folklore from the southern Sporades," *Folklore*, x. (1899), p. 179.

the pain of them is felt by the witches who are riding the beasts.¹ In the neighbourhood of Iserlohn, in Westphalia, the herdsman rises at peep of dawn on May morning, climbs a hill, and cuts down the young rowan-tree which is the first to catch the beams of the rising sun. With this he returns to the farm-yard. The heifer which the farmer desires to "quicken" is then led to the dunghill, and the herdsman strikes it over the hind-quarters, the haunches, and the udders with a branch of the rowan-tree, saying,

"Quick, quick, quick!
Bring milk into the dugs.
The sap is in the birches.
The heifer receives a name.

"Quick, quick, quick!
Bring milk into the dugs.
The sap comes in the beeches,
The leaf comes on the oak.

"Quick, quick, quick!
Bring milk into the dugs.
In the name of the sainted Greta,
Gold-flower shall be thy name,"

and so on.² The intention of the ceremony appears to be to make sure that the heifer shall in due time yield a plentiful supply of milk; and this is perhaps supposed to be brought about by driving away the witches, who are particularly apt, as we have seen,³ to rob the cows of their milk on the morning of May Day. In the north-east of Scotland pieces of rowan-tree and woodbine, or of rowan alone, used to be placed over the doors of the cow-houses on May Day to keep the witches from the kine; and a still better way of attaining the same object was to tie a cross of rowan-tree wood with a scarlet thread to each animal's tail.⁴ In Germany also the rowan-tree is a protection against witchcraft;⁵ and Norwegian sailors and fishermen

¹ K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. p. 258, § 1348.

² J. F. L. Woeste, *Volksüberlieferungen in der Grafschaft Mark* (Iserlohn, 1848), p. 25 sq.; A. Kuhn, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks*,³ p. 161 sqq. The cere-

mony takes its name of "quicken" from *Quieke* or *Quickenbaum*, a German name for the rowan-tree.

³ Vol. i. p. 194, note 3.

⁴ W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 188.

⁵ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,³ p. 106, § 145.

carry a piece of it in their boats for good luck.¹ Thus the benefit to young cows of beating them with rowan is not the positive one of pouring milk into their udders, but merely the negative one of averting evil influence; and the same may perhaps be said of most of the beatings with which we are here concerned.

On Good Friday and the two previous days people in Croatia and Slavonia take rods with them to church, and when the service is over they beat each other "fresh and healthy."² In some parts of Russia people returning from the church on Palm Sunday beat the children and servants who have stayed at home with palm branches, saying, "Sickness into the forest, health into the bones."³ In Germany and Austria the custom is widely known as *Schmeckostern* or "Easter smacks," being observed at Eastertide. People beat each other, commonly with fresh green twigs of the birch or the willow. The beating is supposed to bring good luck; the person beaten will, it is believed, be free of vermin during the summer, or will have no pains in his back or his legs for a year. Often it is the women only who are treated to "Easter smacks," but not uncommonly the two sexes beat each other, sometimes on different days. Frequently the women and girls are expected to present red Easter eggs to the men or boys who beat them. The custom appears to be of Slavonic origin; at least it prevails chiefly in districts where the people are, or once were, Slavs. In Masuren the rods or bundles of twigs are afterwards laid by and used to drive the cattle out to pasture for the first time.⁴

If the view here taken of the Greek scapegoat is correct, it obviates an objection which might otherwise be brought against the main argument of this chapter. To the theory that the priest of Aricia was slain as a representative of the

¹ Woeste, *op. cit.* p. 26.

² F. S. Krauss, *Kroatien und Slavonien* (Vienna, 1889), p. 108.

³ W. Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 257.

⁴ Th. Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche der Völker in Oesterreich*, p. 300 sq.; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, pp. 163-167; A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus Oesterreichisch-Schlesien*, ii. 285; W. Müller,

Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren, pp. 322, 399 sq.; J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., *im Voigtlande*, p. 173 sq.; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 70, § 83; M. Toppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 69; W. Mannhardt, *B.K.* pp. 258-263. See Mannhardt's whole discussion of such customs, *op. cit.* pp. 251-303, and *Myth. Forsch.* pp. 113-153.

spirit of the grove, it might have been objected that such a custom has no analogy in classical antiquity. But reasons have now been given for believing that the human being periodically and occasionally slain by the Asiatic Greeks was regularly treated as an embodiment of a divinity. Probably the persons whom the Athenians kept to be sacrificed were similarly treated as divine. That they were social outcasts did not matter. On the primitive view a man is not chosen to be the mouth-piece or embodiment of a god on account of his high moral qualities or social rank. The divine afflatus descends equally on the good and the bad, the lofty and the lowly. If then the civilised Greeks of Asia and Athens habitually sacrificed men whom they regarded as incarnate gods, there can be no inherent improbability in the supposition that at the dawn of history a similar custom was observed by the semi-barbarous Latins in the Arician Grove.

§ 16. *Killing the God in Mexico*

But the religion of ancient Mexico, as it was found and described by the Spanish conquerors in the sixteenth century, offers perhaps a closer parallel to the rule of the Arician priesthood, as I conceive that rule to have been originally observed. Certainly nowhere does the custom of killing the human representative of a god appear to have been carried out so systematically and on so extensive a scale as in Mexico. "They took a captive," says Acosta, "such as they thought good; and afore they did sacrifice him unto their idols, they gave him the name of the idol, to whom he should be sacrificed, and apparelled him with the same ornaments like their idol, saying that he did represent the same idol. And during the time that this representation lasted, which was for a year in some feasts, in others six months, and in others less, they revered and worshipped him in the same manner as the proper idol; and in the meantime he did eat, drink, and was merry. When he went through the streets the people came forth to worship him, and every one brought him an alms, with children and sick folks, that he might cure them, and bless them, suffering him to do all

things at his pleasure, only he was accompanied with ten or twelve men lest he should fly. And he (to the end he might be revered as he passed) sometimes sounded upon a small flute, that the people might prepare to worship him. The feast being come, and he grown fat, they killed him, opened him, and eat him, making a solemn sacrifice of him."¹ For example, at the annual festival of the great god Tezcatlipoca, which fell about Easter or a few days later, a young man was chosen to be the living image of Tezcatlipoca for a whole year. He had to be of unblemished body, and he was carefully trained to sustain his lofty part with becoming grace and dignity. During the year he was lapped in luxury, and the king himself took care that the future victim was apparelled in gorgeous attire, "for already he esteemed him as a god." Attended by eight pages clad in the royal livery, the young man roamed the streets of the capital day and night at his pleasure, carrying flowers and playing the flute. All who saw him fell on their knees before him and adored him, and he graciously acknowledged their homage. Twenty days before the festival at which he was to be sacrificed, four damsels, delicately nurtured, and bearing the names of four goddesses, were given him to be his brides. For five days before the sacrifice divine honours were showered on him more abundantly than ever. The king remained in his palace, while the whole court went after the destined victim. Everywhere there were solemn banquets and balls. On the last day the young man, still attended by his pages, was ferried across the lake in a covered barge to a small and lonely temple, which, like the Mexican temples in general, rose in the form of a pyramid. As he ascended the stairs of the temple he broke at every step one of the flutes on which he had played in the days of his glory. On reaching the summit he was seized and held down on a block of stone, while a priest cut open his breast with a stone knife, and plucking out his heart, offered it to the sun. His head was hung among the skulls of previous victims, and his legs and

¹ Acosta, *History of the Indies*, vol. ii. p. 323 (Hakluyt Soc. 1880). I have modernised the spelling. Cp. Herrera,

General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America, trans. by Stevens, iii. 207 sq.

arms were cooked and prepared for the table of the lords. His place was immediately filled up by another young man, who for a year was treated with the same profound respect, and at the end of it shared the same fate.¹

The idea that the god thus slain in the person of his representative comes to life again immediately, was graphically represented in the Mexican ritual by skinning the slain man-god and clothing in his skin a living man, who thus became the new representative of the godhead. For example, at an annual festival a woman was sacrificed who represented Toci, the Mother of the Gods, or the Earth-goddess. She was dressed with the ornaments, and bore the name of the goddess, whose living image she was believed to be. After being feasted and diverted with sham fights for several days, she was taken at midnight to the summit of a temple, and beheaded on the shoulders of a man. The body was immediately flayed, and one of the priests, clothing himself in the skin, became the representative of the goddess Toci. The skin of the woman's thigh was removed separately, and a young man who represented the maize-god Cinteotl, the son of the goddess Toci, wrapt it round his face like a mask. Various ceremonies then followed, in which the two men, clad in the woman's skin, played the parts respectively of the god and goddess.² For example, when the principal victims had been slain, their blood was offered to the representative of the maize-god in a vessel decked with feathers. This he tasted, bending over the vessel and dipping his finger in the blood while he uttered a loud and doleful groan, which caused all that heard it to shudder and quake. At

¹ Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne* (Paris, 1880), pp. 61 sq., 96-99, 103; Acosta, *History of the Indies*, vol. ii. p. 350 sqq. (Hakluyt Society); Clavigero, *History of Mexico*, trans. by Cullen, i. 300; Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des Nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique Centrale*, iii. 510-512; Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 319 sq. The sacramental banquet on the flesh of this dead god has been already noticed (vol. ii. p. 342 sq.). For other Mexican instances of persons

representing deities and slain in that character, see Sahagun, pp. 75, 116 sq., 123, 158 sq., 164 sq., 585 sqq., 589; Acosta, ii. 384 sqq.; Clavigero, i. 312; Brasseur de Bourbourg, iii. 517 sq., 519 sq., 527 sq., 529 sq., 535 sq.; Bancroft, ii. 325 sqq., 337 sq.

² Sahagun, pp. 18 sq., 68 sq., 133-139; Brasseur de Bourbourg, iii. 523-525; Bancroft, iii. 353-359; E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 470 sq.

the same moment, as the Indians firmly believed, a tremor ran through the earth itself.¹ Again, at the annual festival of the god Totec, a number of captives having been killed and skinned, a priest clothed himself in one of their skins, and thus became the image of the god Totec. Then wearing the ornaments of the god—a crown of feathers, golden necklaces and ear-rings, scarlet shoes, and so forth—he was enthroned, and received offerings of the first-fruits and first flowers of the season, together with bunches of the maize which had been kept for seed.² Every fourth year the Quauhtitlans offered sacrifices in honour of the god of fire. On the eve of the festival they sacrificed two slaves, skinned them, and took out their thigh bones. Next day two priests clothed themselves in the skins, took the bones in their hands, and with solemn steps and dismal howlings descended the stairs of the temple. The people, who were assembled in crowds below, called out, "Behold, there come our gods."³

Thus it appears that human sacrifices of the sort I suppose to have prevailed at Aricia were, as a matter of fact, systematically offered on a large scale by a people whose level of culture was probably not inferior, if indeed it was not distinctly superior, to that occupied by the Italian races at the early period to which the origin of the Arician priesthood must be referred. The positive and indubitable evidence of the prevalence of such sacrifices in one part of the world may reasonably be allowed to strengthen the probability of their prevalence in places for which the evidence is less full and trustworthy. Taken all together, the facts which we have passed in review seem to show that the custom of killing men whom their worshippers regard as divine has prevailed in many parts of the world. But to clinch the argument, it is clearly desirable to prove that the custom of putting to death a human representative of a god was known and practised in ancient Italy elsewhere than in the Arician Grove. This proof I now propose to adduce.

¹ E. J. Payne, *op. cit.* i. 470.

² Sahagun, p. 584 *sq.* For this festival see also *id.*, pp. 37 *sq.*, 58

sq., 60, 87 *sqq.*, 93; Clavigero, i. 297; Bancroft, ii. 306 *sqq.*

³ Clavigero, i. 283.

§ 17. *The Saturnalia and Kindred Festivals*

In an earlier part of this chapter we saw that many peoples have been used to observe an annual period of licence, when the customary restraints of law and morality are thrown aside, when the whole population give themselves up to extravagant mirth and jollity, and when the darker passions find a vent which would never be allowed them in the more staid and sober course of ordinary life. Such outbursts of the pent-up forces of human nature, too often degenerating into wild orgies of lust and crime, occur most commonly at the end of the year, and are frequently associated, as I have had occasion to point out, with one or other of the agricultural seasons, especially with the time of sowing or of harvest. Now, of all these periods of licence the one which is best known and which in modern languages has given its name to the rest, is the Saturnalia. This famous festival fell in December, the last month of the Roman year, and was popularly supposed to commemorate the merry reign of Saturn, the god of sowing and of husbandry, who lived on earth long ago as a righteous and beneficent king of Italy, drew the rude and scattered dwellers on the mountains together, taught them to till the ground, gave them laws, and ruled in peace. His reign was the fabled Golden Age; the earth brought forth abundantly; no sound of war or discord troubled the happy world; no baleful love of lucre worked like poison in the blood of the industrious and contented peasantry. Slavery and private property were alike unknown; all men had all things in common. At last the good god, the kindly king, vanished suddenly; but his memory was cherished to distant ages, shrines were reared in his honour, and many hills and high places in Italy bore his name.¹ Yet the bright tradition of

¹ Virgil, *Aen.* viii. 319-327, with the comments of Servius; Ovid, *Fasti.* i. 233 sqq.; Lucian, *Saturnalia*, 7; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 7. 21-26; Justin, xliii. 1. 3-5; Aurelius Victor, *Origo gentis Romanae*, 3; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 34. On Saturn and the Saturnalia see especially Preller, *Römische Mytho-*

logie,³ ii. 10 sqq. A good account of the Saturnalia, based on the texts of the classical writers, is given by Dezobry (*Rome au siècle d'Auguste*,³ iii. 143 sqq.). The name Saturn seems to be etymologically akin to *satus* and *satio*, "a sowing" or "planting." Compare Festus, s.v. "Opima spolia," p. 186 ed. Müller: "*ipse* [Saturnus] *agrorum*

his reign was crossed by a dark shadow: his altars are said to have been stained with the blood of human victims, for whom a more merciful age afterwards substituted effigies.¹ Of this gloomy side of the god's religion there is little or no trace in the descriptions which ancient writers have left us of the Saturnalia. Feasting and revelry and all the mad pursuit of pleasure are the features that seem to have especially marked this carnival of antiquity, as it went on for seven days in the streets and public squares and houses of ancient Rome from the seventeenth to the twenty-third of December.² But no feature of the festival is more remarkable, nothing in it seems to have struck the ancients themselves more than the licence granted to slaves at this time. The distinction between the free and the servile classes was temporarily abolished. The slave might rail at his master, intoxicate himself like his betters, sit down at table with them, and not even a word of reproof would be administered to him for conduct which at any other season might have been punished with stripes, imprisonment, or death.³ Nay, more, masters actually changed places with their slaves and waited on them at table; and not till the serf had done eating and drinking was the board cleared and dinner set for his master.⁴ So far was this inversion of ranks carried, that each household became for a time a mimic republic in which the high offices of state were discharged by the slaves, who gave their orders and laid down the law as if they were indeed invested with all the dignity of the consulship, the praetorship, and the bench.⁵ Like the pale reflection of power thus accorded to bondsmen at the Saturnalia was the mock kingship for which freemen cast lots at the same season. The person on whom the lot fell

cullor habetur, nominatus a saturo, tenensque falcem effingitur, quae est insigne agricolae."

¹ Dionysius Halicarn. *Ant. Rom.* i. 38; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 7. 31; Lactantius, i. 21; Arnobius, ii. 68.

² For the general dissipation of the Saturnalia see Seneca, *Epist.* 18; for the seven days of the popular festival see Martial, xiv. 72. 2; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 10. 2; Lucian, *Saturnalia*, 21.

³ Horace, *Sat.* ii. 7. 4 sq.; Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 7. 26; Justin, xliii. 1. 4; Plutarch, *Sulla*, 18; Lucian, *Saturnalia*, 5, 7.

⁴ Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 12. 7, i. 24. 23; Solinus, i. 35; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iii. 15; Athenaeus, xiv. p. 639 B; Dio Cassius, lx. 19.

⁵ Seneca, *Epist.* 47. 14. Compare Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 23.

enjoyed the title of king, and issued commands of a playful and ludicrous nature to his temporary subjects. One of them he might order to mix the wine, another to drink, another to sing, another to dance, another to speak in his own dispraise, another to carry a flute-girl on his back round the house.¹

Now, when we remember that the liberty allowed to slaves at this festive season was supposed to be an imitation of the state of society in Saturn's time, and that in general the Saturnalia passed for nothing more or less than a temporary revival or restoration of the reign of that merry monarch, we are tempted to surmise that the mock king who presided over the revels may have originally represented Saturn himself. The conjecture is strongly confirmed, if not established, by a very curious and interesting account of the way in which the Saturnalia was celebrated by the Roman soldiers stationed on the Danube in the reign of Maximian and Diocletian. The account is preserved in a narrative of the martyrdom of St. Dasius, which has lately been unearthed from a Greek manuscript in the Paris library, and published by Professor Franz Cumont of Ghent. Two briefer descriptions of the event and of the custom are contained in manuscripts at Milan and Berlin; one of them had already seen the light in an obscure volume printed at Urbino in 1727, but its importance for the history of the Roman religion, both ancient and modern, appears to have been overlooked until Professor Cumont drew the attention of scholars to all three narratives by publishing them together a few years ago.² According to these narratives, which have all the appearance of being authentic, and of which the longest is probably based on official documents, the Roman soldiers at Durostolum in Lower Moesia celebrated the Saturnalia year by year in the following manner. Thirty days before the festival they chose by lot from amongst themselves a young

¹ Tacitus, *Annals*, xiii. 15; Arrian, *Epicteti Dissert.* i. 25. 8; Lucian, *Saturnalia*, 4.

² "Les Actes de S. Dasius," *Analecta Bollandiana*, xvi. (1897), pp. 5-16. I have to thank Prof. Cumont for

courteously sending me a copy of this important paper. The bearing of the new evidence on the Saturnalia has been further discussed by Messrs. Parmentier and Cumont ("Le roi des Saturnales," *Revue de Philologie*, xxi. (1897), pp. 143-153).

and handsome man, who was then clothed in royal attire to resemble Saturn. Thus arrayed and attended by a multitude of soldiers he went about in public with full licence to indulge his passions and to taste of every pleasure, however base and shameful. But if his reign was merry, it was short and ended tragically; for when the thirty days were up and the festival of Saturn had come, he cut his own throat on the altar of the god whom he personated.¹ In the year 303 A.D. the lot fell upon the Christian soldier Dasius, but he refused to play the part of the heathen god and soil his last days by debauchery. The threats and arguments of his commanding officer Bassus failed to shake his constancy, and accordingly he was beheaded, as the Christian martyrologist records with minute accuracy, at Durostolum by the soldier John on Friday the twentieth day of November, being the twenty-fourth day of the moon, at the fourth hour.

This account sets in a new and lurid light the office of the King of the Saturnalia, the ancient Lord of Misrule, who presided over the winter revels at Rome in the time of Horace and of Tacitus. It seems to prove that his business had not always been that of a mere harlequin or merry-andrew whose only care was that the revelry should run high and the fun grow fast and furious, while the fire blazed and crackled on the hearth, while the streets swarmed with festive crowds, and through the clear frosty air, far away to the north, Soracte showed his coronal of snow. When we compare this comic monarch of the gay, the civilised metropolis with his grim counterpart of the rude camp on the Danube, and when we remember the long array of similar figures, ludicrous yet tragic, who in other ages and in other lands, wearing mock crowns and wrapt in sceptred palls, have played their little pranks for a few brief hours or days, then passed before their time to a violent death, we can hardly doubt that in the King of the Saturnalia at Rome, as he is depicted by classical writers, we see only a

¹ The phrase of the Paris MS. is ambiguous (τοῖς ἀνώνυμοις καὶ μυσαροῖς εἰδώλοις προσεκόμενος αὐτὸν σπονδὴν, ἀναιρούμενος ὑπὸ μαχαίρας); but the other two versions say plainly that the

mock king perished by his own hand (μέλλοντα αὐτὸν ἐπισφάζει τῷ βῶμει τοῦ Κρόνου, Berlin MS.; αὐτὸν ἐπισφάζει αὐτοχείρως τῷ Κρόνῳ, Milan MS.).

feeble emasculated copy of that original, whose strong features have been fortunately preserved for us by the obscure author of the *Martyrdom of St. Dasius*. In other words, the martyrologist's account of the Saturnalia agrees so closely with the accounts of similar rites elsewhere, which could not possibly have been known to him, that the substantial accuracy of his description may be regarded as established; and further, since the custom of putting a mock king to death as a representative of a god cannot have grown out of a practice of appointing him to preside over a holiday revel, whereas the reverse may very well have happened, we are justified in assuming that in an earlier and more barbarous age it was the universal practice in ancient Italy, wherever the worship of Saturn prevailed, to choose a man who played the part and enjoyed all the traditionary privileges of Saturn for a season, and then died, whether by his own or another's hand, whether by the knife or the fire or on the gallows-tree, in the character of the good god who gave his life for the world. In Rome itself and other great towns the growth of civilisation had probably mitigated this cruel custom long before the Augustan age, and transformed it into the innocent shape it wears in the writings of the few classical writers who bestow a passing notice on the holiday King of the Saturnalia. But in remoter districts the older and sterner practice may long have survived; and even if after the unification of Italy the barbarous usage was suppressed by the Roman government, the memory of it would be handed down by the peasants and would tend from time to time, as still happens with the lowest forms of superstition among ourselves, to lead to a recrudescence of the practice, especially among the rude soldiery on the outskirts of the empire over whom the once iron hand of Rome was beginning to relax its grasp.¹

¹ The opinion that at Rome a man used to be sacrificed at the Saturnalia cannot be regarded as in itself improbable, when we remember that down apparently to the establishment of Christianity a human victim was slaughtered every year at Rome in honour of Latian Jupiter. See Ter-tullian, *Apologeticus*, 9, *Contra Gnos-*

ticos Scorpiace, 7; Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 22 and 30; Lactantius, i. 21; Porphyry, *De abstinencia*, ii. 56. We may conjecture that at first the sacrifice took place on the top of the Alban Mountain, and was offered to Saturn, to whom, as we have seen, high places were sacred.

The resemblance between the Saturnalia of ancient and the Carnival of modern Italy has been often remarked; but in the light of all the facts that have come before us, we may well ask whether the resemblance does not amount to identity. I have shown that in Italy, Spain, and France, that is, in the countries where the influence of Rome has been deepest and most lasting, a conspicuous feature of the Carnival is a burlesque figure personifying the festive season, which after a short career of glory and dissipation is publicly shot, burnt, or otherwise destroyed, to the feigned grief or genuine delight of the populace. If the view here suggested of the Carnival is correct, this grotesque personage is no other than a direct successor of the old King of the Saturnalia, the master of the revels, the real man who personated Saturn and, when the revels were over, suffered a real death in his assumed character. The King of the Bean on Twelfth Night and the mediæval Bishop of Fools, Abbot of Unreason, or Lord of Misrule are figures of the same sort and may perhaps have had a similar origin.¹

¹ As to the King of the Bean, see Boemus, *Mores, leges et ritus omnium gentium* (Lyons, 1541), p. 222; Laisnel, de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 19-29; Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 125; Schmitz, *Sitten und Sagen des Eifler Volkes*, i. 6 sq.; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 21 sqq.; Cortet, *Fêtes religieuses*, p. 29 sqq. As to the Bishop of Fools, Abbot of Unreason, Lord of Misrule, etc., see Brand, *op. cit.* i. 497 sqq.; Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et Survivances*, iv. 4 sqq. A clue to the original functions of the King of the Bean on Twelfth Night is perhaps furnished by the popular belief that the weather for the ensuing twelve months was determined by the weather of the twelve days from Christmas to Twelfth Day, the weather of each particular month being prognosticated from that of one particular day. See Brand, *op. cit.* i. 28; Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. 250, § 1292; Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. 468 sq., 470; Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger*

Sachsen (Vienna, 1885), p. 282; Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 175, § 29; Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wälschtirol*, p. 231, § 4; Montanus, *Die deutsche Volksfeste*, p. 18; Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 20 sq.; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 473, § 237; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Nord-deutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 411, § 163; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. p. 115, § 354. May we conjecture that the King of the Bean formerly reigned during these twelve days, and that one of his chief functions was to perform magical ceremonies for ensuring good weather throughout the coming year? It is at least noticeable that the number twelve meets us often in the present line of inquiry. In Gloucestershire on the eve of the Twelfth Day the farm-servants used to assemble in a cornfield and kindle twelve fires in a row, round the largest of which they drank to the health of their master and the success of the harvest (Pennant, "Tour in Scot-

As the Carnival is always held on the last three days before the beginning of Lent, its date shifts somewhat from year to year, but it invariably falls either in February or March. Now, if the Saturnalia, like many other seasons of licence, was always observed at the end of the old year or the beginning of the new one, it must, like the Carnival, have been originally held in February or March at the time when March was the first month of the Roman year. So strong and persistent are the conservative instincts of the peasantry in respect to old custom, that it would be no matter for surprise if, in rural districts of Italy, the ancient festival continued to be celebrated at the ancient time long after the change of the calendar had shifted the official celebration of the Saturnalia in the towns from February to December. Latin Christianity, which struck at the root of official or civic paganism, has always been tolerant of its rustic cousins, the popular festivals and ceremonies which, unaffected by political and religious revolutions, by the passing of empires and of gods, have been carried on by the people with but little change from time immemorial, and represent in fact the original stock from which the state religions of classical antiquity were comparatively late offshoots. Thus it may very well have come about that while the new faith stamped out the Saturnalia in the towns, it suffered the original festival, disguised by a difference of date, to linger unmolested in the country; and so the old feast of Saturn, under the modern name of the Carnival, has reconquered the cities, and goes on merrily under the eye and with the sanction of the Catholic Church.

The opinion that the Saturnalia originally fell in February or the beginning of March receives some support from

land," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 49; Brand, *op. cit.* i. 33, compare 28). In Ireland on the same day "they use to set up as high as they can a sieve of oats, and in it a dozen of candles set round, and in the centre one larger, all lighted" (Sir Henry Piers, quoted by Brand, *op. cit.* i. 25). We shall see presently that at Athens the festival of Cronus—the Greek Saturn—fell on the twelfth day

of the month Hecatombæon, and that a cake with twelve knobs was offered to him. In the ritual of ancient India there was a festival or sacred period of twelve days or nights (*Dvādaśīha*), on which apparently the fortune and the crops of the year were supposed in some measure to depend. See A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Opfer und Zauber* (Strasburg, 1897), p. 5 sq.

the circumstance that the festival of the Matronalia, at which mistresses feasted their slaves just as masters did theirs at the Saturnalia, always continued to be held on the first of March, even when the Roman year began with January.¹ It is further not a little recommended by the consideration that this date would be eminently appropriate for the festival of Saturn, the old Italian god of sowing and planting. It has always been a puzzle to explain why such a festival should have been held at midwinter; but on the present hypothesis the mystery vanishes. With the Italian farmer February and March were the great season of the spring sowing and planting;² nothing could be more natural than that the husbandman should inaugurate the season with the worship of the deity to whom he ascribed the function of quickening the seed. Further, the orgiastic character of the festival is readily explained by the help of facts which met us in a former part of our investigation. We have seen that between the sower and the seed there is commonly supposed to exist a sympathetic connection of such a nature that his conduct directly affects and can promote or retard the growth of the crops. What wonder then if the simple husbandman imagined that by cramming his belly, by swilling and guzzling just before he proceeded to sow his fields, he thereby imparted additional vigour to the seed? But while his crude philosophy may thus have painted gluttony and intoxication in the agreeable colours of duties which he owed to himself, to his family, and to the commonwealth, it is possible that the zest with which he acquitted himself of his obligations may have been whetted by a less comfortable reflection. In modern times the indulgence of the Carnival is immediately followed by the abstinence of Lent; and if the Carnival is the direct descendant of the Saturnalia, may not Lent in like manner be merely the con-

¹ Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 12. 7; Solinus, l. 35, p. 13 ed. Mommsen (first edition); Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iii. 15. On the other hand, we know that the ceremony of renewing the laurels, which originally took place on the first of March, was long afterwards transferred to the first of January. See Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 135 sqq., and Macro-

bis, *Saturn.* i. 12. 6, compared with *Geoponica*, xi. 2. 6, where the note of the commentator Niclas may be consulted. This transference is strictly analogous to the change which I conjecture to have been made in the date of celebrating the Saturnalia.

² See Palladius, *De re rustica*, books iii. and iv. *passim*.

tinuation, under a thin disguise, of a period of temperance which was annually observed, from superstitious motives, by Italian farmers long before the Christian era? Direct evidence of this, so far as I am aware, is not forthcoming; but we have seen that a practice of abstinence from fleshly lusts has been observed by various peoples as a sympathetic charm to foster the growth of the seed;¹ and such an observance would be an appropriate sequel to the Saturnalia, if that festival was indeed, as I conjecture it to have been, originally held in spring as a religious or magical preparation for sowing and planting. In Burma a similar fast, which a recent writer calls the Buddhist Lent, is observed for three months every year while the ploughing and sowing of the fields go forward; and the custom is believed to be far older than Buddhism, which has merely given it a superficial tinge like the veneer of Christianity which, if I am right, has overlaid an old heathen observance in Lent. This Burmese Lent, we are told, covers the rainy season from the full moon of July to the full moon of October. "This is the time to plough, this is the time to sow; on the villagers' exertions in these months depends all their maintenance for the rest of the year. Every man, every woman, every child, has hard work of some kind or another. And so, what with the difficulties of travelling, what with the work there is to do, and what with the custom of Lent, every one stays at home. It is the time for prayer, for fasting, for improving the soul. Many men during these months will live even as the monks live, will eat but before midday, will abstain from tobacco. There are no plays during Lent, and there are no marriages. It is the time for preparing the land for the crop; it is the time for preparing the soul for eternity. The congregations on the Sundays will be far greater at this time than at any other; there will be more thought of the serious things of life."²

Beyond the limits of Italy festivals of the same general character as the Saturnalia appear to have been held over a considerable area of the ancient world. A characteristic

¹ Above, vol. ii. p. 209 *sqq.*

² H. Fielding, *The Soul of a People* (London, 1898), p. 172 *sq.* The orthodox explanation of the custom is that during these three months the

Buddha retired to a monastery. But "the custom was far older even than that—so old that we do not know how it arose. Its origin is lost in the mists of far-away time."

feature of the Saturnalia, as we saw, was an inversion of social ranks, masters changing places with their slaves and waiting upon them, while slaves were indulged with a semblance not merely of freedom but even of power and office. In various parts of Greece the same hollow show of granting liberty to slaves was made at certain festivals. Thus at a Cretan festival of Hermes the servants feasted and their masters waited upon them. The Troezenians observed a certain solemnity lasting many days, on one of which the slaves played at dice with the citizens and were treated to a banquet by their lords. The Thessalians held a great festival called Peloria, which Baton of Sinope identified with the Saturnalia, and of which the antiquity is vouched for by a tradition that it originated with the Pelasgians. At this festival sacrifices were offered to Pelorian Zeus, tables splendidly adorned were set out, all strangers were invited to the feast, all prisoners released, and the slaves sat down to the banquet, enjoyed full freedom of speech, and were served by their masters.¹

But the Greek festival which appears to have corresponded most closely to the Italian Saturnalia was the Cronia or festival of Cronus, a god whose barbarous myth and cruel ritual clearly belong to a very early stratum of Greek religion, and who was by the unanimous voice of antiquity identified with Saturn. We are told that his festival was celebrated in most parts of Greece, but especially at Athens, where the old god and his wife Rhea had a shrine near the stately, but far more modern, temple of Olympian Zeus. A joyous feast, at which masters and slaves sat down together, formed a leading feature of the solemnity. At Athens the festival fell in the height of summer, on the twelfth day of the month Hecatombaeon, which answered nearly to July; and tradition ran that Cecrops, the first king of Attica, had founded an altar in honour of Cronus and Rhea, and had ordained that master and man should share a common meal when the harvest was got in.² Yet there are indications that at Athens the

¹ Athenaeus, xiv. pp. 639 B-640 A.

² Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 7. 37; *ib.* i. 10. 22; Demosthenes, *Or.* xxiv. 26, p. 708.

As to the temple of Cronus and Rhea, see Pausanias, i. 18. 7; Bekker's *Anecdota Graeca*, i. p. 273, line 20 sq.

Cronia may once have been a spring festival. For a cake with twelve knobs, which perhaps referred to the twelve months of the year, was offered to Cronus by the Athenians on the fifteenth day of the month Elaphebolion, which corresponded roughly to March,¹ and there are traces of a licence accorded to slaves at the Dionysiac festival of the opening of the wine-jars, which fell on the eleventh day of the preceding month Anthesterion.² At Olympia the festival of Cronus undoubtedly occurred in spring; for here a low but steep hill, now covered with a tangled growth of dark holly-oaks and firs, was sacred to him, and on its top certain men, who bore the title of kings, offered sacrifice to the old god at the vernal equinox in the Elean month Elaphius.³

In this last ceremony, which probably went on year by year long before the upstart Zeus had a temple built for himself at the foot of the hill, there are two points of special interest, first the date of the ceremony, and second the title of the celebrants. First, as to the date, the spring equinox, or the twenty-first of March, must have fallen so near the fifteenth day of the Athenian month Elaphebolion, that we may fairly ask whether the Athenian custom of offering a cake to Cronus on that day may not also have been an equinoctial ceremony. In the second place, the title of kings borne by the sacrificers suggests that they may have personated Cronus himself. For, like his Italian counterpart Saturn, the Greek Cronus was believed to have been a king who reigned in heaven or on earth during the blissful Golden Age, when men passed their days like gods without toil or sorrow, when life was a long round of festivity, and death came like sleep, sudden but gentle, announced by none of his sad forerunners, the ailments and infirmities of

¹ *Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum*, iii. No. 77.

² Aug. Mommsen, *Heortologie*, p. 349, quoting Schol. on Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 370. "When the slaves," says Plutarch, "feast at the Cronia or go about celebrating the festival of Dionysus in the country, the shouts they raise and the tumult they make in their rude merriment are intolerable" (*Non posse suaviter vivi secundum*

Epicurum, 26). That the original festival of Cronus fell at Athens in Anthesterion is the view of Aug. Mommsen (*op. cit.* pp. 22, 79; *Die Feste der Stadt Athen*, p. 402).

³ Pausanias, vi. 20. 1. Compare Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* i. 34. The title of these men (*βασιλᾶι*) must undoubtedly be equivalent to kings (*βασιλεῖς*).

age.¹ Thus the analogy of the Olympian Cronia, probably one of the oldest of Greek festivals, to the Italian Saturnalia would be very close if originally, as I conjecture, the Saturnalia fell in spring and Saturn was personated at it, as we have good reason to believe, by a man dressed as a king. May we go a step further and suppose that, just as the man who acted King Saturn at the Saturnalia was formerly slain in that character, so one of the kings who celebrated the Cronia at Olympia not only played the part of Cronus, but was sacrificed, as god and victim in one, on the top of the hill? Cronus certainly bore a sinister reputation in antiquity. He passed for an unnatural parent who had devoured his own offspring, and he was regularly identified by the Greeks with the cruel Semitic Baals who delighted in the sacrifice of human victims, especially of children.² A legend which savours strongly of infant sacrifice is reported of a shrine that stood at the very foot of the god's own hill at Olympia;³ and a quite unambiguous story was told of the sacrifice of a babe to Lycaean Zeus on Mount Lycaeus in Arcadia, where the worship of Zeus was probably nothing but a continuation, under a new name, of the old worship of Cronus, and where human victims appear to have been regularly offered down to the Christian era.⁴ The Rhodians annually sacrificed a man to Cronus in the month Meta-gitnion; at a later time they kept a condemned criminal in prison till the festival of the Cronia was come, then led him forth outside the gates, made him drunk with wine, and cut his throat.⁵ With the parallel of the Saturnalia before our eyes, we may surmise that the victim who thus ended his life in a state of intoxication at the Cronia may perhaps have personated King Cronus himself, the god who reigned in the happy days of old when men had nothing to do but

¹ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 111, 169; Plato, *Politicus*, p. 269 A; Diodorus, iii. 61, v. 66; Julian, *Con-vivium*, p. 317 "D (pp. 407, 408 ed. Hertlein); "Anonymi Chronologica," printed in the Bonn edition of Malalas, p. 17. See further M. Mayer's article "Kronos," Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, ii. 1458.

² See M. Mayer, *op. cit.* ii. 1501 sqq.

³ Pausanias, vi. 20. 4 sq.

⁴ Plato, *Republic*, ix. p. 565 D E; pseudo-Plato, *Minos*, p. 315 C; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 81; Pausanias, viii. 2 and 38; Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 27; Augustine, *De civitate dei*, xviii. 17. The suggestion that Lycaean Zeus may have been merely a successor of Cronus is due to my friend Professor W. Ridgeway.

⁵ Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, ii. 54.

to eat and drink and make merry. At least the Rhodian custom lends some countenance to the conjecture that formerly a human victim may have figured at the sacrifice which the so-called kings offered to Cronus on his hill at Olympia. In this connection it is to be remembered that we have already found well-attested examples of a custom of sacrificing the scions of royal houses in ancient Greece.¹ If the god to whom, or perhaps rather in whose character, the princes were sacrificed, was Cronus, it would be natural that the Greeks of a later age should identify him with Baal or Moloch, to whom in like manner Semitic kings offered up their children. The Laphystian Zeus of Thessaly and Boeotia, like the Lycaean Zeus of Arcadia, was probably nothing but the aboriginal deity, commonly known as Cronus, whose gloomy rites the Greek invaders suffered the priests of the vanquished race to continue after the ancient manner, while they quieted their scruples of conscience or satisfied their pride as conquerors by investing the blood-thirsty old savage with the name, if not with the character, of their own milder deity, the humane and gracious Zeus.

When we pass from Europe to Asia Minor, from ancient Greece to ancient Babylon and the regions where Babylonian influence penetrated, we are still met with festivals which bear the closest resemblance to the oldest form of the Italian Saturnalia. The reader may remember the festival of the Sacaea, on which I had occasion to touch in an earlier part of this chapter.² It was held at Babylon during five days of the month Lous, beginning with the sixteenth day of the month. During its continuance, just as at the Saturnalia, masters and servants changed places, the servants issuing orders and the masters obeying them; and in each house one of the servants, dressed as a king and bearing the title of Zoganes, bore rule over the household. Further, just as at the Saturnalia in its original form a man was dressed as King Saturn in royal robes, allowed to indulge his passions and caprices to the full, and then put to death, so at the Sacaea a condemned prisoner, who probably also bore for the time being the title of Zoganes, was arrayed in the king's attire and suffered to play the despot,

¹ Above, vol. ii. p. 34 *sqq.*

² Vol. ii. p. 24 *sqq.*

to use the king's concubines, and to give himself up to feasting and debauchery without restraint, only however in the end to be stript of his borrowed finery, scourged, and hanged or crucified.¹ From Strabo we learn that this Asiatic counterpart of the Saturnalia was celebrated in Asia Minor wherever the worship of the Persian goddess Anaitis had established itself. He describes it as a Bacchic orgy, at which the revellers were disguised as Scythians, and men and women drank and dallied together by day and night.²

As the worship of Anaitis, though of Persian origin, appears to have been deeply leavened with coarse elements which it derived from the sensual religion of Babylon,³ we may perhaps regard Mesopotamia as the original home from which the Sacaeen festival spread westward into other parts of Asia Minor. Now the Sacaeen festival, described by the Babylonian priest Berosus in the first book of his history of Babylon, has been plausibly identified⁴ with the great Babylonian festival of the New Year called Zakmuk or Zagnuku which has become known to us in recent times through inscriptions. The Babylonian year began with the spring month of Nisan, which seems to have covered the second half of March and the first half of April. Thus the New Year festival, which occupied at least the first eleven days of Nisan, probably included the spring equinox. It was held in honour of Marduk or Merodach, the chief god of Babylon, whose great temple in the city formed the religious centre of the solemnity. For here, in a splendid chamber of the vast edifice, all the gods were believed to assemble at this season under the presidency of Marduk for the purpose of determining the fates for the new year, especially the fate of the king's life. The festival was of hoar antiquity, for it was known to Gudea, an old king of Southern Babylonia who flourished about three thousand years before the beginning of our era, and

¹ Athenaeus, xiv. p. 639c; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* iv. 69 sq. (vol. i. p. 76 ed. Dindorf). From Athenaeus we learn that the festival was described or mentioned by Berosus in his first book and by Ctesias in his second.

³ See Ed. Meyer's article "Anaitis," in Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, i. 330 sqq.

⁴ By Bruno Meissner, "Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Purimfestes," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, l. (1896), pp. 296-301.

² Strabo, xi. 8. 5.

it is mentioned in an early account of the Great Flood. At a much later period it is repeatedly referred to by King Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. Nebuchadnezzar records how he built of bricks and bitumen a chapel or altar, "a thing of joy and rejoicing," for the great festival of Marduk, the lord of the gods; and we read of the rich and abundant offerings which were made by the high priest at this time.¹ Unfortunately the notices of this Babylonian festival of the New Year which have come down to us deal chiefly with its mythical aspect and throw little or no light on the mode of its celebration. Hence its identity with the Sacaea must remain for the present a more or less probable hypothesis. In favour of the hypothesis may be alleged in the first place the resemblance of the names Sacaea and Zoganes to Zakmuk or Zagmuku, and in the second place the very significant statement that the fate of the king's life was supposed to be determined by the gods, under the presidency of Marduk, at the Zakmuk or New Year's festival.² When we remember that the central feature of the Sacaea appears to have been the saving of the king's life for another year by the vicarious sacrifice of a criminal on the cross or the gallows, we can understand that the season was a critical one for the king, and may well have been regarded as determining his fate for the ensuing twelve months. A difficulty, however, in the way of identifying the Sacaea with the Zakmuk arises from the statement of Berosus that the Sacaea fell on the sixteenth day of Lous, which was the tenth month of the Syro-Macedonian calendar, and appears to have nearly coincided with July. Thus if the Sacaea occurred in July and the Zakmuk in March, the theory of their identity could not be maintained. But the identification of the months of the Syro-Macedonian calendar is a matter of some uncertainty; as to the month Lous in

¹ Jensen, *Kosmologie der Babylonier*, p. 84 sqq.; H. Zimmern, "Zur Frage nach dem Ursprunge des Purimfestes," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, xi. (1891), p. 159 sqq.; A. Jeremias, s.v. "Marduk," *Roscher's Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, ii. 2347 sq.; M. Jastrow, *Re-*

ligion of Babylonia and Assyria, pp. 186, 677 sqq. According to Jensen's transcription the name of the festival was Zakmuk; the other authorities referred to spell it Zagmuku.

² The statement occurs in an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar. See Jensen, *Kosmologie der Babylonier*, p. 85.

particular the evidence of ancient writers appears to be conflicting,¹ and until we have ascertained beyond the reach of doubt when Lous fell at Babylon in the time of Berossus, it would be premature to allow much weight to the seeming discrepancy in the dates of the two festivals.

A fresh and powerful argument in favour of the identity of the two festivals is furnished by the connection which has been traced between both of them and the Jewish feast of Purim.² There are good grounds for believing that Purim was unknown to the Jews until after the exile and that they learned to observe it during their captivity in the East. The festival is first mentioned in the book of Esther, which, by the majority of critics is assigned to the fourth or third century B.C.,³ and which certainly cannot be older than the Persian period, since the scene of the narrative is laid in Susa at the court of a Persian king Ahasuerus, whose name appears to be the Hebrew equivalent of Xerxes. The next reference to Purim occurs in the second book of Maccabees, a work written probably about the beginning of our era.⁴ Thus from the absence of all notice of Purim in the older books of the Bible, we may fairly conclude that the festival was instituted or imported at a comparatively late date among the Jews. The same conclusion is supported by the book of Esther itself, which was manifestly written to explain the origin of the feast and to suggest motives for its observance. For, according to the author of the book, the festival was established to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews from a great danger which threatened them in Persia under the reign of King Xerxes. Thus the opinion of modern scholars that the feast of Purim, as celebrated by the Jews, was of late date and oriental origin, is borne out by the tradition of the Jews themselves. An examination of that

¹ See article "Calendarium," in *Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*,³ i. 339; and above, vol. ii. p. 254, note 1.

² H. Zimmern, "Zur Frage nach dem Ursprunge des Purimfestes," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, xi. (1891), pp. 157-169; W. Nowack, *Lehrbuch der hebräischen Archäologie*, ii. 198 sqq.; Br. Meissner,

"Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Purimfestes," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, l. (1896), pp. 296-301; Fr. Cumont, "Le roi des Saturnales," *Revue de Philologie*, xxi. (1897), p. 150.

³ S. R. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*,⁵ p. 452.

⁴ 2 Maccabees xv. 36. As to the date of this book, see Driver, *l.c.*

tradition and of the mode of celebrating the feast renders it probable that Purim is nothing but a more or less disguised form of the Babylonian festival of the Sacaea or Zakmuk.

In the first place, the feast of Purim was and is held on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar, the last month of the Jewish year, which corresponds roughly to March.¹ Thus the date agrees nearly, though not exactly, with the date of the Babylonian Zakmuk, which fell a fortnight later in the early days of the following month Nisan. A trace of the original celebration of Purim in Nisan may perhaps be found in the statement that "they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman" in Nisan, the first month of the year.² It has been suggested with some plausibility that the Jews may have shifted the date of Purim in order that the new and foreign festival might not clash with their own old festival of the Passover, which began on the fourteenth day of Nisan. Another circumstance which speaks at once for the alien origin of Purim and for its identity with Zakmuk is its name. The author of the book of Esther derives the name Purim from *pur*, "a lot,"³ but no such word with this signification exists in Hebrew, and hence we are driven to look for the meaning and etymology of Purim in some other language. A specious theory is that the name was derived from an Assyrian word *pulru*, "an assembly," and referred primarily to the great assembly of the gods which, as we have seen, formed a chief feature of the festival of Zakmuk, and was held annually in the temple of Marduk at Babylon for the purpose of determining the fates or lots of the new year;⁴ the august assembly appears to have been occasionally, if not regularly, designated by the very name *pulru*.⁵ On this hypothesis the traditional Jewish explanation of the name Purim preserved a genuine

¹ We know from Josephus (*Antiquit.* iii. 10. 5) that in the month Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year, the sun was in Aries. Now the sun is in Aries from March 20th or 21st to April 19th or 20th; hence Nisan answers approximately to April, and Adar to March.

² Esther iii. 7.

³ Esther iii. 7, ix. 26.

⁴ This is the view of Zimmern (*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, xi. (1891), p. 157 sqq.), and it is favoured by Nowack (*Lehrbuch der hebräischen Archäologie*, ii. 198 sq.).

⁵ Jensen, *Kosmologie der Babylonier*, p. 240 sq.

kernel of historical truth, or at least of mythical fancy, under the husk of a verbal error; for the name, if this derivation of it is correct, really signified not "the lots" but the assembly for drawing or otherwise determining the lots. Another explanation which has been offered is "that *pūr* or *būr* seems to be an old Assyrian word for 'stone,' and that therefore it is possible that the word was also used to signify 'lot,' like the Hebrew לֹט, 'lot,' which originally, no doubt, meant 'little stone.'"¹ Either of these explanations of the name Purim, by tracing it back to the New Year assembly of the gods at Babylon for settling the lots, furnishes an adequate explanation of the traditional association of Purim with the casting of lots—an association all the more remarkable and all the more likely to be ancient because there is nothing to justify it either in the Hebrew language or in the Jewish mode of celebrating the festival. When to this we add the joyous, nay, extravagant festivity which has always been characteristic of Purim and is entirely in keeping with a New Year celebration, we may perhaps be thought to have made out a fairly probable case for holding that the Jewish feast is derived from the Babylonian New Year festival of Zakmuk. Whether the Jews borrowed the feast directly from the Babylonians or indirectly through the Persian conquerors of Babylon is a question which deserves to be considered; but the Persian colouring of the book of Esther speaks strongly for the view that Purim came to Israel by way of Persia, and this view is confirmed by other evidence, to which I shall have to ask the reader's attention a little later on.

If the links which bind Purim to Zakmuk are reasonably strong, the chain of evidence which connects the Jewish festival with the Sacaea is much stronger. Nor is this surprising when we remember that, while the popular mode of celebrating Zakmuk is unknown, we possess important and trustworthy details as to the manner of holding the Sacaea. We have seen that the Sacaea was a wild Bac-

¹ The explanation is that of Jensen, quoted by Nöldeke in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, s.v. "Esther." In Greek, for a similar reason, the word for "pebble" and "vote" is identical

(ψῆφος). I desire to thank the editors of the *Encyclopædia Biblica* for their courtesy in allowing me to see Professor Nöldeke's article in proof.

chanalian revel at which men and women disguised themselves and drank and played together in a fashion that was more gay than modest. Now this is, or used to be, precisely the nature of Purim. The two days of the festival, according to the author of the book of Esther, were to be kept for ever as "days of feasting and gladness, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor."¹ And this joyous character the festival seems always to have retained. The author of a tract in the Talmud lays it down as a rule that at the feast of Purim every Jew is bound to drink until he cannot distinguish between the words "Cursed be Haman" and "Blessed be Mordecai"; and he tells how on one occasion a certain Rabba drank so deep at Purim that he murdered a rabbi without knowing what he was about. Indeed Purim has been described as the Jewish Bacchanalia, and we are told that at this season everything is lawful which can contribute to the mirth and gaiety of the festival.² Writers of the seventeenth century assert that during the two days and especially on the evening of the second day the Jews did nothing but feast and drink to repletion, play, dance, sing, and make merry; in particular they disguised themselves, men and women exchanging clothes, and thus attired ran about like mad, in open defiance of the Mosaic law, which expressly forbids men to dress as women and women as men.³ Among the Jews of Frankfort, who inhabited the squalid but quaint and picturesque old street known as the Judengasse which many of us still remember, the revelry at Purim ran as high as ever in the eighteenth century. The gluttony and intoxication began punctually at three o'clock in the afternoon of the first day and went on until the whole community seemed to have taken leave of their senses. They ate and drank, they frolicked and cut capers, they reeled and staggered about, they shrieked, yelled, stamped, clattered, and broke

¹ Esther x. 22.

² Buxtorf, *Synagoga Judaica* (Bäle, 1661), pp. 554 sq., 559 sq.

³ Buxtorf, *op. cit.* p. 559; Schickard, quoted by Lagarde, "Purim," p. 54 sq., *Abhandlungen der kön.*

Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, xxxiv. (1887). Compare Bodenschatz, *Kirchliche Verfassung der heutigen Juden* (Erlangen, 1748), ii. 256. For the rule forbidding men and women to exchange garments, see Deuteronomy xxii. 5.

each other's heads with wooden hammers till the blood flowed. On the evening of the first day the women were allowed, as a special favour, to open their latticed window and look into the men's synagogue, because the great deliverance of the Jews from their enemies in the time of King Ahasuerus was said to have been effected by a woman. A feature of the festival which should not be overlooked was the acting of the story of Esther as a comedy, in which Esther, Ahasuerus, Haman, Mordecai, and others played their parts after a fashion that sometimes degenerated from farce into ribaldry.¹ Thus on the whole we may take it that Purim has always been a Saturnalia and therefore corresponds in character to the Sacaea, as that festival has been described for us by Strabo.

But further, when we examine the narrative which professes to account for the institution of Purim, we discover in it not only the strongest traces of Babylonian origin, but also certain singular analogies to those very features of the Sacaeian festival with which we are here more immediately concerned. The book of Esther turns upon the fortunes of two men, the vizier Haman and the despised Jew Mordecai, at the court of a Persian king. Mordecai, we are told, had given mortal offence to the vizier, who accordingly prepares a tall gallows on which he hopes to see his enemy hanged, while he himself expects to receive the highest mark of the king's favour by being allowed to wear the royal crown and the royal robes and thus attired to parade the streets, mounted on the king's own horse and attended by one of the noblest princes, who should proclaim to the multitude his temporary exaltation and glory. But the artful intrigues of the wicked vizier miscarried and resulted in precisely the opposite of what he had hoped and expected; for the royal honours which he had looked for fell to his rival Mordecai, and he himself was hanged on the gallows which he had made ready for his foe. In this story we seem to detect a reminiscence, more or less confused, of the Zoganes of the Sacaea,

¹ J. J. Schudt, *Jüdische Merkwürdigkeiten* (Frankfort and Leipsic, 1714), ii. Theil, pp. *309, *314, *316, iv. Theiles die ii. Continuation, p. 347: J. Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle*

Ages (London, 1896), p. 261 sqq. I have to thank my learned friend Dr. S. Schechter for bringing both these works to my notice.

in other words, of the custom of investing a private man with the insignia of royalty for a few days and then putting him to death on the gallows or the cross. It is true that in the narrative the part of the Zoganes is divided between two actors, one of whom hopes to play the king but is hanged instead, while the other acts the royal part and escapes the gallows to which he was destined by his enemy. But this bisection, so to say, of the Zoganes may have been deliberately invented by the Jewish author of the book of Esther for the sake of setting the origin of Purim, which it was his purpose to explain, in a light that should reflect glory on his own nation. Or, perhaps more probably, it points back to a custom of appointing two mock kings at the Sacaea, one of whom was put to death at the end of the festival, while the other was allowed to go free, at least for a time. We shall be the more inclined to adopt the latter hypothesis when we observe that corresponding to the two rival aspirants to the temporary kingship there appear in the Jewish narrative two rival queens, Vashti and Esther, one of whom succeeds to the high estate from which the other has fallen. Further, it is to be noted that Mordecai, the successful candidate for the mock kingship, and Esther, the successful candidate for the queenship, are linked together by close ties both of interest and blood, the two being said to be cousins. This suggests that in the original story or the original custom there may have figured two pairs of kings and queens, of whom one pair is represented in the Jewish narrative by Mordecai and Esther and the other by Haman and Vashti.

A strong confirmation of this view is furnished by a philological analysis of the names of the four personages. It seems to be now generally recognised by Biblical scholars that the name Mordecai, which has no meaning in Hebrew, is nothing but a slightly altered form of Marduk or Merodach, the name of the chief god of Babylon, whose great festival was the Zakmuk; and further, it is generally admitted that Esther in like manner is equivalent to Ishtar, the great Babylonian goddess whom the Greeks called Astarte and who is more familiar to English readers as Ashtarothe. The derivation of the names of Haman and Vashti is less certain,

but some high authorities are disposed to accept the view of Jensen that Haman is identical with Humman or Homman, the national god of the Elamites, and that Vashti is in like manner an Elamite deity, probably a goddess whose name appears in inscriptions. Now, when we consider that the Elamites were from time immemorial the hereditary foes of the Babylonians and had their capital at Susa, the very place in which the scene of the book of Esther is laid, we can hardly deny the plausibility of the theory that Haman and Vashti on the one side and Mordecai and Esther on the other represent the antagonism between the gods of Elam and the gods of Babylon, and the final victory of the Babylonian deities in the very capital of their rivals.¹ "It is therefore possible," says Professor Nöldeke, "that we have here to do with a feast whereby the Babylonians commemorated a victory gained by their gods over the gods of their neighbours the Elamites, against whom they had so often waged war. The Jewish feast of Purim is an annual merrymaking of a wholly secular kind, and it is known that there were similar feasts among the Babylonians. That the Jews in Babylonia should have adopted a festival of this sort cannot be deemed improbable, since in modern Germany, to cite an analogous case, many Jews celebrate Christmas after the manner of their Christian fellow-countrymen, in so far at least as it is a secular institution."²

Thus if we are right in tracing the origin of Purim to the Babylonian Sacaea and in finding the counterpart of the Zoganes in Haman and Mordecai, it would appear that the

¹ P. Jensen, "Elamitische Eigennamen," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vi. (1892), pp. 47-70; compare *ib.* pp. 209-212. All Jensen's etymologies are accepted by W. Nowack (*Lehrbuch der hebräischen Archäologie*, ii. 199 sq.); H. Gunkel (*Schöpfung und Chaos*, Göttingen, 1895, p. 310 sq.); D. G. Wildeboer (in his commentary on Esther, p. 173 sqq., forming part of K. Marti's *Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum alten Testament*, Freiburg i. B. 1898); and Th. Nöldeke (s.v. "Esther," *Encyclopædia Biblica*). On the other hand, Br. Meissner (*Zeitschrift der deutschen*

morgenländischen Gesellschaft, l. (1896), p. 301) and M. Jastrow (*The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 686, note 2) suspend their judgment as to the identification of Haman and Vashti with Elamite deities, though they apparently regard the identification of Mordecai and Esther with Marduk and Ishtar as quite certain. H. Zimmern also accepts as unquestionable the derivation of Mordecai from Marduk (*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, xi. (1891), p. 167).

² Th. Nöldeke, s.v. "Esther," *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

Zoganes during his five days of office personated not merely a king but a god, whether that god was the Elamite Humman, the Babylonian Marduk, or some other deity not yet identified. The union of the divine and royal characters in a single person is so common that we need not be surprised at meeting with it in ancient Babylon. And the view that the mock king of the Sacaea died as a god on the cross or the gallows is no novelty. The acute and learned Movers long ago observed that "we should be overlooking the religious significance of oriental festivals and the connection of the Sacaea with the worship of Anaitis, if we were to treat as a mere jest the custom of disguising a slave as a king. We may take it for certain that with the royal dignity the king of the Sacaea assumed also the character of an oriental ruler as representative of the divinity, and that when he took his pleasure among the women of the king's harem, he played the part of Sandan or Sardanapalus himself. For according to ancient oriental ideas the use of the king's concubines constituted a claim to the throne, and we know from Dio that the five-days' king received full power over the harem. Perhaps he began his reign by publicly cohabiting with the king's concubines, just as Absalom went in to his father's concubines in a tent spread on the roof of the palace before all Israel, for the purpose of thereby making known and strengthening his claim to the throne."¹ Whatever may be thought of this latter conjecture, there can be no doubt that Movers is right in laying great stress both on the permission given to the mock king to invade the real king's harem, and on the intimate connection of the Sacaea with the worship of Anaitis. That connection is vouched for by Strabo, and when we consider that in Strabo's time the cult of the old Persian goddess Anaitis was thoroughly saturated with Babylonian elements and had practically merged in the sensual worship of the Babylonian Ishtar or Astarte,² we shall incline to view with favour Movers's further

¹ Movers, *Die Phoenizier*, i. 490 sq.; 2 Samuel xvi. 21 sq., compare xii. 8. For other examples of the use of the king's concubines by claimants to the throne, Movers refers to Herodotus, iii. 68; Josephus, *Contra Apion*, i. 15.

² Ed. Meyer, s.v. "Anaitis," Roscher's *Lexikon*, i. 352 sq. At the temple of Anaitis in Acilisena, a city of Armenia, the daughters of the noblest families regularly prostituted themselves for a long time before marriage

conjecture, that a female slave may have been appointed to play the divine queen to the part of the divine king supported by the Zoganes, and that reminiscences of such a queen have survived in the myth or legend of Semiramis. According to tradition, Semiramis was a fair courtesan beloved by the king of Assyria, who took her to wife. She won the king's heart so far that she persuaded him to yield up to her the kingdom for five days, and having assumed the sceptre and the royal robes she made a great banquet on the first day, but on the second day she shut up her husband in prison or put him to death and thenceforward reigned alone.¹ Taken with Strabo's evidence as to the association of the Sacaea with the worship of Anaitis, this tradition seems clearly to point to a custom of giving the Zoganes, during his five-days' reign, a queen who represented the goddess Anaitis or Semiramis or Astarte, in short the great Asiatic goddess of love and fertility, by whatever name she was called. For that in Eastern legend Semiramis was a goddess and a form of Astarte has been made practically certain by the researches of Robertson Smith, who has further shown that the worship of Anaitis is not only modelled on Astarte worship in general, but corresponds to that particular type of it which was specially associated with the name of Semiramis.² The identity of Anaitis and Semiramis is clearly proved by the circumstance that the great sanctuary of Anaitis at Zela in Pontus was actually built upon a mound of Semiramis; probably the old worship of the Semitic goddess always continued here even after her Semitic name of Semiramis or Astarte had been exchanged for the Persian name of

(Strabo, xii. 14. 16). Agathias identified Anaitis with Aphrodite (*Hist.* ii. 24), and when the Greeks spoke of the Oriental Aphrodite, they meant Astarte or one of her equivalents. Jensen proposes to identify Anaitis with an Elamite goddess Nahunt, whom he takes to have been equivalent to Ishtar or Astarte, especially in her quality of the Evening Star. See his article, "Elamitische Eigennamen," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vi. (1892), pp. 64-67, 70.

¹ Diodorus, ii. 20; Aelian, *Var.*

Hist. vii. 1.

² W. Robertson Smith, "Ctesias and the Semiramis Legend," *English Historical Review*, April 1887. Amongst other evidence, Smith refers to Diodorus, from whose account (ii. 4) of the birth of Semiramis he infers that she "is the daughter of Derecto, the fish goddess of Ascalon, and is herself the Astarte whose sacred doves were honoured at Ascalon and throughout Syria."

³ Strabo, xii. 3. 37, compare xi. 8. 4.

Anaitis, perhaps in obedience to a decree of the Persian king Artaxerxes II., who first spread the worship of Anaitis in the west of Asia.¹ It is highly significant, not only that the Sacaeen festival was held at this ancient seat of the worship of Semiramis or Astarte; but further, that the whole city of Zela was formerly inhabited by sacred slaves and harlots, ruled over by a supreme pontiff, who administered it as a sanctuary rather than as a city.² Formerly, we may suppose, this priestly king himself died a violent death at the Sacaea in the character of the divine lover of Semiramis, while the part of the goddess was played by one of the sacred prostitutes. The probability of this is greatly strengthened by the existence of the so-called mound of Semiramis under the sanctuary. For the mounds of Semiramis, which were pointed out all over Western Asia,³ were said to have been the graves of her lovers whom she buried alive.⁴ The tradition ran that the great and lustful queen Semiramis, fearing to contract a lawful marriage lest her husband should deprive her of power, admitted to her bed the handsomest of her soldiers, only, however, to destroy them all afterwards.⁵ Now this tradition is one of the surest indications of the identity of Semiramis with the Babylonian goddess Ishtar or Astarte. For the famous Babylonian epic which recounts the deeds of the hero Gilgamesh tells how, when he clothed himself in royal robes and put his crown on his head, the goddess Ishtar was smitten with love of him and wooed him to be her mate. But Gilgamesh rejected her insidious advances, for he knew the sad fate that had overtaken all her lovers, and he reproached the cruel goddess, saying:

"Tammuz, the consort of thy youth,
Thou causest to weep every year.
The bright-coloured *allallu* bird thou didst love.

¹ Berosus, cited by Clement of Alexandria, *Protrept.* v. 65, p. 57 ed. Potter (where for *Tavatōs* we should read *Avatridos*, as is done by C. Müller, *Frag. Histor. Graec.* ii. 509).

² Strabo, xii. 3. 37. The nature of the *lepidoulai* at Zela is indicated by Strabo in the preceding section (36), where he describes a similar state of things at Comana, a city not far from

Zela. His words are *πληθος γυναικῶν τῶν ἐργαζομένων ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος, ὥς αἱ πλείους εἰσὶν ἑραῖ.*

³ Strabo, xvi. i. 2; Diodorus, ii. 14.

⁴ Ctesias, cited by John of Antioch (Müller's *Frag. Histor. Graec.* iv. 539).

⁵ Diodorus, ii. 13. Note that the first husband of Semiramis is said to have hanged himself (Diodorus, ii. 6).

Thou didst crush him and break his pinions.
 In the woods he stands and laments, 'O my pinions!'
 Thou didst love a lion of perfect strength,
 Seven and seven times thou didst bury him in the corners.
 Thou didst love a horse superior in the fray,
 With whip and spur thou didst urge him on.
 Thou didst force him on for seven double hours,
 Thou didst force him on when wearied and thirsty;
 His mother Silili thou madest weep.
 Thou didst also love a shepherd of the flock,
 Who continually poured out for thee the libation,
 And daily slaughtered kids for thee;
 But thou didst smite him, and didst change him into a leopard,
 So that his own sheep-boy hunted him,
 And his own hounds tore him to pieces."

The hero also tells the miserable end of a gardener in the service of the goddess's father. The hapless swain had once been honoured with the love of the goddess, but when she tired of him she changed him into a cripple so that he could not rise from his bed. Therefore Gilgamesh fears to share the fate of all her former lovers and spurns her proffered favours.¹ But it is not merely that the myth of Ishtar thus tallies with the legend of Semiramis; the worship of the goddess was marked by a profligacy which has found its echo in the loose character ascribed by tradition to the queen. Inscriptions, which confirm and supplement the evidence of Herodotus, inform us that Ishtar was served by harlots of three different classes all dedicated to her worship. Indeed, there is reason to think that these women personated the goddess herself, since one of the names given to them is applied also to her.²

Thus we can hardly doubt that Semiramis is substantially a form of Ishtar or Astarte, the great Semitic goddess of love and fertility; and if this is so, we may assume with at least a fair degree of probability that the high pontiff of Zela or his deputy, who played the king of the Sacaea at

¹ A. Jeremias, *Izdubar-Nimrod*, p. 23 sqq.; M. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 482; L. W. King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology*, p. 159 sqq. The true name of the Babylonian hero, which used to be read as Izdubar, has been found to be Gilgamesh (Jastrow, *op. cit.* p. 468).

² Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 59 sq.; M. Jastrow, *op. cit.* pp. 475 sq., 484 sq.; Herodotus, i. 199. The name which Herodotus gives to the goddess is Mylitta, but this is only a corruption of Baalat or Belit, one of the titles of Ishtar. See E. Meyer, article "Astarte," Roscher's *Lexikon*, i. 648.

the sanctuary of Semiramis, perished as one of the unhappy lovers of the goddess, perhaps as Tammuz, whom she caused "to weep every year." When he had run his brief meteoric career of pleasure and glory, his bones would be laid in the great mound which covered the mouldering remains of many mortal gods, his predecessors, whom the goddess had honoured with her fatal love.

Here then at the great sanctuary of the goddess in Zela it appears that her myth was regularly translated into action; the story of her love and the death of her divine lover was performed year by year as a sort of mystery-play by men and women who lived for a season and sometimes died in the character of the visionary beings whom they personated. The intention of these sacred dramas, we may be sure, was neither to amuse nor to instruct an idle audience, and as little were they designed to gratify the actors, to whose baser passions they gave the reins for a time. They were solemn rites which mimicked the doings of divine beings, because man fancied that by such mimicry he was able to arrogate to himself the divine functions and to exercise them for the good of his fellows. The operations of nature, to his thinking, were carried on by mythical personages very like himself; and if he could only assimilate himself to them completely he would be able to wield all their powers. This is probably the original motive of most religious dramas or mysteries among rude peoples.¹ The dramas are played, the mysteries are performed, not to teach the spectators the doctrines of their creed, still less to entertain them, but for the purpose of bringing about those natural effects which they represent in mythical disguise; in a word, they are magical ceremonies and their mode of operation is mimicry

¹ The elaborate masked dances given by some of the coast Indians of British Columbia are dramatised myths, in which the actors personate spirits and legendary animals. The dramas are performed only in winter, because it is only then that the spirits are present. See Fr. Boas, "The social organisation and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, pp. 396,

420 sq.; 637 sq., 651; *id.*, in *Tenth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 52 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1895*). With regard, for example, to the Bella Coola tribe we are told that "the masks used in the dances represent mythical personages, and the dances are pantomimic representations of myths." This was precisely the origin of the drama in Greece.

or sympathy. We shall probably not err in assuming that many myths, which we now know only as myths, had once their counterpart in magic ; in other words, that they used to be acted as a means of producing in fact the events which they describe in figurative language. Ceremonies often die out while myths survive, and thus we are left to infer the dead ceremony from the living myth. If myths are, in a sense, the reflections or shadows of men cast upon the clouds, we may say that these reflections continue to be visible in the sky and to inform us of the doings of the men who cast them, long after the men themselves are not only beyond our range of vision but sunk beneath the horizon.

When once we perceive that the gods and goddesses, the heroes and heroines of mythology have been represented officially, so to say, by a long succession of living men and women who bore the names and were supposed to exercise the functions of these fabulous creatures, we have attained a point of vantage from which it seems possible to propose terms of peace between two rival schools of mythologists who have been waging fierce war on each other for ages. On the one hand it has been argued that mythical beings are nothing but personifications of natural objects and natural processes ; on the other hand, it has been maintained that they are nothing but notable men and women who in their lifetime, for one reason or another, made a great impression on their fellows, but whose doings have been distorted and exaggerated by a false and credulous tradition. These two views, it is now easy to see, are not so mutually exclusive as their supporters have imagined. The personages about whom all the marvels of mythology have been told may have been real human beings, as the Euhemerists allege ; and yet they may have been at the same time personifications of natural objects or processes, as the adversaries of Euhemerism assert. The doctrine of incarnation supplies the missing link that was needed to unite the two seemingly inconsistent theories. If the powers of nature or a certain department of nature be conceived as personified in a deity, and that deity can become incarnate in a man or woman, it is obvious that the incarnate deity is at the same time a real human being and a personification of nature. To take the

instance with which we are here concerned, Semiramis may have been the great Semitic goddess of love, Ishtar or Astarte, and yet she may be supposed to have been incarnate in a series of real women, whether queens or harlots, whose memory survives in ancient history. Saturn, again, may have been the god of sowing and planting, and yet may have been represented on earth by a succession or dynasty of sacred kings, whose gay but short lives may have contributed to build up the legend of the Golden Age. The longer the series of such human divinities, the greater, obviously, the chance of their myth or legend surviving; and when moreover a deity of a uniform type was represented, whether under the same name or not, over a great extent of country by many local dynasties of divine men or women, it is clear that the stories about him would tend still further to persist and be stereotyped.

The conclusions which we have reached in regard to the legend of Semiramis and her lovers probably holds good of all the similar tales that were current in antiquity throughout the East; in particular, it may be assumed to apply to the myths of Aphrodite and Adonis in Syria, of Cybele and Attis in Phrygia, and of Isis and Osiris in Egypt. If we could trace these stories back to their origin, we might find that in every case a human couple acted year by year the parts of the loving goddess and the dying god. We know that down to Roman times Attis was personated by priests who bore his name;¹ and if within the period of which we have knowledge the dead Attis and the dead Adonis were represented only by effigies, we may surmise that it had not always been so, and that in both cases the dead god was once represented by a dead man. Further, the licence accorded to the man who played the dying god at the Sacaea speaks strongly in favour of the hypothesis that before the incarnate deity was put to a public death he was in all cases allowed or rather required to enjoy the embraces of a woman who played the goddess of love. The reason for such an enforced union of the human god and goddess is not hard to divine. If primitive man believes that the growth of the crops can be stimulated by the intercourse of

¹ See vol. ii. p. 134.

common men and women,¹ what showers of blessings will he not anticipate from the commerce of a pair whom his fancy invests with all the dignity and powers of deities of fertility?

Thus the theory of Movers, that at the Sacaea the Zoganes represented a god and paired with a woman who personated a goddess, turns out to rest on deeper and wider foundations than that able scholar was aware of. He thought that the divine couple who figured by deputy at the ceremony were Semiramis, and Sandan or Sardanapalus. It now appears that he was substantially right as to the goddess; but we have still to inquire into the god. There seems to be no doubt that the name Sardanapalus is only the Greek way of representing Ashurbanapal, the name of the greatest and nearly the last king of Assyria. But the records of the real monarch which have come to light within recent years give little support to the fables that attached to his name in classical tradition. For they prove that, far from being the effeminate weakling he seemed to the Greeks of a later age, he was a warlike and enlightened monarch, who carried the arms of Assyria to distant lands and fostered at home the growth of science and letters.² Still, though the historical reality of King Ashurbanapal is as well attested as that of Alexander or Charlemagne, it would be no wonder if myths gathered, like clouds, round the great figure that loomed large in the stormy sunset of Assyrian glory. Now the two features that stand out most prominently in the legends of Sardanapalus are his extravagant debauchery and his violent death in the flames of a great pyre, on which he burned himself and his concubines to save them from falling into the hands of his victorious enemies. It is said that the womanish king, with painted face and arrayed in female attire, passed his days in the seclusion of the harem, spinning purple wool among his concubines and wallowing in sensual delights; and that in the epitaph which he caused to be carved on his tomb he recorded that all the days of his life he ate and drank and toyed, remember-

¹ See vol. ii. p. 204 sqq.

Assyrische Geschichte, p. 351 sqq.;
M. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and*

² See C. P. Tiele, *Babylonisch-*

Assyria, p. 43.

ing that life is short and full of trouble, that fortune is uncertain, and that others would soon enjoy the good things which he must leave behind.¹ These traits bear little resemblance to the portrait of Ashurbanapal either in life or death; for after a brilliant career of conquest the Assyrian king died in old age, at the height of human ambition, with peace at home and triumph abroad, the admiration of his subjects and the terror of his foes. But if the traditional characteristics of Sardanapalus harmonise but ill with what we know of the real monarch of that name, they fit well enough with all that we know or can conjecture of the mock kings who led a short life and a merry during the revelry of the Sacaea, the Asiatic equivalent of the Saturnalia. We can hardly doubt that for the most part such men, with death staring them in the face at the end of a few days, sought to drown care and deaden fear by plunging madly into all the fleeting joys that still offered themselves under the sun. When their brief pleasures and sharp sufferings were over, and their bones or ashes mingled with the dust, what more natural that on their tomb—those mounds in which the people saw, not untruly, the graves of the lovers of Semiramis—there should be carved some such lines as those which tradition placed in the mouth of the great Assyrian king, to remind the heedless passer-by of the shortness and vanity of life?

When we turn to Sandan, the other legendary or mythical being whom Movers thought that the Zoganes may have personated, we find the arguments in support of his theory still stronger. The city of Tarsus in Cilicia is said to have been founded by a certain Sandan whom the Greeks identified with Hercules; and at the festival of this god or hero an effigy of him was burned on a great pyre.² This Sandan is

¹ Athenaeus, xii. pp. 528 F-530 C; Diodorus Siculus, ii. 23 and 27; Justin, i. 3. Several different versions of the king's epitaph have come down to us. I have followed the version of Choerilus, the original of which is said to have been carved in Chaldean letters on a tombstone that surmounted a great barrow at Nineveh. This barrow may, as I suggest in the text, have been one of the so-called mounds of Semiramis.

² Ammianus Marcellinus, xiv. 8; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* xxxiii. p. 408 (vol. ii. p. 16 ed. Dindorf). Coins of Tarsus exhibit the effigy on the pyre, which seems to be composed of a pyramid of great beams resting on a cubical base. See K. O. Müller, "Sandon und Sardanapal," *Kunstarchäologische Werke*, iii. 8 sqq., whose valuable essay I follow.

doubtless the same with the Sandes whom Agathias calls the old Persian Hercules. Professing to give a list of the gods whom the Persians worshipped before the days of Zoroaster, the Byzantine historian mentions Bel, Sandes, and Anaitis, whom he identifies with Zeus, Hercules, and Aphrodite respectively.¹ As we know that Bel was a Babylonian, not a Persian deity, and that in later times Anaitis was practically equivalent to the Babylonian Ishtar or Astarte, a strong presumption is raised that Sandes also was a Babylonian or at all events Semitic deity, and that in speaking of him as Persian the historian confused the ancient Persians with the Babylonians and perhaps other stocks of Western Asia. The presumption is strengthened when we find that in Lydia the surname of Sandon, doubtless equivalent to Sandan, is said to have been borne by Hercules because he wore a woman's garment called a *sandyx*, fine and diaphanous as gossamer, at the bidding of Queen Omphale, whom the hero served for three years in the guise of a female slave, clad in purple, humbly carding wool and submitting to be slapped by the saucy queen with her golden slipper.² The familiar legend that Hercules burned himself alive on a great pyre completes the parallel between the effeminate Hercules Sandon of Lydia and the Assyrian Sardanapalus. So exact a parallel must surely rest on a common base of custom as well as of myth. That base, according to the conjecture of the admirable scholar K. O. Müller, may have been a custom of dressing up an effigy of an effeminate Asiatic deity in the semblance of a reveller, and then publicly burning it on a pyre. Such a custom appears to have prevailed not only at Tarsus in Cilicia, but also in Lydia; for a coin of the Lydian Philadelphia, a city which lay not far from the old royal capital Sardes, exhibits a device like that on coins of Tarsus, consisting of a figure stretched on a pyre. "We may suppose," says Müller, "that in the old Assyrian mythology a certain being called Sandan, or perhaps Sardan, figured beside Baal and Mylitta or Astarte. The character of this mythical personage is one which often meets us in oriental religion—the extreme of voluptuousness

¹ Agathias, *Hist.* ii. 24.

iii. 64; Apollodorus, ii. 6. 2 sq. &

² Joannes Lydus, *De magistratibus*,

Lucian, *Dial. deorum*, xiii. 2.

and sensuality combined with miraculous force and heroic strength. We may imagine that at the great festivals of Nineveh this Sandan or Sardan was exhibited as a buxom figure with womanish features, the pale face painted with white lead, the eyebrows and eyelashes blackened with kohl, his person loaded with golden chains, rings, and earrings, arrayed in a bright red transparent garment, grasping a goblet in one hand and perhaps, as a symbol of strength, a double axe in the other, while he sat cross-legged and surrounded by women on a splendidly adorned couch under a purple canopy, altogether not unlike the figure of Adonis at the court festivals of Alexandria. Then the people of 'mad Nineveh,' as the poet Phocylides called it, 'the well-favoured harlot,' as the prophet Nahum has it, would rejoice and make merry with this their darling hero. Afterwards there may have been another show, when this gorgeous Sandan or Sardan was to be seen on a huge pyre of precious wood, draped in gold-embroidered tapestry and laden with incense and spices of every sort, which being set on fire, to the howling of a countless multitude and the deafening din of shrill music, sent up a monstrous pillar of fire whirling towards heaven and flooded half Nineveh with smoke and smell."¹

The distinguished scholar whom I have just quoted does not fail to recognise the part which imagination plays in the picture he has set before us ; but he reminds us very properly that in historical inquiries imagination must always supply the bond that links together the broken fragments of tradition. One thing, he thinks, emerges clearly from the present investigation, the worship and legend of an effeminate hero like Sandan appear to have spread, by means of an early diffusion of the Semitic stock, first to the neighbourhood of Tarsus in Cilicia and afterwards to Sardes in Lydia. In favour of the former prevalence of the rite in Lydia it may be added that the oldest dynasty of Lydian kings traced their descent, not only from the mythical Assyrian hero

¹ K. O. Müller, "Sandon und Sardanapal," *Kunstarchiologische Werke*, iii. 16 *sq.* The writer adds that there is authority for every stroke in the picture. His principal source is the sixty-second speech of Dio Chrysostom (vol.

ii. p. 202 ed. Dindorf), where the unmanly Sardanapalus, seated cross-legged on a gilded couch with purple hangings, is compared to "the Adonis for whom the women wail."

Ninus, but also from the Greek hero Hercules,¹ whose legendary death in the fire finds at least a curious echo in the story that Croesus, the last king of Lydia, was laid by his Persian conqueror Cyrus on a great pyre of wood, and was only saved at the last moment from being consumed in the flames.² May not this story embody a reminiscence of the manner in which the ancient kings of Lydia, as living embodiments of their god, formerly met their end? It was thus, as we have seen, that the old Prussian rulers used to burn themselves alive in front of the sacred oak;³ and by an odd coincidence, if it is nothing more, the Greek Hercules directed that the pyre on which he was to be consumed should be made of the wood of the oak and the wild olive.⁴ Some grounds have also been shown for thinking that in certain South African tribes the chiefs may formerly have been burnt alive as a religious or magical ceremony.⁵ All these facts and indications tend to support the view of Movers that at the Sacaea also the man who played the god for five days was originally burnt at the end of them.⁶ Death by hanging or crucifixion may have been a later mitigation of his sufferings, though it is quite possible that both forms of execution or rather of sacrifice may have been combined by hanging or crucifying the victim first and burning him afterwards, much as our forefathers used to disembowel traitors after suspending them for a few minutes on a gibbet. At Tarsus apparently the custom was still further softened by burning an effigy instead of a man; but on this point the evidence is not explicit. It is worth observing that as late

¹ Herodotus, i. 7.

² Herodotus, i. 86, with Bähr's note.

³ See above, vol. ii. p. 13.

⁴ Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 1195 sqq.:

πολλὴν μὲν ὅλην τῇ βαθυρρίζου δρυὸς
κέραττα πολλῶν δ' ἄρσεν ἐκτεμὸνθ' ὁμοῦ
ἀγριοῦ ἑλαίου, σῶμα τοῦ μὲν ἐμβαλεῖν.

The passage was pointed out to me by my friend Dr. A. W. Verrall. The poet's language suggests that of old a sacred fire was kindled by the friction of oak and wild olive wood, and that in accordance with a notion common among rude peoples, one of the pieces of wood (in this case the wild olive) was

regarded as male and the other (the oak) as female. On this hypothesis, the fire was kindled by drilling a hole in a piece of oak with a stick of wild olive. As to the different sorts of wood used by the ancients in making fire by friction, see A. Kuhn, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks*,² p. 35 sqq. We have seen that in South Africa a special fire is procured for sacrifices by the friction of two pieces of the *Uswati* tree, which are known respectively as husband and wife (vol. ii. p. 326).

⁵ See above, vol. ii. p. 328.

⁶ Movers, *Die Phoenizier*, i. 496.

as Lucian's time the principal festival of the year at Hierapolis—the great seat of the worship of Astarte—fell at the beginning of spring and took its name of the Pyre or the Torch from the tall masts which were burnt in the court of the temple with sheep, goats, and other animals hanging from them.¹ Here the season, the fire, and the gallows-tree all fit our hypothesis; only the man-god is wanting.

If the Jewish festival of Purim was, as I have attempted to show, directly descended either from the Sacaea or from some other Semitic festival, of which the central feature was the sacrifice of a man in the character of a god, we should expect to find traces of human sacrifice lingering about it in one or other of those mitigated forms to which I have just referred. This expectation is fully borne out by the facts. For from an early time it has been customary with the Jews at the feast of Purim to burn or otherwise destroy effigies of Haman, whose original character as a deity has recently been made probable by the researches of Jensen. The practice was well known under the Roman empire, for the emperors Honorius and Theodosius issued a decree commanding the governors of the provinces to take care that the Jews should not burn effigies of Haman on a cross at one of their festivals.² We learn from the decree that the custom gave great offence to the Christians, who regarded it as a blasphemous parody of the central mystery of their own religion, little suspecting that it was nothing but a continuation, in a milder form, of a rite that had probably been celebrated in the East long ages before the birth of Christ. The Arab historian Albirûnî, who wrote in the year 1000 A.D., informs us that at Purim the Jews of his time rejoiced greatly over the death of Haman, and that they made figures which they beat and burned, "imitating the burning of Haman." Hence one name for the festival was Hâmân-Sûr.³ Another Arabic writer, Makrizî, who died in

Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 49.

² Codex Theodosianus, Lib. XVI. Tit. viii. § 18: "*Judeos quodam festivitatis suae sollemni Aman ad poenae quondam recordationem incendere, et sanctae crucis adsimulatam speciem in contemptu Christianae fidei sacrilega mente exurere provinciarum rectores*

prohibeant: ne locis suis fidei nostrae signum immisceant, sed ritus suos infra contemptum Christianae legis retineant: amissuri sine dubio permissa hactenus, nisi ab illicitis temperaverint." The decree is dated at Constantinople, in the consulship of Bassus and Philip.

³ Albirûnî, *The Chronology of Ancient*

1442 A.D., says that at the feast of Purim, which fell on the fifteenth day of the month Adar, some of the Jews used to make effigies of Haman which they first played with and then threw into the fire.¹ During the Middle Ages the Italian Jews celebrated Purim in a lively fashion which has been compared by their own historians to that of the Carnival. The children used to range themselves in rows opposite each other and pelt one another with nuts, while grown-up people rode on horseback through the streets with pine branches in their hands or blew trumpets and made merry round a puppet representing Haman, which was set on a platform or scaffold and then solemnly burnt on a pyre.² In the eighteenth century the Jews of Frankfort used at Purim to make pyramids of thin wax candles, which they set on fire; also they fashioned images of Haman and his wife out of candles and burned them on the reading-desk in the synagogue.³

Now, when we consider the close correspondence in character as well as in date between the Jewish Purim and the Christian Carnival, and remember further that the effigy of Carnival, which is now destroyed at this merry season, had probably its prototype in a living man who was put to a violent death in the character of Saturn at the Saturnalia, analogy of itself would suggest that in former times the Jews, like the Babylonians, from whom they appear to have derived their Purim, may at one time have burned, hanged, or crucified a real man in the character of Haman. There are some positive grounds for thinking that this was so. The early church historian Socrates informs us that at Inmestar, a town in Syria, the Jews were wont to observe certain sports among themselves, in the course of which they played many foolish pranks. In the year 416 A.D., being heated with wine, they carried these sports further than usual and began deriding Christians and even Christ himself, and to give the

Nations, translated and edited by Dr. C. Edward Sachau (London, 1879), p. 273 sq.

¹ Quoted by Lagarde, "Purim," p. 13 (*Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, xxxiv. 1887).

² M. Güdemann, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur der abendländischen Juden*, ii. 211 sq.; I. Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1896), p. 260 sq.

³ J. J. Schudt, *jüdische Merkwürdigkeiten*, ii. Theil, p. *309.

more zest to their mockery they seized a Christian child, bound him to a cross, and hung him up. At first they only laughed and jeered at him, but soon, their passions getting the better of them, they ill-treated the child so that he died under their hands. The thing got noised abroad, and resulted in a serious brawl between the Jews and their Christian neighbours. The authorities then stepped in, and the Jews had to pay dear for the crime they had perpetrated in sport.¹ The Christian historian does not mention, and perhaps did not know, the name of the drunken and jovial festival which ended so tragically; but we can hardly doubt that it was Purim, and that the boy who died on the cross represented Haman.² In mediæval and modern times many accusations of ritual murders, as they are called, have been brought against the Jews, and the arguments for and against the charge have been discussed on both sides with a heat which, however natural, has tended rather to inflame the passions of the disputants than to elicit the truth.³ Into this troubled arena I prefer not to enter; I will only observe that, so far as I have looked into the alleged cases, and these are reported in sufficient detail, the majority of the victims are said to have been children and to have met their fate in spring, often in the week before Easter. This last circumstance points, if there is any truth in the accusations, to a connection of the human sacrifice with the Passover, which falls in this week, rather than with Purim, which falls a month earlier. Indeed it has often been made a part of the accusation that the blood of the youthful victims was intended to be used at the Passover. Now if we bear in mind the strong grounds which exist for believing that the great

¹ Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, vii. 16; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. Classen, vol. i. p. 129. Theophanes places the event in the year 408 A.D. From a note in Migne's edition of Socrates, I learn that in the Alexandrian calendar, which Theophanes used, the year 408 corresponded to the year which in our reckoning began on the first of September 415. Hence if the murder was perpetrated in spring at Purim it must have taken place in 416.

² This is the view of Graetz

(*Geschichte der Juden*,² iv. 393 sq.) and Dr. M. R. James (*Life and Miracles of St. William of Norwich* (Cambridge, 1896), by A. Jessopp and M. R. James, p. lxiii. sq.).

³ For an examination of some of these reported murders, see M. R. James, *op. cit.* p. lxii. sqq.; H. L. Strack, *Das Blut im Glauben und Aberglauben der Menschheit* (Munich, 1900), p. 121 sqq. Both writers incline to dismiss the charges as groundless.

feature of the original Passover was the sacrifice of the first-born children,¹ we may hesitate to dismiss as idle calumnies all the charges of ritual murder which have been brought against the Jews in modern times. The extraordinary tenacity of life exhibited by the lowest forms of superstition in the minds of ignorant people, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, is familiar to all students of popular religion; and there would be no reason for surprise if among the most degraded part of the Jewish community there should be from time to time a recrudescence of primitive barbarity. To make the Jewish community as a whole responsible for outrages which, if they occur at all, are doubtless quite as repugnant to them as they are to every humane mind, would be the height of injustice; it would be as fair to charge Christians in general with complicity in the incalculably greater number of massacres and atrocities of every kind that have been perpetrated by Christians in the name of Christianity, not merely on Jews and heathen, but on men and women and children who professed—and died for—the same faith as their torturers and murderers. If deeds of the sort alleged have been really done by Jews—a question on which I must decline to pronounce an opinion—they would interest the student of custom as isolated instances of reversion to an old and barbarous ritual which once flourished commonly enough among the ancestors both of Jews and Gentiles, but on which, as on a noxious monster, an enlightened humanity has long set its heel. Such customs die hard; it is not the fault of society as a whole if sometimes the reptile has strength enough left to lift its venomous head and sting.

But between the stage when human sacrifice goes on unabashed in the light of common day, and the stage when it has been driven out of sight into dark holes and corners, there intervenes a period during which the custom is slowly dwindling away under the growing light of knowledge and philanthropy. In this middle period many subterfuges are resorted to for the sake of preserving the old ritual in a form which will not offend the new morality. A common and successful device is to consummate the sacrifice on the person

¹ See above, vol. ii. p. 47 *sqq.*

of a malefactor, whose death at the altar or elsewhere is little likely to excite pity or indignation, since it partakes of the character of a punishment, and people recognise that if the miscreant had not been dealt with by the priest, it would have been needful in the public interest to hand him over to the executioner. We have seen that in the Rhodian sacrifices to Cronus a condemned criminal was after a time substituted for an innocent victim; and there can be little doubt that at Babylon the criminals, who perished in the character of gods at the Sacaea, enjoyed an honour which, at an earlier period, had been reserved for more respectable persons. It seems therefore by no means impossible that the Jews, in borrowing the Sacaea from Babylon under the new name of Purim, should have borrowed along with it the custom of putting to death a malefactor who, after masquerading as Mordecai in a crown and royal robe, was hanged or crucified in the character of Haman. There are some grounds for thinking that this or something of this sort was done; but a consideration of them had better be deferred till we have cleared up some points which still remain obscure in Purim, and in the account which the Jews give of its origin.

In the first place, then, it deserves to be remarked that the joyous festival of Purim on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar is invariably preceded by a fast, known as the fast of Esther, on the thirteenth; indeed, some Jews fast for several days before Purim.¹ In the book of Esther the fast is traditionally explained as a commemoration of the mourning and lamentation excited among the Jews by the decree of King Ahasuerus that they should all be massacred on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; for "in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes." And Esther, before she went into the presence of the king to plead for the lives of her people, "bade them return answer unto Mordecai, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also

¹ Buxtorf, *Synagoga Judaica*, cap. *Verfassung der heutigen Juden*, ii. 253 xxix. p. 554; Bodenschatz, *Kirchliche* sq.

and my maidens will fast in like manner." Hence fasting and lamentation were ordained as the proper preparation for the happy feast of Purim which commemorated the great deliverance of the Jews from the destruction that had threatened them on the thirteenth day of Adar.¹ Now we have seen that, in the opinion of some of the best modern scholars, the basis of the book of Esther is not history but a Babylonian myth, which celebrated the triumph of the Babylonian deities over the gods of their enemies. On this hypothesis, how is the fast that precedes Purim to be explained? The best solution appears to be that of Jensen, that the fasting and mourning were originally for the supposed annual death of a Semitic god or hero of the type of Tammuz or Adonis, whose resurrection on the following day occasioned that outburst of joy and gladness which is characteristic of Purim. The particular god or hero, whose death and resurrection thus touched with sorrow and filled with joy the hearts of his worshippers, may have been, according to Jensen, either the great hero Gilgamesh, or his comrade and friend Eabani.² The doughty deeds and adventures of this mighty pair are the theme of the longest Babylonian poem that has been as yet discovered. It is recorded on twelve tablets, and this circumstance has suggested to some scholars the view that the story may be a solar myth, descriptive of the sun's annual course through the twelve months or the twelve signs of the zodiac. However this may be, the scene of the poem is laid chiefly at the very ancient Babylonian city of Erech, the chief seat of the worship of the goddess Ishtar or Astarte, who plays an important part in the story. For the goddess is said to have been smitten with the charms of Gilgamesh, and to have made love to him; but he spurned her proffered favours, and thereafter fell into a sore sickness, probably through the wrath of the offended goddess. His comrade Eabani also roused the fury of Ishtar, and was wounded to death. For twelve days he lingered on a bed of pain, and, when he died,

¹ Esther iv. 3 and 16, ix. 31.

² So far as I know, Professor Jensen has not yet published his theory, but he has stated it in letters to correspondents. See Nowack, *Lehrbuch der hebräischen Archäologie*, ii. 200;

Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, p. 311 sqq.; Wildeboer, in his commentary on Esther, p. 174 sq. (*Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament*, herausgegeben von D. K. Marti, Lieferung 6).

his friend Gilgamesh mourned and lamented for him, and rested not until he had prevailed on the god of the dead to suffer the spirit of Eabani to return to the upper world. The resurrection of Eabani, recorded on the twelfth tablet, forms the conclusion of the long poem.¹ Jensen's theory is that the death and resurrection of a mythical being, who combined in himself the features of a solar god and an ancient king of Erech, were celebrated at the Babylonian Zakmuk or festival of the New Year, and that the transference of the drama from Erech, its original seat, to Babylon led naturally to the substitution of Marduk, the great god of Babylon, for Gilgamesh or Eabani in the part of the hero. Although Jensen apparently does not identify the Zakmuk with the Sacaea, a little consideration will show how well his general theory of Zakmuk fits in with those features of the Sacaeen festival which have emerged in the course of our inquiry. At the Sacaeen festival, if I am right, a man, who personated a god or hero of the type of Tammuz or Adonis, enjoyed the favours of a woman, probably a sacred harlot, who represented the great Semitic goddess Ishtar or Astarte; and after he had thus done his part towards securing, by means of sympathetic magic, the revival of plant life in spring, he was put to death. We may suppose that the death of this divine man was mourned over by his worshippers, and especially by women, in much the same fashion as the women of Jerusalem wept for Tammuz at the gate of the temple,² and as Syrian damsels mourned the dead Adonis, while the river ran red with his blood. Such rites appear, in fact, to have been common all over Western Asia; the particular name of the dying god varied in different places, but in substance the

¹ M. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 471 sq., 475 sq., 481-486, 510-512; L. W. King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology*, p. 146 sqq. Mr. Jastrow points out that though a relation cannot be traced between each of the tablets of the poem and the corresponding month of the year, such a relation appears undoubtedly to exist between some of the tablets and the months. Thus, for example, the sixth tablet describes the affection of Ishtar for Gilgamesh, and the visit which she

paid to Anu, her father in heaven, to complain of the hero's contemptuous rejection of her love. Now the sixth Babylonian month was called the "Mission of Ishtar," and in it was held the festival of Tammuz, the hapless lover of the goddess. Again, the story of the great flood is told in the eleventh tablet, and the eleventh month was called the "month of rain." See Jastrow, *op. cit.* pp. 484, 510.

² Ezekiel viii. 14.

ritual was the same. Fundamentally, the custom was a religious or rather magical ceremony intended to ensure the revival and reproduction of life in spring.

Now, if this interpretation of the Sacaea is correct, it is obvious that one important feature of the ceremony is wanting in the brief notices of the festival that have come down to us. The death of the man-god at the festival is recorded, but nothing is said of his resurrection. Yet if he really personated a being of the Adonis or Attis type, we may feel pretty sure that his dramatic death was followed at a shorter or longer interval by his dramatic revival, just as at the festivals of Attis and Adonis the resurrection of the dead god quickly succeeded to his mimic death.¹ Here, however, a difficulty presents itself. At the Sacaea the man-god died a real, not a mere mimic death; and in ordinary life the resurrection even of a man-god is at least not an everyday occurrence. What was to be done? The man, or rather the god, was undoubtedly dead. How was he to come to life again? Obviously the best, if not the only way, was to set another and living man to support the character of the reviving god, and we may conjecture that this was done. We may suppose that the insignia of royalty which had adorned the dead man were transferred to his successor, who, arrayed in them, would be presented to his rejoicing worshippers as their god come to life again; and by his side would probably be displayed a woman in the character of his divine consort, the goddess Ishtar or Astarte. In favour of this hypothesis it may be observed that it at once furnishes a clear and intelligible explanation of a remarkable feature in the book of Esther which has not yet, so far as I am aware, been adequately elucidated; I mean that apparent duplication of the principal characters to which I have already directed the reader's attention. If I am right, Haman represents the temporary king or mortal god who was put to death at the Sacaea; and his rival Mordecai represents the other temporary king who, on the death of his predecessor, was invested with his royal insignia, and exhibited to the people as the god come to life again. Similarly Vashti, the deposed queen in the narrative, corresponds to the woman who

¹ See vol. ii. pp. 116, 132.

played the part of queen and goddess to the first mock king, the Haman or Humman; and her successful rival, Esther or Ishtar, answers to the woman who figured as the divine consort of the second mock king, the Mordecai or Marduk. A trace of the sexual licence accorded to the mock king of the festival seems to be preserved in the statement that King Ahasuerus found Haman fallen on the bed with Esther and asked, "Will he even force the queen before me in the house?"¹ We have seen that the mock king of the Sacaea did actually possess the right of using the real king's concubines, and there is much to be said for the view of Movers that he began his short reign by exercising the right in public.² In the parallel ritual of Adonis the marriage of the goddess with her ill-fated lover was publicly celebrated the day before his mimic death.³ A clear reminiscence of the time when the relation between Esther and Mordecai was conceived as much more intimate than mere cousinship appears to be preserved in some of the Jewish plays acted at Purim, in which Mordecai appears as the lover of Esther; and this significant indication is confirmed by the teaching of the Rabbis that King Ahasuerus never really knew Esther, but that a phantom in her likeness lay with him while the real Esther sat on the lap of Mordecai.⁴ Another recommendation of the theory which I venture to propound is that it suggests an obvious and plausible reason for the Elamite names attached to two of the principal characters in the book of Esther, the discarded queen Vashti and the unhappy vizier Haman. If at the New Year festival in Babylon the divine drama was played by two pairs of mock kings and queens, of whom one pair came to a miserable end, while the other pair triumphed before the people arrayed in all the mimic pomp of their predecessors, it would be natural enough that in time an unfavourable comparison should be drawn between the two pairs, and that people, forgetting their real meaning and religious identity, should see in their apparent opposition a victory of the gods of Babylon over the gods of their eternal

¹ Esther vii. 8.² See above, p. 160.³ Above, vol. ii. p. 116.⁴ J. J. Schudt, *Jüdische Merkwürdigkeiten*, ii. Theil, p. *316.

foes the Elamites. Hence while the happy pair retained their Babylonian names of Marduk and Ishtar, the unhappy pair, who were originally nothing but Marduk and Ishtar in a different aspect, were renamed after the hated Elamite deities Humman and Vashti.

The Persian setting, in which the Hebrew author of the book of Esther has framed his highly-coloured picture, naturally suggests that the Jews derived their feast of Purim not directly from the old Babylonians, but from their Persian conquerors. Even if this could be demonstrated, it would in no way invalidate the theory that Purim originated in the Babylonian festival of the Sacaea, since we know that the Sacaea was celebrated by the Persians.¹ Hence it becomes worth while to inquire whether in the Persian religion we can detect any traces of a festival akin to the Sacaea or Purim. Here Lagarde has shown the way by directing attention to the old Persian ceremony known as the "Ride of the Beardless One."² This was a rite performed both in Persia and Babylonia at the beginning of spring, on the first day of the first month, which in the most ancient Persian calendar corresponded to March, so that the date of the ceremony agrees with that of the Babylonian New Year festival of Zakmuk. A beardless and, if possible, one-eyed buffoon was set naked on an ass, a horse, or a mule, and conducted in a sort of mock triumph through the streets of the city. In one hand he held a crow and in the other a fan, with which he fanned himself, complaining of the heat, while the people pelted him with ice and snow and drenched him with cold water. He was supposed to drive away the cold, and perhaps to aid him in discharging this useful function he was fed with hot food, and hot stuffs were smeared on his body. Riding on his ass and attended by all the king's household, if the city happened to be the capital, or, if it was not, by all the

¹ Dio Chrysostom makes Diogenes say to Alexander the Great, οὐκ ἐννεύθηκας τὴν τῶν Σακαίων ἐορτήν, ἣν Πέρσαι ἀγούσιν (*Or.* iv. vol. i. p. 76 ed. Dindorf). The festival was mentioned by Ctesias in the second book of his Persian history (Athenaeus, xiv. p. 639 c); and down to the time of Strabo

it was associated with the nominal worship of the Persian goddess Anaitis (Strabo, xi. 8. 4 and 5).

² Lagarde, "Purim," p. 51 sqq. (*Abhandlungen der königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, xxxiv. 1887).

retainers of the governor, who were also mounted, he paraded the streets and extorted contributions. He stopped at the doors of the rich, and if they did not give him what he asked for, he befouled their garments with mud or a mixture of red ochre and water, which he carried in an earthenware pot. If a shopkeeper hesitated a moment to respond to his demands, the importunate beggar had the right to confiscate all the goods in the shop; so the tradesmen who saw him bearing down on them, not unnaturally hastened to anticipate his wants by contributing of their substance before he could board them. Everything that he thus collected from break of day to the time of morning prayers belonged to the king or governor of the city; but everything that he laid hands on between the first and the second hour of prayer he kept for himself. After the second prayers he disappeared, and if the people caught him later in the day they were free to beat him to their heart's content. "In like manner," proceeds one of the native writers who has described the custom, "people at the present time appoint a New Year Lord and make merry. And this they do because the season, which is the beginning of Azur or March, coincides with the sun's entry into Aries, for on that day they disport themselves and rejoice because the winter is over."¹

Now in this harlequin, who rode through the streets attended by all the king's men, and levying contributions which went either to the royal treasury or to the pocket of the collector, we recognise the familiar features of the mock or temporary king, who is invested for a short time with the pomp and privileges of royalty for reasons which have been already explained.² The abrupt disappearance of the Persian clown at a certain hour of the day, coupled with the leave given to the populace to thrash him if they found him afterwards, points plainly enough to the harder fate that probably awaited him in former days, when he paid with his life for his brief tenure of a kingly crown. The resemblance between his burlesque progress and that of Mordecai through the streets of Susa is obvious; though

¹ Th. Hyde, *Historia religionis veterum Persarum* (Oxford, 1700), pp. 183, 249-251.

² See especially, vol. ii. p. 26 *sqq.*



the Jewish author of Esther has depicted in brighter colours the pomp of his hero "in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a robe of fine linen and purple," riding the king's own charger, and led through the city by one of the king's most noble princes.¹ The difference between the two scenes is probably not to be explained simply by the desire of the Jewish writer to shed a halo of glory round the personage whom he regarded as the deliverer of his people. So long as the temporary king was a real substitute for the reigning monarch, and had to die sooner or later in his stead, it was natural that he should be treated with a greater show of deference, and should simulate his royal brother more closely than a clown, who had nothing worse than a beating to fear when he laid down his office. In short, after the serious meaning of the custom had been forgotten, and the substitute was allowed to escape with his life, the high tragedy of the ancient ceremony would rapidly degenerate into farce.

But while the "Ride of the Beardless One" is, from one point of view, a degenerate copy of the original, regarded from another point of view, it preserves some features which are almost certainly primitive, though they do not appear in the kindred Babylonian and Jewish festivals. The Persian custom bears the stamp of a popular festivity rather than of a state ceremonial, and everywhere it seems as if popular festivals, when left to propagate themselves freely among the folk, reveal their old meaning and intention more transparently than when they have been adopted into the official religion and enshrined in a ritual. The simple thoughts of our simple forefathers are better understood by their unlettered descendants than by the majority of educated people; their rude rites are more faithfully preserved and more truly interpreted by a rude peasantry than by the priest, who wraps up their nakedness in the gorgeous pall of religious pomp, or by the philosopher, who dissolves their crudities into the thin air of allegory. In the present instance the purpose of the "Ride of the Beardless One" at the beginning of spring is sufficiently obvious; it was meant to hasten the departure of winter and the approach

¹ Esther vi. 8 *sq.*, viii. 15.

of summer. We are expressly told that the clown who went about fanning himself and complaining of the heat, while the populace snowballed him, was supposed to dispel the cold ; and even without any such assurance we should be justified in inferring as much from his behaviour. On the principles of sympathetic magic, which is little more than an elaborate system of make-believe, you can make the weather warm by pretending that it is so ; or if you cannot, you may be sure that there is some wiser person than yourself who can. Such a wizard, in the estimation of the Persians, was the beardless one-eyed man who went through the performance I have described ; and no doubt his physical defects were believed to contribute in some occult manner to the success of the rite. The ceremony was thus, as Lagarde acutely perceived, the oriental equivalent of those popular European customs which celebrate the advent of spring by representing in a dramatic form the expulsion or defeat of winter by the victorious summer.¹ But whereas in Europe the two rival seasons are often, if not regularly, personated by two actors or two effigies, in Persia a single actor sufficed. Whether he definitely represented winter or summer is not quite clear ; but his pretence of suffering from heat, and his final disappearance suggest that, if he personified either of the seasons, it was the departing winter rather than the coming summer.

If there is any truth in the connection thus traced between Purim and the "Ride of the Beardless One," we are now in a position to finally unmask the leading personages in the book of Esther. I have attempted to show that Haman and Vashti are little more than doubles of Mordecai and Esther, who in turn conceal under a thin disguise the features of Marduk and Ishtar, the great god and goddess of Babylon. But why, the reader may ask, should the divine pair be thus duplicated and the two pairs set in opposition to each other ? The answer is suggested by the popular European celebrations of spring to which I have just adverted. If my interpretation of these customs is right, the contrast between the summer and winter, or the life and death which figure in effigy, or in the persons of

¹ See above, vol. ii. p. 99 sqq.

living representatives at the spring ceremonies of our peasantry, is fundamentally a contrast between the dying or dead vegetation of the old, and the sprouting vegetation of the new year—a contrast, I may add, which would lose nothing of its point when, as in ancient Rome and Babylon and Persia, the beginning of spring was also the beginning of the new year. In these and in all the ceremonies we have been examining the antagonism is not between powers of a different order, but between the same power viewed in different aspects as old and young; it is in short nothing but the eternal and pathetic contrast between youth and age. And as the power or spirit of vegetation is represented in religious ritual and popular custom by a human pair, whether they be called Ishtar and Tammuz, or Venus and Adonis, or the Queen and King of May, so we may expect to find the old decrepit spirit of the past year personated by one pair, and the fresh young spirit of the new year by another. This, if my hypothesis is right, is the ultimate explanation of the struggle between Haman and Vashti on the one side, and their doubles Mordecai and Esther on the other. In the last analysis both pairs stood for the powers that make for the fertility of plants and perhaps also of animals; but the one pair embodied the failing energies of the past, and the other the vigorous and growing energies of the coming year. Both powers, on my hypothesis, were personified not merely in myth, but in custom; for year by year a human couple undertook to quicken the life of nature by a union in which, as in a microcosm, the loves of tree and plant, of herb and flower, of bird and beast were supposed in some mystic fashion to be summed up. Originally, we may conjecture, such couples exercised their functions for a whole year, on the conclusion of which the male partner—the divine king—was put to death; but in historical times it seems that, as a rule, the human god—the Saturn, Zoganes, Tammuz, or whatever he was called—enjoyed his divine privileges, and discharged his divine duties only for a short part of the year. This curtailment of his reign on earth was probably introduced at the time when the old hereditary divinities or deified kings contrived to shift the most painful part of their

duties to a substitute, whether that substitute was a son or a slave or a malefactor. Having to die as a king, it was necessary that the substitute should also live as a king for a season; but the real monarch would naturally restrict within the narrowest limits both of time and of power a reign which, so long as it lasted, necessarily encroached upon and indeed superseded his own. What became of the divine king's female partner, the human goddess who shared his bed and transmitted his beneficent energies to the rest of nature, we cannot say. So far as I am aware, there is no evidence either in custom or in myth that she like him suffered death when her primary function was discharged. The nature of maternity suggests an obvious reason for sparing her a little longer, till that mysterious law, which links together woman's life with the changing aspects of the nightly sky, had been fulfilled by the birth of an infant god, who should in his turn, reared perhaps by her tender care, grow up to live and die for the world.

An eminent scholar has recently pointed out the remarkable resemblance between the treatment of Christ by the Roman soldiers at Jerusalem and the treatment of the mock king of the Saturnalia by the Roman soldiers at Durostolum; and he would explain the similarity by supposing that the soldiers ridiculed the claims of Christ to a divine kingdom by arraying him in the familiar garb of old King Saturn, whose quaint person figured so prominently at the winter revels.¹ Even if the theory should prove to be right, we can hardly suppose that Christ played the part of the regular Saturn of the year, since at the beginning of our era the Saturnalia fell at midwinter, whereas Christ was crucified at the Passover in spring. There is, indeed, as I have pointed out, some reason to think that when the Roman year began in March the Saturnalia was held in spring, and that in remote districts the festival always continued to be celebrated at the ancient date. If the Roman garrison of Jerusalem conformed to the old fashion in this respect, it seems not quite impossible that their celebration of the Saturnalia may have coincided with the Passover;

¹ P. Wendland, "Jesus als Saturnalien-König," *Hermes*, xxxiii. (1898), pp. 175-179.

and that thus Christ, as a condemned criminal, may have been given up to them to make sport with as the Saturn of the year. But on the other hand it is rather unlikely that the officers, as representatives of the State, would have allowed their men to hold the festival at any but the official date; even in the distant town of Durostolum we saw that the Roman soldiers celebrated the Saturnalia in December. Thus if the legionaries at Jerusalem really intended to mock Christ by treating him like the burlesque king of the Saturnalia, they probably did so only by way of a jest which was in more senses than one unseasonable.

But closely as the passion of Christ resembles the treatment of the mock king of the Saturnalia, it resembles still more closely the treatment of the mock king of the Sacaea.¹ The description of the mockery by St. Matthew is the fullest. It runs thus: "Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him."² Compare with this the treatment of the mock king of the Sacaea, as it is described by Dio Chrysostom: "They take one of the prisoners condemned to death and seat him upon the king's throne, and give him the king's raiment, and let him lord it and drink and run riot and use the king's concubines during these days, and no man prevents him from doing just what he likes. But afterwards they strip and scourge and crucify him."³ Now it is quite possible that this remarkable resemblance is after all a mere coincidence, and that Christ was executed in the ordinary

¹ The resemblance had struck me when I wrote this book originally, but as I could not definitely explain it I preferred to leave it unnoticed.

² Matthew xxvii. 26-31. Mark's description (xv. 15-20) is nearly identical.

³ Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* iv. vol. i. p. 76 ed. Dindorf. As I have already mentioned, the Greek word which describes the execution (*ἐκπέμψαν*) leaves it uncertain whether the man was crucified or hanged.

way as a common malefactor ; but on the other hand there are so many scattered hints and indications of something unusual, so many broken lines seemingly converging towards the cross on Calvary, that it is worth while to follow them up and see where they lead us. In attempting to draw these fragmentary data together, to bridge the chasms, and to restore the shattered whole, we must beware of mistaking hypothesis for the facts which it only professes to cement ; yet even if our hypothesis should be thought to bear a somewhat undue proportion to the facts, the excess may perhaps be overlooked in consideration of the obscurity and the importance of the inquiry.

We have seen reason to think that the Jewish festival of Purim is a continuation, under a changed name, of the Babylonian Sacaea, and that in celebrating it by the destruction of an effigy of Haman the modern Jews have kept up a reminiscence of the ancient custom of crucifying or hanging a man in the character of a god at the festival. Is it not possible that at an earlier time they may, like the Babylonians themselves, have regularly compelled a condemned criminal to play the tragic part, and that Christ thus perished in the character of Haman ? The resemblance between the hanged Haman and the crucified Christ struck the early Christians themselves ; and whenever the Jews destroyed an effigy of Haman they were accused by their Christian neighbours of deriding the most sacred mystery of the new faith.¹ It is probable that on this painful subject the Christians were too sensitive ; remembering the manner of their Founder's death it was natural that they should wince at any pointed allusion to a cross, a gallows, or a public execution, even when the shaft was not aimed at them. An objection to supposing that Christ died as the Haman of the year is that according to the Gospel narrative the crucifixion occurred at the Passover, on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, whereas the feast of Purim, at which the hanging of Haman would naturally take place, fell exactly a month earlier, namely, on the fourteenth day of the month Adar. I have no wish to blink or extenuate the serious nature of the difficulty arising from this discrepancy of dates, but I

¹ See above, p. 172.

would suggest some considerations which may make us hesitate to decide that the discrepancy is fatal. In the first place, it is possible, though perhaps not probable, that Christian tradition shifted the date of the crucifixion by a month in order to make the great sacrifice of the Lamb of God coincide with that annual sacrifice of the Passover lamb which in the belief of pious hearts had so long foreshadowed it and was thenceforth to cease. Instances of gentle pressure brought to bear, for purposes of edification, on stubborn facts are perhaps not wholly unknown in the annals of religion. But the express testimony of history is never to be lightly set aside; and in the investigation of its problems a solution which assumes the veracity and accuracy of the historian is, on an even balance of probabilities, always to be preferred to one which impugns them both. Now in the present case we have seen reason to think that the Babylonian New Year festival, of which Purim was a continuation, did fall in Nisan at or near the time of the Passover, and that when the Jews borrowed the festival they altered the date from Nisan to Adar in order to prevent the new feast from clashing with the old Passover. A reminiscence of the original date of Purim perhaps survives, as I have already pointed out, in the statement in the book of Esther that Haman caused *pur* or lots to be cast before him from the month of Nisan onward.¹ It thus seems not impossible that occasionally, for some special reason, the Jews should have celebrated the feast of Purim, or at least the death of Haman, at or about the time of the Passover. But there is another possibility which, remote and fanciful as it may appear, deserves at least to be mentioned. The mock king of the Saturnalia, whose resemblance to the dying Christ was first pointed out by Mr. Wendland, was allowed a period of licence of thirty days before he was put to death. If we could suppose that in like manner the Jews spared the human representative of Haman for one month from Purim, the date of his execution would fall exactly on the Passover. Which, if any, of these conjectural solutions of the difficulty is the true one, I will not undertake to say. I am fully conscious of the doubt and uncertainty that hang round the whole subject; and if

¹ Esther iii. 7.

in this and what follows I throw out some hints and suggestions, it is more in the hope of stimulating and directing further inquiry than with any expectation of reaching definite conclusions.

It may be objected that the mockery of Christ was done not by the Jews but by the Roman soldiers, who knew and cared nothing about Haman ; how then can we suppose that the purple or scarlet robe, the sceptre of reed, and the crown of thorns, which the soldiers thrust upon Christ, were the regular insignia of the Haman of the year ? To this we may reply, in the first place, that even if the legions stationed in Syria were not recruited in the country, they may have contracted some of the native superstitions and have fallen in with the local customs. This is not an idle conjecture. We know that the third legion during its stay in Syria learned the Syrian custom of saluting the rising sun, and that this formal salute, performed by the whole regiment as one man at a critical moment of the great battle of Bedriacum, actually helped to turn the scale when the fortune of empire hung trembling in the balance.¹ But it is not necessary to suppose that the garrison of Jerusalem really shared the beliefs and prejudices of the mob whom they overawed ; soldiers everywhere are ready to go with a crowd bent on sport, without asking any curious questions as to the history or quality of the entertainment, and we should probably do the humanity of Roman soldiers too much honour if we imagined that they would be deterred by any qualm of conscience from joining in the pastime, which is still so popular, of baiting a Jew to death. But in the second place it should be observed that according to one of the Evangelists it was not the soldiers of Pilate who mocked Jesus, but the soldiers of Herod,² and we may fairly assume that Herod's guards were Jews.

The hypothesis that the crucifixion with all its cruel mockery was not a punishment specially devised for Christ, but was merely the fate that annually befell the malefactor who played Haman, appears to go some way towards relieving the Gospel narrative of certain difficulties which otherwise beset it. If, as we read in the Gospels, Pilate was really

¹ Tacitus, *Hist.* iii. 24 sq., compared with ii. 74.

² Luke xxiii. 11.

anxious to save the innocent man whose fine bearing seems to have struck him, what was to hinder him from doing so? He had the power of life and death; why should he not have exercised it on the side of mercy, if his own judgment inclined that way? His reluctant acquiescence in the importunate demand of the rabble becomes easier to understand if we assume that custom obliged him annually at this season to give up to them a prisoner on whom they might play their cruel pranks. On this assumption Pilate had no power to prevent the sacrifice; the most he could do was to choose the victim.

Again, consider the remarkable statement of the Evangelists that Pilate set up over the cross a superscription stating that the man who hung on it was king of the Jews.¹ Is it likely that in the reign of Tiberius a Roman governor, with the fear of the jealous and suspicious old emperor before his eyes, would have ventured, even in mockery, to blazon forth a seditious claim of this sort unless it were the regular formula employed on such occasions, recognised by custom and therefore not liable to be misconstrued into treason by the malignity of informers and the fears of a tyrant?

But if the tragedy of the ill-fated aspirant after royal honours was annually enacted at Jerusalem by a prisoner who perished on the cross, it becomes probable that the part of his successful rival was also played by another actor who paraded in the same kingly trappings but did not share the same fate. If Jesus was the Haman of the year, where was the Mordecai? Perhaps we may find him in Barabbas.

We are told by the Evangelists that at the feast which witnessed the crucifixion of Christ it was the custom for the Roman governor to release one prisoner, whomsoever the people desired, and that Pilate, convinced of the innocence of Jesus, attempted to persuade the multitude to choose him as the man who should go free. But, hounded on by the priests and elders who had marked out Jesus for destruction, the rabble would not hear of this, and clamoured for the blood of Jesus, while they demanded the release of a certain miscreant, by name Barabbas, who lay in gaol for murder and sedition. Accordingly Pilate had to give way: Christ

¹ Matthew xxvii. 37; Mark xv. 26; Luke xxiii. 38; John xix. 19.

was crucified and Barabbas set at liberty.¹ Now what, we may ask, was the reason for setting free a prisoner at this festival? In the absence of positive information, we may conjecture that the gaol-bird whose cage was thrown open at this time had to purchase his freedom by performing some service from which decent people would shrink. Such a service may very well have been that of going about the streets, rigged out in tawdry splendour with a tinsel crown on his head and a sham sceptre in his hand, preceded and followed by all the tag-rag and bobtail of the town hooting, jeering, and breaking coarse jests at his expense, while some pretended to salaam his mock majesty, and others belaboured the donkey on which he rode. It was in this fashion, probably, that in Persia the beardless and one-eyed man made his undignified progress through the town, to the delight of ragamuffins and the terror of shop-keepers, whose goods he unceremoniously confiscated if they did not hasten to lay their peace-offerings at his feet. So, perhaps, the ruffian Barabbas, when his irons were knocked off and the prison door had grated on its hinges to let him forth, tasted the first sweets of liberty in this public manner, even if he was not suffered, like his one-eyed brother, to make raids with impunity on the stalls of the merchants and the tables of the money-changers. A curious confirmation of this conjecture is supplied by a passage in the writings of Philo the Jew, who lived at Alexandria in the time of Christ. He tells us that when Agrippa, the grandson of Herod, had received the crown of Judaea from Caligula at Rome, the new king passed through Alexandria on his way to his own country. The disorderly populace of that great city, animated by a hearty dislike of his nation, seized the opportunity of venting their spite by publicly defaming and ridiculing the Jewish monarch. Among other things they laid hold of a certain harmless lunatic named Carabas, who used to roam the streets stark naked, the butt and laughing-stock of urchins and idlers. This poor wretch they set up in a public place, clapped a paper crown on his head, thrust a broken reed into his hand by way of a sceptre, and having huddled

¹ Matthew xxvii. 15-26; Mark xv. 6-15; Luke xxiii. 16-25; John xviii. 38-40.

a mat instead of a royal robe about his naked body, and surrounded him with a guard of bludgeon-men, they did obeisance to him as to a king and made a show of taking his opinion on questions of law and policy. To point the jest unmistakably at the Syrian king Agrippa, the bystanders raised cries of "Marin! Marin!" which they understood to be the Syrian word for "lord."¹ This mockery of the Jewish king closely resembles the mockery of Christ; and the joke, such as it was, would receive a keener edge if we could suppose that the riff-raff of Alexandria were familiar with the Jewish practice of setting up a sham king on certain occasions, and that they meant by implication to ridicule the real King Agrippa by comparing him to his holiday counterfeit. May we go a step further and conjecture that one at least of the titles of the mock king of the Jews was regularly Barabbas? The poor imbecile who masqueraded in a paper crown at Alexandria was probably a Jew, otherwise the jest would have lost much of its point; and his name, according to the Greek manuscripts of Philo, was Carabas. But Carabas is meaningless in Hebrew, whereas Barabbas is a regularly formed Hebrew word meaning "Son of the Father." The palaeographic difference between the two forms is slight, and perhaps we shall hardly be deemed very rash if we conjecture that in the passage in question Philo himself wrote Barabbas, which a Greek copyist, ignorant of Hebrew, afterwards corrupted into Carabas. If this were granted, we should still have to assume that both Philo and the authors of the Gospels fell into the mistake of treating as the name of an individual what in fact was a title of office.

Thus the hypothesis which, with great diffidence, I would put forward for consideration is this. It was customary, we may suppose, with the Jews at Purim, or perhaps occasionally at Passover, to employ two prisoners to act the parts respectively of Haman and Mordecai in the passion-play which formed a central feature of the festival. Both men paraded for a short time in the insignia of royalty, but their fates were different; for while at the end of the performance

¹ Philo Judaeus, *Adversus Flaccum*, vol. ii. pp. 520-523 ed. Mangey. The first to call attention to this passage

was Mr. P. Wendland ("Jesus als Saturnalien-König," *Hermes*, xxxiii. (1898), p. 175 sq.).

the one who played Haman was hanged or crucified, the one who personated Mordecai and bore in popular parlance the title of Barabbas was allowed to go free. Pilate, perceiving the trumpety nature of the charges brought against Jesus, tried to persuade the Jews to let him play the part of Barabbas, which would have saved his life; but the merciful attempt failed and Jesus perished on the cross in the character of Haman. The description of his last triumphal ride into Jerusalem reads almost like an echo of that brilliant progress through the streets of Susa which Haman aspired to and Mordecai accomplished; and the account of the raid which he immediately afterwards made upon the stalls of the hucksters and money-changers in the temple, may raise a question whether we have not here a trace of those arbitrary rights over property which it has been customary on such occasions to accord to the temporary king.¹

If it be asked why one of these temporary kings should bear the remarkable title of Barabbas or "Son of the Father," I can only surmise that the title may perhaps be a relic of the time when the real king, the deified man, used to redeem his own life by deputing his son to reign for a short time and to die in his stead. We have seen that the custom of sacrificing the son for the father was common, if not universal, among Semitic peoples; and if we are right in our interpretation of the Passover, that festival—the traditional date of the crucifixion—was the very season when the dreadful sacrifice of the first-born was consummated.² Hence Barabbas or the "Son of the Father" would be a natural enough title for the man or child who reigned and died as a substitute for his royal sire. Even in later times, when the father provided a less precious substitute than his own offspring, it would be quite in accordance with the formal conservatism of religion that the old title should be retained after it had ceased to be appropriate; indeed the efficacy of the sacrifice might be thought to require and justify the pious fiction that the substitute was the very son of that divine father who should have died, but who preferred to live, for the good of his people. If in the time of Christ, as I have conjectured, the

¹ Matthew xxi. 1-13; Mark xi. 1-17; Luke xix. 28-46; John xii. 12-15.

² See above, vol. ii. pp. 38-50.

title of Barabbas or Son of the Father was bestowed on the Mordecai, the mock king who lived, rather than on the Haman, the mock king who died at the festival, this distinction can hardly have been original; for at first, we may suppose, the same man served in both capacities at different times, as the Mordecai of one year and the Haman of the next. The two characters, as I have attempted to show, are probably nothing but two different aspects of the same deity considered at one time as dead and at another as risen; hence the human being who personated the risen god would in due time, after he had enjoyed his divine honours for a season, act the dead god by dying in good earnest in his own person; for it would be unreasonable to expect of the ordinary man-god that he should play the two parts in the reverse order by dying first and coming to life afterwards. In both parts the substitute would still be, whether in sober fact or in pious fiction, the Barabbas or Son of that divine Father who generously gave his own son to die for the world.

To conclude this speculation, into which I have perhaps been led by the interest and importance of the subject somewhat deeper than the evidence warrants, I venture to urge in its favour that it seems to shed fresh light on some of the causes which contributed to the remarkably rapid diffusion of Christianity in Asia Minor. We know from a famous letter of the younger Pliny addressed to the Emperor Trajan in the year 112 A.D. that by the beginning of our era, less than a hundred years after the Founder's death, Christianity had made such strides in Bithynia and Pontus that not only cities but villages and rural districts were affected by it, and that multitudes of both sexes and of every age and every rank professed its tenets; indeed things had gone so far that the temples were almost deserted, the sacred rites of the public religion discontinued, and hardly a purchaser could be found for the sacrificial victims.¹ It is obvious therefore that

¹ Pliny, *Letters*, No. 98. The province which Pliny governed was known officially as Bithynia and Pontus, and extended from the river Rhyndacos on the west to beyond Amisus on the east. See Professor W. M. Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 224.

Professor Ramsay is of opinion "that the description of the great power acquired by the new religion in the province applies to Eastern Pontus at least." The chief religious centre of this district appears to have been the great sanctuary of Anaitis or Semiramis at

the new faith had elements in it which appealed powerfully to the Asiatic mind. What these elements were, the present investigation has perhaps to some extent disclosed. We have seen that the conception of the dying and risen god was no new one in these regions. All over Western Asia from time immemorial the mournful death and happy resurrection of a divine being appear to have been annually celebrated with alternate rites of bitter lamentation and exultant joy; and through the veil which mythic fancy has woven round this tragic figure we can still detect the features of those great yearly changes in earth and sky which, under all distinctions of race and religion, must always touch the natural human heart with alternate emotions of gladness and regret, because they exhibit on the vastest scale open to our observation the mysterious struggle between life and death. But man has not always been willing to watch passively this momentous conflict; he has felt that he has too great a stake in its issue to stand by with folded hands while it is being fought out; he has taken sides against the forces of death and decay—has flung into the trembling scale all the weight of his puny person and has exulted in his fancied strength when the great balance has slowly inclined towards the side of life, little knowing that for all his strenuous efforts he can as little stir that balance by a hair's-breadth as can the primrose on a mossy bank in spring or the dead leaf blown by the chilly breath of autumn. Nowhere do these efforts, vain and pitiful yet pathetic, appear to have been made more persistently and systematically than in Western Asia. In name they varied from place to place, but in substance they were all alike. A man, whom the fond imagination of his worshippers invested with the attributes of a god, gave

Zela, to which I have already had occasion to call the reader's attention. Strabo tells us (xii. 3. 37) that all the people of Pontus took their most solemn oaths at this shrine. In the same district there was another very popular sanctuary of a similar type at Comana, where the worship of a native goddess called Ma was carried on by a host of sacred harlots and by a high priest, who wore a diadem and was second only to the king in rank. At

the festivals of the goddess crowds of men and women flocked into Comana from all the region round about, from the country as well as from the cities. The luxury and debauchery of this holy town suggest to Strabo a comparison with the famous or rather infamous Corinth. See Strabo, xii. 3. 32 and 36, compared with xii. 2. 3. Such were some of the hot-beds in which the seeds of Christianity first struck root.

his life for the life of the world ; after infusing from his own body a fresh current of vital energy into the stagnant veins of nature, he was cut off from among the living before his failing strength should initiate a universal decay, and his place was taken by another who played, like all his predecessors, the ever-recurring drama of the divine resurrection and death. Such a drama, if our interpretation of it is right, was the original story of Esther and Mordecai or, to give them their older names, of Ishtar and Marduk. It was played in Babylonia, and from Babylonia the returning captives brought it to Judaea, where it was acted, rather as an historical than a mythical piece, by players who, having to die in grim earnest on a cross or gallows, were naturally drawn rather from the gaol than the green-room. A chain of causes which, because we cannot follow them, might in the loose language of daily life be called an accident, determined that the part of the dying god in this annual play should be thrust upon Jesus of Nazareth, whom the enemies he had made in high places by his outspoken strictures were resolved to put out of the way. They succeeded in ridding themselves of the popular and troublesome preacher ; but the very step by which they fancied they had simultaneously stamped out his revolutionary doctrines contributed more than anything else they could have done to scatter them broadcast not only over Judaea but over Asia ; for it impressed upon what had been hitherto mainly an ethical mission the character of a divine revelation culminating in the passion and death of the incarnate Son of a heavenly Father. In this form the story of the life and death of Jesus exerted an influence which it could never have had if the great teacher had died, as is commonly supposed, the death of a vulgar malefactor. It shed round the cross on Calvary a halo of divinity which multitudes saw and worshipped afar off ; the blow struck on Golgotha set a thousand expectant strings vibrating in unison wherever men had heard the old, old story of the dying and risen god. Every year, as another spring bloomed and another autumn faded across the earth, the field had been ploughed and sown and borne fruit of a kind till it received that seed which was destined to spring up and overshadow the world. In the

great army of martyrs who in many ages and in many lands, not in Asia only, have died a cruel death in the character of gods, the devout Christian will doubtless discern types and forerunners of the coming Saviour—stars that heralded in the morning sky the advent of the Sun of Righteousness—earthen vessels wherein it pleased the divine wisdom to set before hungering souls the bread of heaven. The sceptic, on the other hand, with equal confidence, will reduce Jesus of Nazareth to the level of a multitude of other victims of a barbarous superstition, and will see in him no more than a moral teacher, whom the fortunate accident of his execution invested with the crown, not merely of a martyr, but of a god. The divergence between these views is wide and deep. Which of them is the truer and will in the end prevail? Time will decide the question of prevalence, if not of truth. Yet we would fain believe that in this and in all things the old maxim will hold good—*Magna est veritas et praevalerebit.*

We may now sum up the general results of the inquiry which we have pursued in the present section. We have found evidence that festivals of the type of the Saturnalia, characterised by an inversion of social ranks and the sacrifice of a man in the character of a god, were at one time held all over the ancient world from Italy to Babylon. Such festivals seem to date from an early age in the history of agriculture, when people lived in small communities, each presided over by a sacred or divine king, whose primary duty was to secure the orderly succession of the seasons and the fertility of the earth. Associated with him was his wife or other female consort, with whom he performed some of the necessary ceremonies, and who therefore shared his divine character. Originally his term of office appears to have been limited to a year, on the conclusion of which he was put to death; but in time he contrived by force or craft to extend his reign and sometimes to procure a substitute, who after a short and more or less nominal tenure of the crown was slain in his stead. At first the substitute for the divine father was probably the divine son, but afterwards this rule was no longer insisted on, and still later the growth of a humane feeling demanded that the victim should always be

a condemned criminal. In this advanced stage of degeneration it is no wonder if the light of divinity suffered eclipse, and many should fail to detect the god in the malefactor. Yet the downward career of fallen deity does not stop here; even a criminal comes to be thought too good to personate a god on the gallows or in the fire; and then there is nothing left but to make up a more or less grotesque effigy, and so to hang, burn, or otherwise destroy the god in the person of this sorry representative. By this time the original meaning of the ceremony may be so completely forgotten that the puppet is supposed to represent some historical personage, who earned the hatred and contempt of his fellows in his life, and whose memory has ever since been held up to eternal execration by the annual destruction of his effigy. The figures of Haman, of the Carnival, and of Winter or Death which are or used to be annually destroyed in spring by Jews, Catholics, and the peasants of Central Europe respectively, appear to be all lineal descendants of those human incarnations of the powers of nature whose life and death were deemed essential to the welfare of mankind. But of the three the only one which has preserved a clear trace of its original meaning is the effigy of Winter or Death. In the others the ancient significance of the custom as a magical ceremony designed to direct the course of nature has been almost wholly obscured by a thick aftergrowth of legend and myth. The cause of this distinction is that, whereas the practice of destroying an effigy of Winter or Death has been handed down from time immemorial through generations of simple peasants, the festivals of Purim and the Carnival, as well as their Babylonian and Italian prototypes, the *Sacaea* and the *Saturnalia*, were for centuries domesticated in cities, where they were necessarily exposed to those thousand transforming and disintegrating currents of speculation and inquiry, of priestcraft and policy, which roll their turbid waters through the busy haunts of men, but leave undefiled the limpid springs of mythic fancy in the country.

If there is any truth in the analysis of the *Saturnalia* and kindred festivals which I have now brought to a close, it seems to point to a remarkable homogeneity of civilisation throughout Southern Europe and Western Asia in pre-

historic times. How far such homogeneity of civilisation may be taken as evidence of homogeneity of race is a question for the ethnologist; it does not concern us here. But without discussing it, I may remind the reader that in the far east of Asia we have met with temporary kings whose magical functions and intimate relation to agriculture stand out in the clearest light;¹ while India furnishes examples of kings who have regularly been obliged to sacrifice themselves at the end of a term of years.² All these things appear to hang together; all of them may, perhaps, be regarded as the shattered remnants of a uniform zone of religion and society which at a remote era belted the Old World from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. Whether that was so or not, I may at least claim to have made it probable that if the King of the Wood at Aricia lived and died as an incarnation of a sylvan deity, the functions he thus discharged were by no means singular, and that for the nearest parallel to them we need not go beyond the bounds of Italy, where the divine king Saturn—the god of the sown and sprouting seed—was annually slain in the person of a human representative at his ancient festival of the Saturnalia.

¹ See above, vol. ii. p. 26 *sqq.*

² See above, vol. ii. p. 14 *sqq.*

CHAPTER IV

THE GOLDEN BOUGH

“Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum.”—FAUST.

§ 1. *Between Heaven and Earth*

AT the outset of this book two questions were proposed for answer: Why had the priest of Aricia to slay his predecessor? And why, before doing so, had he to pluck the Golden Bough? Of these two questions the first has now been answered. The priest of Aricia, if I am right, embodied in himself the spirit, primarily, of the woods and, secondarily, of vegetable life in general. Hence, according as he was well or ill, the woods, the flowers, and the fields were believed to flourish or fade; and if he were to die of sickness or old age, the plant world, it was supposed, would simultaneously perish. Therefore it was necessary that this priest of the woodlands, this sylvan deity incarnate in a man, should be put to death while he was still in the full bloom of his divine manhood, in order that his sacred life, transmitted in unabated force to his successor, might renew its youth, and thus by successive transmissions through a perpetual line of vigorous incarnations might remain eternally fresh and young, a pledge and security that the buds and blossoms of spring, the verdure of summer woods, and the mellow glories of autumn would never fail.

But we have still to ask, What was the Golden Bough? and why had each candidate for the Arician priesthood to pluck it before he could slay the priest? These questions I will now try to answer.

It will be well to begin by noticing two of those rules or taboos by which, as we have seen, the life of divine kings or priests is regulated. The first of the rules to which I desire to call the reader's attention is that the divine personage may not touch the ground with his foot. This rule was observed by the Mikado of Japan and by the supreme pontiff of the Zapotecs in Mexico. The latter profaned his sanctity if he so much as touched the ground with his foot.¹ For the Mikado to touch the ground with his foot was a shameful degradation; indeed, in the sixteenth century, it was enough to deprive him of his office. Outside his palace he was carried on men's shoulders; within it he walked on exquisitely wrought mats.² The king and queen of Tahiti might not touch the ground anywhere but within their hereditary domains; for the ground on which they trod became sacred. In travelling from place to place they were carried on the shoulders of sacred men. They were always accompanied by several pairs of these sacred men; and when it became necessary to change their bearers, the king and queen vaulted on to the shoulders of their new bearers without letting their feet touch the ground.³ It was an evil omen if the king of Dosuma touched the ground, and he had to perform an expiatory ceremony.⁴ Within his palace the king of Persia walked on carpets on which no one else might tread; outside of it he was never seen on foot but only in a chariot or on horseback.⁵ In old days the king of Siam never set foot upon the earth, but was carried on a throne of gold from place to place.⁶ Formerly, neither the kings of Uganda nor their mothers might walk on foot outside the palace; they were always carried.⁷ The notion that contact

¹ Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 142.

² *Memorials of Japan* (Hakluyt Society, 1850), pp. 14, 141; Varenus, *Descriptio regni Japoniae*, p. 11; Caron, "Account of Japan," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, vii. 613; Kaempfer, "History of Japan," in *id.* vii. 716.

³ W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iii. 102 sq.; James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 329.

⁴ Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte*, iii. 81.

⁵ Athenaeus, xii. p. 514 c.

⁶ *The Voyages and Travels of John Struys* (London, 1684), p. 30.

⁷ This I have on the authority of my friend the Rev. J. Roscoe, missionary to Uganda. "Before horses had been introduced into Uganda, the king and his mother never walked, but always went about perched astride the shoulders of a slave—a most ludicrous sight. In this way they often travelled hundreds

with the ground carries with it pollution or danger may be applied to sacred animals. Thus some Victorian tribes regarded the fat of the emu as sacred, and in taking it from the bird or handing it about they treated it reverently. Any one who threw away the fat or flesh of the emu was held accursed. "The late Mr. Thomas observed on one occasion, at Nerre-nerre-Warreen, a remarkable exhibition of the effects of this superstition. An aboriginal child—one attending the school—having eaten some part of the flesh of an emu, threw away the skin. The skin fell to the ground, and this being observed by his parents, they showed by their gestures every token of horror. They looked upon their child as one utterly lost. His desecration of the bird was regarded as a sin for which there was no atonement."¹

The second rule to be here noted is that the sun may not shine upon the divine person. This rule was observed both by the Mikado and by the pontiff of the Zapotecs. The latter "was looked upon as a god whom the earth was not worthy to hold, nor the sun to shine upon."² The Japanese would not allow that the Mikado should expose his sacred person to the open air, and the sun was not thought worthy to shine on his head.³ The Indians of Granada, in South America, "kept those who were to be rulers or commanders, whether men or women, locked up for several years when they were children, some of them seven years, and this so close that they were not to see the sun, for if they should happen to see it they forfeited their lordship, eating certain sorts of food appointed; and those who were their keepers at certain times went into their retreat or prison and scourged them severely."⁴ Thus, for example, the heir to the throne of Bogota had to undergo a rigorous training from the age of sixteen; he lived in com-

of miles" (L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 445 note). The use both of horses and of chariots by royal personages may often have been intended to prevent their sacred feet from touching the ground.

¹ R. Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 450.

² Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 142.

³ Kaempfer, "History of Japan," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, vii. 717; Caron, "Account of Japan," *ibid.* vii. 613; Varenus, *Descriptio regni Japoniae*, p. 11: "Radiis solis caput nunquam illustrabatur: in apertum aërem non procedebat."

⁴ Herrera, *General History of the vast Continent and Islands of America*, trans. by Stevens, v. 88.

plete retirement in a temple, where he might not see the sun nor eat salt nor converse with a woman.¹ So, too, the heir to the kingdom of Sogamoso, before succeeding to the crown, had to fast for seven years in the temple, being shut up in the dark and not allowed to see the sun or light.² The prince who was to become Inca of Peru had to fast for a month without seeing light.³ Acarnanian peasants tell of a handsome prince called Sunless, who would die if he saw the sun. So he lived in an underground palace on the site of the ancient Oeniadae, but at night he came forth and crossed the river to visit a famous enchantress who dwelt in a castle on the further bank. She was loth to part with him every night long before the sun was up, and as he turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties to linger, she hit upon the device of cutting the throats of all the cocks in the neighbourhood. So the prince, whose ear had learned to expect the shrill clarion of the birds as the signal of the growing light, tarried too long, and hardly had he reached the ford when the sun rose over the Aetolian mountains, and its fatal beams fell on him before he could regain his dark abode.⁴

Now it is remarkable that these two rules—not to touch the ground and not to see the sun—are observed either separately or conjointly by girls at puberty in many parts of the world. Thus amongst the negroes of Loango girls at puberty are confined in separate huts, and they may not touch the ground with any part of their bare body.⁵ Amongst the Zulus and kindred tribes of South Africa, when the first signs of puberty show themselves "while a girl is walking, gathering wood, or working in the field, she runs to the river and hides herself among the reeds for the day, so as not to be seen by men. She covers her head carefully with her blanket that the sun may not shine on it and shrivel her up

¹ Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, iv. 359.

² Alonzo de Zurita, "Rapport sur les différentes classes de chefs de la Nouvelle-Espagne," p. 30, in Ternaux-Compans's *Voyages, Relations et Mémoires originaux* (Paris, 1840); Waitz, *l.c.*; Bastian, *Die Culturländer des alten Amerika*, ii. 204.

³ Cieza de Leon, *Second Part of the Chronicle of Peru* (Hakluyt Soc. 1883), p. 18.

⁴ L. Heuzey, *Le Mont Olympe et l'Acarnanie* (Paris, 1860), p. 458 sq.

⁵ Pechuel-Loesche, "Indiscretus aus Loango," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, x. (1878), p. 23.

into a withered skeleton, as would result from exposure to the sun's beams. After dark she returns to her home and is secluded" in a hut for some time.¹ With the Awa-nkonde, a tribe at the north end of Lake Nyasa, it is a rule that after her first menstruation a girl must be kept apart, with a few companions of her own sex, in a darkened house. The floor is covered with dry banana leaves, but no fire may be lit in the house, which is called "the house of the Awasungu," that is, "of maidens who have hearts."² When a girl reaches puberty, the Wafomi of Eastern Africa hold a festival at which they make a noise with a peculiar kind of rattle. After that the girl remains for a year in the large common hut, where she occupies a special compartment screened off from the men's quarters. She may not cut her hair or touch food, but is fed by other women. At night, however, she quits the hut and dances with young men.³

In New Ireland girls are confined for four or five years in small cages, being kept in the dark and not allowed to set foot on the ground. The custom has been thus described by an eye-witness. "I heard from a teacher about some strange custom connected with some of the young girls here, so I asked the chief to take me to the house where they were. The house was about twenty-five feet in length, and stood in a reed and bamboo enclosure, across the entrance to which a bundle of dried grass was suspended to show that it was strictly 'tabu.' Inside the house were three conical structures about seven or eight feet in height, and about ten or twelve feet in circumference at the bottom, and for about four feet from the ground, at which point they tapered off to a point at the top. These cages were made of the broad leaves of the pandanus-tree, sewn quite close together so that no light and little or no air could enter. On one side of each is an opening which is closed by a double door of plaited cocoa-nut tree and pandanus-tree leaves. About three feet from the ground there is a stage of bamboos which forms the floor. In each of these cages we were told there

¹ J. Macdonald, "Manners, customs, superstitions, and religions of South African tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 118.

² Sir H. H. Johnston, *British Cen-*

tral Africa (London, 1897), p. 411.

³ O. Baumann, *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* (Berlin, 1894), p. 178. As to the rule not to touch food with the hands, see above, vol. i. pp. 323, 326 sq.

was a young woman confined, each of whom had to remain for at least four or five years, without ever being allowed to go outside the house. I could scarcely credit the story when I heard it ; the whole thing seemed too horrible to be true. I spoke to the chief, and told him that I wished to see the inside of the cages, and also to see the girls that I might make them a present of a few beads. He told me that it was '*tabu*,' forbidden for any men but their own relations to look at them ; but I suppose the promised beads acted as an inducement, and so he sent away for some old lady who had charge, and who alone is allowed to open the doors. While we were waiting we could hear the girls talking to the chief in a querulous way as if objecting to something or expressing their fears. The old woman came at length and certainly she did not seem a very pleasant jailor or guardian ; nor did she seem to favour the request of the chief to allow us to see the girls, as she regarded us with anything but pleasant looks. However, she had to undo the door when the chief told her to do so, and then the girls peeped out at us, and when told to do so, they held out their hands for the beads. I, however, purposely sat at some distance away and merely held out the beads to them, as I wished to draw them quite outside, that I might inspect the inside of the cages. This desire of mine gave rise to another difficulty, as these girls were not allowed to put their feet to the ground all the time they were confined in these places. However, they wished to get the beads, and so the old lady had to go outside and collect a lot of pieces of wood and bamboo, which she placed on the ground, and then going to one of the girls, she helped her down and held her hand as she stepped from one piece of wood to another until she came near enough to get the beads I held out to her. I then went to inspect the inside of the cage out of which she had come, but could scarcely put my head inside of it, the atmosphere was so hot and stifling. It was clean and contained nothing but a few short lengths of bamboo for holding water. There was only room for the girl to sit or lie down in a crouched position on the bamboo platform, and when the doors are shut it must be nearly or quite dark inside. The girls are never allowed to come out except once a day to bathe in a dish or wooden

bowl placed close to each cage. They say that they perspire profusely. They are placed in these stifling cages when quite young, and must remain there until they are young women, when they are taken out and have each a great marriage feast provided for them."¹

In the island of Mabuiag, Torres Straits, when the signs of puberty appear on a girl, a circle of bushes is made in a dark corner of the house. Here, decked with shoulder-belts, armlets, leglets just below the knees, and anklets, wearing a chaplet on her head, and shell ornaments in her ears, on her chest, and on her back, she squats in the midst of the bushes, which are piled so high round about her that only her head is visible. In this state of seclusion she must remain for three months. All this time the sun may not shine upon her, but at night she is allowed to slip out of the hut, and the bushes that hedge her in are then changed. She may not feed herself or handle food, but is fed by one or two old women, her maternal aunts, who are especially appointed to look after her. One of these women cooks food for her at a special fire in the forest. The girl is forbidden to eat turtle or turtle eggs during the season when the turtles are breeding; but no vegetable food is refused her. No man, not even her own father, may come into the house while her seclusion lasts; for if her father saw her at this time he would certainly have bad luck in his fishing, and would probably smash his

¹ The Rev. G. Brown, quoted by the Rev. B. Danks, "Marriage Customs of the New Britain Group," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xviii. (1889), p. 284 sq.; cp. Rev. G. Brown, "Notes on the Duke of York Group, New Britain, and New Ireland," *Journ. Royal Geogr. Soc.* xlvii. (1877), p. 142 sq. Powell's description of the New Ireland custom is similar (*Wanderings in a Wild Country*, p. 249). According to him, the girls wear wreaths of scented herbs round the waist and neck; an old woman or a little child occupies the lower floor of the cage; and the confinement lasts only a month. Probably the long period mentioned by Mr. Brown is that prescribed for chief's daughters. Poor people could not afford to keep their children so long idle. This distinction

is sometimes expressly stated; for example, among the Goajiras of Colombia rich people keep their daughters shut up in separate huts at puberty for periods varying from one to four years, but poor people cannot afford to do so for more than a fortnight or a month. See F. A. Simons, "An exploration of the Goajira Peninsula," *Proceed. Royal Geogr. Soc.* N.S., vii. (1885), p. 791. In Fiji, brides who were being tattooed were kept from the sun (Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, i. 170). This was perhaps a modification of the Melanesian custom of secluding girls at puberty. The reason mentioned by Mr. Williams, "to improve her complexion," can hardly have been the original one.

canoe the very next time he went out in it. At the end of the three months she is carried down to a fresh-water creek by her attendants, hanging on to their shoulders in such a way that her feet do not touch the ground, while the women of the tribe form a ring round her, and thus escort her to the beach. Arrived at the shore, she is stripped of her ornaments, and the bearers stagger with her into the creek, where they immerse her, and all the other women join in splashing water over both the girl and her bearers. When they come out of the water one of the two attendants makes a heap of grass for her charge to squat upon. The other runs to the reef, catches a small crab, tears off its claws, and hastens back with them to the creek. Here in the meantime a fire has been kindled, and the claws are roasted at it. The girl is then fed by her attendants with the roasted claws. After that she is freshly decorated, and the whole party marches back to the village in a single rank, the girl walking in the centre between her two old aunts, who hold her by the wrists. The husbands of her aunts now receive her and lead her into the house of one of them, where all partake of food, and the girl is allowed once more to feed herself in the usual manner. A dance follows, in which the girl takes a prominent part, dancing between the husbands of the two aunts who had charge of her in her retirement.¹

Among the Yaraibanna tribe of Cape York Peninsula, in Northern Queensland, a girl at puberty is said to live by herself for a month or six weeks; no man may see her, though any woman may. She stays in a hut or shelter specially made for her, on the floor of which she lies supine. She may not see the sun, and towards sunset she must keep her eyes shut until the sun has gone down, otherwise it is thought that her nose will be diseased. During her seclusion she may eat nothing that lives in salt water, or a snake would kill her. An old woman waits upon her and supplies her with roots, yams, and water.² Some tribes are wont to bury their girls at such seasons more or less deeply in the

¹ From notes furnished me by Dr. C. G. Seligmann, member of the recent Cambridge Expedition to Torres Straits and Borneo. These notes have been printed in the *Report of the*

British Association for 1899, and in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxix. (1899), p. 212 sq.

² From the notes of Dr. C. G. Seligmann.

ground, perhaps in order to hide them from the light of the sun. Thus the Larrakeeyah tribe in the northern territory of South Australia used to cover a girl up with dirt for three days at her first monthly period.¹ In similar circumstances the Otati tribe, on the east coast of the Cape York Peninsula, make an excavation in the ground, where the girl squats. A bower is then built over the hole, and sand is thrown on the young woman till she is covered up to the hips. In this condition she remains for the first day, but comes out at night. So long as the period lasts, she stays in the bower during the daytime, but is not again covered with sand. Afterwards her body is painted red and white from the head to the hips, and she returns to the camp.² Among the Uijumhwi tribe in Red Island the girl lies at full length in a shallow trench dug in the foreshore, and sand is thrown over her legs and body up to the breasts, which appear not to be covered. A rough shelter of boughs is then built over her, and thus she remains lying for a few hours.³ In Prince of Wales Island, Torres Strait, the treatment of the patient is similar, but lasts for about two months. During the day she lies covered up with sand in a shallow hole on the beach, over which a hut is built. At night she may get out of the hole, but she may not leave the hut. Her paternal aunt looks after her, and both of them must abstain from eating turtle, dugong, and the heads of fish. Were they to eat the heads of fish no more fish would be caught. During the time of the girl's seclusion, the aunt who waits upon her has the right to enter any house and take from it anything she likes without payment, provided she does so before the sun rises. When the time of her retirement has come to an end the girl bathes in the sea while the morning star is rising, and after performing various other ceremonies is readmitted to society.⁴

¹ L. Crauford, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), p. 181.

² From the notes of Dr. C. G. Seligmann.

³ From the notes of Dr. C. G. Seligmann.

⁴ From the notes of Dr. C. G. Seligmann. The practice of burying a girl at puberty was observed also by some

Indian tribes of California, but apparently rather for the purpose of producing a sweat than for the sake of concealment. The treatment lasted only twenty-four hours, during which the patient was removed from the ground and washed three or four times, to be afterwards reimbedded. Dancing was kept up the whole time by the women. See Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 215.

In some parts of New Guinea "daughters of chiefs, when they are about twelve or thirteen years of age, are kept indoors for two or three years, never being allowed, under any pretence, to descend from the house, and the house is so shaded that the sun cannot shine on them."¹ Among the Ot Danoms of Borneo girls at the age of eight or ten years are shut up in a little room or cell of the house, and cut off from all intercourse with the world for a long time. The cell, like the rest of the house, is raised on piles above the ground, and is lit by a single small window opening on a lonely place, so that the girl is in almost total darkness. She may not leave the room on any pretext whatever, not even for the most necessary purposes. None of her family may see her all the time she is shut up, but a single slave woman is appointed to wait on her. During her lonely confinement, which often lasts seven years, the girl occupies herself in weaving mats or with other handiwork. Her bodily growth is stunted by the long want of exercise, and when, on attaining womanhood, she is brought out, her complexion is pale and wax-like. She is now shown the sun, the earth, the water, the trees, and the flowers, as if she were newly born. Then a great feast is made, a slave is killed, and the girl is smeared with his blood.² In Ceram girls at puberty were formerly shut up by themselves in a hut which was kept dark.³

Amongst the Aht or Nootka Indians of Vancouver Island, when girls reach puberty they are placed in a sort of gallery in the house "and are there surrounded completely with mats, so that neither the sun nor any fire can be seen. In this cage they remain for several days. Water is given them, but no food. The longer a girl remains in this retirement the greater honour is it to the parents; but she is disgraced for life if it is known that she has seen fire or the sun during this initiatory ordeal."⁴ Pictures of the

¹ Chalmers and Gill, *Work and Adventure in New Guinea*, p. 159.

² Schwaner, *Borneo, 'Beschrijving van het stroomgebied van den Barito, etc. ii. 77 sq.*; Zimmerman, *Die Inseln des Indischen und Stillen Meeres*, ii.

632 sq.; Otto Finsch, *Neu Guinea und seine Bewohner*, p. 116 sq.

³ Riedel, *De sluit. en kroesharige rassen tusschen Celebes en Papua*, p. 138.

⁴ Sproat, *Scenes and Studies of Savage Life*, p. 93 sq.

mythical thunder-bird are painted on the screens behind which she hides. During her seclusion she may neither move nor lie down, but must always sit in a squatting posture. She may not touch her hair with her hands, but is allowed to scratch her head with a comb or a piece of bone provided for the purpose. To scratch her body is also forbidden, as it is believed that every scratch would leave a scar. For eight months after reaching maturity she may not eat any fresh food, particularly salmon; moreover, she must eat by herself, and use a cup and dish of her own.¹ Amongst the Thlinket or Kolosh Indians of Alaska, when a girl shows signs of womanhood she is confined to a little hut or cage, which is completely blocked up with the exception of a small air-hole. In this dark and filthy abode she had formerly to remain a year, without fire, exercise, or associates. Her food was put in at the small window; she had to drink out of the wing-bone of a white-headed eagle. The time has now been reduced, at least in some places, to six months. The girl has to wear a sort of hat with long flaps, that her gaze may not pollute the sky; for she is thought unfit for the sun to shine upon.² In the Bilqula or Bella Coola tribe of British Columbia, when a girl attains puberty she must stay in the shed which serves as her bedroom, where she has a separate fireplace. She is

¹ Fr. Boas in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, pp. 40-42 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*). The rule not to lie down is observed also during their seclusion at puberty by Tsimshian girls, who always sit propped up between boxes and mats; their heads are covered with small mats, and they may not look at men nor at fresh salmon and olachen. See Boas in *Fifth Report*, etc., p. 41 (reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*). We have seen (vol. i. p. 236) that some divine kings are not allowed to lie down.

² Erman, "Ethnographische Wahrnehmungen und Erfahrungen an den Küsten des Berings-Meeres," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, ii. 318 sq.; Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt*, ii. 114 sq.; Holm-

berg, "Ethnogr. Skizzen über die Völker d. russischen Amerika," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae*, iv. (1856), p. 329 sq.; Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 110 sq.; Krause, *Die Tlinkit-Indianer*, p. 217 sq.; Rev. Sheldon Jackson, "Alaska and its Inhabitants," *American Antiquarian*, ii. 111 sq.; W. M. Grant, in *Journal of American Folk-lore*, i. (1888), p. 169. For caps, hoods, and veils worn by girls at such seasons, compare G. H. Loskiel, *History of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians*, i. 56; *Journal Anthropol. Institute*, vii. (1878), p. 206; G. M. Dawson, *Report of the Queen Charlotte Islands*, 1878 (Geological Survey of Canada), p. 130 B; Petitot, *Mono-graphie des Déné-Dindjé*, pp. 72, 75; id., *Traditions indiennes du Canada Nord-Ouest*, p. 258.

not allowed to descend to the main part of the house, and may not sit by the fire of the family. For four days she is bound to remain motionless in a sitting posture. She fasts during the day, but is allowed a little food and drink very early in the morning. After the four days' seclusion she may leave her room, but only through a separate opening cut in the floor, for the houses are raised on piles. She may not yet come into the chief room. In leaving the house she wears a large hat which protects her face against the rays of the sun. It is believed that if the sun were to shine on her face her eyes would suffer. She may pick berries on the hills, but may not come near the river or sea for a whole year. Were she to eat fresh salmon she would lose her senses, or her mouth would be changed into a long beak.¹ In the Tsetsaut tribe of British Columbia, a girl at puberty wears a large hat of skin which comes down over her face and screens it from the sun. It is believed that if she were to expose her face to the sun or to the sky, rain would fall. The hat protects her face also against the fire, which ought not to strike her skin; to shield her hands she wears mittens. In her mouth she carries the tooth of an animal to prevent her own teeth from becoming hollow. For a whole year she may not see blood unless her face is blackened; otherwise she would grow blind. For two years she wears the hat and lives in a hut by herself, although she is allowed to see other people. At the end of the two years a man takes the hat from her head and throws it away.² Among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia, when a girl attained puberty, she was at once separated from all the people. A conical hut of fir branches and bark was erected at some little distance from the other houses, and in it the girl had to squat on her heels during the day. Often, a circular hole was dug in the hut and the girl squatted in the hole. She might quit the hut for various purposes in the early morning, but had always to be back

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Fifth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 42 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1889*); *id.*, in *Seventh Report*, etc., p. 12 (reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1891*).

² Fr. Boas, in *Tenth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 45 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1895*).

at sunrise. A heavy blanket swathed her body from top to toe, and during the first four days she wore a conical cap made of small fir branches, which reached below the breast but left an opening for the face. In her hair was fastened an implement made of deer-bone with which she scratched herself. For the first four days she might neither wash nor eat, but a little water was given her in a birch-bark cup painted red, and she sucked up the liquid through a tube made out of the leg of a crane, a swan, or a goose, for her lips might not touch the surface of the water. After the four days she was allowed, during the rest of the period of isolation, to eat, to wash, to lie down, to comb her hair, and to drink of streams and springs. But in drinking at these sources she had still to use her tube, otherwise the spring would dry up. While her seclusion lasted she performed various ceremonies, which were supposed to exert a beneficial influence on her future life. For example, she carried four stones in her bosom to a spring, where she spat upon the stones and threw them one after the other into the water, praying that all disease might leave her as these stones did. Also she ran four times in the early morning with two small stones in her bosom; and as she ran the stones slipped down between her bare body and her clothes and fell to the ground. At the same time she prayed to the Dawn that when she should be with child, she might be delivered as easily as she was delivered of these stones. Her seclusion lasted four months. The Indians say that long ago it extended over a year, and that fourteen days elapsed before the girl was permitted to wash for the first time. The dress which she wore during her time of separation was afterwards taken to the top of a hill and burned, and the rest of her clothes were hung up on trees.¹ Amongst the Koniags, an Esquimaux people of Alaska, girls at puberty were placed in small huts in which they had to remain on their hands and knees for six months; then the hut was enlarged enough to let them kneel up-

¹ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900),

pp. 311-317. The ceremony intended to procure an easy delivery is clearly an imitation of childbirth. See above, vol. i. p. 19 *sqq.*

right, and they had to remain in this posture for six months more.¹

When symptoms of puberty appeared on a girl for the first time, the Indians of the Rio de la Plata used to sew her up in her hammock as if she were dead, leaving only a small hole for her mouth to allow her to breathe. In this state she continued so long as the symptoms lasted.² In similar circumstances the Chiriguano of Bolivia hoisted the girl in her hammock to the roof, where she stayed for a month; the second month the hammock was let half-way down from the roof; and in the third month old women, armed with sticks, entered the hut and ran about striking everything they met, saying they were hunting the snake that had wounded the girl. This they did till one of the women gave out that she had killed the snake.³ Among the Matacos Indians of the Grand Chaco a girl at puberty has to remain in seclusion for some time. She lies covered up with branches or other things in a corner of the hut, seeing no one and speaking to no one, and during this time she may eat neither flesh nor fish. Meanwhile a drum is beaten in front of the hut.⁴ Amongst some of the Brazilian Indians, when a girl attained to puberty, her hair was burned or shaved off close to the head. Then she was placed on a flat stone and cut with the tooth of an animal from the shoulders all down the back, till she ran with blood. Next the ashes of a wild gourd were rubbed into the wounds; the girl was bound hand and foot, and hung in a hammock, being enveloped in it so closely that no one could see her. Here she had to stay for three days without eating or drinking. When the three days were over, she stepped out of the hammock upon the flat stone, for her feet might not touch the ground. If she had a call of nature, a female relation took the girl on her back and carried her out, taking with her a live coal to prevent evil influences from entering the girl's body. Being

¹ Holmberg, in *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae*, iv. (1856), p. 401; Petroff, *Report on the Population*, etc., of Alaska, p. 143.

² Lafitau, *Mœurs des Sauvages américains*, i. 262 sq.

³ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, viii. 333. On the Chiriguano see Von Martius, *Zur Ethnographie Amerika's zumal Brasiliens*, p. 212 sqq.

⁴ Father Cardus, quoted in J. Pelleschi's *Los Indios Matacos* (Buenos Ayres, 1897), p. 47 sq.

replaced in her hammock, she was now allowed to get some flour, boiled roots, and water, but might not taste salt or flesh. Thus she continued to the end of the first monthly period, at the expiry of which she was gashed on the breast and belly as well as all down the back. During the second month she still stayed in her hammock, but her rule of abstinence was less rigid, and she was allowed to spin. The third month she was blackened with a certain pigment and began to go about as usual.¹

Amongst the Macusis of British Guiana, when a girl shows the first signs of puberty, she is hung in a hammock at the highest point of the hut. For the first few days she may not leave the hammock by day, but at night she must come down, light a fire, and spend the night beside it, else she would break out in sores on her neck, throat, and other parts of her body. So long as the symptoms are at their height, she must fast rigorously. When they have abated, she may come down and take up her abode in a little compartment that is made for her in the darkest corner of the hut. In the morning she may cook her food, but it must be at a separate fire and in a vessel of her own. In about ten days the magician comes and undoes the spell by muttering charms and breathing on her and on the more valuable of the things with which she has come in contact. The pots and drinking-vessels which she used are broken and the fragments buried. After her first bath, the girl must submit to be beaten by her mother with thin rods without uttering a cry. At the end of the second period she is again beaten, but not afterwards. She is now "clean," and can mix again with people.² Other Indians of Guiana, after keeping the girl in her hammock at the top of the hut for a month, expose her to certain large ants, whose bite is very painful.³ Sometimes, in addition to being stung with ants, the sufferer has to fast day and night so long as she remains slung up on high in her hammock, so that when she comes down she is reduced to a skeleton. The

¹ Thevet, *Cosmographie Universelle* (Paris, 1575), ii. 946 B sq.; Lafitau, *op. cit.* i. 290 sqq.

² Schomburgk, *Reisen in Britisch Guiana*, ii. 315 sq.; Martius, *Zur*

Ethnographie Amerika's, p. 644.

³ Labat, *Voyage du Chevalier des Marchais en Guinée, Isles voisines, et à Cayenne*, iv. 365 sq. (Paris ed.), p. 17 sq. (Amsterdam ed.).

intention of stinging her with ants is said to be to make her strong to bear the burden of maternity.¹ Amongst the Uaupes of Brazil a girl at puberty is secluded in the house for a month, and allowed only a small quantity of bread and water. Then she is taken out into the midst of her relations and friends, each of whom gives her four or five blows with pieces of *sipo* (an elastic climber), till she falls senseless or dead. If she recovers, the operation is repeated four times at intervals of six hours, and it is considered an offence to the parents not to strike hard. Meantime, pots of meats and fish have been made ready; the *sipos* are dipped into them and then given to the girl to lick, who is now considered a marriageable woman.²

The custom of stinging the girl at such times with ants or beating her with rods is intended, we may be sure, not as a punishment or a test of endurance, but as a purification, the object being to drive away the malignant influences with which a girl in this condition is believed to be beset and enveloped. Examples of purification, both by beating and by stinging with ants, have already come before us.³ No people, probably, submit voluntarily to more excruciating tortures from the stings not merely of ants but of the most ferocious wasps than the Indians of Cayenne; yet amongst them, we are told, "the custom is by no means an ordeal preparatory to marriage; it is rather a sort of national medicine administered chiefly to the youth of both sexes." Applied to men, the *maraké*, as it is called, "sharpens them, prevents them from being heavy and lazy, makes them active, brisk; industrious, imparts strength, and helps them to shoot well with the bow, without it the Indians would always be slack and rather sickly, would always have a little fever, and would lie perpetually in their hammocks. As for the women, the *maraké* keeps them from going to sleep, renders them active, alert, brisk, gives them strength and a liking for

¹ A. Caulin, *Historia Coro-graphica natural y evangelica dela Nueva Andaluia* (1779), p. 93. A similar custom, with the omission of the stinging, is reported of the Tamanaks in the region of the Orinoco. See F. S.

Gillij, *Saggio di Storia Americana*, ii. (Rome, 1781), p. 133.

² A. R. Wallace, *Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro*, p. 496.

³ Above, p. 127 *sqq.*; vol. i. p. 301.

work, makes them good housekeepers, good workers at the stockade, good makers of *cachiri*. Every one undergoes the *maraké* at least twice in his life, sometimes thrice, and oftener if he likes. It may be had from the age of about eight years and upward, and no one thinks it odd that a man of forty should voluntarily submit to it."¹ Similarly the Indians of St. Juan Capistrano in California used to be branded on some part of their bodies, generally on the right arm, but sometimes on the leg also, not as a proof of manly fortitude, but because they believed that the custom "added greater strength to the nerves, and gave a better pulse for the management of the bow." Afterwards "they were whipped with nettles, and covered with ants, that they might become robust, and the infliction was always performed in summer, during the months of July and August, when the nettle was in its most fiery state. They gathered small bunches, which they fastened together, and the poor deluded Indian was chastised, by inflicting blows with them upon his naked limbs, till unable to walk; and then he was carried to the nearest and most furious species of ants, and laid down among them, while some of his friends, with sticks, kept annoying the insects to make them still more violent. What torments did they not undergo! What pain! What hellish inflictions! Yet their faith gave them power to endure all without a murmur, and they remained as if dead. Having undergone these dreadful ordeals, they were considered as invulnerable, and believed that the arrows of their enemies could no longer harm them."² Among the Alur, a tribe inhabiting the south-western region of the upper Nile, to bury a man in an ant-hill and leave him there for a while is the regular treatment for insanity.³ In like manner it is probable that beating or scourging as a religious or ceremonial rite was originally a mode of purification. It was meant to wipe off and drive away a dangerous contagion, whether personified as demoniacal or not, which was supposed

¹ H. Coudreau, *Chez nos Indiens : quatre années dans la Guyane Française* (Paris, 1895), p. 228. For details as to the different modes of administering the *maraké*, see *ibid.* pp. 228-235.

² Boscana, "Chinigichinich," in A.

Robinson's *Life in California* (New York, 1846), p. 273 sq.

³ F. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 506.

to be adhering physically, though invisibly, to the body of the sufferer.¹ The pain inflicted on the person beaten was no more the object of the beating than it is of a surgical operation with us; it was a necessary accident, that was all. In later times such customs were interpreted otherwise, and the pain, from being an accident, became the prime object of the ceremony, which was now regarded either as a test of endurance imposed upon persons at critical epochs of life, or as a mortification of the flesh well pleasing to the god. But asceticism, under any shape or form, is never primitive. The savage, it is true, in certain circumstances will voluntarily subject himself to pains and privations which appear to us wholly needless; but he never acts thus unless

¹ As a confirmation of this view it may be pointed out that beating or scourging is inflicted on inanimate objects expressly for the purpose indicated in the text. Thus the Indians of Costa Rica hold that there are two kinds of ceremonial uncleanness, *nya* and *bu-ku-rú*. Anything that has been connected with a death is *nya*. But *bu-ku-rú* is much more virulent. It can not only make one sick but kill. "The worst *bu-ku-rú* of all is that of a young woman in her first pregnancy. She infects the whole neighbourhood. Persons going from the house where she lives carry the infection with them to a distance, and all the deaths or other serious misfortunes in the vicinity are laid to her charge. In the old times, when the savage laws and customs were in full force, it was not an uncommon thing for the husband of such a woman to pay damages for casualties thus caused by his unfortunate wife. . . . *Bu-ku-rú* emanates in a variety of ways; arms, utensils, even houses become affected by it after long disuse, and before they can be used again must be purified. In the case of portable objects left undisturbed for a long time, the custom is to beat them with a stick before touching them. I have seen a woman take a long walking-stick and beat a basket hanging from the roof of a house by a cord. On asking what that was for, I was told that the basket contained her treasures,

that she would probably want to take something out the next day, and that she was driving off the *bu-ku-rú*. A house long unused must be swept, and then the person who is purifying it must take a stick and beat not only the movable objects, but the beds, posts, and in short every accessible part of the interior. The next day it is fit for occupation. A place not visited for a long time or reached for the first time is *bu-ku-rú*. On our return from the ascent of Pico Blanco, nearly all the party suffered from little calenturas, the result of extraordinary exposure to wet and cold and want of food. The Indians said that the peak was especially *bu-ku-rú*, since nobody had ever been on it before." One day Mr. Gabb took down some dusty blow-guns amid cries of *bu-ku-rú* from the Indians. Some weeks afterwards a boy died, and the Indians firmly believed that the *bu-ku-rú* of the blow-guns had killed him. "From all the foregoing, it would seem that *bu-ku-rú* is a sort of evil spirit that takes possession of the object, and resents being disturbed; but I have never been able to learn from the Indians that they consider it so. They seem to think of it as a property the object acquires." W. M. Gabb, *Indian Tribes and Languages of Costa Rica* (read before the American Philosophical Society, 20th August 1875), p. 504 sq.

he believes that some solid temporal advantage is to be gained by so doing. Pain for the sake of pain, whether as a moral discipline in this life or as a means of winning a glorious immortality hereafter, is not an object which he sets himself deliberately to pursue.

When a Hindoo maiden reaches maturity she is kept in a dark room for four days, and is forbidden to see the sun. She is regarded as unclean; no one is allowed to touch her. Her diet is restricted to boiled rice, milk, sugar, curd, and tamarind without salt.¹ The Rarhi Brahmans of Bengal compel a girl at puberty to live alone, and do not allow her to see the face of any male. For three days she remains shut up in a dark room, and has to undergo certain penances. Fish, flesh, and sweetmeats are forbidden her; she must live upon rice and ghee.² In Cambodia a girl at puberty is put to bed under a mosquito curtain, where she should stay a hundred days. Usually, however, four, five, ten, or twenty days are thought enough; and even this, in a hot climate and under the close meshes of the curtain, is sufficiently trying.³ According to another account, a Cambodian maiden at puberty is said to "enter into the shade." During her retirement, which, according to the rank and position of her family, may last any time from a few days to several years, she has to observe a number of rules, such as not to be seen by a strange man, not to eat flesh or fish, and so on. She goes nowhere, not even to the pagoda. But this state of seclusion is discontinued during eclipses; at such times she goes forth and pays her devotions to the monster who is supposed to cause eclipses by catching the heavenly bodies between his teeth.⁴ This permission to break her rule of

¹ S. C. Bose, *The Hindoos as they are*, p. 86. Similarly, after a Brahman boy has been invested with the sacred thread, he is for three days strictly forbidden to see the sun. He may not eat salt, and he is enjoined to sleep either on a carpet or a deer's skin, without a mattress or mosquito curtain (*ibid.* p. 186). In Bali, boys who have had their teeth filed, as a preliminary to marriage, are kept shut up in a dark room for three days (Van Eck, "Schetsen van het eiland Bali,"

Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië, N.S., ix. (1880), p. 428 sq.).

² H. H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, *Ethnographic Glossary*, i. 152.

³ Moura, *Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 377.

⁴ Aymonier, "Notes sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," *Cochinchine Française: Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 16 (Saigon, 1883), p. 193 sq. Cp. *id.*, *Notice sur le Cambodge*, p. 50.

retirement and show herself abroad during an eclipse seems to show how literally the injunction is interpreted which forbids maidens entering on womanhood to look upon the sun.

A superstition so widely diffused as this might be expected to leave traces in legends and folk-tales. And it has done so. In a Danish story we read of a princess who was fated to be carried off by a warlock if ever the sun shone on her before she had passed her thirtieth year; so the king her father kept her shut up in the palace, and had all the windows on the east, south, and west sides blocked up, lest a sunbeam should fall on his darling child, and he should thus lose her for ever.¹ A Tyrolese story tells how it was the doom of a lovely maiden to be transported into the belly of a whale if ever a sunbeam fell on her.² In a modern Greek folk-tale the Fates predict that in her fifteenth year a princess must be careful not to let the sun shine on her, for if this were to happen she would be turned into a lizard.³ In another modern Greek tale the Sun bestows a daughter upon a childless woman on condition of taking the child back to himself when she is twelve years old. So, when the child was twelve, the mother closed the doors and windows, and stopped up all the chinks and crannies, to prevent the Sun from coming to fetch away her daughter. But she forgot to stop up the key-hole, and a sunbeam streamed through it and carried off the girl.⁴ In a Sicilian story a seer foretells that a king will have a daughter who, in her fourteenth year, will conceive a child by the Sun. So, when the child was born, the king shut her up in a lonely tower which had no window, lest a sunbeam should fall on her. When she was nearly fourteen years old, it happened that her parents sent her a piece of roasted kid, in which she found a sharp bone. With this bone she scraped a hole in the wall, and a sunbeam shot through the hole and impregnated her.⁵ The old Greek story of Danae,

¹ Grundtvig, *Dänische Volksmärchen*, übersetzt von A. Strodtmann, Zweite Sammlung (Leipsic, 1879), p. 199 *sqq.*

² Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wälschtirol*, No. 22.

³ B. Schmidt, *Griechische Märchen, Sagen und Volkslieder*, p. 98.

⁴ J. G. von Hahn, *Griechische und albanesische Märchen*, No. 41.

⁵ Gonzenbach, *Sicilianische Märchen*, No. 28. The incident of the bone

who was confined by her father in a subterranean chamber or a brazen tower, but impregnated by Zeus, who reached her in the shape of a shower of gold,¹ perhaps belongs to the same class of tales. It has its counterpart in the legend which the Kirghiz of Siberia tell of their ancestry. A certain Khan had a fair daughter, whom he kept in a dark iron house, that no man might see her. An old woman tended her; and when the girl was grown to maidenhood she asked the old woman, "Where do you go so often?"—"My child," said the old dame, "there is a bright world. In that bright world your father and mother live, and all sorts of people live there. That is where I go." The maiden said, "Good mother, I will tell nobody, but show me that bright world." So the old woman took the girl out of the iron house. But when she saw the bright world, the girl tottered and fainted; and the eye of God fell upon her, and she conceived. Her angry father put her in a golden chest and sent her floating away (fairy gold can float in fairyland) over the wide sea.² The shower of gold in the Greek story, and the eye of God in the Kirghiz legend, probably stand for sunlight and the

occurs in other folk-tales. A prince or princess is shut up for safety in a tower and makes his or her escape by scraping a hole in the wall with a bone which has been accidentally conveyed into the tower; sometimes it is expressly said that care was taken to let the princess have no bones with her meat (Hahn, *op. cit.* No. 15; Gonzenbach, Nos. 26, 27; *Pentamerone*, No. 23). From this we should infer that it is a rule with savages not to let women handle the bones of animals during their monthly seclusions. We have already seen the great respect with which the savage treats the bones of game (see above, vol. ii. p. 404 *sqq.*); and women in their courses are specially forbidden to meddle with the hunter or fisher, as their contact or neighbourhood would spoil his sport (see below, pp. 222 *sq.*, 226 *sq.*, 229 *sq.*). In folk-tales the hero who uses the bone is sometimes a boy; but the incident might easily be transferred from a girl to a boy after its real meaning had been forgotten. Amongst the Hare-skin

Indians a girl at puberty is forbidden to break the bones of hares (Petitot, *Traditions indiennes du Canada Nord-Ouest*, p. 258). On the other hand, she drinks out of a tube made of a swan's bone (Petitot, *l.c.*; *id.*, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjé*, p. 76), and the same instrument is used for the same purpose by girls of the Carrier tribe of Indians (see below, p. 228). We have seen that a Thlinket girl in the same circumstances used to drink out of the wing-bone of a white-headed eagle (Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt*, ii. 114), and that among the Nootka and Shushwap tribes girls at puberty are provided with bones or combs with which to scratch themselves, because they may not use their fingers for this purpose (above, p. 211; and vol. i. p. 326, note 2).

¹ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 944 *sqq.*; Apollodorus, ii. 4. 1; Horace, *Odes*, iii. 16. 1 *sqq.*; Pausanias, ii. 23. 7.

² W. Radloff, *Proben der Volksliteratur der türkischen Stämme Süd-Sibiriens*, iii. 82 *sq.*

sun. The idea that women may be impregnated by the sun is not uncommon in legends,¹ and there are even traces of it in marriage customs.²

The ground of this seclusion of girls at puberty lies in the deeply engrained dread which primitive man universally entertains of menstruous blood. Evidence of this has already been given,³ but a few more facts may here be added. Amongst the Australian blacks "the boys are told from their infancy that, if they see the blood, they will early become gray-headed, and their strength will fail prematurely." Hence a woman lives apart at these times; and if a young man or boy approaches her she calls out, and he immediately makes a circuit to avoid her. The men go out of their way to avoid even crossing the tracks made by women at such times. Similarly the woman may not walk on any path frequented by men, nor touch anything used by men; she may not eat fish, or go near water at all, much less cross it; for if she did, the fish would be frightened, and the fishers would have no luck; she may not even fetch water for the camp; it is sufficient for her to say *Thama* to ensure her husband fetching the water himself. A severe beating, or even death, is the punishment inflicted on an Australian

¹ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, i. 416, vi. 25; Turner, *Samoa*, p. 200; *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii. p. 148, § 797; A. Pfizmaier, "Nachrichten von den alten Bewohnern des heutigen Corea," *Sitzungsberichte der philos.-histor. Classe d. kais. Akademie der Wissenschaft* (Vienna), lvii. (1868), p. 495 sq.

² Amongst the Chaco Indians of South America a newly-married couple sleep the first night on a skin with their heads towards the west; "for the marriage is not considered as ratified till the rising sun shines on their feet the succeeding morning" (T. J. Hutchinson, "The Chaco Indians," *Transact. Ethnolog. Soc. N.S.*, iii. (1865), p. 327). At old Hindoo marriages, the first ceremony was the "Impregnation-rite" (*Garbhādhāna*). "During the previous day the young married woman was made to look

towards the sun, or in some way exposed to its rays" (Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 354). Amongst the Turks of Siberia it was formerly the custom on the morning after marriage to lead the young couple out of the hut to greet the rising sun. The same custom is said to be still practised in Iran and Central Asia, the belief being that the beams of the rising sun are the surest means of impregnating the new bride (Vambéry, *Das Türkenvolk*, p. 112). The Greenlanders attribute the same power of impregnation to the moon, which they regard as a masculine being. Hence young girls are afraid to look long at it, and no Greenland woman will sleep on her back unless she has first spat upon her fingers and rubbed the spittle on her stomach (H. Egede, *Description of Greenland*, London, 1818, p. 209).

³ Above, vol. i. p. 325 sq.

woman who breaks these rules.¹ The Dieri of Central Australia believe that if women at these times were to eat fish or bathe in a river, the fish would all die and the water would dry up. In this tribe a mark made with red ochre round a woman's mouth indicates that she has her courses; no one would offer fish to such a woman.² Other Central Australian tribes will not allow menstruous women to gather a certain bulb, which forms a staple food of these people; they think that if the rule were broken, the supply of bulbs would fail.³ In Galela women at their monthly periods may not enter a tobacco-field, or the plants would be attacked by disease.⁴ The Minangkabauers of Sumatra are persuaded that if a woman in her unclean state were to go near a rice-field, the crop would be spoiled.⁵ The Bushmen think that, by a glance of a girl's eye at the time when she ought to be kept in strict retirement, men become fixed in whatever position they happen to occupy, with whatever they were holding in their hands, and are changed into trees which talk.⁶ Cattle-rearing tribes of South Africa hold that their cattle would die if the milk were drunk by a menstruous woman; and lest they should suddenly be overtaken by their infirmity, women are forbidden to enter the villages by the paths which the men use.⁷ According to the Talmud, if a woman at the beginning of her period passes between two men, she thereby kills one of them; if she passes between them towards the end of her period, she only causes them to quarrel violently.⁸

¹ *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 186; E. J. Eyre, *Journals*, ii. 295, 304; W. Ridley, *Kamilaroi*, p. 157; *id.*, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ii. (1873), p. 268; W. E. Armit, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* ix. (1880), p. 459 sq.; Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*, i. 65, 236. Cp. Sir George Grey, *Journals*, ii. 344; J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. ci. sq.

² S. Gason, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), p. 171.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 473.

⁴ M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-*

Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië, xlv. (1895), p. 489.

⁵ J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padagnsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 66.

⁶ Bleek, *Brief Account of Bushman Folk-lore*, p. 14; cp. *ibid.* p. 10.

⁷ J. Macdonald, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xx. (1891), p. 138; *id.*, *Light in Africa*, p. 221; *id.*, *Religion and Myth*, p. 198.

⁸ J. Mergel, *Die Medezin der Talmudisten* (Leipsic and Berlin, 1885), p. 15 sq.

The miraculous virtue ascribed to menstruous blood is well illustrated in a story told by the Arab chronicler Tabari. He relates how Sapor, king of Persia, besieged the strong city of Atræ, in the desert of Mesopotamia, for several years without being able to take it. But the king of the city, whose name was Daizan, had a daughter, and when it was with her after the manner of women she went forth from the city and dwelt for a time in the suburb, for such was the custom of the place. Now it fell out that, while she tarried there, Sapor saw her and loved her, and she loved him; for he was a handsome man and she a lovely maid. And she said to him, "What will you give me if I show you how you may destroy the walls of this city and slay my father?" And he said to her, "I will give you what you will, and I will exalt you above my other wives, and will set you nearer to me than them all." Then she said to him, "Take a greenish dove with a ring about its neck, and write something on its foot with the menstruous blood of a blue-eyed maid; then let the bird loose, and it will perch on the walls of the city, and they will fall down." For that, says the Arab historian, was the talisman of the city, which could not be destroyed in any other way. And Sapor did as she bade him, and the city fell down in a heap, and he stormed it and slew Daizan on the spot.¹

The Parsees, who reverence fire, will not suffer menstruous women to see it or even to look on a lighted taper.² Maimonides tells us that down to his time it was a common custom in the East to keep women at their periods in a separate house, and to burn everything on which they had trodden; a man who spoke with such a woman or who was merely exposed to the same wind that blew over her, became thereby unclean.³ In Syria to this day a woman who

¹ Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sassaniden, aus der arabischen Chronik des Tabari übersetzt* (Leyden, 1879), pp. 33-38. I have to thank my friend Prof. A. A. Bevan for pointing out to me this and the passage referred to in the next note. Many ancient cities had talismans on the preservation of which their safety was believed to depend. The Palla-

dium of Troy is the most familiar instance. See Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 278 sqq., and my note on Pausanias, viii. 47. 5.

² G. Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus Syrischen Akten persischer Martyrer übersetzt* (Leipsic, 1880), p. 99.

³ Maimonides, translated by Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, ii. 483.

has her courses on her may neither salt nor pickle, for the people think that whatever she pickled or salted would not keep.¹ The Toaripi of New Guinea, doubtless for a similar reason, will not allow women at such times to cook.² The Bhuiyars, a Dravidian tribe of South Mirzapur, are said to feel an intense dread of menstrual pollution. Every house has two doors, one of which is used only by women in this condition. During her impurity the wife is fed by her husband apart from the rest of the family, and whenever she has to quit the house she is obliged to creep out on her hands and knees in order not to defile the thatch by her touch.³ The Kharwars, another aboriginal tribe of the same district, keep their women at such seasons in the outer verandah of the house for eight days, and will not let them enter the kitchen or the cow-house; during this time the unclean woman may not cook nor even touch the cooking vessels. When the eight days are over, she bathes, washes her clothes, and returns to family life.⁴

The Guayquiries of the Orinoco think that, when a woman has her courses, everything upon which she steps will die, and that if a man treads on the place where she has passed, his legs will immediately swell up.⁵ The Creek and kindred Indians of the United States compelled women at menstruation to live in separate huts at some distance from the village. There the women had to stay, at the risk of being surprised and cut off by enemies. It was thought "a most horrid and dangerous pollution" to go near the women at such times; and the danger extended to enemies who, if they slew the women, had to cleanse themselves from the pollution by means of certain sacred herbs and roots.⁶ Similarly, the Choctaw women had to quit their huts during their monthly periods, and might not return till after they had been purified. While their uncleanness lasted they had to prepare their own food. The men believed that if they

¹ Eijüb Abēla, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss abergläubischer Gebräuche in Syrien," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palaestina-Vereins*, vii. (1884), p. 111.

² J. Chalmers, "Toaripi," *Journal of the Anthropol. Institute*, xxvii. (1898), p. 328.

³ W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of*

the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, ii. 87.

⁴ W. Crooke, in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, i. p. 67, § 467.

⁵ Gumilla, *Histoire de l'Orénoque* (Avignon, 1758), i. 249.

⁶ James Adair, *History of the American Indians*, p. 123 sq.

were to approach a menstruous woman, they would fall ill, and that some mishap would overtake them when they went to the wars.¹ When an Omaha woman has her courses on her, she retires from the family to a little shelter of bark or grass, supported by sticks, where she kindles a fire and cooks her victuals alone. Her seclusion lasts four days. During this time she may not approach or touch a horse, for the Indians believe that such contamination would impoverish or weaken the animal.² Among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia every woman had to isolate herself from the rest of the people during every recurring period of menstruation, and had to live some little way off in a small brush or bark lodge made for the purpose. At these times she was considered unclean, must use cooking and eating utensils of her own, and was supplied with food by some other woman. If she smoked out of a pipe other than her own, that pipe would ever afterwards be hot to smoke. If she crossed in front of a gun, that gun would thenceforth be useless for the war or the chase, unless indeed the owner promptly washed the weapon in "medecine" or struck the woman with it once on each principal part of her body. If a man ate or had any intercourse with a menstruous woman, nay if he merely wore clothes or moccasins made or patched by her, he would have bad luck in hunting and the bears would attack him fiercely. Before being admitted again among the people, she had to change all her clothes and wash several times in clear water. The clothes worn during her isolation were hung on a tree, to be used next time, or to be washed. For one day after coming back among the people, she did not cook food. Were a man to eat food cooked by a woman at such times, he would have incapacitated himself for hunting and exposed himself to sickness or death.³ Among the Chippeways and other Indians of the Hudson Bay Territory, menstruous women are excluded from the camp, and take up their abode in huts of branches. They wear long hoods, which effectually conceal

¹ Bossu, *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes occidentales* (Paris, 1768), ii. 105.

² E. James, *Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, i. 214.

³ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 326 sq.

the head and breast. They may not touch the household furniture nor any objects used by men; for their touch "is supposed to defile them, so that their subsequent use would be followed by certain mischief or misfortune," such as disease or death. They may not walk on the common paths nor cross the tracks of animals. They "are never permitted to walk on the ice of rivers or lakes, or near the part where the men are hunting beaver, or where a fishing-net is set, for fear of averting their success. They are also prohibited at those times from partaking of the head of any animal, and even from walking in or crossing the track where the head of a deer, moose, beaver, and many other animals have lately been carried, either on a sledge or on the back. To be guilty of a violation of this custom is considered as of the greatest importance; because they firmly believe that it would be a means of preventing the hunter from having an equal success in his future excursions."¹ So the Lapps forbid women at menstruation to walk on that part of the shore where the fishers are in the habit of setting out their fish.²

But the beliefs and superstitions of this sort that prevail among the western tribes of the great Déné or Tinné stock, to which the Chippeways belong, have been so well described by an experienced missionary, that I will give his description in his own words. Prominent among the ceremonial rites of these Indians, he says, "are the observances peculiar to the fair sex, and many of them are remarkably analogous to those practised by the Hebrew women, so much so that, were it not savouring of profanity, the ordinances of the Déné ritual code might be termed a new edition 'revised and considerably augmented' of the Mosaic ceremonial law. Among the Carriers,³ as soon as a girl had experienced the first flow of the menses which in the female constitution are a natural

¹ S. Hearne, *Journey to the Northern Ocean*, p. 314 sq.; Alex. Mackenzie, *Voyages through the Continent of North America* (London, 1801), p. cxxiii.; Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjé*, p. 75 sq.

² C. Leemius, *De Lapponibus Finmarchiae eorumque lingua vita et re-*

ligione pristina, (Copenhagen, 1767), p. 494.

³ The Carriers are a tribe of Déné or Tinné Indians who get their name from a custom observed among them by widows, who carry the charred bones of their dead husbands about with them in bundles.

discharge, her father believed himself under the obligation of atoning for her supposedly sinful condition by a small impromptu distribution of clothes among the natives. This periodical state of women was considered as one of legal impurity fateful both to the man who happened to have any intercourse, however indirect, with her, and to the woman herself who failed in scrupulously observing all the rites prescribed by ancient usage for persons in her condition.

"Upon entering into that stage of her life, the maiden was immediately sequestered from company, even that of her parents, and compelled to dwell in a small branch hut by herself away from beaten paths and the gaze of passers-by. As she was supposed to exercise malefic influence on any man who might inadvertently glance at her, she had to wear a sort of head-dress combining in itself the purposes of a veil, a bonnet, and a mantlet. It was made of tanned skin, its forepart was shaped like a long fringe completely hiding from view the face and breasts; then it formed on the head a close-fitting cap or bonnet, and finally fell in a broad band almost to the heels. This head-dress was made and publicly placed on her head by a paternal aunt, who received at once some present from the girl's father. When three or four years later the period of sequestration ceased, only this same aunt had the right to take off her niece's ceremonial head-dress. Furthermore, the girl's fingers, wrists, and legs at the ankles and immediately below the knees, were encircled with ornamental rings and bracelets of sinew intended as a protection against the malign influences she was supposed to be possessed with.¹ To a belt girding her waist were suspended two bone implements called respectively *Tsoenkux* (bone tube) and *Tsiltsoet* (head scratcher). The former was a hollowed swan bone to drink with, any other mode of drinking being unlawful to her. The latter was fork-like and was called into requisition whenever she wanted to scratch her head—immediate contact of the fingers with the head being reputed injurious to her health. While thus secluded, she was called *asta*, that is 'interred alive' in Carrier, and she had to submit to a

¹ Hence we may conjecture that the girls in similar circumstances are also similar ornaments worn by Mabuig amulets. See above, p. 207.

rigorous fast and abstinence. Her only allowed food consisted of dried fish boiled in a small bark vessel which nobody else must touch, and she had to abstain especially from meat of any kind, as well as fresh fish. Nor was this all she had to endure; even her contact, however remote, with these two articles of diet was so dreaded that she could not cross the public paths or trails, or the tracks of animals. Whenever absolute necessity constrained her to go beyond such spots, she had to be packed or carried over them lest she should contaminate the game or meat which had passed that way, or had been brought over these paths; and also for the sake of self-preservation against tabooed, and consequently to her, deleterious food. In the same way she was never allowed to wade in streams or lakes, for fear of causing death to the fish.

"It was also a prescription of the ancient ritual code for females during this primary condition to eat as little as possible, and to remain lying down, especially in course of each monthly flow, not only as a natural consequence of the prolonged fast and resulting weakness; but chiefly as an exhibition of a becoming penitential spirit which was believed to be rewarded by long life and continual good health in after years.

"These mortifications or seclusion did not last less than three or four years. Useless to say that during all that time marriage could not be thought of, since the girl could not so much as be seen by men. When married, the same sequestration was practised relatively to husband and fellow-villagers—without the particular head-dress and ring spoken of—on the occasion of every recurring menstruation. Sometimes it was protracted as long as ten days at a time, especially during the first years of cohabitation. Even when she returned to her mate, she was not permitted to sleep with him on the first nor frequently on the second night, but would choose a distant corner of the lodge to spread her blanket, as if afraid to defile him with her dread uncleanness."¹ Elsewhere the same writer tells us that most of

¹ A. G. Morice, "The Western Dénés, their manners and customs," *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute*,

Toronto, Third Series, vii. (1888-89), 111, 162-164. The writer has repeated the substance of this account in a later

the devices to which these Indians used to resort for the sake of ensuring success in the chase "were based on their regard for continence and their excessive repugnance for, and dread of, menstruating women."¹ But the strict observances imposed on Déné women at such times were designed at the same time to protect the women themselves from the evil consequences of their dangerous condition. Thus it was thought that women in their courses could not partake of the head, heart, or hind part of an animal that had been caught in a snare without exposing themselves to a premature death through a kind of rabies. They might not cut or carve salmon, because to do so would seriously endanger their health, and especially would enfeeble their arms for life. And they had to abstain from cutting up the grebes which are caught by the Carriers in great numbers every spring, because otherwise the blood with which these fowls abound would occasion hæmorrhage or an unnaturally prolonged flux in the transgressor.² Similarly Indian women of the Thompson River tribe abstained from venison and the flesh of other large game during menstruation, lest the animals should be displeased and the menstrual flow increased.³ For a similar reason, probably, Shushwap girls during their seclusion at puberty are forbidden to eat anything that bleeds.⁴ The same principle may perhaps partly explain the rule, of which we have had some examples, that women at such times should refrain from fish and flesh, and restrict themselves to a vegetable diet.

The philosophic student of human nature will observe, or learn, without surprise that ideas thus deeply ingrained in the savage mind reappear at a more advanced stage of society in those elaborate codes which have been drawn up for the guidance of certain peoples by lawgivers who claim

work, *Au pays de l'Ours Noir: chez les sauvages de la Colombie Britannique* (Paris and Lyons, 1897), p. 72 sq.

¹ A. G. Morice, "Notes, archaeological, industrial, and sociological, on the Western Dénés," *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93), p. 106 sq.

² A. G. Morice, in *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93),

pp. 107, 110.

³ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 327.

⁴ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 89 (separate reprint from the *Report of the Brit. Assoc. for 1890*).

to have derived the rules they inculcate from the direct inspiration of the deity. However we may explain it, the resemblance which exists between the earliest official utterances of the deity and the ideas of savages is unquestionably close and remarkable ; whether it be, as some suppose, that God communed face to face with man in those early days, or, as others maintain, that man mistook his wild and wandering thoughts for a revelation from heaven. Be this as it may, certain it is that the natural uncleanness of woman at her monthly periods is a conception which has occurred or been revealed with singular unanimity to several ancient legislators. The Hindoo lawgiver Manu, who professed to have received his institutes from the creator Brahman, informs us that the wisdom, the energy, the strength, the sight, and the vitality of a man who approaches a woman in her courses will utterly perish ; whereas, if he avoids her, his wisdom, energy, strength, sight, and vitality will all increase.¹ The Persian lawgiver Zoroaster, who, if we can take his word for it, derived his code from the mouth of the supreme being Ahura Mazda, devoted special attention to the subject. According to him, the menstruous flow, at least in its abnormal manifestations, is a work of Ahriman, or the devil. Therefore, so long as it lasts, a woman "is unclean and possessed of the demon ; she must be kept confined, apart from the faithful whom her touch would defile, and from the fire which her very look would injure ; she is not allowed to eat as much as she wishes, as the strength she might acquire would accrue to the fiends. Her food is not given her from hand to hand, but is passed to her from a distance, in a long leaden spoon."² The Hebrew lawgiver Moses, whose divine legation is as little open to question as that of Manu and Zoroaster, treats the subject at still greater length ; but I must leave to the reader the task of comparing the inspired ordinances on this head with the merely human regulations of the Carrier Indians which they so closely resemble.

Amongst the civilised nations of Europe the superstitions which cluster round this mysterious aspect of

¹ *Laws of Manu*, translated by G. Bühler, ch. iv. 41 sq., p. 135.

² J. Darmesteter, *The Zend-Avesta*, i. p. xcii. See Fargard, i. 18 and 19, xvi. 1-18.

woman's nature are not less extravagant than those which prevail among savages. In the oldest existing cyclopaedia—the *Natural History* of Pliny—the list of dangers apprehended from menstruation is longer than any furnished by mere barbarians. According to Pliny, the touch of a menstruous woman turned wine to vinegar, blighted crops, killed seedlings, blasted gardens, brought down the fruit from trees, dimmed mirrors, blunted razors, rusted iron and brass (especially at the waning of the moon), killed bees, or at least drove them from their hives, caused mares to miscarry, and so forth.¹ Similarly, in various parts of Europe, it is still believed that if a woman in her courses enters a brewery the beer will turn sour; if she touches beer, wine, vinegar, or milk it will go bad; if she makes jam, it will not keep; if she mounts a mare, it will miscarry; if she touches buds, they will wither; if she climbs a cherry tree, it will die.² In Brunswick people think that if a menstruous woman assists at the killing of a pig, the pork will putrefy.³ In the Greek island of Calymnos a woman at such times may not go to the well to draw water, nor cross a running stream, nor enter the sea. Her presence in a boat is said to raise storms.⁴

Thus the object of secluding women at menstruation is to neutralise the dangerous influences which are supposed to emanate from them at such times. That the danger is believed to be especially great at the first menstruation appears from the unusual precautions taken to isolate girls at this crisis. Two of these precautions have been illustrated above, namely, the rules that the girl may not touch the

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 64 sq., xxviii. 77 sqq. Cp. *Geoponica*, xii. 20. 5 and 25. 2; Columella, xi. 3. 50.

² A. Schleicher, *Volkstümliches aus Sonnenberg*, p. 134; B. Souché, *Croyances, Présages et Traditions diverses*, p. 11; A. Meyrac, *Traditions, Coutumes, Légendes et Contes des Ardennes* (Charleville, 1890), p. 171; V. Fossel, *Volksmedizin und medicinischer Aberglaube in Steiermark* (Graz, 1886), p. 124. A correspondent, who withholds her name, writes to me that in a Suffolk village, where she used to live

some twenty or thirty years ago, "every one pickled their own beef, and it was held that if the pickling were performed by a woman during her menstrual period the meat would not keep. If the cook were incapacitated at the time when the pickling was due, another woman was sent for out of the village rather than risk what was considered a certainty."

³ R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 291.

⁴ W. R. Paton, in *Folklore*, i. (1890), p. 524.

ground nor see the sun. The general effect of these rules is to keep the girl suspended, so to say, between heaven and earth. Whether enveloped in her hammock and slung up to the roof, as in South America, or raised above the ground in a dark and narrow cage, as in New Ireland, she may be considered to be out of the way of doing mischief, since, being shut off both from the earth and from the sun, she can poison neither of these great sources of life by her deadly contagion. In short, she is rendered harmless by being, in electrical language, insulated. But the precautions thus taken to isolate or insulate the girl are dictated by a regard for her own safety as well as for the safety of others. For it is thought that the girl herself would suffer if she were to neglect the prescribed regimen. Thus Zulu girls, as we have seen, believe that they would shrivel to skeletons if the sun were to shine on them at puberty, and in some Brazilian tribes the girls think that a transgression of the rules would entail sores on the neck and throat. In short, the girl is viewed as charged with a powerful force which, if not kept within bounds, may prove destructive both to the girl herself and to all with whom she comes in contact. To repress this force within the limits necessary for the safety of all concerned is the object of the taboos in question.

The same explanation applies to the observance of the same rules by divine kings and priests. The uncleanness, as it is called, of girls at puberty and the sanctity of holy men do not, to the primitive mind, differ from each other. They are only different manifestations of the same mysterious energy which, like energy in general, is in itself neither good nor bad, but becomes beneficent or maleficent according to its application.¹ Accordingly, if, like girls at puberty, divine

¹ The Greeks and Romans thought that a field was completely protected against insects if a menstruous woman walked round it with bare feet and streaming hair (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvii. 266, xxviii. 78; Columella, x. 358 sq., xi. 3. 64; Palladius, *De re rustica*, i. 35. 3; *Geoponica*, xii. 8. 5 sq.; Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* vi. 36). A similar preventive is employed for the same purpose by North American Indians and European peasants. See School-

craft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 70; Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Eskten*, p. 484. Cp. Halt- rich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, p. 280; Heinrich, *Agrarische Sitten und Gebräuche unter den Sachsen Siebenbürgens*, p. 14; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ iii. 468; Lam- mert, *Volksmedizin aus Bayern*, p. 147. Among the Western Dénés it is believed that one or two transverse lines tattooed on the arms or legs of a young

personages may neither touch the ground nor see the sun, the reason is, on the one hand, a fear lest their divinity might, at contact with earth or heaven, discharge itself with fatal violence on either; and, on the other hand, an apprehension that the divine being, thus drained of his ethereal virtue, might thereby be incapacitated for the future performance of those magical functions, upon the proper discharge of which the safety of the people and even of the world is believed to hang. Thus the rules in question fall under the head of the taboos which we examined in the second chapter; they are intended to preserve the life of the divine person and with it the life of his subjects and worshippers. Nowhere, it is thought, can his precious yet dangerous life be at once so safe and so harmless as when it is neither in heaven nor in earth, but, as far as possible, suspended between the two.

In legends and folk-tales, which reflect the ideas of earlier ages, we find this suspension between heaven and earth attributed to beings who have been endowed with the coveted yet burdensome gift of immortality. The wizened remains of the deathless Sibyl are said to have been preserved in a jar or urn which hung in a temple of Apollo at Cumae; and when a group of merry children, tired, perhaps, of playing in the sunny streets, sought the shade of the temple and amused themselves by gathering underneath the familiar jar and calling out, "Sibyl, what do you wish?" a hollow voice, like an echo, used to answer from the urn, "I wish to die."¹ A story, taken down from the lips of a

man by a pubescent girl are a specific against premature weakness of these limbs. See A. G. Morice, "Notes, archaeological, industrial, and sociological, on the Western Dénés," *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93), p. 182. The Thompson River Indians of British Columbia thought that the Dawn of Day could and would cure hernia if only an adolescent girl prayed to it to do so. Just before day-break the girl would put some charcoal in her mouth, chew it fine, and spit it out four times on the diseased place. Then she prayed: "O Day-dawn! thy child relies on me to obtain healing

from thee, who art mystery. Remove thou the swelling of thy child. Pity thou him, Day-dawn!" See James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. (April 1900), p. 345 sq. These are examples of the beneficent application of the menstuous energy.

¹ Petronius, *Sat.* 48; Pausanias, x. 12. 8; Justin Martyr, *Cohort. ad Graecos*, 37, p. 34 C, ed. 1742. According to another account, the remains of the Sibyl were enclosed in an iron cage which hung from a pillar in

German peasant at Thomsdorf, relates that once upon a time there was a girl in London who wished to live for ever, so they say :

"London, London is a fine town.
A maiden prayed to live for ever."

And still she lives and hangs in a basket in a church, and every St. John's Day, about the hour of noon, she eats a roll of bread.¹ Another German story tells of a lady who resided at Danzig and was so rich and so blest with all that life can give that she wished to live always. So when she came to her latter end, she did not really die but only looked like dead, and very soon they found her in a hollow of a pillar in the church, half standing and half sitting, motionless. She stirred never a limb, but they saw quite plainly that she was alive, and she sits there down to this blessed day. Every New Year's Day the sacristan comes and puts a morsel of the holy bread in her mouth, and that is all she has to live on. Long, long has she rued her fatal wish who set this transient life above the eternal joys of heaven.² A third German story tells of a noble damsel who cherished the same foolish wish for immortality. So they put her in a basket and hung her up in a church, and there she hangs and never dies, though many a year has come and gone since they put her there. But every year on a certain day they give her a roll, and she eats it and cries out, "For ever! for ever! for ever!" And when she has so cried she falls silent again till the same time next year, and so it will go on for ever and for ever.³ A fourth story, taken down near Oldenburg in Holstein, tells of a jolly dame that ate and drank and lived right merrily and had all that heart could desire, and she wished to live always. For the first hundred years all went well, but after that she began to shrink and shrivel up, till at last

an ancient temple of Hercules at Argyrus (Ampelius, *Liber Memorialis*, viii. 16).

¹ Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 70, No. 72. 1. This and the following German parallels to the story of the Sibyl's wish were first indicated by Dr.

M. R. James (*Classical Review*, vi. (1892), p. 74). I have already given the stories at length in a note on Pausanias, x. 12. 8.

² Kuhn und Schwartz, *op. cit.* p. 70 sq., No. 72. 2.

³ Kuhn und Schwartz, *op. cit.* p. 71, No. 72. 3.

she could neither walk nor stand nor eat nor drink. But die she could not. At first they fed her as if she were a little child, but when she grew smaller and smaller they put her in a glass bottle and hung her up in the church. And there she still hangs, in the church of St. Mary, at Lübeck. She is as small as a mouse, but once a year she stirs.¹

§ 2. Balder

A god whose life might in a sense be said to be neither in heaven nor on earth but between the two, was the Norse Balder, the good and beautiful god. The story of his death is as follows: Once on a time Balder dreamed heavy dreams which seemed to forebode his death. Thereupon the gods held a council and resolved to make him secure against every danger. So the goddess Frigg took an oath from fire and water, iron and all metals, stones and earth, from trees, sicknesses and poisons, and from all four-footed beasts, birds, and creeping things, that they would not hurt Balder. When this was done Balder was deemed invulnerable; so the gods amused themselves by setting him in their midst, while some shot at him, others hewed at him, and others threw stones at him. But whatever they did, nothing could hurt him; and at this they were all glad. Only Loki, the mischief-maker, was displeased, and he went in the guise of an old woman to Frigg, who told him that the weapons of the gods could not wound Balder, since she had made them all swear not to hurt him. Then Loki asked, "Have all things sworn to spare Balder?" She answered, "East of Walhalla grows a plant called mistletoe; it seemed to me too young to swear." So Loki went and pulled the mistletoe and took it to the assembly of the gods. There he found the blind god Hödur standing at the outside of the circle. Loki asked him, "Why do you not shoot at Balder?" Hödur answered, "Because I do not see where he stands; besides I have no weapon." Then said Loki, "Do like the rest and show Balder honour, as they all do. I will show you where he stands, and do you shoot at him

¹ K. Müllenhoff, *Sagen, Märchen und Lieder*, p. 158 sq., No. 217. On this subject see further Note A at the end of the volume.

with this twig." Hödur took the mistletoe and threw it at Balder, as Loki directed him. The mistletoe struck Balder and pierced him through and through, and he fell down dead. And that was the greatest misfortune that ever befell gods and men. For a while the gods stood speechless, then they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. They took Balder's body and brought it to the sea-shore. There stood Balder's ship; it was called Ringhorn, and was the hugest of all ships. The gods wished to launch the ship and to burn Balder's body on it, but the ship would not stir. So they sent for a giantess called Hyrrockin. She came riding on a wolf and gave the ship such a push that fire flashed from the rollers and all the earth shook. Then Balder's body was taken and placed on the funeral pile upon his ship. When his wife Nanna saw that, her heart burst for sorrow and she died. So she was laid on the funeral pile with her husband, and fire was put to it. Balder's horse, too, with all its trappings, was burned on the pile.¹

The minute details with which this story is told suggest that it belongs to that class of myths which have been dramatised in ritual, or, to put it otherwise, which have been performed as magical ceremonies for the sake of producing those natural effects which they describe in figurative language. A myth is never so graphic and precise in its details as when it is, so to speak, the book of the words which are spoken and acted by the performers of the sacred rite. That the Norse story of Balder was a myth of this sort will become probable if we can prove that ceremonies resembling the incidents in the tale have been performed by Norsemen and other European peoples. Now the main incidents in the tale are two—first, the pulling of the mistletoe, and second, the death and burning of the god; and both of them can be shown to have had their counterparts in yearly rites observed, whether separately or conjointly, by people in various parts of Europe.

All over Europe the peasants have been accustomed from time immemorial to kindle bonfires on certain

¹ *Die Edda*, übersetzt von K. Simrock,⁸ pp. 286-288, cp. pp. 8, 34, 264. In English the Balder story is told at

length by Prof. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 529 sqq.

days of the year, and to dance round or leap over them. Customs of this kind can be traced back on historical evidence to the Middle Ages,¹ and their analogy to similar customs observed in antiquity goes with strong internal evidence to prove that their origin must be sought in a period long prior to the spread of Christianity. Indeed the earliest proof of their observance in Northern Europe is furnished by the attempts made by Christian synods in the eighth century to put them down as heathenish rites.² Not uncommonly effigies are burned in these fires, or a pretence is made of burning a living person in them; and there are grounds for believing that anciently human beings were actually burned on these occasions. A general survey of the customs in question will bring out the traces of human sacrifice, and will serve at the same time to throw light on their meaning.³

The seasons of the year at which these bonfires are most commonly lit are spring and midsummer, but in some places they are kindled at Hallow E'en (the thirty-first of October) and Christmas. In spring the first Sunday in Lent (Quadragesima), Easter Eve, and the first of May are the days on which the ceremony has been oftenest observed.

The custom of kindling bonfires on the first Sunday in Lent has prevailed in Belgium, the north of France, and in many parts of Germany. Thus in the Belgian Ardennes for a week or a fortnight before the "day of the great fire," as it is called, children go about from farm to farm collecting fuel. At Grand Halleux any one who refuses their request is pursued next day by the children, who try to blacken his face with the ashes of the extinct fire. When the day has come, they cut down bushes, especially juniper and broom, and in the evening great bonfires blaze on all the heights. It is a common saying that seven bonfires should be seen in the village is to be safe from conflagrations. If the Meuse

¹ See Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 502, 510, 516.

² Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 518 sq.

³ In the following survey of these fire-customs I follow chiefly W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, kap. vi. p. 497

sqq. Compare also Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 500 sqq.; Kelly, *Curiosities of Indo-European Tradition and Folk-lore*, p. 46 sqq.; F. Vogt, "Scheibentreiben und Frühlingsfeuer," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, iii. (1893), pp. 349-369; *ibid.* iv. (1894), pp. 195-197.

happens to be frozen hard at the time, bonfires are lit also on the ice. At Grand Halleux they set up a pole called *makral*, or "the witch," in the midst of the pile, and the fire is kindled by the man who was last married in the village. In the neighbourhood of Morlanwelz a straw man is burnt in the fire. Young people and children dance and sing round the bonfires, and leap over the embers to secure good crops or a happy marriage within the year, or as a means of guarding themselves against colic. In Brabant on the same Sunday, down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, women and men disguised in female attire used to go with burning torches to the fields, where they danced and sang comic songs for the purpose, as they alleged, of driving away "the wicked sower," who is mentioned in the Gospel for the day.¹

In the French department of the Ardennes the whole village used to dance and sing round the bonfires which were lighted on the first Sunday in Lent. Here, too, it was the person last married, sometimes a man and sometimes a woman, who put the match to the fire. The custom is still kept up very commonly in the district. Cats used to be burnt in the fire or roasted to death by being held over it; and while they were burning the shepherds drove their flocks through the smoke and flames as a sure means of guarding them against sickness and witchcraft. In some communes it was believed that the livelier the dance round the fire, the better would be the crops that year.² In the Vosges Mountains it is still customary to light great fires on the heights and around the villages on the first Sunday in Lent; and at Rupt and elsewhere the right of kindling them belongs to the person who was last married. Round the fires the people dance and sing merrily till the flames have died out. Then the master of the fire, as they call the man who kindled it, invites all who contributed to the erection of the pile to follow him to the nearest tavern, where they partake of good cheer. At Dommartin they say that, if you would have the hemp tall, it is absolutely necessary

¹ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Calendrier Belge*, i. 141-143; E. Monseur, *Le Folklore Wallon*, p. 124 sq.

² A. Meyrac, *Traditions, coutumes, légendes et contes des Ardennes* (Charleville, 1890), p. 68.

that the women should be tipsy on the evening of this day.¹ At Épinal in the Vosges, on the first Sunday in Lent, bon-fires used to be kindled at various places both in the town and on the banks of the Moselle. They consisted of pyramids of sticks and faggots, which had been collected some days earlier by young folks going from door to door. When the flames blazed up, the names of various couples, whether young or old, handsome or ugly, rich or poor, were called out, and the persons thus linked in mock marriage were forced, whether they liked it or not, to march arm in arm round the fire amid the laughter and jests of the crowd. The festivity lasted till the fire died out, and then the spectators dispersed through the streets, stopping under the windows of the houses and proclaiming the names of the *féchenots* and *féchenottes* or Valentines whom the popular voice had assigned to each other. These couples had to exchange presents; the mock bridegroom gave his mock bride something for her toilet, while she in turn presented him with a cockade of coloured ribbon. Next Sunday, if the weather allowed it, all the couples, arrayed in their best attire and attended by their relations, repaired to the wood of Saint Antony, where they mounted a famous stone called the *danserosse* or *danseresse*. Here they found cakes and refreshments of all sorts, and danced to the music of a couple of fiddlers. The evening bell, ringing the Angelus, gave the signal to depart. As soon as its solemn chime was heard, every one quitted the forest and returned home. The exchange of presents between the Valentines went by the name of ransom or redemption (*rachat*), because it was supposed to redeem the couple from the flames of the bon-fire. Any pair who failed thus to ransom themselves were not suffered to share the merrymaking at the great stone in the forest; and a pretence was made of burning them in small fires kindled before their own doors.²

In some parts of France people used to go about the roads and fields with lighted torches on the first Sunday in Lent, warning the fruit-trees that if they did not take heed and bear fruit they would surely be cut down and cast into the

¹ L. F. Sauvé, *Le Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 56.

² E. Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 101 sq.

fire.¹ On the same day peasants in the department of Loiret used to run about the sowed fields with burning torches in their hands, while they adjured the field-mice to quit the wheat on pain of having their whiskers burned.² In the department of Ain the great fires of straw and faggots which are kindled in the fields at this time are or were supposed to destroy the nests of the caterpillars.³ At Verges, a lonely village surrounded by forests between the Jura and the Combe d'Ain, the torches used at this season were kindled in a peculiar manner. The young people climbed to the top of a mountain, where they placed three nests of straw in three trees. These nests being then set on fire, torches made of dry lime-wood were lighted at them, and the merry troop descended the mountain to their flickering light, and went to every house in the village, demanding roasted peas and obliging all couples who had been married within the year to dance.⁴ In the centre of France it appears that bonfires are not lighted on this day, but when the sun has set the whole population of the villages, armed with blazing torches of straw, disperse over the country and scour the fields, the vineyards, and the orchards. Seen from afar, the multitude of moving lights, twinkling in the darkness, appear like will-o'-the-wisps chasing each other across the plains, along the hillsides, and down the valleys. While the men wave their flambeaus about the branches of the fruit-trees, the women and children tie bands of wheaten-straw round the tree-trunks. The effect of the ceremony is supposed to be to avert the various plagues from which the fruits of the earth are apt to suffer; and the bands of straw fastened round the stems of the trees are believed to render them fruitful.⁵ In the peninsula of La Manche the Norman peasants used to spend almost the whole night of the first Sunday in Lent rushing about the country with lighted torches for the purpose, as they supposed, of driving away the moles and field-mice; fires were also kindled on some of the dolmens.⁶

¹ Cortet, *op. cit.* p. 99 sq.

² A. de Nore, *Coutumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, p. 283 sq. A similar, though not identical, custom prevailed at Valenciennes (*ibid.* p. 338).

³ A. de Nore, *op. cit.* p. 302.

⁴ D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées*, p. 191 sq.

⁵ Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et légendes du centre de la France*, i. 35 sqq.

⁶ Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage*

In Germany at the same season similar customs have prevailed. Thus in the Eifel Mountains, Rhenish Prussia, on the first Sunday in Lent young people used to collect straw and brushwood from house to house. These they carried to an eminence and piled up round a tall, slim beech-tree, to which a piece of wood was fastened at right angles to form a cross. The structure was known as the "hut" or "castle." Fire was set to it and the young people marched round the blazing "castle" bareheaded, each carrying a lighted torch and praying aloud. Sometimes a straw-man was burned in the "hut." People observed the direction in which the smoke blew from the fire. If it blew towards the corn-fields, it was a sign that the harvest would be abundant. On the same day, in some parts of the Eifel, a great wheel was made of straw and dragged by three horses to the top of a hill. Thither the village boys marched at nightfall, set fire to the wheel, and sent it rolling down the slope. Two lads followed it with levers to set it in motion again, in case it should anywhere meet with a check. At Oberstattfeld the wheel had to be provided by the young man who was last married.¹ About Echternach the same ceremony is called "burning the witch"; while it is going on, the older men ascend the heights and observe what wind is blowing, for that is the wind which will prevail the whole year.² At Voralberg in the Tyrol, on the first Sunday in Lent, a slender young fir-tree is surrounded with a pile of straw and firewood. To the top of the tree is fastened a human figure called the "witch," made of old clothes and stuffed with gunpowder. At night the whole is set on fire and boys and girls dance round it, swinging torches and singing rhymes in which the words "corn in the winnowing-basket, the plough in the earth" may be distinguished.³ In Swabia on the first Sunday in Lent a figure called the "witch" or the "old wife" or "winter's grandmother" is made up of

Normand, ii. 131 sq. For more evidence of customs of this sort observed in various parts of France on the first Sunday in Lent, see Madame Clément, *Histoire des Fêtes civiles et religieuses*, etc., du Département du Nord² (Cambrai, 1836), p. 351 sqq.

¹ Schmitz, *Sitten und Sagen*, etc., des

Eifler Volkes, i. 21-25; N. Hocker, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 90; *B.K.* p. 501.

² N. Hocker, *op. cit.* p. 89 sq.; *B.K.* p. 501.

³ Vonbun, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, p. 20; *B.K.* p. 501.

clothes and fastened to a pole. This is stuck in the middle of a pile of wood, to which fire is applied. While the "witch" is burning, the young people throw blazing discs into the air. The discs are thin round pieces of wood, a few inches in diameter, with notched edges to imitate the rays of the sun or stars. They have a hole in the middle, by which they are attached to the end of a wand. Before the disc is thrown it is set on fire, the wand is swung to and fro, and the impetus thus communicated to the disc is augmented by dashing the rod sharply against a sloping board. The burning disc is thus thrown off, and mounting high into the air, describes a long curve before it reaches the ground. A single lad may fling up forty or fifty of these discs, one after the other. The object is to throw them as high as possible. The wand by which they are hurled must, at least in some parts of Swabia, be of hazel. Sometimes the lads also leap over the fire brandishing lighted torches of pine-wood. The charred embers of the burned "witch" and discs are taken home and planted in the flax-fields the same night, in the belief that they will keep vermin from the fields.¹ At Wangen, near Molsheim in Baden, a like custom is observed on the first Sunday in Lent. The young people kindle a bonfire on the crest of the mountain above the village; and the burning discs which they hurl into the air are said to present in the darkness the aspect of a continual shower of falling stars. When the supply of discs is exhausted and the bonfire begins to burn low, the boys light torches and run with them at full speed down one or other of the three steep and winding paths that descend the mountain-side to the village. Bumps, bruises, and scratches are often the result of their efforts to outstrip each other in the headlong race.² In the Rhön Mountains, Bavaria, on the first Sunday in Lent, the people

¹ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 380 sqq.; Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. 59 sq., 66 sq.; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 2, p. 838 sq.; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 211, § 232; *B. K.* p. 501 sq. One of the popular German names for the first Sunday in

Lent is White Sunday, which is not to be confused with the first Sunday after Easter, which also goes by the name of White Sunday (E. Meier, *op. cit.* p. 380; Birlinger, *op. cit.* ii. 58).

² H. Gaidoz, "Le dieu gaulois du soleil et le symbolisme de la roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. série, iv. (1884), p. 139 sq.

used to march to the top of a hill or eminence. Children and lads carried torches, brooms daubed with tar, and poles swathed in straw. A wheel, wrapt in combustibles, was kindled and rolled down the hill; and the young people rushed about the fields with their burning torches and brooms, till at last they flung them in a heap, and standing round them, struck up a hymn or a popular song. The object of running about the fields with the blazing torches was to "drive away the wicked sower." Or it was done in honour of the Virgin, that she might preserve the fruits of the earth throughout the year and bless them.¹ In neighbouring villages of Hesse, between the Rhön and the Vögel Mountains, it is thought that wherever the burning wheels roll, the fields will be safe from hail and storm.²

It seems hardly possible to separate from these bonfires, kindled on the first Sunday in Lent, the fires in which, about the same season, the effigy called Death is burned as part of the ceremony of "carrying out Death." We have seen that at Spachendorf, in Austrian Silesia, on the morning of Rupert's Day (Shrove Tuesday?), a straw-man, dressed in a fur coat and a fur cap, is laid in a hole outside the village and there burned, and that while it is blazing every one seeks to snatch a fragment of it, which he fastens to a branch of the highest tree in his garden or buries in his field, believing that this will make the crops to grow better. The ceremony is known as the "burying of Death."³ Even when the straw-man is not designated as Death, the meaning of the observance is probably the same; for the name Death, as I have tried to show, does not express the original intention of the ceremony. At Cobern in the Eifel Mountains the lads make up a straw-man on Shrove Tuesday. The effigy is formally tried and accused of having perpetrated all the thefts that have been committed in the neighbourhood throughout the year. Being condemned to death, the straw-man is led through the village, shot, and burned upon a pyre. They dance round the blazing pile, and the

¹ Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 189; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 207; *B.K.* p. 500 sq.

² W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten*

und Gebräuche, p. 36.

³ Th. Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 293 sq.; *B.K.* p. 498. See above, vol. ii. p. 95.

last bride must leap over it.¹ In Oldenburg on the evening of Shrove Tuesday people used to make long bundles of straw, which they set on fire, and then ran about the fields waving them, shrieking, and singing wild songs. Finally they burned a straw man on the field.² In the district of Düsseldorf the straw-man burned on Shrove Tuesday was made of an unthreshed sheaf of corn.³ On the first Monday after the spring equinox the urchins of Zurich drag a straw-man on a little cart through the streets, while at the same time the girls carry about a May-tree. When vespers ring, the straw-man is burned.⁴ In the district of Aachen on Ash Wednesday a man used to be encased in peas-straw and taken to an appointed place. Here he slipped quietly out of his straw casing, which was then burned, the children thinking that it was the man who was being burned.⁵ In the Val di Ledro (Tyrol) on the last day of the Carnival a figure is made up of straw and brushwood and then burned. The figure is called the Old Woman, and the ceremony "burning the Old Woman."⁶

Another occasion on which these fire-festivals are held is Easter Eve, the Saturday before Easter Sunday. On that day it has been customary in Catholic countries to extinguish all the lights in the churches, and then to make a new fire, sometimes with flint and steel, sometimes with a burning-glass. At this fire is lit the great Paschal or Easter candle which is then used to rekindle all the extinguished lights in the church. In many parts of Germany a bonfire is also kindled, by means of the new fire, on some open space near the church. It is consecrated, and the people bring sticks of oak, walnut, and beech, which they char in the fire, and then take home with them. Some of these charred sticks are thereupon burned at home in a newly-kindled fire, with a prayer that God will preserve the homestead from fire, lightning, and hail. Thus every house receives "new fire." Some of the sticks are kept throughout the year and laid on the hearth-fire during heavy thunder-storms to prevent the

¹ Schmitz, *Sitten u. Sagen des Eifler Volkes*, i. 20; *B.K.* p. 499.

² Strackerjan, *Aberglaube u. Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 39, § 306; *B.K.* 498.

³ *B.K.* p. 499.

⁴ *B.K.* p. 498 sq.

⁵ *B.K.* p. 499.

⁶ Schneller, *Märchen u. Sagen aus Wälschtirrol*, p. 234 sq.; *B.K.* p. 499 sq.

house from being struck by lightning, or they are inserted in the roof with the like intention. Others are placed in the fields, gardens, and meadows, with a prayer that God will keep them from blight and hail. Such fields and gardens are thought to thrive more than others; the corn and the plants that grow in them are not beaten down by hail, nor devoured by mice, vermin, and beetles; no witch harms them, and the ears of corn stand close and full. The charred sticks are also applied to the plough. The ashes of the Easter bonfire, together with the ashes of the consecrated palm-branches, are mixed with the seed at sowing. A wooden figure called Judas is sometimes burned in the consecrated bonfire, and even where this custom has been abolished the bonfire itself in some places goes by the name of "the burning of Judas."¹ Some of these customs have been transported by the Catholic Church to the New World. Thus in Mexico the new fire is struck from a flint early in the morning of Holy Saturday, and a candle which has been lighted at the sacred flame is carried through the church by a deacon shouting "*Lumen Christi*." Later in the day effigies of Judas, made of paper pulp, are everywhere burned or exploded, to the delight of the rabble. They are of all shapes and sizes, and in the larger towns they dangle by scores or hundreds from cords stretched across the streets. Some of them are stuffed with meat, bread, soap, clothing, and candy, for which the crowd scramble and scuffle while

¹ *B.K.* pp. 502-505; Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechraim*, p. 172 sq.; Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, i. 472 sq.; Montanus, *Die deutsche Volksfeste*, p. 26; Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 241 sq., 533 sq.; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, i. 391 sq.; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 68 sq., § 81; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 149, §§ 1286-1289; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 371; W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*, p. 44 sq.; *County Folk-lore, Leicestershire and Rutland*, collected by C. J. Billson, p. 75 sq.; A. Tiraboschi, "Usi pasquali nel Bergamasco," *Archi-*

vio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari, i. (1892), p. 442 sq. The ecclesiastical custom of lighting the Paschal or Easter candle is very fully described by Mr. H. J. Feasey, *Ancient English Holy Week Ceremonial* (London, 1897), p. 179 sqq. These candles were sometimes of prodigious size; in the cathedrals of Norwich and Durham, for example, they reached almost to the roof, from which they had to be lighted. Often they went by the name of the Judas Light or the Judas Candle; and sometimes small waxen figures of Judas were hung on them. See Feasey, *op. cit.* pp. 193, 213 sqq. As to the ritual of the new fire at St. Peter's in Rome, see Chambers, *Book of Days*, i. 421.

the effigies are burning.¹ Similarly in Brazil the mourning for the death of Christ ceases at noon on Easter Saturday and gives place to an extravagant burst of joy at his resurrection. Shots are fired everywhere, and effigies of Judas are hung on trees or dragged about the streets, to be finally burned or otherwise destroyed.²

But usages of this sort are not confined to the Latin Church; they are common to the Greek Church also. Every year on the Saturday before Easter Sunday a new fire is miraculously kindled at the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It descends from heaven and ignites the candles which the patriarch holds in his hands, while with closed eyes he wrestles in prayer all alone in the chapel of the Angel. The worshippers meanwhile wait anxiously in the body of the church, and great are their transports of joy when at one of the windows of the chapel, which had been all dark a minute before, there suddenly appears the hand of an angel, or of the patriarch, holding a lighted taper. This is the sacred new fire; it is passed out to the expectant believers, and the desperate struggle which ensues among them to get a share of its blessed influence is only terminated by the intervention of the Turkish soldiery, who restore peace and order by hustling the whole multitude impartially out of the church.³ At Athens the new fire is kindled in the cathedral at midnight on Holy Saturday. A dense crowd with unlit candles in their hands fills the square in front of the cathedral; the king, the archbishop, and the highest dignitaries of the church, arrayed in their gorgeous robes, occupy a platform; and at the presumed moment of the resurrection the bells ring out, and the whole square bursts as by magic into a blaze of light. Theoretically all the candles are lit from the sacred new fire in the cathedral, but practically it may be suspected that the matches which bear the name of Lucifer have some share in the sudden illumination.⁴ Effigies of Judas used to be burned at Athens

¹ F. Starr, "Holy Week in Mexico," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, xii. (1899), p. 164 sq.

² K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, p. 458 sq.; E. Montet, "Religion et

Superstition dans l'Amérique du Sud," *Revue de l'histoire des Religions*, xxxii. (1895), p. 145.

³ E. Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, pp. 137-139.

⁴ I have described the ceremony as

on Easter Saturday, but the custom has been forbidden by the Government. However, firing goes on more or less continuously all over the city both on Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday, and the cartridges used on this occasion are not always blank. The shots are aimed at Judas, but sometimes they miss him and hit other people. Outside of Athens the practice of burning Judas in effigy still survives in some places. For example, in Cos a straw image of the traitor is made on Easter Day, and after being hung up and shot at is burned.¹ A similar custom appears to prevail at Thebes.² In the Armenian Church the sacred new fire is kindled not at Easter but at Candlemas, that is, on the second of February, or on the eve of that festival. The materials of the bonfire are piled in an open space near a church, and they are generally ignited by young couples who have been married within the year. However, it is the bishop or his vicar who lights the candles with which the young married pairs set fire to the pile. When the ceremony is over the people eagerly pick up charred sticks or ashes of the bonfire and preserve them at home with a sort of superstitious veneration.³

In spite of the thin cloak of Christianity thrown over these customs by representing the new fire as an emblem of Christ and the figure burned in it as an effigy of Judas, we can hardly doubt that both practices are of pagan origin. Neither of them has the authority of Christ or of his disciples; but both of them have abundant analogies in popular custom and superstition. Some instances of the practice of annually extinguishing fires and relighting them from a new and sacred

I witnessed it at Athens, on April 13th, 1890. Compare *Folk-lore*, i. (1890), p. 275. Having been honoured, like other strangers, with a place on the platform, I did not myself detect Lucifer at work among the multitude below; I merely suspected his presence.

¹ W. H. D. Rouse, "Folk-lore from the southern Sporades," *Folk-lore*, x. (1899), p. 178.

² Mrs. E. A. Gardner was so kind as to send me a photograph of a Theban Judas dangling from a gallows and partially enveloped in smoke.

The photograph was taken at Thebes during the Easter celebration of 1891.

³ Cirbied, "Mémoire sur le gouvernement et sur la religion des anciens Arméniens," *Mémoires publiées par la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, ii. (1820), pp. 285-287. The writer tells us that the ceremony is merely a continuation of an old heathen festival which was held at the beginning of spring in honour of the fire-god Mihr. A bonfire was made in a public place, and lamps kindled at it were kept burning throughout the year in each of the fire-god's temples.

flame have already come before us;¹ but a few more examples may here be cited for the sake of illustrating the wide diffusion of a custom which has found its way into the ritual both of the Eastern and of the Western Church.

The Incas of Peru celebrated a festival called Raymi, a word which their native historian Garcilasso de la Vega tells us was equivalent to our Easter. It was held in honour of the sun at the solstice in June. For three days before the festival the people fasted, men did not sleep with their wives, and no fires were lighted in Cuzco, the capital. The sacred new fire was obtained direct from the sun by concentrating his beams on a highly polished concave plate and reflecting them on a little cotton wool. With this holy fire the sheep and lambs offered to the sun were consumed, and the flesh of such as were to be eaten at the festival was roasted. Portions of the new fire were also conveyed to the temple of the sun and to the convent of the sacred virgins, where they were kept burning all the year, and it was an ill omen if the holy flame went out. When the sun happened to be hidden by clouds at the time of the festival, as might often happen in the rainy climate of Cuzco, the new fire was obtained by the friction of two sticks; but the people looked on it as an evil augury if the fire had to be kindled in this manner, for they said that the sun must be angry with them since he refused to light the flame with his own hand.² At a festival held in the last month of the old Mexican year all the fires both in the temples and in the houses were extinguished, and the priest kindled a new fire by rubbing two sticks against each other before the image of the fire-god.³ Once a year the Iroquois priesthood supplied the people with a new fire. As a preparation for the annual rite the fires in all the huts were extinguished and the ashes scattered about. Then the priest, wearing the insignia of his office, went from hut to hut re-lighting the fires by means of a flint.⁴ Among the Esquimaux

¹ See above, vol. ii. pp. 329 *sqq.*, 469.

² Garcilasso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, Markham's translation, vol. ii. pp. 155-163.

³ Sahagun, *Histoire générale des choses de la Nouvelle Espagne*, bk. ii.

ch. 18 and 37, pp. 76, 161 (French translation by Jourdanet and Simeon); Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique et de l'Amérique-Centrale*, iii. 136.

⁴ Schoolcraft, *Notes on the Iroquois*, p. 137.

with whom C. F. Hall resided, it was the custom that at a certain time, which answered to our New Year's Day, two men went about from house to house blowing out every light in the village. One of the men was dressed to represent a woman. Afterwards the lights were rekindled from a fresh fire. An Esquimaux woman being asked what all this meant, replied, "New sun—new light."¹

In the Soudanese kingdom of Wadai all the fires in the villages are put out and the ashes removed from the houses on the day which precedes the New Year festival. At the beginning of the new year a new fire is lit by the friction of wood in the great straw hut where the village elders lounge away the sultry hours together; and every man takes from thence a burning brand with which he rekindles the fire on his domestic hearth.² Among the Swahilis of East Africa the greatest festival is that of the New Year, which falls in the second half of August. At a given moment all the fires are extinguished with water and afterwards relit by the friction of two dry pieces of wood. Formerly no awkward questions were asked about any crimes committed on this occasion, so some people improved the shining hour by knocking a few poor devils on the head. Shooting still goes on during the whole day, and at night the proceedings generally wind up with a great dance.³ The King of Benamatapa in East Africa used to send commissioners annually to every town in his dominions; on the arrival of one of these officers the inhabitants of each town had to put out all their fires and to receive a new fire from him. Failure to comply with this custom was treated as rebellion.⁴ Some tribes of British Central Africa carefully extinguish the fires on the hearths at the beginning of the hoeing season and at harvest; the fires are afterwards rekindled by friction, and the people indulge in dances of various kinds.⁵

¹ C. F. Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, ii. 323.

² G. Nachtigal, *Sahdrah und Suddän*, iii. 251 (Leipsic, 1889).

³ Jerome Becker, *La vie en Afrique* (Paris and Brussels, 1887), ii. 36; O. Baumann, *Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete* (Berlin, 1891), p. 55 sq.

⁴ Barbosa, *Description of the coasts*

of East Africa and Malabar (Hakluyt Society, 1866), p. 8. It is to this custom doubtless that Montaigne refers in his essays (i. 22, vol. i. p. 140 of Charpentier's edition), though he mentions no names.

⁵ Sir H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa* (London, 1897), pp. 426, 439.

When the Nagas of Northern India have felled the timber and cut down the scrub in those patches of jungle which they propose to cultivate, they put out all the fires in the village and light a new fire by rubbing two dry pieces of wood together. Then having kindled torches at it, they proceed with them to the jungle and ignite the felled timber and brushwood. The flesh of a cow or buffalo is also roasted on the new fire and furnishes a sacrificial meal.¹ Near the small town of Kahma in Burma, between Prome and Thayetmyo, certain gases escape from a hollow in the ground and burn with a steady flame during the dry season of the year. The people regard the flame as the forge of a spectral smith who here carried on his business after death had removed him from his old smithy in the village. Once a year all the household fires in Kahma are extinguished and then lighted afresh from the ghostly flame.² In China every year, about the beginning of April, certain officials, called *Sz'liien*, used of old to go about the country armed with wooden clappers. Their business was to summon the people and command them to put out every fire. This was the beginning of a season called *Han-shih-tsieh*, or "eating cold food." For three days all household fires remained extinct as a preparation for the solemn renewal of the fire, which took place on the fifth or sixth day of April, being the hundred and fifth day after the winter solstice. The ceremony was performed with great pomp by the same officials, who procured the new fire from heaven by reflecting the sun's rays either from a metal mirror or from a crystal on dry moss. Fire thus obtained is called by the Chinese heavenly fire, and its use is enjoined in sacrifices; whereas fire elicited by the friction of wood is termed by them earthly fire, and its use is prescribed for cooking and other domestic purposes. When once the new fire had thus been drawn down from the sun, all the people were free to rekindle their domestic hearths; and, as a Chinese distich has it—

¹ Lieut. R. Stewart, "Notes on Northern Cachar," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, xxiv. 1855), p. 612.

² A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, ii. 49 sq.; Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, ii. 325 sq.

"At the festival of the cold food there are a thousand white stalks among the flowers ;
On the day Tsing-ming, at sunrise, you may see the smoke of ten thousand houses."

According to a Chinese philosopher, the reason for thus renewing fire periodically is that the vital principle grows weaker and weaker in old fire, whereas in new fire it is young and vigorous. This annual renewal of fire was a ceremony of very great antiquity in China, since it is known to have been observed in the time of the first dynasty, about two thousand years before Christ. Under the Tcheou dynasty a change in the calendar led to shifting the fire-festival from spring to the summer solstice, but afterwards it was brought back to its original date. Although the custom appears to have long fallen into disuse, the barbarous inhabitants of Hainan, an island to the south of China, still call a year "a fire," as if in memory of the time when the years were reckoned by the annually recurring ceremony of rekindling the sacred fire.¹ In classical antiquity the Greek island of Lemnos was devoted to the worship of the smith-god Hephaestus, who was said to have fallen on it when Zeus hurled him from heaven.² Once a year every fire in the island was extinguished and remained extinct for nine days, during which sacrifices were offered to the dead and to the infernal powers. New fire was brought in a ship from the sacred isle of Delos, and with it the fires in the houses and the workshops were relit. The people said that with the new fire they made a new beginning of life. If the ship that bore the sacred flame arrived too soon, it might not put in to shore, but had to cruise in the offing till the nine days were expired.³ At Rome the sacred fire in the temple of Vesta was kindled anew every year on the first of March, which used to be the beginning of the Roman year ;⁴ the task of lighting it was entrusted to the Vestal Virgins, and they performed it by drilling a hole in a board of lucky

¹ G. Schlegel, *Uranographie Chinoise* (The Hague and Leyden, 1875), pp. 139-143; C. Puini, "Il fuoco nella tradizione degli antichi Cinesi," *Giornale della Società Asiatica Italiana*, i. (1887), pp. 20-23.

² Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 82; Homer, *Iliad*, i. 590 sqq.

³ Philostratus, *Heroica*, xx. 24.

⁴ Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 143 sq. ; Macrobius, *Saturn.* i. 12. 6.

wood till the flame was elicited by friction. The new fire thus produced was carried into the temple of Vesta by one of the virgins in a bronze sieve.¹ Among the Celts of Ireland a new fire was kindled at a place called Tlachtga on the eve of the first of November, which was the beginning of the Irish new year, and from this fresh fire all the hearths in Ireland are said to have been rekindled.² In the villages near Moscow at the present time the peasants put out all their fires on the eve of the first of September, and next morning at sunrise a wise man or a wise woman rekindles them with the help of muttered incantations and spells.³

Instances of such practices might doubtless be multiplied, but the foregoing examples may suffice to render it probable that the ecclesiastical ceremony of lighting a sacred new fire on Easter Saturday had originally nothing to do with Christianity, but is merely one case of a world-wide custom which the Church has seen fit to incorporate in its ritual. It might be supposed that in the Western Church the custom was merely a survival of the old Roman usage of renewing the fire on the first of March, were it not that the observance by the Eastern Church of the custom on the same day seems to point back to a still older period when the ceremony of lighting a new fire in spring, perhaps at the vernal equinox, was common to many peoples of the Mediterranean area. We may conjecture that wherever such a ceremony has been observed, it originally marked the beginning of a new year, as it did in ancient Rome and Ireland, and as it still does in the Soudanese kingdom of Wadai and among the Swahilis of Eastern Africa.

¹ Festus, ed. Müller, p. 106, s.v. "Ignis." Plutarch describes a method of rekindling the sacred fire by means of the sun's rays reflected from a hollow mirror (*Numa*, 9); but he seems to be referring to a Greek rather than to the Roman custom. The rule of celibacy imposed on the Vestals, whose duty it was to relight the sacred fire as well as to preserve it when it was once made, is perhaps explained by a superstition current among French peasants that if a girl can blow up a smouldering candle into a flame she is a virgin, but that if she fails to do so, she is not.

See Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 27; B. Souché, *Croyances, Présages, et Traditions diverses*, p. 12. At least it seems more likely that the rule sprang from a superstition of this sort than from a simple calculation of expediency, as I formerly suggested (*Journal of Philology*, xiv. (1885), p. 158.)

² J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 514 sq. Tlachtga has been identified with an ancient *rath* or fort on the Hill of Ward near Athboy in Meath.

³ W. R. S. Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 254 sq.

The essentially pagan character of the Easter fire festival appears plainly both from the mode in which it is celebrated by the peasants and from the superstitious beliefs which they associate with it. All over Northern and Central Germany, from Altmark and Anhalt on the east, through Brunswick, Hanover, Oldenburg, the Harz district, and Hesse to Westphalia, the Easter bonfires still blaze simultaneously on the hill-tops. As many as forty may sometimes be counted within sight at once. Long before Easter the young people have been busy collecting firewood ; every farmer contributes, and tar-barrels, petroleum cases, and so forth go to swell the pile. Neighbouring villages vie with each other as to which shall send up the greatest blaze. The fires are always kindled, year after year, on the same hill, which accordingly often takes the name of Easter Mountain. It is a fine spectacle to watch from some eminence the bonfires flaring up one after another on the neighbouring heights. As far as their light reaches, so far, in the belief of the peasants, the fields will be fruitful, and the houses on which they shine will be safe from conflagration or sickness. At Volkmarsen, in Hesse, the people used to observe which way the wind blew the flames, and then they sowed flax seed in that direction, confident that it would grow well. Brands taken from the bonfires preserve houses from being struck by lightning ; and the ashes increase the fertility of the fields, protect them from mice, and mixed with the drinking-water of cattle make the animals thrive and ensure them against plague. As the flames die down, young and old leap over them, and cattle are sometimes driven through the smouldering embers. In some places tar-barrels or wheels wrapt in straw used to be set on fire, and then sent rolling down the hillside. In others the boys light torches and wisps of straw at the bonfires and rush about brandishing them in their hands. Where the people are divided between Protestantism and Catholicism, as in Hildesheim, it has been observed that among Protestants the Easter bonfires are generally left to the boys, while in Catholic districts they are cared for by grown-up persons, and here the whole population will gather round the blazing pile and join in singing

choral hymns, which echo far and wide in the stillness of night.¹

In Münsterland, these Easter fires are always kindled upon certain definite hills, which are hence known as Easter or Paschal Mountains. The whole community assembles about the fire. Fathers of families form an inner circle round it. An outer circle is composed of the young men and maidens, who, singing Easter hymns, march round and round the fire in the direction of the sun, till the blaze dies down. Then the girls jump over the fire in a line, one after the other, each supported by two young men who hold her hands and run beside her. When the fire has burned out, the whole assembly marches in solemn procession to the church, singing hymns. They go thrice round the church, and then break up. In the twilight boys with blazing bundles of straw run over the fields to make them fruitful.² At Delmenhorst, in Oldenburg, it used to be the custom to cut down two trees, plant them in the ground side by side, and pile twelve tar-barrels, one above the other, against each of the trees. Brushwood was then heaped about the trees, and on the evening of Easter Saturday the boys, after rushing about with blazing bean-poles in their hands, set fire to the whole. At the end of the ceremony the urchins tried to blacken each other and the clothes of grown-up people.³ In Schaumburg, the Easter bonfires may be seen blazing on all the mountains around for miles. They are made with a tar-barrel fastened to a pine-tree, which is wrapt in straw. The people dance singing round them.⁴

¹ Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 373; A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. 134 sqq.; *id.*, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 312 sq.; Temme, *Volkssagen der Altmark*, p. 75 sq.; K. Lynker, *Deutsche Sagen und Sitten in hessischen Gauen*, p. 240; H. Pröhle, *Harzbilder*, p. 63; R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde* (Brunswick, 1896), pp. 240-242; W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche* (Marburg, 1888), pp. 44-47; F. A. Reimann, *Deutsche Volksfeste* (Weimar, 1839), p. 37; "Sitten und Gebräuche in Duder-

stadt," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, ii. (1855), p. 107; K. Seifart, *Sagen, Märchen, Schwänke und Gebräuche aus Stadt und Stift Hildesheim*² (Hildesheim, 1889), pp. 177, 180; O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 76.

² Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 43 sq., § 313; *B.K.* p. 505 sq.

³ Strackerjan, *op. cit.* ii. 43, § 313.

⁴ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 512; *B.K.* p. 506 sq.

In the Harz Mountains the fire is commonly made by piling brushwood about a tree and setting it on fire. At Osterode, every one tries to snatch a brand from the bonfire and runs about with it; the better it burns, the more lucky it is. In Grund there are torch-races.¹ In the Altmark the Easter bonfires are composed of tar-barrels, bee-hives, and so forth piled round a pole. The young folk dance round the fire; and when it has died out, the old folk come and collect the ashes, which they preserve as a remedy for the ailments of bees. It is also believed that as far as the blaze of the bonfire is visible, the corn will grow well throughout the year, and no conflagration will break out.² At Braunröde, in the Harz Mountains, it was the custom to burn squirrels in the Easter bonfire.³ In the Altmark, bones were burned in it.⁴

Further south the Easter fires are, or used to be, lit in many districts of Bavaria. Thus on Easter Monday in some parts of Middle Franken the schoolboys collect all the old worn-out besoms they can lay hands on, and march with them in a long procession to a neighbouring height. When the first chime of the evening bell comes up from the dale they set fire to the brooms, and run along the ridges waving them, so that seen from below the hills appear to be crested with a twinkling and moving chain of fire.⁵ In some parts of Upper Bavaria at Easter burning arrows or discs of wood were shot from hill-tops high into the air, as in the Swabian custom already described. At Oberau, instead of the discs, an old cart-wheel was sometimes wrapt in straw, ignited, and sent rolling and blazing down the mountain. The lads who hurled the discs received painted Easter eggs from the girls.⁶ Near Forchheim, in Upper Franken, a straw-man called the Judas used to be burned in the churchyards on

¹ H. Pöhle, *Harz-bilder*, p. 63; *id.*, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 79; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 373; *B.K.* p. 507.

² Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 312 sq.; *B.K.* p. 507.

³ *B.K.* p. 508. Compare J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutsch. Myth.* i. 74;

Grimm, *Deutsche Myth.* i. 512. The two latter writers only state that before the fires were kindled it was customary to hunt squirrels in the woods.

⁴ Kuhn, *l.c.*; *B.K.* p. 508.

⁵ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 956.

⁶ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 211 sq., § 233; *B.K.* p. 507 sq.

Easter Saturday. The whole village contributed wood to the pyre on which he perished, and the charred sticks were afterwards kept and planted in the fields on Walpurgis Day (the first of May) to preserve the wheat from blight and mildew.¹ About a hundred years ago the custom at Althenneberg, in Upper Bavaria, used to be as follows. On the afternoon of Easter Saturday the lads collected wood, which they piled in a cornfield, while in the middle of the pile they set up a tall wooden cross all swathed in straw. After the evening service they lighted their lanterns at the consecrated candle in the church, and ran with them at full speed to the pyre, each striving to get there first. The first to arrive set fire to the heap. No woman or girl might come near the bonfire, but they were allowed to watch it from a distance. As the flames rose the men and lads rejoiced and made merry, shouting, "We are burning the Judas!" Two of them had to watch the glowing embers the whole night long, lest people should come and steal them. Next morning at sunrise they carefully collected the ashes, and threw them into the running water of the Rötten brook. The man who had been the first to reach the pyre and to kindle it was rewarded on Easter Sunday by the women, who gave him coloured eggs at the church door. Well-to-do women gave him two; poorer women gave him only one. The object of the whole ceremony was to keep off the hail. About a century ago the Judas fire, as it was called, was put down by the police.² At Giggerhausen and Aufkirchen, two other villages of Upper Bavaria, a similar custom prevailed, yet with some interesting differences. Here the ceremony, which took place between nine and ten at night on Easter Saturday, was called "burning the Easter Man." On a height about a mile from the village the young fellows set up a tall cross enveloped in straw, so that it looked like a man with his arms stretched out. This was the Easter Man. No lad under eighteen years of age might take part in the ceremony. One of them stationed himself beside the Easter Man, holding in his hand a consecrated taper which he had brought from the church and

¹ Bavaria, *Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 357.

² Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 212 sq., § 236.

lighted. The rest stood at equal intervals in a great circle round the cross. At a given signal they raced thrice round the circle, and then at a second signal ran straight at the cross and at the lad with the lighted taper beside it; the one who reached the goal first had the right of setting fire to the Easter Man. Great was the jubilation while he was burning. When he had been consumed in the flames, three lads were chosen from among the rest, and each of the three drew a circle on the ground with a stick thrice round the ashes. Then they all left the spot. On Easter Monday the villagers gathered the ashes and strewed them on their fields; also they planted in the fields palm-branches which had been consecrated on Palm Sunday, and sticks which had been charred and hallowed on Good Friday, all for the purpose of protecting their fields against showers of hail. The custom of burning an Easter Man made of straw on Easter Saturday was observed also at Abensberg, in Lower Bavaria.¹ In some parts of Swabia the Easter fires might not be kindled with iron or steel or flint, but only by the friction of wood.²

Thus the custom of the Easter fires appears to have prevailed all over Central Germany from north to south. We find it also in Holland, where the fires were kindled on the highest eminences, and the people danced round them and leaped through the flames or over the glowing embers. Here too, as so often in Germany, the materials for the bonfire were collected by the young folk from door to door.³ In many parts of Sweden firearms are, as at Athens, discharged in all directions on Easter eve, and huge bonfires are lighted on hills and eminences. Some people think that the intention is to keep off the Troll and other evil spirits who are especially active at this season.⁴ When the afternoon service on Good Friday is over, German children in Bohemia drive Judas out of the church by running about the sacred edifice and even the streets shaking rattles and

¹ Panzer, *op. cit.* ii. p. 78 sq., §§ 114, 115. The customs observed at these places and at Althenneberg are described together by Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 505.

² Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus*

Schwaben, ii. p. 82, § 106; *B.K.* p. 508.

³ J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. 75 sq.; *B.K.* p. 506.

⁴ L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 228.

clappers. Next day, on Easter Saturday, the remains of the holy oil are burnt before the church door in a fire which must be kindled with flint and steel. This fire is called "the burning of Judas," but in spite of its evil name a beneficent virtue is ascribed to it, for the people scuffle for the cinders, which they put in the roofs of their houses as a safeguard against fire and lightning.¹

In the central Highlands of Scotland bonfires, known as the Beltane fires, were formerly kindled with great ceremony on the first of May, and the traces of human sacrifices at them were particularly clear and unequivocal. The custom of lighting the bonfires lasted in various places far into the eighteenth century, and the descriptions of the ceremony by writers of that period present such a curious and interesting picture of primitive heathendom surviving in our own country that I will reproduce them in the words of their authors. The fullest of the descriptions, so far as I know, is the one bequeathed to us by John Ramsay, laird of Ochtertyre, near Stirling, the patron of Burns and the friend of Sir Walter Scott. From his voluminous manuscripts, written in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a selection has been published in recent years. The following account of Beltane is extracted from a chapter dealing with Highland superstitions. Ramsay says: "But the most considerable of the Druidical festivals is that of Beltane, or May-day, which was lately observed in some parts of the Highlands with extraordinary ceremonies. Of later years it is chiefly attended to by young people, persons advanced in years considering it as inconsistent with their gravity to give it any countenance. Yet a number of circumstances relative to it may be collected from tradition, or the conversation of very old people, who witnessed this feast in their youth, when the ancient rites were better observed.

"This festive is called in Gaelic *Beal-tene*—i.e. the fire

¹ W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, pp. 321, 397 sq. In Wagstadt, a town of Austrian Silesia, a boy in a red waistcoat used to play the part of Judas on the Wednesday before Good Friday. He was chased from before the church door by the other school children, who

pursued him through the streets with shouts and the noise of rattles and clappers till they reached a certain suburb, where they always caught him and beat because he had betrayed the Redeemer. See A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus österreichisch Schlesien*, ii. 282 sq.

of Bel. . . . Like the other public worship of the Druids, the Beltane feast seems to have been performed on hills or eminences. They thought it degrading to him whose temple is the universe to suppose that he would dwell in any house made with hands. Their sacrifices were therefore offered in the open air, frequently upon the tops of hills, where they were presented with the grandest views of nature, and were nearest the seat of warmth and order. And, according to tradition, such was the manner of celebrating this festival in the Highlands within the last hundred years. But since the decline of superstition, it has been celebrated by the people of each hamlet on some hill or rising ground around which their cattle were pasturing. Thither the young folks repaired in the morning and cut a trench, on the summit of which a seat of turf was formed for the company. And in the middle a pile of wood or other fuel was placed, which of old they kindled with *tein-eigin*—i.e. forced fire or *need fire*. Although, for many years past, they have been contented with common fire, yet we shall now describe the process, because it will hereafter appear that recourse is still had to the *tein-eigin* upon extraordinary emergencies.

"The night before, all the fires in the country were carefully extinguished, and next morning the materials for exciting this sacred fire were prepared. The most primitive method seems to be that which was used in the islands of Skye, Mull, and Tiree. A well-seasoned plank of oak was procured, in the midst of which a hole was bored. A wimble of the same timber was then applied, the end of which they fitted to the hole. But in some parts of the mainland the machinery was different. They used a frame of green wood, of a square form, in the centre of which was an axle-tree. In some places three times three persons, in others three times nine, were required for turning round by turns the axle-tree or wimble. If any of them had been guilty of murder, adultery, theft, or other atrocious crime, it was imagined either that the fire would not kindle, or that it would be devoid of its usual virtue. So soon as any sparks were emitted by means of the violent friction, they applied a species of agaric which grows on old birch-trees, and is very combustible. This fire had the appearance of

being immediately derived from heaven, and manifold were the virtues ascribed to it. They esteemed it a preservative against witchcraft, and a sovereign remedy against malignant diseases, both in the human species and in cattle; and by it the strongest poisons were supposed to have their nature changed.

"After kindling the bonfire with the *tein-eigin* the company prepared their victuals. And as soon as they had finished their meal they amused themselves a while in singing and dancing round the fire. Towards the close of the entertainment, the person who officiated as master of the feast produced a large cake baked with eggs and scalloped round the edge, called *am bonnach beal-tine*—i.e. the Beltane cake. It was divided into a number of pieces, and distributed in great form to the company. There was one particular piece which whoever got was called *cailleach bealtine*—i.e. the Beltane *carline*, a term of great reproach. Upon his being known, part of the company laid hold of him and made a show of putting him into the fire; but the majority interposing, he was rescued. And in some places they laid him flat on the ground, making as if they would quarter him. Afterwards, he was pelted with egg-shells, and retained the odious appellation during the whole year. And while the feast was fresh in people's memory, they affected to speak of the *cailleach beal-tine* as dead.

"This festival was longest observed in the interior Highlands, for towards the west coast the traces of it are faintest. In Glenorchy and Lorne, a large cake is made on that day, which they consume in the house; and in Mull it has a large hole in the middle, through which each of the cows in the fold is milked. In Tiree it is of a triangular form. The more elderly people remember when this festival was celebrated without-doors with some solemnity in both islands. There are at present no vestiges of it in Skye or the Long Island, the inhabitants of which have substituted the *bonnach Micheil* or St. Michael's cake. It is made at Michaelmas with milk and oatmeal, and some eggs are sprinkled on its surface. Part of it is sent to the neighbours.

"It is probable that at the original Beltane festival there

were two fires kindled near one another. When any person is in a critical dilemma, pressed on each side by unsurmountable difficulties, the Highlanders have a proverb, *The e' eada anda theine bealtuin*—*i.e.* he is between the two Beltane fires. There are in several parts small round hills, which, it is like, owe their present names to such solemn uses. One of the highest and most central in Icolmkil is called *Cnoch-nan-ainneal*—*i.e.* the hill of the fires. There is another of the same name near the kirk of Balquhiddy; and at Killin there is a round green eminence which seems to have been raised by art. It is called *Tom-nan-ainneal*—*i.e.* the eminence of the fires. Around it there are the remains of a circular wall about two feet high. On the top a stone stands upon end. According to the tradition of the inhabitants, it was a place of Druidical worship; and it was afterwards pitched on as the most venerable spot for holding courts of justice for the country of Breadalbane. The earth of this eminence is still thought to be possessed of some healing virtue, for when cattle are observed to be diseased, some of it is sent for, which is rubbed on the part affected."¹ The same writer tells us that on Beltane day the people of Strathspey used to make a hoop of rowan-tree, through which they forced all the sheep and lambs to pass both evening and morning,² doubtless as a precaution against witchcraft.

In the parish of Callander, a beautiful district of western Perthshire, the Beltane custom was still in vogue towards the end of the eighteenth century. It has been described as follows by the parish minister of the time: "Upon the first day of May, which is called *Beltan*, or *Bal-tein* day, all the boys in a township or hamlet, meet in the moors. They cut a table in the green sod, of a round figure, by casting a trench in the ground, of such circumference as to hold the whole company. They kindle a fire and dress a repast of eggs and milk in the consistence of a custard. They knead a cake of oatmeal, which is toasted at the embers against a

¹ *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, from the MSS. of John Ramsay, Esq., of Ochertyre, edited by A. Allardyce (Edinburgh and London, 1888), ii. 439-445. The

etymology of the word Beltane is uncertain; the popular derivation of the first part from the Phœnician Bael is absurd.

² *Op. cit.* ii. 254.

stone. After the custard is eaten up, they divide the cake into so many portions, as similar as possible to one another in size and shape, as there are persons in the company. They daub one of these portions all over with charcoal, until it be perfectly black. They put all the bits of cake into a bonnet. Every one, blindfold, draws out a portion. He who holds the bonnet is entitled to the last bit. Whoever draws the black bit is the *devoted* person, who is to be sacrificed to *Baal*, whose favour they mean to implore, in rendering the year productive of the sustenance of man and beast. There is little doubt of these inhuman sacrifices having been once offered in this country, as well as in the east, although they now pass from the act of sacrificing, and only compel the *devoted* person to leap three times through the flames; with which the ceremonies of this festival are closed.”¹

Thomas Pennant, who travelled in Perthshire in the year 1769, tells us that “on the 1st of May, the herdsmen of every village hold their Bel-tien, a rural sacrifice. They cut a square trench on the ground, leaving the turf in the middle; on that they make a fire of wood, on which they dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal and milk; and bring besides the ingredients of the caudle, plenty of beer and whisky; for each of the company must contribute something. The rites begin with spilling some of the caudle on the ground, by way of libation: on that every one takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised nine square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herds, or to some particular animal, the real destroyer of them: each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob, and flinging it over his shoulders, says, ‘This I give to thee, preserve thou my horses; this to thee, preserve thou my sheep; and so on.’ After that, they use the same ceremony to the noxious animals: ‘This I give to thee, O fox! spare thou my lambs; this to thee, O hooded crow! this to thee, O eagle!’ When the ceremony is over, they dine on the caudle; and after the feast is finished, what is left is hid by two persons deputed for that purpose; but on the next

¹ J. Robertson, in Sinclair’s *Statistical Account of Scotland*, xi. 620 sq.

Sunday they re-assemble, and finish the reliques of the first entertainment."¹

Another writer of the same period has described the Beltane festival as it was held in the parish of Logierait in Perthshire. He says: "On the 1st of May, O.S., a festival called *Beltan* is annually held here. It is chiefly celebrated by the cow-herds, who assemble by scores in the fields, to dress a dinner for themselves, of boiled milk and eggs. These dishes they eat with a sort of cakes baked for the occasion, and having small lumps in the form of *nipples*, raised all over the surface."² In this last account no mention is made of bonfires, but they were probably lighted, for a contemporary writer informs us that in the parish of Kirkmichael, which adjoins the parish of Logierait on the east, the custom of lighting a fire in the fields and baking a consecrated cake on the first of May was not quite obsolete in his time.³ We may conjecture that the cake with knobs was formerly used for the purpose of determining who should be the "Beltane carline" or victim doomed to the flames. A trace of this custom survived, perhaps, in the custom of baking oatmeal cakes of a special kind and rolling them down hill about noon on the first of May; for it was thought that the person whose cake broke as it rolled would die or be unfortunate within the year. These cakes, or bannocks as we call them in Scotland, were baked in the usual way, but they were washed over with a thin batter composed of whipped egg, milk or cream, and a little oatmeal. This custom appears to have prevailed at or near Kingussie in Inverness-shire. At Achterneed, near Strathpeffer in Ross-shire, the Beltane bannocks were called *tcharnican* or hand-cakes, because they were kneaded entirely in the hand, and not on a board or table like common cakes; and after being baked they might not be placed anywhere but in the hands of the children who were to eat them.⁴ In the north-east of Scotland the Beltane fires were

¹ Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 49.

² Th. Bisset, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, v. 84.

³ A. Stewart, in Sinclair's *Statistical*

Account of Scotland, xv. 517 note.

⁴ W. Gregor, "Notes on Beltane cakes," *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 2 sq. The Beltane cakes with the nine knobs on them remind us of the cake with twelve knobs which the Athenians offered

still kindled in the latter half of the eighteenth century ; the herdsmen of several farms used to gather dry wood, kindle it, and dance three times "southways" about the burning pile.¹ But in this region, according to a later authority, the Beltane fires were lit not on the first but on the second of May, Old Style. They were called bone-fires. The people believed that on that evening and night the witches were abroad and busy casting spells on cattle and stealing cows' milk. To counteract their machinations, pieces of rowan tree and woodbine, but especially of rowan-tree, were placed over the doors of the cow-houses, and fires were kindled by every farmer and cottar. Old thatch, straw, furze, or broom was piled in a heap and set on fire a little after sunset. While some of the bystanders kept tossing the blazing mass, others hoisted portions of it on pitchforks or poles and ran hither and thither, holding them as high as they could. Meantime the young people danced round the fire or ran through the smoke shouting, "Fire! blaze and burn the witches; fire! fire! burn the witches." In some districts a large round cake of oat or barley meal was rolled through the ashes. When all the fuel was consumed, the people scattered the ashes far and wide, and till the night grew quite dark continued to run through them, crying, "Fire! burn the witches."²

The Beltane fires appear to have been kindled also in Ireland, for Cormac, "or somebody in his name, says that Beltane, May-day, was so called from the 'lucky fire,' or the 'two fires' which the Druids of Erin used to make on that day with great incantations; and cattle, he adds, used to be brought to those fires, or driven between them, as a safeguard against the diseases of the year."³ The first of May is a great popular festival in the more midland and southern parts of Sweden. On the eve of the festival, huge bonfires,

to Saturn (see above, p. 148). The King of the Bean on Twelfth Night was chosen by means of a cake, which was broken in as many pieces as there were persons present, and the person who received the piece containing a bean or a coin became king. See J. Boemus, *Mores, leges et ritus omnium gentium* (Lyons, 1541), p. 222; Brand,

Popular Antiquities, i. 22 sq.

¹ Shaw, in Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," printed in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 136.

² W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 167.

³ J. Rhys, "Manx folk-lore and superstitions," *Folk-lore*, ii. (1891), p. 303 sq.

which should be lighted by striking two flints together, blaze on all the hills and knolls. Every large hamlet has its own fire, round which the young people dance in a ring. The old folk notice whether the flames incline to the north or to the south. In the former case, the spring will be cold and backward ; in the latter, it will be mild and genial.¹ Similarly, in Bohemia, on the eve of May-day, young people kindle fires on hills and eminences, at crossways, and in pastures, and dance round them. They leap over the glowing embers or even through the flames. The ceremony is called "burning the witches."² We have to remember that the eve of May-day is the notorious Walpurgis Night, when the witches are everywhere speeding unseen through the air on their hellish errands. On this witching night children, in Voigtland also light bonfires on the heights and leap over them. Moreover, they wave burning brooms or toss them into the air. So far as the light of the bonfire reaches, so far will a blessing rest on the fields. The kindling of the fires on Walpurgis Night is called "driving away the witches."³

But the season at which these fire-festivals have been most generally held all over Europe is the summer solstice, that is Midsummer Eve (the twenty-third of June) or Midsummer Day (the twenty-fourth of June). A faint tinge of Christianity has been given to them by naming Midsummer Day after St. John the Baptist, but we cannot doubt that the celebration dates from a time long before the beginning of our era. The summer solstice, or Midsummer Day, is the

¹ L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 233 sq.

² Br. Jelínek, "Materialien zur Vorgeschichte und Volkskunde Böhmens," *Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxi. (1891), p. 13.

³ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch, Aberglauben, Sagen und andre alte Ueberlieferungen im Voigtlande*, p. 373. The superstitions relating to witches at this season are legion. For instance, in Saxony and Thuringen any one who labours under a physical blemish can easily rid himself of it by transferring it to the witches on Walpurgis Night. He has only to go out

to a cross-road, make three crosses on the blemish, and say, "In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Thus the blemish, whatever it may be, is left behind him at the cross-road, and when the witches sweep by on their way to the Brocken, they must take it with them, and it sticks to them henceforth. Moreover, three crosses chalked up on the doors of houses and cattle-stalls on Walpurgis Night will effectually prevent any of the infernal crew from entering and doing harm to man or beast. See E. Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Sachsen und Thüringen*, p. 148 sq. ; *Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie*, p. 116.

great turning-point in the sun's career, when, after climbing higher and higher day by day in the sky, the luminary stops and thenceforth retraces his steps down the heavenly road. Such a moment could not but be regarded with anxiety by primitive man so soon as he began to observe and ponder the courses of the great lights across the celestial vault; and having still to learn his own powerlessness in face of the vast cyclic changes of nature, he fancied that he might help the sun in his seeming decline—might prop his failing steps and rekindle the sinking flame of the red lamp in his feeble hand. In some such thoughts as these the midsummer festivals of our European peasantry may be supposed to have taken their rise. Whatever their origin, they have prevailed all over this quarter of the globe, from Ireland on the west to Russia on the east, and from Sweden on the north to Spain and Greece on the south. According to a mediæval writer, the three great features of the midsummer celebration were the bonfires, the procession with torches round the fields, and the custom of rolling a wheel. He tells us that boys burned bones and filth of various kinds to make a foul smoke, and that the smoke drove away certain noxious dragons which at this time, excited by the summer heat, copulated in the air and poisoned the wells and rivers by dropping their seed into them; and he explains the custom of trundling a wheel to mean that the sun, having now reached the highest point in the ecliptic, begins thenceforward to descend.¹ From his description, which still holds good, we see that the main features of the midsummer fire-festival resemble those which we have found to characterise the vernal festivals of fire. The similarity of the two sets of ceremonies will plainly appear from the following examples.

A writer of the sixteenth century informs us that in almost every village and town of Germany public bonfires were kindled on the Eve of St. John, and young and old, of

¹ Kemble, *The Saxons in England*, i. 361 *sq.*, quoting "an ancient MS. written in England, and now in the Harleian Collection, No. 2345, fol. 50." The passage is quoted in part by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 298 *sq.*, and by Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 509. The explanation of the Mid-

summer fires as a means of dispersing the aerial dragons is given also by John Belet, a writer of the twelfth century. See J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 387. Compare Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 516.

both sexes, gathered about them and passed the time in dancing and singing. People on this occasion wore chaplets of mugwort and vervain, and they looked at the fire through bunches of larkspur which they held in their hands, believing that this would preserve their eyes in a healthy state throughout the year. As each departed, he threw the mugwort and vervain into the fire, saying, "May all my ill-luck depart and be burnt up with these."¹ At Lower Konz, a village prettily situated on a hillside overlooking the Moselle, in the midst of a wood of walnut-trees and fruit-trees, the midsummer festival used to be celebrated as follows. A quantity of straw was collected on the top of the steep Stromberg Hill. Every inhabitant, or at least every householder, had to contribute his share of straw to the pile; a recusant was looked at askance, and if in the course of the year he happened to break a leg or lose a child, there was not a gossip in the village but knew the reason why. At nightfall the whole male population, men and boys, mustered on the top of the hill; the women and girls were not allowed to join them, but had to take up their position at a certain spring half-way down the slope. On the summit stood a huge wheel completely encased in some of the straw which had been jointly contributed by the villagers; the rest of the straw was made into torches. From each side of the wheel the axle-tree projected about three feet, thus furnishing handles to the lads who were to guide it in its descent. The mayor of the neighbouring town of Sierck, who always received a basket of cherries for his services, gave the signal; a lighted torch was applied to the wheel, and as it burst into flame, two young fellows, strong-limbed and swift of foot, seized the handles and began running with it down the slope. A great shout went up. Every man and boy waved a blazing torch in the air, and took care to keep it alight so long as the wheel was trundling down the hill. Some of them followed the fiery wheel, and watched with amusement the shifts to which its guides were put in steering it round the hollows and over the broken ground on the mountain-side. The great object of the young men who guided the

¹ J. Boemus, *Mores, leges et ritus omnium gentium* (Lyons, 1541), p. 225 sq.

wheel was to plunge it blazing into the water of the Moselle; but they rarely succeeded in their efforts, for the vineyards which cover the greater part of the declivity impeded their progress, and the wheel was often burned out before it reached the river. As it rolled past the women and girls at the spring, they raised cries of joy which were answered by the men on the top of the mountain; and the shouts were echoed by the inhabitants of neighbouring villages who watched the spectacle from their hills on the opposite bank of the Moselle. If the fiery wheel was successfully conveyed to the bank of the river and extinguished in the water, the people looked for an abundant vintage that year, and the inhabitants of Konz had the right to exact a waggon-load of white wine from the surrounding vineyards. On the other hand, they believed that, if they neglected to perform the ceremony, the cattle would be attacked by giddiness and convulsions and would dance in their stalls.¹

Down at least to some forty years ago the midsummer fires used to blaze all over Upper Bavaria. They were kindled especially on the mountains, but also far and wide in the lowlands, and we are told that in the darkness and stillness of night the moving groups, lit up by the flickering glow of the flames, presented an impressive spectacle. In some places the people showed their sense of the sanctity of the fires by using for fuel the trees past which the gay procession had defiled, with fluttering banners, on Corpus Christi Day. In others the children collected the firewood from door to door on the eve of the festival, singing their request for fuel at every house in doggerel verse. Cattle were driven through the fire to cure the sick animals and to guard such as were sound against plague and harm of every kind throughout the year. Many a householder on that day put out the fire on the domestic hearth and rekindled it by means of a brand taken from the midsummer bonfire.

¹ Tessier, "Sur la fête annuelle de la roue flamboyante de la Saint-Jean, à Basse-Kontz, arrondissement de Thionville," *Mémoires et dissertations publiés par la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, v. (1823), pp. 379-393. Tessier witnessed the ceremony, 23rd June 1822 (not 1823, as is sometimes stated). His

account has been reproduced more or less fully by Grimm (*Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 515 sq.), Mannhardt (*Baumkultus*, p. 510 sq.), and H. Gaidoz ("Le dieu gaulois du Soleil et le symbolisme de la Roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. Série, iv. (1884), p. 24 sq.).

The people judged of the height to which the flax would grow in the year by the height to which the flames of the bonfire rose; and whoever leaped over the burning pile was sure not to suffer from backache in reaping the corn at harvest. But it was especially the practice for lovers to spring over the fire hand in hand, and the way in which each couple made the leap was the subject of many a jest and many a superstition. In one district the custom of kindling the bonfires was combined with that of lighting wooden discs and hurling them in the air after the manner which prevails at some of the spring festivals.¹ In many parts of Bavaria it was believed that the flax would grow as high as the young people leaped over the fire.² In others the old folk used to plant three charred sticks from the bonfire in the fields, believing that this would make the flax grow tall.³ Elsewhere an extinguished brand was put in the roof of the house to protect it against fire. In the towns about Würzburg the bonfires used to be kindled in the market-places, and the young people who jumped over them wore garlands of flowers, especially of mugwort and vervain, and carried sprigs of larkspur in their hands. They thought that such as looked at the fire holding a bit of larkspur before their face would be troubled by no malady of the eyes throughout the year.⁴ Further, it was customary at Würzburg, in the sixteenth century, for the bishop's followers to throw burning discs of wood into the air from a mountain which overhangs the town. The discs were discharged by means of flexible rods, and in their flight through the darkness presented the appearance of fiery dragons.⁵

In the valley of the Lech, which divides Upper Bavaria from Swabia, the midsummer customs and beliefs are, or used to be, very similar. Bonfires are kindled on the

¹ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, i. 373 sq. As to the burning discs at the spring festivals, see above, p. 243.

² *Op. cit.* ii. 260 sq., iii. 936, 956, iv. 2. p. 360.

³ *Op. cit.* ii. 260.

⁴ *Op. cit.* iv. 1. p. 242. We have seen (p. 267) that in the sixteenth

century these customs and beliefs were common in Germany. It is also a German superstition that a house which contains a brand from the midsummer bonfire will not be struck by lightning (J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 217, § 185).

⁵ J. Boemus, *Mores, leges et ritus omnium gentium* (Lyons, 1541), p. 226.

mountains on Midsummer Day; and besides the bonfire a tall beam, thickly wrapt in straw and surmounted by a cross-piece, is burned in many places. Round this cross as it burns the lads dance with loud shouts; and when the flames have subsided, the young people leap over the fire in pairs, a young man and a young woman together. If they escape unsmirched, the man will not suffer from fever, and the girl will not become a mother within the year. Further, it is believed that the flax will grow that year as high as they leap over the fire; and that if a charred billet be taken from the fire and stuck in a flax-field it will promote the growth of the flax.¹ Similarly in Swabia, lads and lasses, hand in hand, leap over the midsummer bonfire, praying that the hemp may grow three ells high, and they set fire to wheels of straw and send them rolling down the hill.² At Deffingen, in Swabia, as they sprang over the midsummer bonfire they cried out, "Flax, flax! may the flax this year grow seven ells high!"³ Near Offenburg, in the Black Forest, on Midsummer Day the village boys used to collect faggots and straw on some steep and conspicuous height, and they spent some time in making circular wooden discs by slicing the trunk of a pine-tree across. When darkness had fallen, they kindled the bonfire, and then, as it blazed up, they lighted the discs at it, and, after swinging them to and fro at the end of a stout and supple hazel-wand, they hurled them one after the other, whizzing and flaming, into the air, where they described great arcs of fire, to fall at length, like shooting-stars, at the foot of the mountain.⁴ In many parts of Elsass and Lorraine the midsummer fires still blaze annually.⁵ At Speicher in the Eifel, a district which lies on the middle Rhine, to the west of Coblenz, a bonfire used to be kindled in front of the village on St. John's Day, and all the young people had to jump over it.

¹ Leoprechting, *Aus dem Lechrain*, p. 181 sqq.; *B.K.* p. 510.

² Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. p. 96 sqq., § 128, p. 103 sq., § 129; *id.*, *Aus Schwaben*, ii. 116-120; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 423 sqq.; *B.K.* p. 510.

³ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen*

Mythologie, i. p. 215 sq., § 242; ii. 549.

⁴ H. Gaidoz, "Le dieu Gaulois du Soleil et le symbolisme de la Roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. Série, iv. (1884), p. 29 sq.

⁵ "Die Sommerwendfeier im St. Amarinthale," *Der Urquell*, N.F., i. (1897), p. 181 sqq.

Those who failed to do so were not allowed to join the rest in begging for eggs from house to house. Where no eggs were given, they drove a wedge into the keyhole of the door. On this day children in the Eifel used also to gather flowers in the fields, weave them into garlands, and throw the garlands on the roofs or hang them on the doors of the houses. So long as the flowers remained there, they were supposed to guard the house from fire and lightning.¹ In the southern Harz district and in Thüringen the midsummer or St. John's fires used to be commonly lighted some fifty years ago, and the custom has probably not died out. At Edersleben, near Sangerhausen, a high pole was planted in the ground and a tar-barrel was hung from it by a chain which reached to the ground. The barrel was then set on fire and swung round the pole amid shouts of joy.²

According to one account, German tradition required that the midsummer fire should be lighted, not from a common hearth, but by the friction of two sorts of wood, namely oak and fir.³ In some old farm-houses of the Surenthal and Winenthal a couple of holes or a whole row of them may be seen facing each other in the door-posts of the barn or stable. Sometimes the holes are smooth and round; sometimes they are deeply burnt and blackened. The explanation of them is this. About midsummer, but especially on Midsummer Day, two such holes are bored opposite each other, into which the extremities of a strong pole are fixed. The holes are then stuffed with tow steeped in resin and oil; a rope is looped round the pole, and two young men, who must be brothers or must have the same baptismal name, and must be of the same age, pull the ends of the rope backwards and forwards so as to make the pole revolve rapidly, till smoke and sparks issue from the two holes in the door-posts. The sparks are caught and blown up with tinder, and this is the new and pure fire, the appearance of which is greeted with cries of joy. Heaps of combustible materials are now ignited with the new fire, and

¹ Schmitz, *Sitten und Sagen, Lieder, Sprichwörter und Räthsel des Eifler Volkes*, i. 40 sq. According to one writer, the garlands are composed of St. John's wort (Montanus, *Die*

deutschen Volksfeste, p. 33).

² Kuhn and Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 390.

³ Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste*, p. 33 sq.

blazing bundles are placed on boards and sent floating down the brook. The boys light torches at the new fire and run to fumigate the pastures. This is believed to drive away all the demons and witches that molest the cattle. Finally the torches are thrown in a heap on the meadow and allowed to burn out. On their way back the boys strew the ashes over the fields, which is supposed to make them fertile. If a farmer has taken possession of a new house, or if servants have changed masters, the boys fumigate the new abode and are rewarded by the farmer with a supper.¹

In Austria the midsummer customs and superstitions resemble those of Germany. Thus in some parts of the Tyrol bonfires are kindled and burning discs hurled into the air.² At Reutte, in the Tyrol, people believed that the flax would grow as high as they leaped over the midsummer bonfire, and they took pieces of charred wood from the fire and stuck them in their flax-fields the same night, leaving them there till the flax harvest had been got in.³ In Lower Austria fires are lit in the fields, commonly in front of a cross, and the people dance and sing round them and throw flowers into the flames. Before each handful of flowers is tossed into the fire, a set speech is made; then the dance is resumed and the dancers sing in chorus the last words of the speech. At evening bonfires are kindled on the heights, and the boys caper round them, brandishing lighted torches drenched in pitch. Whoever jumps thrice across the fire will not suffer from fever within the year. Cart-wheels are often smeared with pitch, ignited, and sent rolling and blazing down the hillsides.⁴ All over Bohemia bonfires still burn on Midsommer Eve. Sometimes the young men fell a tall straight fir in the woods and set it up on a height, where the girls deck it with nosegays, wreaths of leaves, and red ribbons. Then brushwood is piled about it, and at nightfall the whole is set on fire. While the flames break out, the young men climb the tree and fetch down the wreaths which the girls had placed on it. After that, lads

¹ Rochholz, *Deutscher Glaube und Brauch*, ii. 144 sqq.

² Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² ii. p. 159, § 1354.

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³ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 210, § 231.

⁴ Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 307 sq.

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and lasses stand on opposite sides of the fire and look at one another through the wreaths to see whether they will be true to each other and marry within the year. Also the girls throw the wreaths across the flames to the men, and woe to the awkward swain who fails to catch the wreath thrown him by his sweetheart. When the blaze has died down, each couple takes hands, and leaps thrice across the fire. The singed wreaths are taken home and carefully preserved throughout the year. During thunderstorms a bit of the wreath is burned on the hearth with a prayer; some of it is given to kine that are sick or calving, and some of it serves to fumigate house and cattle-stall, that man and beast may keep hale and well. Sometimes an old cart-wheel is smeared with resin, ignited, and sent rolling down the hill. Often the boys collect all the worn-out besoms they can get hold of, dip them in pitch, and having set them on fire wave them about or throw them high into the air. Or they rush down the hillside in troops, brandishing the flaming brooms and shouting, only however to return to the bonfire on the summit when the brooms have burnt out. The stumps of the brooms and embers from the fire are preserved and stuck in cabbage gardens to protect the cabbages from caterpillars and gnats. Some people insert charred sticks and ashes from the bonfire in their sown fields and meadows, in their gardens and the roofs of their houses, as a talisman against foul weather; or they fancy that the ashes placed in the roof will prevent any fire from breaking out in the house. In some districts they crown or gird themselves with mugwort while the midsummer fire is burning, for this is supposed to be a protection against ghosts, witches, and sickness; in particular, a wreath of mugwort is a sure preventive of sore eyes. Sometimes the girls look at the bonfires through garlands of wild flowers, praying the fire to strengthen their eyes and eyelids. She who does this thrice will have no sore eyes all that year. In some parts of Bohemia they used to drive the cows through the midsummer fire to guard them against witchcraft.¹ In Austrian Silesia the custom also prevails of

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. *des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 308; 519; Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche* Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender*

lighting great bonfires on hilltops on Midsummer Eve, and here too the boys swing blazing besoms or hurl them high in the air, while they shout and leap and dance wildly. Next morning every door is decked with flowers and birchen saplings.¹ In the district of Cracow, especially towards the Carpathian Mountains, great fires are kindled by the peasants in the fields or on the heights at nightfall on Midsummer Eve, which among them goes by the name of Kupalo's Night. The fire must be kindled by the friction of two sticks. The young people dance round or leap over it; and a band of sturdy fellows run a race with lighted torches, the winner being rewarded with a peacock's feather, which he keeps throughout the year as a distinction. Cattle also are driven round the fire in the belief that this is a charm against pestilence and disease of every sort.²

The name of Kupalo's Night, applied in this part of Galicia to Midsummer Eve, reminds us that we have now passed from German to Slavonic ground; even in Bohemia the midsummer celebration is common to Slavs and Germans. We have already seen that in Russia the summer solstice or Eve of St. John is celebrated by young men and maidens, who jump over a bonfire in couples carrying a straw effigy of Kupalo in their arms.³ In some parts of Russia the young folk wear garlands of flowers and girdles of holy herbs when they spring through the smoke or flames; and sometimes they drive the cattle also through the fire in order to protect the animals against wizards and witches, who are then ravenous after milk.⁴ In Little Russia a stake is driven into the ground on St. John's Night, wrapt in straw, and set on fire. As the flames rise the peasant women throw birchen boughs into them, saying, "May my flax be as tall as this bough!"⁵ In

aus *Bohmen*, pp. 306-311; Br. Jellinek, "Materialien zur Vorgeschichte und Volkskunde Böhmens," *Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxi. (1891), p. 13.

¹ A. Peter, *Volksthümliches aus oesterreichisch Schlesien*, ii. 287. Compare Philo vom Walde, *Schlesien in Sage und Brauch*, p. 124.

² Th. Vernalcken, *Mythen und*

Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich, p. 308 sq.

³ Vol. ii. p. 105. Compare M. Kowalewsky, in *Folk-lore*, i. (1890), p. 467.

⁴ Grimm, *D.M.* i. 519; Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, pp. 240, 391.

⁵ Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 240.

Ruthenia the bonfires are lighted by a flame procured by the friction of wood. While the elders of the party are engaged in thus "churning" the fire, the rest maintain a respectful silence; but when the flame bursts from the wood, they break forth into joyous songs. As soon as the bonfires are kindled, the young people take hands and leap in pairs through the smoke, if not through the flames; and after that the cattle in their turn are driven through the fire.¹ In many parts of Prussia and Lithuania great fires are kindled on Midsummer Eve. All the heights are ablaze with them, as far as the eye can see. The fires are supposed to be a protection against witchcraft, thunder, hail, and cattle disease, especially if next morning the cattle are driven over the places where the fires burned. Above all, the bonfires ensure the farmer against the arts of witches, who try to steal the milk from his cows by charms and spells. That is why next morning you may see the young fellows who lit the bonfire going from house to house and receiving jugfuls of milk. And for the same reason they stick burs and mugwort on the gate or the hedge through which the cows go to pasture, because that is supposed to be a preservative against witchcraft.² In Masuren, a district of Eastern Prussia inhabited by a branch of the Polish family, it is the custom on the evening of Midsummer Day to put out all the fires in the village. Then an oaken stake is driven into the ground and a wheel is fixed on it as on an axle. This wheel the villagers, working by relays, cause to revolve with great rapidity till fire is produced by friction. Every one takes home a lighted brand from the new fire and with it rekindles the fire on the domestic hearth.³ Among the Letts who inhabit the Baltic provinces of Russia the most joyful festival of the year is held on Midsummer Day. The people drink and dance and sing and adorn themselves and their houses with flowers and branches. Chopped boughs of fir are strewn about the rooms, and leaves are stuck in the roofs. In every farm-yard a birch tree is set up, and every person of the name of John who

¹ Ralston, *l.c.*

Westpreussens, p. 277.

² Tettau und Temme, *Die Volks-sagen Ostpreussens, Lithauens und*

³ Töppen, *Aberglauben aus Masu-ren*,² p. 71.

enters the farm that day must break off a twig from the tree and hang up on its branches in return a small present for the family. When the serene twilight of the summer night has veiled the landscape, bonfires gleam on all the hills, and wild shouts of "Ligho! Ligho!" echo from the woods and fields. In Riga the day is a festival of flowers. From all the neighbourhood the peasants stream into the city laden with flowers and garlands. A market of flowers is held in an open square and on the chief bridge over the river; here wreaths of immortelles, which grow wild in the meadows and woods, are sold in great profusion and deck the houses of Riga for long afterwards. Roses too are now at the prime of their beauty, and masses of them adorn the flower-stalls. Till far into the night gay crowds parade the streets to music or float on the river in gondolas decked with flowers.¹ In Servia on Midsummer Eve herdsmen light torches of birch bark and march round the sheepfolds and cattle-stalls; then they climb the hills and there allow the torches to burn out.²

Among the Magyars in Hungary the midsummer fire-festival is marked by the same features that meet us in so many parts of Europe. On Midsummer Eve in many places it is customary to kindle bonfires on heights and to leap over them, and from the manner in which the young people leap the bystanders predict whether they will marry soon. At Nograd-Ludany the young men and women go out, each carrying a truss of straw, to a meadow, where they pile the straw in seven or twelve heaps and set it on fire. Then they go round the fire singing, and hold a bunch of iron-wort in the smoke, while they say, "No boil on my body, no sprain in my foot!" This holding of the flowers over the flames is regarded, we are told, as equally important with the practice of walking through the fire barefoot and stamping it out. On this day also many Hungarian swineherds make fire by rotating a wheel round a wooden axle wrapt in hemp, and through the fire thus made they drive their pigs to preserve them from sickness.³ In villages on

¹ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, i. 178-180, ii. 24 sq. Ligho was an old heathen deity, whose joyous festival used to fall in spring.

² Grimm, *D.M.* i. 519.

³ H. von Wilslocki, *Folksglaube und religiöser Brauch der Magyar* (Münster i. W., 1893), pp. 40-44.

the Danube, where the population is a cross between Magyar and German, the young men and maidens repair to the high banks of the river on Midsummer Eve; and while the girls post themselves low down the slope, the lads on the height above set fire to little wooden wheels and, after swinging them to and fro at the end of a wand, send them whirling through the air to fall into the Danube. As he does so, each lad sings out the name of his sweetheart, and she listens well pleased down below.¹ The Esthonians of Russia, who, like the Magyars, belong to the great Turanian family of mankind, also celebrate the summer solstice in the usual way. On the Eve of St. John all the people of a farm, a village, or an estate, walk solemnly in procession, the girls decked with flowers, the men with leaves and carrying bundles of straw under their arms. The lads carry lighted torches or flaming hoops steeped in tar at the top of long poles. Thus they go singing to the cattle-sheds, the granaries, and so forth, and afterwards march thrice round the dwelling-house. Finally, preceded by the shrill music of the bagpipes and shawms, they repair to a neighbouring hill, where the materials of a bonfire have been collected. Tar-barrels filled with combustibles are hung on poles, or the trunk of a felled tree has been set up with a great mass of juniper piled about it in the form of a pyramid. When a light has been set to the pile, old and young gather about it and pass the time merrily with song and music till break of day. Every one who comes brings fresh fuel for the fire, and they say, "Now we all gather together, where St. John's fire burns. He who comes not to St. John's fire will have his barley full of thistles, and his oats full of weeds." Three logs are thrown into the fire with special ceremony; in throwing the first they say, "Gold of pleasure (a plant with yellow flowers) into the fire!" in throwing the second they say, "Weeds to the unploughed land!" but in throwing the third they cry, "Flax on my field!" The fire is said to keep the witches from the cattle.² According to others, it

¹ A. von Ipolyi, "Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie aus Ungarn," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 270 sq.

² J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 268 sq.; F. J. Wiedemann, *Aus dem innern und äussern Leben der Ehsten*, p. 362.

ensures that for the whole year the milk shall be "as pure as silver and as the stars in the sky, and the butter as yellow as the sun and the fire and the gold."¹ In the Esthonian island of Oesel, while they throw fuel into the midsummer fire, they call out, "Weeds to the fire, flax to the field," or they fling three billets into the flames, saying, "Flax grow long!" And they take charred sticks from the bonfire home with them and keep them to make the cattle thrive. In some parts of the island the bonfire is formed by piling brushwood and other combustibles round a tree, at the top of which a flag flies. Whoever succeeds in knocking down the flag with a pole before it begins to burn will have good luck. Formerly the festivities lasted till daybreak, and ended in scenes of debauchery which looked doubly hideous by the growing light of a summer morning.² Still farther north, among a people of the same Turanian stock, we learn from an eye-witness that Midsummer Night used to witness a sort of witches' sabbath on the top of every hill in Finland. The bonfire was made by setting up four tall birches in a square and piling the intermediate space with fuel. Round the roaring flames the people sang and drank and pranced in the usual way.³ Farther east, in the valley of the Volga, the Cheremiss celebrate about midsummer a festival which Haxthausen regarded as identical with the midsummer ceremonies of the rest of Europe. A sacred tree in the forest, generally a tall and solitary oak, marks the scene of the solemnity. All the males assemble there, but no woman may be present. A heathen priest lights seven fires in a row from north-west to south-east; cattle are sacrificed and their blood poured in the fires, each of which is dedicated to a separate deity. Afterwards the holy tree is illumined by lighted candles placed on its branches; the people fall on their knees and with faces bowed to the earth pray that God would be

The word which I have translated "weeds" is *Thaugras*. Apparently it is the name of a special kind of weed.

¹ Fr. Kreutzwald und H. Neus, *Mythische und Magische Lieder der Ehsten* (St. Petersburg, 1854), p. 62.

² Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesell-*

schaft zu Dorpat, vii. (1872), p. 62 sq. Wiedemann also observes that the sports in which young couples engage in the woods on this evening are not always decorous (*Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehsten*, p. 362).

³ J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 447 sq.

pleased to bless them, their children, their cattle, and their bees, grant them success in trade, in travel, and in the chase, enable them to pay the Czar's taxes, and so forth.¹

When we pass from the east to the west of Europe we still find the summer solstice celebrated with rites of the same general character. About half a century ago the custom of lighting bonfires at midsummer prevailed so commonly in France that there was hardly a town or a village, we are told, where they were not kindled.² In Brittany the custom is kept up to this day. Thus in Lower Brittany every town and every village still lights its *tantad* or bonfire on St. John's Night. When the flames have died down, the whole assembly kneels round about the bonfire and an old man prays aloud. Then they all rise and march thrice round the fire; at the third turn they stop and every one picks up a pebble and throws it on the burning pile. After that they disperse.³ At Quimper, and in the district of Léon, chairs used to be placed round the midsummer bonfire, that the souls of the dead might sit on them and warm themselves at the blaze.⁴ At Brest on this day thousands of people used to assemble on the ramparts towards evening and brandish lighted torches, which they swung in circles or flung by hundreds into the air. The closing of the town gates put an end to the spectacle, and the lights might be seen dispersing in all directions like wandering will-o'-the-wisps.⁵ In Upper Brittany the materials for the midsummer bonfires, which generally consist of bundles of furze and heath, are furnished by voluntary contributions, and piled on the tops of hills round poles, each of which is surmounted by a nosegay or a crown. This nosegay or crown is generally provided by a man named John or a woman named Jean,

¹ J. G. Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des russischen Reichs* (St. Petersburg, 1776), p. 36; von Haxthausen, *Studien über die innere Zustände*, etc., *Russlands*, i. 446 sqq.

² De Nore, *Contumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, p. 19.

³ A. Le Braz, *La Légende de la Mort en Basse-Bretagne* (Paris, 1893), p. 279. For an explanation of the

custom of throwing a pebble into the fire, see below, p. 296.

⁴ J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 217, § 185; A. Breuil, "Du Culte de St. Jean Baptiste," *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie*, viii. (Amiens, 1845), p. 189 sq.

⁵ E. Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 216.

and it is always a John or a Jean who puts a light to the bonfire. While the fire is blazing the people dance and sing round it, and when the flames have subsided they leap over the glowing embers. Charred sticks from the bonfire are thrown into wells to improve the water, and they are also taken home as a protection against thunder.¹ To make them thoroughly effective, however, against thunder and lightning you should keep them near your bed, between a bit of a Twelfth Night cake and a sprig of boxwood which has been blessed on Palm Sunday.² Flowers from the nosegay or crown which overhung the fire are accounted charms against disease and pain, both bodily and spiritual; hence girls hang them at their breast by a thread of scarlet wool. In many parishes of Brittany the priest used to go in procession with the crucifix and kindle the bonfire with his own hands; and farmers were wont to drive their flocks and herds through the fire in order to preserve them from sickness till midsummer of the following year. Also it was believed that every girl who danced round nine of the bonfires would marry within the year.³ In Normandy the midsummer fires have now almost disappeared, at least in the district known as the Bocage, but they used to shine on every hill. They were commonly made by piling brushwood, broom, and ferns about a tall tree, which was decorated with a crown of moss and sometimes with flowers. While they burned, people danced and sang round them, and young folk leaped over the flames or the glowing ashes. In the valley of the Orne the custom was to kindle the bonfire just at the moment when the sun was about to dip below the horizon; and the peasants drove their cattle through the fires to protect them against witchcraft, especially against the spells of witches and wizards who attempted to steal the milk and butter.⁴

At Jumièges in Normandy, down to about sixty years ago, the midsummer festival was marked by certain singular features which bore the stamp of a very high antiquity.

¹ Sébillot, *Contumes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, pp. 192-195. In Upper Brittany these bonfires are called *vieux* or *raviers*.

² De Nore, *op. cit.* p. 219; Cortet, *op. cit.* p. 216.

³ De Nore, *Contumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, pp. 219, 228, 231; Cortet, *op. cit.* p. 215 sq.

⁴ J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 219-224.

Every year, on the twenty-third of June, the Eve of St. John, the Brotherhood of the Green Wolf chose a new chief or master, who had always to be taken from the hamlet of Conihout. On being elected the new head of the brotherhood took the title of the Green Wolf, and assumed a peculiar costume consisting of a long green mantle and a very tall green hat of a conical shape and without a brim. Thus arrayed he stalked solemnly at the head of the brothers, chanting the hymn of St. John, the crucifix and holy banner leading the way, to a place called Chouquet. Here the procession was met by the priest, precentors, and choir, who conducted the brotherhood to the parish church. After hearing mass the company adjourned to the house of the Green Wolf, where a simple repast, such as is required by the church on fast-days, was served up to them. Then they danced before the door till it was time to light the bonfire. Night being come, the fire was kindled to the sound of hand-bells by a young man and a young woman, both decked with flowers. As the flames rose, the *Te Deum* was sung, and a villager thundered out a parody in the Norman dialect of the hymn *ut queant laxis*. Meantime the Green Wolf and his brothers, with their hoods down on their shoulders and holding each other by the hand, ran round the fire after the man who had been chosen to be the Green Wolf of the following year. Though only the first and the last man of the chain had a hand free, their business was to surround and seize thrice the future Green Wolf, who in his efforts to escape belaboured the brothers with a long wand which he carried. When at last they succeeded in catching him they carried him to the burning pile and made as if they would throw him on it. This ceremony over, they returned to the house of the Green Wolf, where a supper, still of the most meagre fare, was set before them. Up till midnight a sort of religious solemnity prevailed. No unbecoming word might fall from the lips of any of the company, and a censor, armed with a hand-bell, was appointed to mark and punish instantly any infraction of the rule. But at the stroke of twelve all this was changed. Constraint gave way to licence; pious hymns were replaced by Bacchanalian ditties, and the shrill quavering notes of the

village fiddle hardly rose above the roar of voices that went up from the merry brotherhood of the Green Wolf. Next day, the twenty-fourth of June or Midsummer Day, was celebrated by the same personages with the same noisy gaiety. One of the ceremonies consisted in parading, to the sound of musketry, an enormous loaf of consecrated bread, which, rising in tiers, was surmounted by a pyramid of verdure adorned with ribbons. After that the holy hand-bells, deposited on the step of the altar, were entrusted as insignia of office to the man who was to be the Green Wolf next year.¹

In the canton of Breteuil in Picardy the priest used to kindle the midsummer bonfire, and the people marched thrice round it in procession. Some of them took ashes of the fire home with them to protect the houses against lightning.² In the department of the Ardennes every one used to contribute his faggot to the midsummer bonfire, and the clergy marched at the head of the procession to kindle it. Failure to light the fires would, in the popular belief, have exposed the fields to the greatest danger. At Revin the young folk, besides dancing round the fire to the strains of the village fiddler, threw garlands of flowers across the flames to each other.³ In the Vosges it is still customary to kindle bonfires upon the hill-tops on Midsummer Eve; the people believe that the fires help to preserve the fruits of the earth and ensure good crops.⁴ In the Jura Mountains the midsummer bonfires went by the name of *bâ* or *beau*. They were lit on the most conspicuous points of the landscape.⁵ Near St. Jean, in the Jura, it appears that at this season young people still repair to the cross-roads and heights, and there wave burning torches so as to present the appearance

¹ This description is quoted by Madame Clément (*Histoire des fêtes civiles et religieuses*, etc., de la Belgique Méridionale (Avesnes, 1846), pp. 394-396); F. Liebrecht (*Gervasius von Tilbury*, p. 209 sq.); and W. Mannhardt (*Antike Wald und Feldkulte*, p. 323 sqq.) from the *Magasin pittoresque*, Paris, viii. (1840), p. 287 sqq. A slightly condensed account is given, from the same source, by Cortet (*Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 221 sq.).

² Bazin, quoted by Breuil, in *Mémoires de la Société d'Antiquaires de Picardie*, viii. (1845), p. 191 note.

³ A. Meyrac, *Traditions, Coutumes, Légendes, et Contes des Ardennes*, p. 88 sq.

⁴ L. F. Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes Vosges*, p. 186.

⁵ D. Monnier, *Traditions populaires comparées*, p. 207 sqq.; Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 217 sq.

of fiery wheels in the darkness.¹ In Berry, a district of Central France, the midsummer fire was lit on the Eve of St. John and went by the name of the *jônée*, *joannée*, or *jouannée*. Every family according to its means contributed faggots, which were piled round a pole on the highest place in the neighbourhood. In the hamlets the office of kindling the fire devolved on the oldest man, but in the towns it was the priest or the mayor who discharged the duty. Here, as in Brittany, people supposed that a girl who had danced round nine of the midsummer bonfires would marry within the year. To leap several times over the fire was regarded as a sort of purification which kept off sickness and brought good luck to the leaper. Hence the nimble youth bounded through the smoke and flames, and when the fire had somewhat abated parents jumped across it with their children in their arms in order that the little ones might also partake of its beneficent influence. Embers from the extinct bonfire were taken home, and after being dipped in holy water were kept as a talisman against all kinds of misfortune, but especially against lightning.² The same virtue was ascribed to the ashes and charred sticks of the midsummer bonfire in Périgord, where everybody contributed his share of fuel to the pile and the whole was crowned with flowers, especially with roses and lilies.³

Bonfires were lit in almost all the hamlets of Poitou on the Eve of St. John. People marched round them thrice, carrying a branch of walnut in their hand. Shepherdesses and children passed sprigs of mullein (*verbascum*) and nuts across the flames; the nuts were supposed to cure toothache, and the mullein to protect the cattle from sickness and sorcery. When the fire died down people took some of the ashes home with them, either to keep them in the house as a preservative against thunder or to scatter them on the fields for the purpose of destroying corn-cockles and darnel. Stones were also placed round the fire, and it was believed that the first to lift one of

¹ Bérenger-Féraud, *Reminiscences populaires de la Provence*, p. 142.

² Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 78 sqq. The writer adopts the absurd derivation of *jônée* from Janus. Need-

less to say that our old friend Baal, Bel, or Belus figures prominently in this and many other accounts of the European fire-festivals.

³ De Nore, *op. cit.* p. 150.

these stones next morning would find under it the hair of St. John.¹ In Poitou also it used to be customary on the Eve of St. John to trundle a blazing wheel wrapt in straw over the fields to fertilise them.² This last custom is said to be now extinct,³ but it is still usual in Poitou to kindle fires on this day at cross-roads or on the heights. The oldest or youngest person present sets a light to the pile, which consists of broom, gorse, and heath. A bright and crackling blaze shoots up, but soon dies down, and over it the young folk leap. They also throw stones into it, picking the stone according to the size of the turnips that they wish to have that year. It is said that "the good Virgin" comes and sits on the prettiest of the stones, and next morning they see there her beautiful golden tresses. At Lussac, in Poitou, the lighting of the midsummer bonfire is still an affair of some ceremony. A pyramid of faggots is piled round a tree or tall pole on the ground where the fair is held; the priest goes in procession to the spot and kindles the pile. When prayers have been said and the clergy have withdrawn, the people continue to march round the fire, telling their beads, but it is not till the flames have begun to die down that the youth jump over them. A brand from the midsummer bonfire is supposed to be a preservative against thunder.⁴

In the department of Vienne the bonfire was kindled by the oldest man, and before the dance round the flames began it was the custom to pass across them a great bunch of mullein (*bouillon blanc*) and a branch of walnut, which next morning before sunrise were fastened over the door of the chief cattle-shed.⁵ A similar custom prevailed in the neighbouring department of Deux-Sèvres; but here it was the priest who kindled the bonfire, and old men used to put embers of the fire

¹ Guerry, "Sur les usages et traditions du Poitou," *Mémoires et Dissertations publiées par la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, viii. (1829), p. 451 sq.

² Brevil, in *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie*, viii. (1845), p. 206; Cortet, *op. cit.* p. 216; Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 83; Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 225.

³ H. Gaidoz, "Le dieu gaulois du soleil et le symbolisme de la roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. Série, iv. (1884), p. 26, note 3.

⁴ L. Pineau, *Le Folk-lore du Poitou* (Paris, 1892), p. 499 sq. In Périgord the ashes of the midsummer bonfire are searched for the hair of the Virgin (Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 219).

⁵ De Nore, *op. cit.* p. 149 sq.; Cortet, *op. cit.* p. 218 sq.

in their wooden shoes as a preservative against many evils.¹ In some towns and villages of Saintonge and Aunis, provinces of Western France now mostly comprised in the department of Charente Inférieure, the fires of St. John are still kindled on Midsummer Eve, but the custom is neither so common nor carried out with so much pomp and ceremony as formerly. Great quantities of wood used to be piled on an open space round about a huge post or a tree stripped of its leaves and branches. Every one took care to contribute a faggot to the pile, and the whole population marched to the spot in procession with the crucifix at their head and the priest bringing up the rear. The squire, or other person of high degree, put the torch to the pyre, and the priest blessed it. In the southern and eastern parts of Saintonge children and cattle were passed through the smoke of the bonfires to preserve them from contagious diseases, and when the fire had gone out the people scuffled for the charred fragments of the great post, which they regarded as talismans against thunder. Next morning, on Midsummer Day, every shepherdess in the neighbourhood was up very early, for the first to drive her sheep over the blackened cinders and ashes of the great bonfire was sure to have the best flock all that year. Where the shepherds shrunk from driving their flocks through the smoke and flames of the bonfire they contented themselves with marking the hinder-quarters of the animals with a broom which had been blackened in the ashes.²

In the mountainous part of Comminges, a province of Southern France, now comprised in the department of Haute Garonne, the midsummer fire is made by splitting open the trunk of a tall tree, stuffing the crevice with shavings, and igniting the whole. A garland of flowers is fastened to the top of the tree, and at the moment when the fire is lighted the man who was last married has to climb up a ladder and bring the flowers down. In the flat parts of the same district the materials of the midsummer bonfires consist of fuel piled in the usual way; but

¹ Dupin, "Notice sur quelques fêtes et divertissemens populaires du département des Deux-Sèvres," *Mémoires et Dissertations publiés par la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, iv. (1823), p. 110.

² J. L. M. Noguès, *Les mœurs d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Aunis* (Saintes, 1891), pp. 72, 178 sq.

they must be put together by men who have been married since the last midsummer festival, and each of these benedicts is obliged to lay a wreath of flowers on the top of the pile.¹ In some districts of the French Pyrenees it is deemed necessary to leap nine times over the midsummer fire if you would be assured of prosperity.² In Provence the midsummer fires are still popular. Children go from door to door begging for fuel, and they are seldom sent empty away. Formerly the priest, the mayor, and the aldermen used to walk in procession to the bonfire, and even deigned to light it; after which the assembly marched thrice round the burning pile, while the church bells pealed and rockets fizzed and sputtered in the air. Dancing began later, and the bystanders threw water on each other. At Ciotat, while the fire was blazing, the young people plunged into the sea and splashed each other vigorously. At Vitrolles they bathed in a pond in order that they might not suffer from fever during the year, and at Saintes-Maries they watered the horses to protect them from the itch.³ At Aix a nominal king, chosen from among the youth for his skill in shooting at a popinjay, presided over the festival. He selected his own officers, and escorted by a brilliant train marched to the bonfire, kindled it, and was the first to dance round it. Next day he distributed largesse to his followers. His reign lasted a year, during which he enjoyed certain privileges. He was allowed to attend the mass celebrated by the commander of the Knights of St. John on St. John's Day; the right of hunting was accorded to him; and soldiers might not be quartered in his house. At Marseilles also on this day one of the guilds chose a king of the *badache* or double axe; but it does not appear that he kindled the bonfire, which is said to have been lighted with great ceremony by

¹ H. Gaidoz, "Le dieu soleil et le symbolisme de la roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. Série, iv. (1884), p. 30.

² De Nore, *op. cit.* p. 127.

³ De Nore, *Contumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, p. 19 sq.; Bérenger-Féraud, *Reminiscences populaires de la Provence*, pp. 135-141. As to the custom at Toulon, see Poncy, quoted by Breuil, *Mémoires*

de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie, viii. (1845), p. 190 note. The custom of drenching people on this occasion with water used to prevail in Toulon, Marseilles, and other towns in the south of France. The water was squirted from syringes, poured on the heads of passers-by from windows, and so on. See Breuil, *op. cit.* p. 237 sq.

the préfet and other authorities.¹ In Belgium people jump over the midsummer bonfires as a preventive of colic, and they keep the ashes at home to hinder fire from breaking out.²

The custom of lighting bonfires at midsummer has been observed in many parts of our own country. In the North of England these fires used to be lit in the open streets. Young and old gathered round them, and while the young leaped over the fires and engaged in games, their elders looked on and probably remembered with regret the days when they used to foot it as nimbly. Sometimes the fires were kindled on the tops of high hills. The people also carried firebrands about the fields.³ We are told that "on midsummer's eve, reckoned according to the old style, it was formerly the custom of the inhabitants, young and old, not only of Whalton, but of most of the adjacent villages, to collect a large cartload of whins and other combustible materials, which was dragged by them with great rejoicing (a fiddler being seated on the top of the cart) into the village and erected into a pile. The people from the surrounding country assembled towards evening, when it was set on fire; and while the young danced around it, the elders looked on smoking their pipes and drinking their beer until it was consumed." In a law-suit, which was tried in 1878, the rector of Whalton gave evidence of the constant use of the village green for the ceremony since 1843. "The bonfire," he said, "was lighted a little to the north-east of the well at Whalton, and partly on the footpath, and people danced round it and jumped through it. That was never interrupted." The Rev. G. R. Hall, writing in 1879, says that "the fire festivals or bonfires of the summer solstice at the Old Midsummer until recently were commemorated on Christenburg Crags and elsewhere by leaping through and dancing round the fires, as those who have been present have told me."⁴ In Herefordshire and Somersetshire the

¹ De Nore, *op. cit.* p. 20 sq.; Cortet, *op. cit.* pp. 218, 219 sq.

² E. Monseur, *Folklore Wallon*, p. 130, §§ 1783, 1786, 1787.

³ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 300 sq., 318, cp. pp. 305, 306, 308 sq.; B.K. p. 512.

⁴ *The Denham Tracts*, edited by J. Hardy, ii. 342 sq., quoting *Archæologia Aetiana*, N.S., viii. 73, and the *Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club*, vi. 242 sq. Whalton is a village of Northumberland, not far from Morpeth.

peasants used to make fires in the fields on Midsummer Eve "to bless the apples."¹ In Devonshire the custom of leaping over the midsummer fires was also observed.² In Cornwall bonfires were lit on Midsummer Eve and the people marched round them with burning torches, which they also carried from village to village. On Whiteborough, a large tumulus near Launceston, a huge bonfire used to be kindled on Midsummer Eve; a tall summer pole with a large bush at the top was fixed in the centre of the bonfire.³ The Cornish fires at this season appear to have been commonly lit on high and conspicuous hills, such as Tregonan, Godolphin, Carnwarth, and Cambrae. When it grew dusk on Midsummer Eve, old men would hobble away to some height whence they counted the fires and drew a presage from their number.⁴ At Darowen in Wales small bonfires were kindled on Midsummer Eve.⁵ On the same day people in the Isle of Man were wont to light fires to the windward of every field, so that the smoke might pass over the corn; and they folded their cattle and carried blazing furze or gorse round them several times.⁶

In Ireland, "on the Eves of St. John Baptist and St. Peter, they always have in every town a bonfire late in the evening, and carry about bundles of reeds fast tied and fired; these being dry, will last long, and flame better than a torch, and be a pleasing divertive prospect to the distant beholder; a stranger would go near to imagine the whole country was on fire."⁷ Another writer says of the South of Ireland: "On Midsummer's Eve, every eminence, near which is a habitation, blazes with bonfires; and round these they carry numerous torches, shouting and dancing."⁸ An author who described Ireland in the first quarter of the eighteenth century says: "On the vigil of St. John the Baptist's nativity,

¹ Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, p. 96, cp. *id.*, p. 26.

² Brand, *op. cit.* i. 311.

³ *Id.*, i. 303, 318, 319; Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 315.

⁴ J. Napier, *Folk-lore, or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, p. 173, quoting W. Botreill's *Traditions*

and *Hearthside Stories of West Cornwall*.

⁵ Brand, *op. cit.* i. 318.

⁶ J. Train, *Account of the Isle of Man*, ii. 120.

⁷ Brand, i. 303, quoting Sir Henry Piers's *Description of Westmeath*.

⁸ Brand, *l.c.*, quoting the author of the *Survey of the South of Ireland*.

they make bonfires, and run along the streets and fields with wisps of straw blazing on long poles to purify the air, which they think infectious by believing all the devils, spirits, ghosts, and hobgoblins fly abroad this night to hurt mankind."¹ Another writer states that he witnessed the festival in Ireland in 1782: "Exactly at midnight the fires began to appear, and taking advantage of going up to the leads of the house, which had a widely extended view, I saw on a radius of thirty miles, all around, the fires burning on every eminence which the country afforded. I had a further satisfaction in learning, from undoubted authority, that the people *danced round the fires*, and at the close went through these fires, and made their sons and daughters, together with their cattle, pass through the fire; and the whole was conducted with religious solemnity."² That the custom prevailed in full force as late as 1867 appears from a notice in a newspaper of that date, which runs thus: "The old pagan fire-worship still survives in Ireland, though nominally in honour of St. John. On Sunday night bonfires were observed throughout nearly every county in the province of Leinster. In Kilkenny fires blazed on every hillside at intervals of about a mile. There were very many in the Queen's County, also in Kildare and Wexford. The effect in the rich sunset appeared to travellers very grand. The people assemble and dance round the fires, the children jump through the flames, and in former times live coals were carried into the corn-fields to prevent blight."³ In County Leitrim on St. John's Eve, which is called Bonfire Day, fires are still lighted after dusk on the hills and along the sides of the roads.⁴ All over Kerry the same thing continues to be done, though not so commonly as of old. Small fires were made across the road, and to drive through them brought luck for the year. Cattle were also driven through the fires. On Lettermore Island, in South Connemara, some of the ashes from the midsummer bonfire are thrown on the fields to fertilise

¹ Brand, i. 305, quoting the author of the *Comical Pilgrim's Pilgrimage into Ireland*.

² Brand, i. 304, quoting *The Gentleman's Magazine*, February 1795, p. 124.

³ Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 321 sq., quoting the *Liverpool Mercury* of June 29th, 1867.

⁴ L. L. Duncan, "Further Notes from County Leitrim," *Folk-lore*, v. (1894), p. 193.

them.¹ One writer informs us that in Munster and Connaught a bone must always be burned in the fire; for otherwise the people believe that the fire will bring no luck. He adds that in many places sterile beasts and human beings are passed through the fire, and that as a boy he himself jumped through the fire "for luck."²

Lady Wilde's account of the midsummer festival in Ireland is picturesque and probably correct in substance, although she does not cite her authorities. As it contains some interesting features which are not noticed by the other writers on Ireland whom I have consulted, I will quote the greater part of it in full. "In ancient times," she says, "the sacred fires were lighted with great ceremony on Midsummer Eve, and on that night all the people of the adjacent country kept watch on the western promontory of Howth, and the moment the first flash was seen from that spot the fact of ignition was announced with wild cries and cheers repeated from village to village, when all the local fires began to blaze, and Ireland was circled by a cordon of flame rising up from every hill. Then the dance and song began round every fire, and the wild hurrahs filled the air with the most frantic revelry. Many of these ancient customs are still continued, and the fires are still lighted on St. John's Eve on every hill in Ireland. When the fire has burned down to a red glow the young men strip to the waist and leap over or through the flames; this is done backwards and forwards several times, and he who braves the greatest blaze is considered the victor over the powers of evil, and is greeted with tremendous applause. When the fire burns still lower, the young girls leap the flame, and those who leap clean over three times back and forward will be certain of a speedy marriage and good luck in after-life, with many children. The married women then walk through the lines of the burning embers; and when the fire is nearly burnt and trampled down, the yearling cattle are driven through the hot ashes, and their back is singed with a lighted hazel twig. These rods are kept safely afterwards, being considered of

¹ A. C. Haddon, "A batch of Irish Folk-lore," *Folk-lore*, iv. (1893), pp. 351, 359.

² G. H. Kinahan, "Notes on Irish Folk-lore," *Folk-lore Record*, iv. (1881), p. 97.

immense power to drive the cattle to and fro from the watering-places. As the fire diminishes the shouting grows fainter, and the song and the dance commence; while professional story-tellers narrate tales of fairy-land, or of the good old times long ago, when the kings and princes of Ireland dwelt amongst their own people, and there was food to eat and wine to drink for all comers to the feast at the king's house. When the crowd at length separate, every one carries home a brand from the fire, and great virtue is attached to the lighted *brone* which is safely carried to the house without breaking or falling to the ground. Many contests also arise amongst the young men; for whoever enters his house first with the sacred fire brings the good luck of the year with him."¹

In Scotland the traces of midsummer fires are few. We are told by a writer of the eighteenth century that "the midsummer-even fire, a relict of Druidism," was kindled in some parts of the county of Perth.² Another writer of the same period, describing what he calls the Druidical festivals of the Highlanders, says that "the least considerable of them is that of midsummer. In the Highlands of Perthshire there are some vestiges of it. The cowherd goes three times round the fold, according to the course of the sun, with a burning torch in his hand. They imagined this rite had a tendency to purify their herds and flocks, and to prevent diseases. At their return the landlady makes an entertainment for the cowherd and his associates."³ In the north-east of Scotland, down to the latter half of the eighteenth century, farmers used to go round their lands with burning torches about the middle of June.⁴ At the village of Tarbolton in Ayrshire a bonfire has been annually kindled from time immemorial on the evening of the first Monday after the eleventh of June. A noted cattle-market was formerly held at the fair on the following day. The bonfire

¹ Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland*, ii. 214 sq.

² A. Johnstone, describing the parish of Monquhitter in Perthshire, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, .xxi. 145.

³ John Ramsay of Ochertyre, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by A. Allardyce, ii. 436.

⁴ Shaw, in Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," printed in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 136.

is still lit at the gloaming by the lads and lasses of the village on a high mound or hillock just outside of the village. Fuel for it is collected by the lads from door to door. The youth dance round the fire and leap over the fringes of it. The many cattle-drovers who used to assemble for the fair were wont to gather round the blazing pile, smoke their pipes, and listen to the young folk singing in chorus on the hillock. Afterwards they wrapped themselves in their plaids and slept round the bonfire, which was intended to last all night.¹ Moiresin states that on St. Peter's Day, which is the twenty-ninth of June, the Scotch ran about with lighted torches on mountains and high grounds,² and towards the end of the eighteenth century the parish minister of Loudoun, a district of Ayrshire whose "bonny woods and braes" have been sung by Burns, wrote that "the custom still remains amongst the herds and young people to kindle fires in the high grounds, in honour of Beltan. *Beltan*, which in Gaelic signifies *Baal*, or *Bel's-fire*, was antiently the time of this solemnity. It is now kept on St. Peter's day."³

Far more important in Scotland, however, than the midsummer fires were the bonfires kindled on Allhallow Even or Hallowe'en, that is on the thirty-first of October, the day preceding All Saints or Allhallows' Day. As these Hallowe'en bonfires belong to the class of celebrations with which we are here concerned, we may interrupt our examination of the midsummer festivals to notice them. Like the Beltane fires on the first of May, they seem to have prevailed most commonly in the Perthshire Highlands. On the evening of Hallowe'en "the young people of every hamlet assembled upon some eminence near the houses. There they made a bonfire of ferns or other fuel, cut the same day, which from the feast was called *Samh-nag* or *Savnag*, a fire of rest

¹ From notes kindly furnished to me by the Rev. J. C. Higgins, parish minister of Tarbolton. Mr. Higgins adds that he knows of no superstition connected with the fire, and no tradition of its origin. I visited the scene of the bonfire in 1898, but, as Pausanias says (viii. 41. 6) in similar circumstances, "I did not happen to

arrive at the season of the festival." Indeed the snow was falling thick as I trudged to the village through the beautiful woods of "the Castle o' Montgomery" immortalised by Burns.

² Quoted by Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 512.

³ G. Lawrie, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, iii. 105.

and pleasure. Around it was placed a circle of stones, one for each person of the families to whom they belonged. And when it grew dark the bonfire was kindled, at which a loud shout was set up. Then each person taking a torch of ferns or sticks in his hand, ran round the fire exulting; and sometimes they went into the adjacent fields, where, if there was another company, they visited the bonfire, taunting the others if inferior in any respect to themselves. After the fire was burned out they returned home, where a feast was prepared, and the remainder of the evening was spent in mirth and diversions of various kinds. Next morning they repaired betimes to the bonfire, where the situation of the stones was examined with much attention. If any of them were misplaced, or if the print of a foot could be discerned near any particular stone, it was imagined that the person for whom it was set would not live out the year. Of late years this is less attended to, but about the beginning of the present century it was regarded as a sure prediction. The Hallowe'en fire is still kept up in some parts of the Low Country; but on the western coast and in the isles it is never kindled, though the night is spent in merriment and entertainments."¹ In the Perthshire parish of Callander, which includes the now famous pass of the Trossachs opening out on the winding and wooded shores of the lovely Loch Katrine, the Hallowe'en bonfires were still kindled down to near the end of the eighteenth century. When the fire had died down, the ashes were carefully collected in the form of a circle, and a stone was put in, near the circumference, for every person of the several families interested in the bonfire. Next morning, if any of these stones was found to be displaced or injured, the people made sure that the person represented by it was *fey* or devoted, and that he could not live twelve months from that day.² In the parish of Logierait, which covers the beautiful valley of the Tummel, one of the fairest regions of all Scotland, the Hallowe'en fire was somewhat different. Faggots of heath,

¹ John Ramsay of Ochertyre, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by A. Allardyce, ii. 437 sq. This account was written in

the eighteenth century.

² J. Robertson, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, xi. 621 sq.

broom, and the dressings of flax were kindled and carried on poles by men, who ran with them round the villages, attended by a crowd. As soon as one faggot was burnt out, a fresh one was lighted and fastened to the pole. Numbers of these blazing faggots were often carried about together, and when the night happened to be dark, they formed a splendid illumination.¹ Hallowe'en fires were also lighted in some parts of the north-east of Scotland. Villagers and farmers alike must have their fire. In the villages the boys went from house to house and begged a peat from each householder, generally with the words, "Ge's a peat t' burn the witches." When the peats and other fuel had been got together, they were piled in a heap and set on fire. Then each of the youths, one after another, laid himself down on the ground as near to the fire as he could without being burned, and thus lying allowed the smoke to roll over him. The others ran through the smoke and jumped over their prostrate comrade. When the fire had gone out, the ashes were scattered, the boys vying with each other who should scatter the most. After that they continued to run through them and to pelt each other with the charred peats. At each farm the spot chosen for the bonfire was as high as conveniently possible; and the proceedings at it were much the same as at the village bonfires. The lads of one farm, when their own fire was burnt out, sometimes went to a neighbouring fire and helped to kick the ashes about.²

In the northern part of Wales, that other great Celtic region of Britain, it used also to be customary for every family to make a great bonfire called *Coel Coeth* on Hallowe'en. The fire was kindled on the most conspicuous spot near the house; and when it had nearly gone out every one threw into the ashes a white stone, which he had first marked. Then having said their prayers round the fire, they went to bed. Next morning, as soon as they were up, they came to

¹ A Stewart, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, v. 84 sq.

² W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 167 sq. A different interpretation is put upon this last custom by another writer, who, in describing the Hallowe'en customs of Buchan, says: "The hallow fire was

kindled, and guarded by the male part of the family. Societies were formed, either by pique or humour, to scatter certain fires, and the attack and defence were often conducted with art and with fury" (A. Johnstone, in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, xxi. 146).

search out the stones, and if any one of them was found to be missing, they had a notion that the person who threw it would die before he saw another Hallowe'en.¹ A writer on Wales says that "the autumnal fire is still kindled in North Wales, being on the eve of the first day of November, and is attended by many ceremonies; such as running through the fire and smoke, each casting a stone into the fire, and all running off at the conclusion to escape from the black short-tailed sow; then supping upon parsnips, nuts, and apples; catching up an apple suspended by a string with the mouth alone, and the same by an apple in a tub of water: each throwing a nut into the fire; and those that burn bright, betoken prosperity to the owners through the following year, but those that burn black and crackle, denote misfortune. On the following morning the stones are searched for in the fire, and if any be missing, they betide ill to those who threw them in."² According to Professor Rhys, the habit of celebrating Hallowe'en by lighting bonfires on the hills is perhaps not yet extinct in Wales, and men still living can remember how the people who assisted at the bonfires would wait till the last spark was out and then would suddenly take to their heels, shouting at the top of their voices, "The cropped black sow seize the hindmost!" The saying, as Professor Rhys justly remarks, implies that originally one of the company became a victim in dead earnest. Down to the present time the saying is current in Carnarvonshire, where allusions to the cutty black sow are still occasionally made to frighten children.³ We can now understand why in Lower Brittany every person throws a pebble into the midsummer bonfire.⁴ Doubtless here, as in Wales and the Highlands of Scotland, omens of life and death have at one time or other been drawn from the position and state of the pebbles on the morning of All Saints' Day. The custom, thus found among three separate branches of the Celtic

¹ Pennant's manuscript, quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 389 sq.

² Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *The Itinerary of Archbishop Baldwin through Wales A.D. MCLXXXVIII.* by Giraldus de Barri (London, 1806), ii. 315; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 390. The passage quoted in the text occurs

in one of Hoare's notes on the Itinerary.

³ J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 515 sq. These Hallowe'en fire-festivals in Wales and Scotland can hardly be dissevered from the ancient Irish custom of kindling a new fire on that day. See above, p. 253.

⁴ See above, p. 280.

stock, probably dates from a period before their dispersion, or at least from a time when alien races had not yet driven home the wedges of separation between them.¹

But it is time to return to the midsummer festival and to pass from the cloudy homes of the Celt to sunnier climes. All over Spain great bonfires called *lumes* are still lit on Midsummer Eve. They are kept up all night, and the children leap over them in a certain rhythmical way which is said to resemble the ancient dances. On the coast, people at this season plunge into the sea; in the inland districts the villagers go and roll naked in the dew of the meadows, which is supposed to be a sovereign preservative against diseases of the skin. On this evening, too, girls who would pry into the future put a vessel of water on the sill outside their window; and when the clocks strike twelve, they break an egg in the water and see, or fancy they see, in the shapes assumed by the pulp, as it blends with the liquid, the likeness of future bridegrooms, castles, coffins, and so forth. But generally, as might perhaps have been expected, the obliging egg exhibits the features of a bridegroom.² In Corsica on the Eve of St. John the people set fire to the trunk of a tree or to a whole tree, and the young men and maidens dance round the blaze, which is called *fucaraia*.³ We have seen that at Ozieri, in Sardinia, a great bonfire is kindled on St. John's Eve, and that the young people dance round it.⁴ Passing to Italy, we find that the midsummer fires are still lighted

¹ It is worth noting that in the French department of Deux-Sèvres young people used to assemble in the fields on All Saints' Day (the first of November) and kindle great fires of ferns, thorns, leaves, and stubble, at which they roasted chestnuts. They also danced round the fires and indulged in noisy pastimes. See Baron Dupin, in *Mémoires publiées par la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, iv. (1823), p. 108.

² Letter from Dr. Otero Acevado of Madrid, published in *Le Temps*, September 1898. An extract from the newspaper was sent me, but without mention of the day of the month when it appeared.

The fires on St. John's Eve in Spain are mentioned also by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 317. Grimm inferred the custom from a passage in a romance (*Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 518). To roll in the dew on the morning of St. John's Day is a cure for diseases of the skin in Normandy, Périgord, and the Abruzzo, as well as in Spain (Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 8; De Nore, *Coutumes, mythes et traditions des provinces de France*, p. 150; Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi*, p. 157).

³ Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, i. 185.

⁴ Above, vol. ii. p. 127.

on St. John's Eve in many parts of the Abruzzo. They are commonest in the territory which was inhabited in antiquity by the Vestini; they are rarer in the land of the ancient Marsi, and they disappear entirely in the lower valley of the Sangro. For the most part, the fires are fed with straw and dry grass, and are kindled in the fields near the villages or on high ground. As they blaze up, the people dance round or over them. In leaping across the flames the boys cry out, "St. John, preserve my thighs and legs!" Formerly it used to be common to light the bonfires also in the towns in front of churches of St. John, and the remains of the sacred fire were carried home by the people; but this custom has mostly fallen into disuse. However, at Celano the practice is still kept up of taking brands and ashes from the bonfires to the houses, although the fires are no longer kindled in front of the churches, but merely in the streets.¹ At Orvieto the midsummer fires were specially excepted from the prohibition directed against bonfires in general.²

In Greece, the custom of kindling fires on St. John's Eve and jumping over them is said to be still universal. One reason assigned for it is a wish to escape from the fleas.³ According to another account, the women cry out, as they leap over the fire, "I leave my sins behind me."⁴ In Lesbos the fires are usually lighted by threes, and the people spring thrice over them, each with a stone on his head, saying, "I jump the hare's fire, my head a stone!"⁵ In Calymnos the midsummer fire is supposed to ensure abundance in the coming year as well as deliverance from fleas. The people dance round the fires singing, with stones on their heads, and then jump over the blaze or the glowing embers. When the fire is burning low, they throw the stones into it; and when it is nearly out, they make crosses on their legs and

¹ Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi* (Palermo, 1890), p. 154 sq. In the Abruzzo water also is supposed to acquire certain marvellous and beneficent properties on St. John's Night. Hence many people make a point of bathing in the sea or a river at that season, especially at the moment of sunrise. See Finamore, *op. cit.* pp. 158-160. We may compare the Provençal custom of bathing and splashing

water at midsummer (above, p. 287).

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 518.

³ W. R. Paton, in *Folk-lore*, ii. (1891), p. 128. The custom was reported to me when I was in Greece in 1890 (*Folk-lore*, i. (1890), p. 520).

⁴ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 519.

⁵ Georgeakis et Pineau, *Folk-lore de Lesbos*, p. 308.

then go straightway and bathe in the sea.¹ In Cos the lads and lasses dance round the bonfires on St. John's Eve. Each of the lads binds a black stone on his head, signifying that he wishes to become as strong as the stone. Also they make the sign of the cross on their feet and legs and jump over the fire.² On Midsummer Eve the Greeks of Macedonia light fires after supper in front of their gates. The garlands, now faded, which were hung over the doors on May Day, are taken down and cast into the flames, after which the young folk leap over the blaze, fully persuaded that St. John's fire will not burn them.³ Even the Mohammedans of Algeria and Morocco are reported to have kindled great midsummer bonfires of straw, into which they kept throwing incense and spices the whole night, invoking the divine blessing on their fruit-trees.⁴ From the Old World the midsummer fires have been carried across the Atlantic to America. In Brazil people jump over the fires of St. John, and at this season they can take hot coals in their mouths without burning themselves.⁵ In Bolivia on the Eve of St. John it is usual to see bonfires lighted on the hills and even in the streets of the capital La Paz. The writer who reports the custom adds that he cannot say whether it was introduced by the Spaniards, or was prevalent before the conquest.⁶

It remains to show that the burning of effigies of human beings in the midsummer fires was not uncommon. At Rottenburg in Wurtemberg, down to the beginning of the present century, a ceremony was observed on Midsummer Day which was called "beheading the angel-man." A stump was driven into the ground, wrapt with straw, and fashioned into the rude likeness of a human figure, with arms, head,

¹ W. R. Paton, in *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 94. From the stones cast into the fire omens may perhaps be drawn, as in Scotland, Wales, and probably Brittany. See above, pp. 280, 294, 295 sq.

² W. H. D. Rouse, "Folklore from the Southern Sporades," *Folk-lore*, x. (1899), p. 179.

³ Lucy M. J. Garnett, *The Women of Turkey and their Folk-lore, the Christian Women*, p. 122.

⁴ G. Ferraro, *Superstizioni, usi e proverbi Monferrini*, p. 34 sq., referring to Alvise da Cadamosto, *Relazione dei viaggi d'Africa* in Ramusio.

⁵ K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Natur-Völkern Zentral-Brasiliens*, p. 561.

⁶ D. Forbes, "On the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*, ii. (1870), p. 235.

and face. This was the angel-man; round about him wood was piled up. The boys, armed with swords, assembled in crowds, covered the figure completely over with flowers, and eagerly awaited the signal. When the pile of wood was fired and the angel-man burst into a blaze, the word was given and all the boys fell upon him with their swords and hewed the burning figure in pieces. Then they leaped backwards and forwards over the fire.¹ In some parts of the Tyrol a straw-man is carted about the village on Midsummer Day and then burned. He is called the *Lotter*, which has been corrupted into Luther.² In French Flanders down to 1789 a straw figure representing a man was always burned in the midsummer bonfire, and the figure of a woman was burned on St. Peter's Day, the twenty-ninth of June.³ At Grätz on the twenty-third of June the common people used to make a puppet called the *Tatermann*, which they dragged to the bleaching-ground, and pelted with burning besoms till it took fire.⁴ In some parts of Russia a figure of Kupalo is burned or thrown into a stream on St. John's Night.⁵ The Russian custom of carrying a straw effigy of Kupalo over the midsummer bonfire has been already described.⁶

The best general explanation of these European fire-festivals seems to be the one given by Mannhardt, namely, that they are sun-charms or magical ceremonies intended to ensure a proper supply of sunshine for men, animals, and plants. We have seen that savages resort to charms for making sunshine,⁷ and it is no wonder that primitive man in Europe has done the same. Indeed, when we consider the cold and cloudy climate of Europe during a great part of the year, we shall find it natural that sun-charms should have played a much more prominent part among the superstitious practices of European peoples than among those of savages who live nearer the equator. This view of the festivals is supported by various arguments drawn partly from the

¹ Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. 100 sq.; *B.K.* p. 513 sq.

² Zingerle, *Sitten, etc., des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 159, § 1353. cp. § 1355; *B.K.* p. 513.

³ Madame Clément, *Histoire des fêtes civiles et religieuses, etc., du Département du Nord* (Cambrai, 1836),

p. 364; Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 392; *B.K.* p. 513.

⁴ *B.K.* p. 513.

⁵ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 240.

⁶ Above, vol. ii. p. 105.

⁷ Above, vol. i. p. 115 sqq.

rites themselves, partly from the influence which they are believed to exert upon the weather and on vegetation. For example, the custom of rolling a burning wheel down a hill-side, which is often observed at these times, seems a very natural imitation of the sun's course in the sky, and the imitation is especially appropriate on Midsummer Day when the sun's annual declension begins.¹ Not less graphic is the mimicry of his apparent revolution by swinging a burning tar-barrel round a pole.² The custom of throwing blazing discs, shaped like suns, into the air is probably also a piece of imitative magic. In these, as in so many cases, the magic force is supposed to take effect through mimicry or sympathy; by imitating the desired result you actually produce it; by counterfeiting the sun's progress through the heavens you really help the luminary to pursue his celestial journey with punctuality and despatch. The name "fire of heaven," by which the midsummer fire is sometimes popularly known,³ clearly indicates a consciousness of the connection between the earthly and the heavenly flame.

Again, the manner in which the fire appears to have been originally kindled on these occasions favours the view that it was intended to be a mock-sun. For, as various scholars have seen,⁴ it is highly probable that originally at these festivals fire was universally obtained by the friction of two pieces of wood. We have seen that this is still the case in some places both at the Easter and midsummer fires, and that it is expressly stated to have been formerly the case at the Beltane fires.⁵ But what makes it almost certain that this was once the invariable mode of kindling the fire at these periodic festivals is the analogy of the need-fires. Need-fires are kindled, not at fixed periods, but on occasions of special distress, particularly at the outbreak of a murrain,

¹ On the wheel as an emblem of the sun, see Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 585; H. Gaidoz, "Le dieu gaulois du soleil et le symbolisme de la roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. série, iv. (1884), p. 14 sqq. In the old Mexican picture-books the sun is often represented as a wheel of many colours (E. J. Payne, *History of the New World called America*, i. 521).

² Above, p. 272.

³ Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. 57, 97; *B.K.* p. 510; cp. Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 240.

⁴ Cp. Grimm, *D.M.* i. 521; Woll, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 389; Ad. Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,² pp. 41 sq., 47; W. Mannhardt, *B.K.* p. 521.

⁵ See above, pp. 258, 260 sq., 272, 275, 276.

and the cattle are driven through the need-fire, just as they are sometimes driven through the midsummer fires.¹ Now, the need-fire has almost always been produced by the friction of wood and sometimes by the revolution of a wheel; in Mull, for example, it was made by turning an oaken wheel over nine oaken spindles from east to west, that is, in the direction of the sun.² It is a plausible conjecture that the wheel employed to produce the need-fire represents the sun;³ and if the spring and midsummer fires were originally pro-

¹ On the need-fires, see Grimm, *D.M.* i. 501 sqq.; Wolf, *op. cit.* i. 116 sq., ii. 378 sqq.; Kuhn, *op. cit.* p. 41 sqq.; *B.K.* p. 518 sqq.; Kelly, *Curiosities of Indo-European Tradition and Folk-lore*, p. 48 sqq.; Elton, *Origins of English History*, p. 293 sq.; Jahn, *Die deutschen Opfergebräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht*, p. 26 sqq.

² Grimm, *D.M.* i. 506. The fire was made on the top of Carnmoor Hill, every common fire in every house within sight of the hill having been previously extinguished. In 1767 a delay in the production of the need-fire was attributed to the obstinacy of one householder who would not let his fires be put out. The rule that all fires in the neighbourhood must be extinguished while the need-fire is being made is common to Scotland and Germany. See Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 611; Grimm, *D.M.* i. 502, 503, 504, 507; Colshorn, *Sagen und Märchen* (Hanover, 1854), p. 234 sq.; Prohle, *Harzbilder* (Leipzig, 1855), p. 74 sq. In Prohle's account we read how in a village near Quedlinburg the kindling of the need-fire was impeded by a night-light burning in the parsonage; how the people knocked at the window and begged earnestly, but in vain, that the light might be extinguished; and how their hope of producing the need-fire revived towards morning when the night-light went out of itself. According to one account, in the Highlands of Scotland the rule that all common fires must be previously extinguished applied only to the houses situated between the two nearest

running streams (Kelly, *Curiosities of Indo-European Tradition and Folk-lore*, p. 53 sq.). In Bulgaria also every fire in the village must be extinguished before the need-fire is kindled; even smoking is forbidden. Two naked men produce the fire by rubbing dry branches together in the forest; and with the flame thus elicited they light two fires, one on each side of a cross-road haunted by wolves. The cattle are then driven between the two fires, from which glowing embers are afterwards taken to rekindle the cold hearths in the houses (A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren*, p. 198). In Caithness the men who kindled the need-fire had previously to divest themselves of all metal (Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Neid-fire," vol. iii. p. 349 sq., ed. Longmuir and Donaldson). In some of the Hebrides the men who made the need-fire had to be eighty-one in number and all married; they worked at rubbing the two planks together by relays of nine men at a time (Martin, *l.c.*). Sometimes the fire is produced, not by the friction of two pieces of wood, but by the friction of a rope on wood. In the Halberstadt district the rope had to be pulled by two chaste boys (Grimm, *D.M.* i. 504). It is reported, contrary to the usual custom, that near Wolfenbüttel the need-fire had to be struck by the smith from the cold anvil (R. Andree, *Braunschweiger Volkskunde*, p. 314). In England the need-fire is said to have been kindled at Birtley within the last half-century (*The Denham Tracts*, ii. 342; compare *ibid.* pp. 50, 365 sq.).

³ This is the view of Grimm, Wolf, Kuhn, Kelly, and Mannhardt.

duced in the same way, it would be a confirmation of the view that they were originally sun-charms. In point of fact there is, as Kuhn has pointed out,¹ some evidence to show that the midsummer fire was originally thus produced. We have seen that many Hungarian swincherds make fire on Midsummer Eve by rotating a wheel round a wooden axle wrapt in hemp, and that they drive their pigs through the fire thus made.² At Obermedlingen, in Swabia, the "fire of heaven," as it was called, was made on St. Vitus's Day (the fifteenth of June) by igniting a cart-wheel, which, smeared with pitch and plaited with straw, was fastened on a pole twelve feet high, the top of the pole being inserted in the nave of the wheel. This fire was made on the summit of the mountain, and as the flame ascended, the people uttered a set form of words, with eyes and arms directed heavenward.³ Here the fixing of a wheel on a pole and igniting it suggests that originally the fire was produced, as in the case of the need-fire, by the revolution of a wheel. The day on which the ceremony takes place (the fifteenth of June) is near midsummer; and we have seen that in Masuren fire is or used to be actually made on Midsummer Day by turning a wheel rapidly about an oaken pole, though it is not said that the new fire so produced is used to light a bonfire.

Once more, the influence which these bonfires are supposed to exert on the weather and on vegetation, goes to show that they are sun-charms, since the effects ascribed to them are identical with those of sunshine. Thus, we have seen that in the Vosges Mountains the people believe that the midsummer fires help to preserve the fruits of the earth and ensure good crops. In Sweden the warmth or cold of the coming season is inferred from the direction in which the flames of the May Day bonfire are blown; if they blow to the south, it will be warm, if to the north, cold. No doubt at present the direction of the flames is regarded merely as an augury of the weather, not as a mode of influencing it. But we may be pretty sure that this is one of the cases in which magic has dwindled into divination. So in the Eifel Mountains, when the smoke blows towards the corn-fields,

¹ *Herabkunft des Feuers*,² p. 47.

² See above, p. 277.

³ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 240, § 443.

this is an omen that the harvest will be abundant. But doubtless the older view was, not merely that the smoke and flames prognosticated, but that they actually produced an abundant harvest, the heat of the flames acting like sunshine on the corn. Indeed, this older view must still have been held by people in the Isle of Man when they lit fires to windward of their fields in order that the smoke might blow over them. Notions of this sort are not confined to Europe. In South Africa, about the month of April, the Matabele light huge fires to the windward of their gardens, "their idea being that the smoke, by passing over the crops, will assist the ripening of them."¹ Among the Zulus also "medicine is burned on a fire placed to windward of the garden, the fumigation which the plants in consequence receive being held to improve the crop."² Again, the idea of our European peasants that the corn will grow well as far as the blaze of the bonfire is visible, is certainly a remnant of the belief in the quickening and fertilising power of the bonfires. The same belief reappears in the notion that embers taken from the bonfires and inserted in the fields will promote the growth of the crops, and again it plainly underlies the customs of sowing flax-seed in the direction in which the flames blow, of mixing the ashes of the bonfire with the seed-corn at sowing, and of scattering the ashes by themselves over the field. The belief that the flax will grow as high as the flames rise or the people leap over them belongs clearly to the same class of ideas. Once more, we saw that at Konz, on the banks of the Moselle, if the blazing wheel which was trundled down the hillside reached the river without being extinguished, this was hailed as a proof that the vintage would be abundant. So firmly was this belief held that the successful performance of the ceremony entitled the villagers to levy a tax upon the owners of the neighbouring vineyards. Here the unextinguished wheel meant an unclouded sun, and this again portended an abundant vintage. So the waggon-load of white wine which the villagers received from the vineyards round about was in fact a payment for the sunshine which they had procured for the grapes.

¹ L. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 160 *sq.*

² J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal*, p. 18.

But in popular belief the quickening and fertilising influence of the bonfires is not limited to the vegetable world ; it extends also to animals. This plainly appears both from the Irish custom of driving barren cattle through the midsummer fires, and from the German practice of mixing the ashes of the bonfires with the drink of cattle in order to make the animals thrive. Further, there are clear indications that even human fecundity is supposed to be promoted by the genial heat of the fires. It is an Irish belief that a girl who jumps thrice over the midsummer bonfire will soon marry and become the mother of many children ; and in various parts of France they think that if a girl dances round nine fires she will be sure to marry within the year. On the other hand, in Lechrain people say that if a young man and woman, leaping over the midsummer fire together, escape unsmirched, the young woman will not become a mother within twelve months—the flames have not touched and fertilised her. The rule observed in some parts of France and Belgium that the bonfires on the first Sunday in Lent should be kindled by the person who was last married seems to belong to the same class of ideas, whether it be that such a person is supposed to receive from, or to impart to, the fire a generative and fertilising influence. The common practice of lovers leaping over the fires hand in hand may very well have originated in a notion that thereby their marriage would be more likely to be blessed with offspring. And the scenes of profligacy which appear to have marked the midsummer celebration among the Esthonians, as they once marked the celebration of May Day among ourselves, may have sprung, not from the mere licence of holiday-makers, but from a crude notion that such orgies were justified, if not required, by some mysterious bond which linked the life of man to the courses of the heavens at this turning-point of the year.

The interpretation of these fire-customs as charms for making sunshine is confirmed by a parallel custom observed by the Hindoos of Southern India at the Pongol or Feast of Ingathering. The festival is celebrated in the early part of January, when, according to Hindoo astrologers, the sun enters the tropic of Capricorn, and the chief event of the festival coincides with the passage of the sun. For some

days previously the boys gather heaps of sticks, straw, dead leaves, and everything that will burn. On the morning of the first day of the festival the heaps are fired. Every street and lane has its bonfire. The young folk leap over the flames or pile on fresh fuel. This fire is an offering to Sûrya, the sun-god, or to Agni, the deity of fire; it "wakes him from his sleep, calling on him again to gladden the earth with his light and heat."¹ To say that the fires awaken the sun-god from his sleep is only a metaphorical and perhaps modernised expression of the belief that they actually help to rekindle the sun's light and heat.

A festival of Northern India which presents points of resemblance to the popular European celebrations which we have been considering is the Holi. This is a village festival held in early spring at the full moon of the month Phalgun. Large bonfires are lit and young people dance round them. The people believe that the fires prevent blight, and that the ashes cure disease. At Barsana the local village priest is expected to pass through the Holi bonfire, which, in the opinion of the faithful, cannot burn him. Indeed he holds his land rent-free simply on the score of his being fire-proof. On one occasion when the priest disappointed the expectant crowd by merely jumping over the outermost verge of the smouldering ashes and then bolting into his cell, they threatened to deprive him of his benefice if he did not discharge his spiritual functions better when the next Holi season came round. Another feature of the festival which has, or once had, its counterpart in the corresponding European ceremonies is the unchecked profligacy which prevails among the Hindoos at this time.² In Kumaon, a district of North-West India, at the foot of the Himalayas, each clan celebrates the Holi festival by cutting down a tree, which is thereupon stripped of its leaves, decked with shreds of cloth, and burnt at some convenient place in the quarter of the town inhabited by the clan. Some of the songs sung on this occasion are of a ribald character. The people leap

¹ Ch. E. Gover, "The Pongol festival in Southern India," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, N.S., v. (1870), p. 96 sq.

² W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, pp. 387-393.

over the ashes of the fire, believing that they thus rid themselves of itch and other diseases of the skin. While the trees are burning, each clan tries to carry off strips of cloth from the tree of another clan, and success in the attempt is thought to ensure good luck. In Gwalior large heaps of cow-dung are burnt instead of trees. Among the Marwaris the festival is celebrated by the women with obscene songs and gestures. A monstrous and disgusting image of a certain Nathuram, who is said to have been a notorious profligate, is set up in a bazaar and then smashed with blows of shoes and bludgeons while the bonfire of cow-dung is blazing. No household can be without an image of Nathuram, and on the night when the bride first visits her husband, the image of this disreputable personage is placed beside her couch. Barren women and mothers whose children have died look to Nathuram for deliverance from their troubles.¹

In the Chinese province of Fo-Kien we also meet with a vernal festival of fire which may be compared to the fire-festivals of Europe. The ceremony, according to an eminent authority, is a solar festival in honour of the renewal of vegetation and of the vernal warmth. It falls in April, on the thirteenth day of the third month in the Chinese calendar, and is doubtless connected with the ancient custom of renewing the fire, which, as we saw, used to be observed in China at this season.² The chief performers in the ceremony are labourers, who refrain from women for seven days, and fast for three days before the festival. During these days they are taught in the temple how to discharge the difficult and dangerous duty which is to be laid upon them. On the eve of the festival an enormous brazier of charcoal, sometimes twenty feet wide, is prepared in front of the temple of the Great God, the protector of life. At sunrise next morning the brazier is lighted and kept burning by fresh supplies of fuel. A Taoist priest throws a mixture of salt and rice on the fire to conjure the flames and ensure an abundant year. Further, two exorcists, barefooted and followed by two peasants, traverse the fire again and again till it is somewhat beaten down. Meantime the pro-

¹ Pandit Janardan Joshi, in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, iii. p. 92 sq., § 199.

² See above, p. 251 sq.

cession is forming in the temple. The image of the god of the temple is placed in a sedan-chair, resplendent with red paint and gilding, and is carried forth by a score or more of bare-footed peasants. On the shafts of the sedan-chair, behind the image, stands a magician with a dagger stuck through the upper parts of his arms and grasping in each hand a great sword, with which he essays to deal himself violent blows on the back; however the strokes as they descend are mostly parried by peasants, who walk behind him and interpose bamboo rods between his back and the swords. Wild music now strikes up, and under the excitement caused by its stirring strains, the procession passes thrice across the furnace. At their third passage the performers are followed by other peasants carrying the utensils of the temple; and the rustic mob, electrified by the frenzied spectacle, falls in behind. Strange as it may seem, burns are comparatively rare. Inured from infancy to walking barefoot, the peasants can step with impunity over the glowing charcoal, provided they plant their feet squarely and do not stumble; for usage has so hardened their soles that the skin is converted into a sort of leathery or horny substance which is almost callous to heat. But sometimes, when they slip and a hot coal touches the sides of their feet or ankles, they may be seen to pull a wry face and jump out of the furnace amid the laughter of the spectators. When this part of the ceremony is over, the procession defiles round the village, and the priests distribute to every family a leaf of yellow paper inscribed with a magic character, which is thereupon glued over the door of the house. The peasants carry off the charred embers from the furnace, pound them to ashes, and mix the ashes with the fodder of their cattle, believing that it fattens them. However, the Chinese Government disapproves of these performances, and next morning a number of the performers may generally be seen in the hands of the police, laid face downwards on the ground and receiving a sound castigation on a part of their person which is probably more sensitive than the soles of their feet.¹

¹ G. Schlegel, *Uranographie Chinoise* (The Hague and Leyden, 1875), p. 143 sq.; *id.*, "La fête de fouler le feu

célébrée en Chine et par les Chinois à Java," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ix. (1896), pp. 193-195.

In this last festival the essential feature of the ceremony appears to be the passage of the image of the deity across the fire; it may be compared to the passage of the straw effigy of Kupalo across the midsummer bonfire in Russia. As we shall see presently, such customs are probably magical rites designed to produce light and warmth by subjecting the deity himself to the heat and glow of the furnace. Meantime we may conjecture that where, as at Barsana, priests or sorcerers have been accustomed in the discharge of their functions to walk through or over fire, they have sometimes done so as the living representatives or embodiments of deities, spirits, or other supernatural beings. Some confirmation of this view is furnished by the beliefs and practices of the Dosadhs, a low Indian caste in Behar and Chota Nagpur. On the fifth, tenth, and full-moon days of three months in the year, the priest walks over a narrow trench filled with smouldering wood ashes, and is supposed thus to be inspired by the tribal god Rahu, who becomes incarnate in him for a time. Full of the spirit and also, it is surmised, of drink, the man of god then mounts a bamboo platform, where he sings hymns and distributes to the crowd leaves of *tulsi*, which cure incurable diseases, and flowers which cause barren women to become happy mothers. The service winds up with a feast lasting far into the night, at which the line that divides religious fervour from drunken revelry cannot always be drawn with absolute precision.¹ Similarly the Bhuiyas, a Dravidian tribe of Mirzapur, worship their tribal hero Bir by walking over a short trench filled with fire, and they say that the man who is possessed by the hero does not feel any pain in the soles of his feet.² Ceremonies of this sort used to be observed in most districts of the Madras Presidency, sometimes in discharge of vows made in time of

According to Mr. Schlegel, the connection between this festival and the old custom of solemnly extinguishing and relighting the fire in spring is unquestionable.

¹ H. H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, *Ethnographic Glossary*, i. 255 sq. Compare W. Crooke, *Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 10; *id.*, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western*

Provinces and Oudh, ii. 355. According to Mr. Risley, the trench filled with smouldering ashes is so narrow (only a span and a quarter wide) "that very little dexterity would enable a man to walk with his feet on either edge, so as not to touch the smouldering ashes at the bottom."

² W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, ii. 82.

sickness or distress, sometimes periodically in honour of a deity. Where the ceremony was observed periodically, it generally occurred in March or June, which are the months of the vernal equinox and the summer solstice respectively. A narrow trench, sometimes twenty yards long and half a foot deep, was filled with small sticks and twigs, mostly of tamarind, which were kindled and kept burning till they sank into a mass of glowing embers. Along this the devotees, often fifty or sixty in succession, walked, ran, or leaped barefoot. In 1854 the Madras Government instituted an inquiry into the custom, but found that it was not attended by danger or instances of injury sufficient to call for governmental interference.¹ The French traveller Sonnerat has described how, in the eighteenth century, the Hindoos celebrated a fire-festival of this sort in honour of the god Darma Rajah and his wife Drobedé. The festival lasted eighteen days, during which all who had vowed to take part in it were bound to fast, to practise continence, to sleep on the ground without a mat, and to walk on a furnace. On the eighteenth day the images of Darma Rajah and his spouse were carried in procession to the furnace, and the performers followed dancing, their heads crowned with flowers and their bodies smeared with saffron. The furnace consisted of a trench about forty feet long, filled with hot embers. When the images had been carried thrice round it, the worshippers

¹ M. J. Walhouse, "Passing through the Fire," *Indian Antiquary*, vii. (1878), p. 126 sq. At Akka timanully, one of the many villages which help to make up the town of Bangalore in Southern India, one woman at least from every house is expected to walk through the fire at the village festival. Captain J. S. F. Mackenzie witnessed the ceremony in 1873. A trench, four feet long by two feet wide, was filled with live embers. The priest walked through it thrice, and the women afterwards passed through it in batches. Capt. Mackenzie remarks: "From the description one reads of walking through fire, I expected something sensational. Nothing could be more tame than the ceremony we saw performed; in which there never was nor ever could be the

slightest danger to life. Some young girl, whose soles were tender, might next morning find that she had a blister, but this would be the extent of harm she could receive." See *Indian Antiquary*, iii. (1874), pp. 6-8. But to fall on the hot embers might result in injuries which would prove fatal, and such an accident is known to have occurred at a village in Bengal (H. J. Stokes, "Walking through Fire," *Indian Antiquary*, ii. (1873), p. 190 sq.). Accounts of similar rites practised in Fiji, Tonga, and other parts of the world have been cited by Mr. Andrew Lang (*Modern Mythology*, p. 154 sqq.; *Athenaeum*, 26th August and 14th October 1899), but these accounts shed little light on the origin and meaning of the custom.

walked over the embers, faster or slower, according to the degree of their religious fervour, some carrying their children in their arms, others brandishing spears, swords, and standards. This part of the ceremony being over, the bystanders hastened to rub their foreheads with ashes from the furnace, and to beg from the performers the flowers which they had worn in their hair; and such as obtained them preserved the flowers carefully. The rite was performed in honour of the goddess Drobedé. For she married five brothers all at once; every year she left one of her husbands to betake herself to another, but before doing so she had to purify herself by fire. There was no fixed date for the celebration of the rite, but it could only be held in one of the first three months of the year.¹

Similar rites were performed in antiquity at Castabala in Cappadocia by the priestesses of an Asiatic goddess, whom the Greeks called Artemis Perasia;² and at the foot of Mount Soracte, in Italy, there was a sanctuary of a goddess Feronia, where once a year the men of certain families walked barefoot, but unscathed, over the glowing embers and ashes of a great fire of pinewood in presence of a vast multitude, who had assembled from all the country round about to pay their devotions to the deity or to ply their business at the fair. The families from whom these latter performers were drawn went by the name of Hirpi Sorani, or "Soranian Wolves"; and in consideration of the services which they rendered the state by walking through the fire, they were exempted, by a special decree of the senate, from military service and all public burdens. In the discharge of their sacred function, if we can trust the testimony of Strabo, they were believed to be inspired by the goddess Feronia. The ceremony certainly took place in her sanctuary, which was held in the highest reverence alike by Latins and Sabines; but according to Virgil and Pliny the rite was performed in honour of the god of the mountain, whom they call by the Greek name of Apollo, but whose real name appears

¹ Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes orientales et à la Chine* (Paris, 1782), i. 247 sq.

² Strabo, xii. 2. 7: ἐν τοῖς Κασταβάλοις ἐστὶ τὸ τῆς Περσίας Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερόν, οὗ φασὶ τὰς ἱερέας γυμνοῖς τοῖς ποσὶ δι' ἀνθρακίᾳς βαδίζειν ἀπαθεῖς.

to have been Soranus.¹ If Soranus was a sun-god, as his name appears to indicate,² we might perhaps conclude that the passage of his priests through the fire was a magical ceremony designed to procure a due supply of light and warmth for the earth by mimicking the sun's passage across the firmament. For so priceless a service, rendered at some personal risk, it would be natural that the magicians should be handsomely rewarded by a grateful country, and that they should be released from the common obligations of earth in order the better to devote themselves to their celestial mission. The neighbouring towns paid the first-fruits of their harvest as tribute to the shrine, and loaded it besides with offerings of gold and silver, of which, however, it was swept clean by Hannibal when he hung with his dusky army, like a storm-cloud about to break, within sight of the sentinels on the walls of Rome.³

The custom of leaping over the fire and driving cattle through it may be intended, on the one hand, to secure for man and beast a share of the vital energy of the sun, and, on the other hand, to purge them of all evil influences; for to the primitive mind fire is the most powerful of all purificatory agents. The latter idea is obviously uppermost in the minds of Greek women when they leap over the midsummer fire saying, "I leave my sins behind me." So in

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 19; Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 784 *sqq.*, with the comment of Servius; Strabo, v. 2. 9; Dionysius Halicarnasensis, *Antiquit. Rom.* iii. 32. From a reference to the custom in Silius Italicus (v. 175 *sqq.*) it seems that the men passed thrice through the furnace holding the entrails of the sacrificial victims in their hands. The learned but sceptical Varro attributed their immunity in the fire to a drug with which they took care to anoint the soles of their feet before they planted them in the furnace. See Varro, cited by Servius, on Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 787. The whole subject has been treated by Mannhardt (*Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, p. 327 *sqq.*) and Mr. Andrew Lang (*Modern Mythology*, p. 148 *sqq.*). Mannhardt compares the rites of these "Soranian

Wolves" with the ceremonies performed by the brotherhood of the Green Wolf at Jumièges in Normandy. See above, p. 281 *sqq.*

² L. Preller (*Römische Mythologie*,² i. 268), following G. Curtius, would connect the first syllable of Soranus and Soracte with the Latin *sol*, "sun." W. Ridgeway points out to me that as *r* in *Hirpi* ("wolves") answers to *l* in *lupi*, so *r* in *Sorani* probably answers to *l* in *sol*. Thus the *Hirpi Sorani* would be "the solar wolves."

³ Livy, xxvi. 11. About this time the Carthaginian army encamped only three miles from Rome and Hannibal in person, at the head of two thousand cavalry, rode close up to the walls and leisurely reconnoitred them. See Livy xxvi. 10.

Yucatan at a New Year's festival the people used to light a huge bonfire and pass through it, in the belief that this was a means of ridding themselves of their troubles.¹ The custom of driving cattle through a fire is not confined to Europe. At certain times the Hottentots make a fire of chips, dry branches, and green twigs, so as to raise a great smoke. Through this fire they drive their sheep, dragging them through by force, if necessary. If the sheep make their escape without passing through the fire, it is reckoned a heavy disgrace and a very bad omen. But if they pass readily through or over the fire, the joy of the Hottentots is indescribable.²

The procession or race with burning torches, which so often forms a part of these fire-festivals, appears to be simply a means of diffusing far and wide the genial influence of the bonfire or of the sunshine which it represents. Hence on these occasions lighted torches are very frequently carried over the fields, sometimes with the avowed intention of fertilising them;³ and for the same purpose live coals from the bonfire are sometimes placed in the field "to prevent blight." On the eve of Twelfth Day in Normandy men, women, and children run wildly through the fields and orchards with lighted torches, which they wave about the branches and dash against the trunks of the fruit-trees for the sake of burning the moss and driving away the moles and field mice. "They believe that the ceremony fulfils the double object of exorcising vermin whose multiplication would be a real calamity, and of imparting fecundity to the trees, the fields, and even the cattle"; and they imagine that the more the ceremony is prolonged, the greater will be the crop of fruit next autumn.⁴ In Bohemia they say that the corn will grow as high as they fling the blazing besoms into the air.⁵ Nor are such notions confined to Europe. In

¹ Diego de Landa, *Relation des choses de Yucatan* (Paris, 1864), p. 233.

² Kolben, *Present State of the Cape of Good Hope*, i. 129 sqq.

³ P. 255. The torches of Demeter, which figure so largely in her myth and on the monuments, are perhaps to be explained by this custom. To regard, with Mannhardt (*B.A.* p. 536), the

torches in the modern European customs as imitations of lightning seems unnecessary.

⁴ A. Bosquet, *La Normandie romanesque et merveilleuse*, p. 295 sq.; Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 126-129.

⁵ Br. Jellinek, "Materialien zur Vorgeschichte und Volkskunde Böh-

Corea, a few days before the New Year festival, the eunuchs of the palace swing burning torches, chanting invocations the while, and this is supposed to ensure bountiful crops for the next season.¹ The custom of trundling a burning wheel over the fields, which used to be practised in Poitou for the express purpose of fertilising them, embodies the same idea in a still more graphic form; since in this way the mock-sun itself, not merely its light and heat represented by torches, is made actually to pass over the ground which is to receive its quickening and kindly influence. Again, the custom of carrying lighted brands round the cattle is plainly equivalent to driving the animals through the fire. It is quite possible that in these customs the idea of the quickening power of fire may be combined with the conception of it as a purgative agent for the expulsion or destruction of evil beings, such as witches and the vermin that destroy the fruits of the earth. Certainly the fires are often interpreted in the latter way by the persons who light them; and this purgative use of the element comes out very prominently, as we have seen, in the general expulsion of demons from towns and villages. But in the present class of cases this aspect of fire may be secondary, if indeed it is more than a later misinterpretation of the custom.

It remains to ask, What is the meaning of burning an effigy in these bonfires? The effigies so burned, as I have already remarked, can hardly be separated from the effigies of Death which are burned or otherwise destroyed in spring; and grounds have been already given for regarding the so-called effigies of Death as really representatives of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. Are the other effigies, which are burned in the spring and midsummer bonfires, susceptible of the same explanation? It would seem so. For just as the fragments of the so-called Death are stuck in the fields to make the crops grow, so the charred embers of the figure burned in the spring bonfires are sometimes laid on the fields in the belief that they will keep vermin from the crop. Again, the rule that the last married bride must leap over

mens," *Mittheilungen der anthropolog. Gesellschaft in Wien*, xxi. (1891), p. 13 note.

¹ Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours*, ii. 56 sq.

the fire in which the straw-man is burned on Shrove Tuesday, is probably intended to make her fruitful.¹ But, as we have seen, the power of blessing women with offspring is a special attribute of tree-spirits;² it is therefore a fair presumption that the burning effigy over which the bride must leap is a representative of the fertilising tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. This character of the effigy, as representative of the spirit of vegetation, is almost unmistakable when the figure is composed of an unthreshed sheaf of corn or is covered from head to foot with flowers.³ Again, it is to be noted that, instead of a puppet, trees, either living or felled, are sometimes burned both in the spring and midsummer bonfires.⁴ Now, considering the frequency with which the tree-spirit is represented in human shape, it is hardly rash to suppose that when sometimes a tree and sometimes an effigy is burned in these fires, the effigy and the tree are regarded as equivalent to each other, each being a representative of the tree-spirit. This, again, is confirmed by observing, first, that sometimes the effigy which is to be burned is carried about simultaneously with a May-tree, the former being carried by the boys, the latter by the girls;⁵ and, second, that the effigy is sometimes tied to a living tree and burned with it.⁶ In these cases, we can scarcely doubt, the tree-spirit is represented, as we have found it represented before, in duplicate, both by the tree and by the effigy. That the true character of the effigy as a representative of the beneficent spirit of vegetation should sometimes be forgotten, is natural. The custom of burning a beneficent god is too foreign to later modes of thought to escape misinterpretation. Naturally enough the people who continued to burn his image came in time to identify it as the effigy of persons, whom, on various grounds, they regarded with aversion, such as Judas Iscariot, Luther, and a witch.

The general reasons for killing a god or his representative have been examined in the preceding chapter. But when the god happens to be a deity of vegetation, there are special reasons why he should die by fire. For

¹ See above, p. 244 *sq.*

² Above, vol. i. p. 192 *sqq.*

³ Pp. 245, 300.

⁴ Pp. 242, 255, 256, 273, 279, 281, 285, 286, 297.

⁵ P. 245.

⁶ P. 242.



light and heat are necessary to vegetable growth ; and, on the principle of sympathetic magic, by subjecting the personal representative of vegetation to their influence, you secure a supply of these necessities for trees and crops. In other words, by burning the spirit of vegetation in a fire which represents the sun, you make sure that, for a time at least, vegetation shall have plenty of sun. It may be objected that, if the intention is simply to secure enough sunshine for vegetation, this end would be better attained, on the principles of sympathetic magic, by merely passing the representative of vegetation through the fire instead of burning him. In point of fact this is sometimes done. In Russia, as we have seen, the straw figure of Kupalo is not burned in the midsummer fire, but merely carried backwards and forwards across it.¹ But, for the reasons already given, it is necessary that the god should die ; so next day Kupalo is stripped of her ornaments and thrown into a stream. In this Russian custom, therefore, the passage of the image through the fire is a sun-charm pure and simple ; the killing of the god is a separate act, and the mode of killing him—by drowning—is probably a rain-charm. But usually people have not thought it necessary to draw this fine distinction ; for the various reasons already assigned, it is advantageous, they think, to expose the god of vegetation to a considerable degree of heat, and it is also advantageous to kill him, and they combine these advantages in a rough-and-ready way by burning him.

Finally, we have to ask, Were human beings formerly burned as representatives of the tree-spirit or deity of vegetation ? We have seen reasons for believing that living persons have often acted as representatives of the tree-spirit, and have suffered death as such. There is no reason, therefore, why they should not have been burned, if any special advantages were likely to be attained by putting them to death in that way. The consideration of human suffering is not one which enters into the calculations of primitive man. It would have been surprising if it did, when we remember the record of Christian Europe. Now, in the fire-festivals which we are discussing, the pretence of burning people is

¹ Vol. ii. p. 105.

sometimes carried so far that it seems reasonable to regard it as a mitigated survival of an older custom of actually burning them. Thus in Aachen, as we saw, the man clad in peas-straw acts so cleverly that the children really believe he is being burned. At Jumièges in Normandy the man clad all in green, who bore the title of the Green Wolf, was pursued by his comrades, and when they caught him they feigned to fling him upon the midsummer bonfire. Similarly at the Beltane fires the pretended victim was seized, and a show made of throwing him into the flames, and for some time afterwards people affected to speak of him as dead. The titular king at Aix, who reigned for a year and danced the first dance round the midsummer bonfire, may perhaps in days of old have discharged the less agreeable duty of serving as fuel for that fire which in later times he only kindled. In the following customs Mannhardt is probably right in recognising traces of an old custom of burning a leaf-clad representative of the spirit of vegetation. At Wolfeck, in Austria, on Midsummer Day, a boy completely clad in green fir branches goes from house to house, accompanied by a noisy crew, collecting wood for the bonfire. As he gets the wood he sings—

“Forest trees I want,
No sour milk for me,
But beer and wine,
So can the wood-man be jolly and gay.”¹

In some parts of Bavaria, also, the boys who go from house to house collecting fuel for the midsummer bonfire envelop one of their number from head to foot in green branches of firs, and lead him by a rope through the whole village.² At Moosheim, in Wurtemberg, the festival of St. John's Fire usually lasted for fourteen days, ending on the second Sunday after Midsummer Day. On this last day the bonfire was left in charge of the children, while the older people retired to a wood. Here they encased a young fellow in leaves and twigs, who, thus disguised, went to the fire,

¹ *B.K.* p. 524.

² *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 956; *B.K.* p. 524. In the neighbourhood of

Breitenbrunn the lad who collects fuel at this season has his face blackened and is called “the Charcoal Man” (*Bavaria*, etc., ii. 261).

scattered it, and trod it out. All the people present fled at the sight of him.¹

In this connection it is worth while to note that in pagan Europe the water as well as the fire seems to have claimed its human victim on Midsummer Day. Some German rivers, such as the Saale and the Spree, are believed still to require their victim on that day; hence people are careful not to bathe at this perilous season. Where the beautiful Neckar flows, between vine-clad and wooded hills, under the castled steep of Heidelberg, the spirit of the river seeks to drown three persons, one on Midsummer Eve, one on Midsummer Day, and one on the day after. On these nights, if you hear a shriek as of a drowning man or woman from the water, beware of running to the rescue; for it is only the water-fairy shrieking to lure you to your doom. Many a fisherman of the Elbe knows better than to launch his boat and trust himself to the treacherous river on Midsummer Day. And Samland fishermen will not go to sea at this season, because they know that the sea is then hollow and demands a victim. In the neighbourhood of the Lake of Constance the Swabian peasants say that on St. John's Day the Angel or St. John must have a swimmer and a climber; hence no one will climb a tree or bathe even in a brook on that day.² According to others, St. John will have three dead men on his day; one of them must die by water, one by a fall, and one by lightning: therefore old-fashioned people warn their children not to climb or bathe, and are very careful themselves not to run into any kind of danger on Midsummer Day.³ Accordingly when we find that, in one of the districts where a belief of this sort prevails, it used to be customary to throw a person into the water on Midsummer Day, we can hardly help concluding that this was only a modification of an older custom of actually drowning a human being in the river at that time. In Voigtland it was formerly the practice

¹ Birlinger, *Volksthümliches aus Schwaben*, ii. 121 sq., § 146; B.A. p. 524 sq.

² E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 428 sq., §§ 120, 122; J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., im Voigtlande, p. 176;

Tettau und Temme, *Die Volkssagen Ost-preussens, Litthauens und West-preussens*, p. 277 sq.; K. Haupt, *Sagenbuch der Lausitz*, i. 48.

³ Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste, Volksbräuche und deutscher Volksglaube*, p. 34.

to set up a fine May tree, adorned with all kinds of things, on St. John's Day. The people danced round it, and when the lads had fetched down the things with which it was tricked out, the tree was thrown into the water. But before this was done, they sought out somebody whom they treated in the same manner, and the victim of this horseplay was called "the John." The brawls and disorders, which such a custom naturally provoked, led to the suppression of the whole ceremony.¹

But it seems possible to go farther than this. Of human sacrifices offered on these occasions the most unequivocal traces, as we have seen, are those which, about a hundred years ago, still lingered at the Beltane fires in the Highlands of Scotland, that is, among a Celtic people who, situated in a remote corner of Europe, enjoying practical independence, and almost completely isolated from foreign influence, had till then conserved their old heathenism better than any other people in the West of Europe. It is significant, therefore, that human sacrifices by fire are known, on unquestionable evidence, to have been systematically practised by the Celts. The earliest description of these sacrifices has been bequeathed to us by Julius Caesar. As conqueror of the hitherto independent Celts of Gaul, Caesar had ample opportunity of observing the national Celtic religion and manners, while these were still fresh and crisp from the native mint and had not yet been fused in the melting-pot of Roman civilisation. With his own notes Caesar appears to have incorporated the observations of a Greek explorer, by name Posidonius, who travelled in Gaul about fifty years before Caesar carried the Roman arms to the English Channel. The Greek geographer Strabo and the historian Diodorus seem also to have derived their descriptions of the Celtic sacrifices from the work of Posidonius, but independently of each other and of Caesar, for each of the three derivative accounts contains some details which are not to be found in either of the others. By combining them, therefore, we can restore the original account of Posidonius with some certainty, and thus obtain a picture of the sacrifices offered by the Celts of Gaul at the close of the

¹ Köhler, *loc. cit.*

second century B.C.¹ The following seem to have been the main outlines of the custom. Condemned criminals were reserved by the Celts in order to be sacrificed to the gods at a great festival which took place once in every five years. The more there were of such victims, the greater was believed to be the fertility of the land.² If there were not enough criminals to furnish victims, captives taken in war were immolated to supply the deficiency. When the time came the victims were sacrificed by the Druids or priests. Some they shot down with arrows, some they impaled, and some they burned alive in the following manner. Colossal images of wicker-work or of wood and grass were constructed; these were filled with live men, cattle, and animals of other kinds; fire was then applied to the images, and they were burned with their living contents.

Such were the great festivals held once every five years. But besides these quinquennial festivals, celebrated on so grand a scale and with, apparently, so large an expenditure of human life, it seems reasonable to suppose that festivals of the same sort, only on a lesser scale, were held annually, and that from these annual festivals are lineally descended some at least of the fire-festivals which, with their traces of human sacrifices, are still celebrated year by year in many parts of Europe. The gigantic images constructed of osiers or covered with grass in which the Druids enclosed their victims remind us of the leafy framework in which the human representative of the tree-spirit is still so often encased.³ Considering, therefore, that the fertility of the land was apparently supposed to depend upon the due performance of these sacrifices, Mannhardt is probably right in viewing the Celtic victims, cased in osiers and grass, as representatives of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. These wicker giants of the Druids seem to have had till lately their representatives at the spring and midsummer festivals of modern Europe. At Douay, down to the early part of the nineteenth century, a procession took place annually on the Sunday

¹ Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* vi. 15; Strabo, iv. 4. 5; Diodorus, v. 32. See Mannhardt, *B. A.* p. 525 *sqq.*

² Strabo, iv. 4. 4: τὰς δὲ φονικὰς δίκας μάλιστα τοῦτοις [*i.e.* the Druids]

ἐπετέτραπτο δικάζειν, ὅταν τε φορὰ τοῦτων ᾖ, φορὰν καὶ τῆς χώρας νομίζουσιν ὑπάρχειν. On this passage see Mannhardt, *B. A.* p. 529 *sqq.*

³ See vol. i. p. 209 *sqq.*

nearest to the seventh of July. The great feature of the procession was a colossal figure, some twenty or thirty feet high, made of osiers, and called "the giant," which was moved through the streets by means of rollers and ropes worked by men who were enclosed within the effigy. The wooden head of the giant is said to have been carved and painted by Rubens. The figure was armed as a knight with lance and sword, helmet and shield. Behind him marched his wife and his three children, all constructed of osiers on the same principle, but on a smaller scale.¹ At Dunkirk the procession of the giants took place on Midsummer Day, the twenty-fourth of June. The festival, which was known as the Follies of Dunkirk, attracted such multitudes of spectators, that the inns and private houses could not lodge them all, and many had to sleep in cellars or in the streets. In 1755 an eye-witness estimated that the number of onlookers was not less than forty thousand, without counting the inhabitants of the town. The streets through which the procession took its way were lined with double ranks of soldiers, and the houses crammed with spectators from top to bottom. High mass was celebrated in the principal church and then the procession got under weigh. First came the guilds or brotherhoods, the members walking two and two with great waxen tapers, lighted, in their hands. They were followed by the friars and the secular priests, and then came the Abbot, magnificently attired, with the Host borne before him by a venerable old man. When these were past, the real "Follies of Dunkirk" began. They consisted of pageants of various sorts wheeled through the streets in cars. These appear to have varied somewhat from year to year; but if we may judge from the processions of 1755 and 1757, both of which have been described by eye-witnesses, a standing show was a car decked with foliage and branches to imitate a wood, and carrying a number of men dressed in

¹ Madame Clément, *Histoire des fêtes civiles et religieuses du département du Nord*² (Cambrai, 1836), pp. 193-200; De Nore, *Costumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 323 sq.; B.A. p. 523, note. In the eighteenth century the procession

took place on the third Sunday in June, which must always have been within about a week of Midsummer Day (H. Gaidoz, "Le dieu gaulois du soleil et le symbolisme de la roue," *Revue Archéologique*, iii. série iv. 32 sq.).

leaves or in green scaly skins, who squirted water on the people from pewter syringes. An English spectator has compared these maskers to the Green Men of our own country on May Day. Last of all came the giant and giantess. The giant was a huge figure of wicker-work, occasionally as much as forty-five feet high, dressed in a long blue robe with gold stripes, which reached to his feet, concealing the dozen or more men who made it dance and bob its head to the spectators. This colossal effigy went by the name of Papa Reuss, and carried in its pocket a bouncing infant of Brobdingnagian proportions, who kept bawling "Papa! papa!" in a voice of thunder, only pausing from time to time to devour the victuals which were handed out to him from the windows. The rear was brought up by the daughter of the giant, constructed, like her sire, of wicker-work, and little, if at all, inferior to him in size. She wore a rose-coloured robe, with a gold watch as large as a warming pan at her side; her breast glittered with jewels; her complexion was high, and her eyes and head turned with as easy a grace as the men inside could contrive to impart to their motions. The procession came to an end with the revolution of 1789, and has never been revived. The giant himself indeed, who had won the affections of the townspeople, survived his ancient glory for a little while and made shift to appear in public a few times more at the Carnival and other festal occasions; but his days were numbered, and within fifty years even his memory had seemingly perished.¹

Most towns and even villages of Brabant and Flanders have, or used to have, similar wicker giants which were annually led about to the delight of the populace, who loved these grotesque figures, spoke of them with patriotic enthusiasm, and never wearied of gazing at them. The name by which the giants went was Reuzes, and a special song called the Reuze song was sung in the Flemish dialect

¹ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, xxix. (1759), pp. 263-265; Madame Clément, *Histoire des fêtes civiles et religieuses du département du Nord*,² pp. 169-175; De Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, pp. 328-332. Compare John Milner, *The History, Civil and Ecclesiastical, and*

Survey of the Antiquities of Winchester, i. 8 sq.; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 325 sq.; James Logan, *The Scottish Gael*, ii. 358 (new edition). According to the writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine* the name of the procession was the Cor-mass.

while they were making their triumphal progress through the streets. The most celebrated of these monstrous effigies were those of Anvers and Wetteren. At Ypres a whole family of giants contributed to the public hilarity at the Carnival. At Cassel and Hazebrouch, in the French department of Nord, the giants made their annual appearance on Shrove Tuesday.¹ In England artificial giants seem to have been a standing feature of the midsummer festival. A writer of the sixteenth century speaks of "Midsommer pageants in London, where, to make the people wonder, are set forth great and uglie gyants, marching as if they were alive, and armed at all points, but within they are stuffed full of browne paper and tow, which the shrewd boyes, underpeeping, do guilefully discover, and turne to a greate derision."² The Mayor of Chester in 1599 "altered many antient customs, as the shooting for the sheriff's breakfast; the going of the giants at Midsommer, etc."³

In these cases the giants only figure in the processions. But sometimes they were burned in the summer bonfires. Thus the people of the Rue aux Ours in Paris used annually to make a great wicker-work figure, dressed as a soldier, which they promenaded up and down the streets for several days, and solemnly burned on the third of July, the crowd of spectators singing *Salve Regina*. A personage who bore the title of king presided over the ceremony with a lighted torch in his hand. The burning fragments of the image were scattered among the people, who eagerly scrambled for them. The custom was abolished in 1743.⁴ In Brie, Isle de France, a wicker-work giant, eighteen feet high, was annually burned on Midsummer Eve.⁵

Again, the Druidical custom of burning live animals, enclosed in wicker-work, has its counterpart at the spring and midsummer festivals. At Luchon in the Pyrenees on Mid-

¹ Madame Clément, *Histoire des fêtes civiles et religieuses, etc., de la Belgique méridionale, etc.* (Avesnes, 1846), p. 252; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Calendrier Belge*, pp. 123-126. We may conjecture that the Flemish *Reuze*, like the *Reuss* of Dunkirk, is only another form of the German *Riese*, "giant."

² Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie*,

1589, p. 128, quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 323.

³ King's *Vale Royal of England*, p. 208, quoted by Brand, *l.c.*

⁴ Liebrecht, *Gervasius von Tilbury*, p. 212 sq.; De Nore, *Contumes, Mythes, et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 354 sq.; *B.K.* p. 514.

⁵ *B.K.* pp. 514, 523.

summer Eve "a hollow column, composed of strong wicker-work, is raised to the height of about sixty feet in the centre of the principal suburb, and interlaced with green foliage up to the very top; while the most beautiful flowers and shrubs procurable are artistically arranged in groups below, so as to form a sort of background to the scene. The column is then filled with combustible materials, ready for ignition. At an appointed hour—about 8 P.M.—a grand procession, composed of the clergy, followed by young men and maidens in holiday attire, pour forth from the town chanting hymns, and take up their position around the column. Meanwhile, bonfires are lit, with beautiful effect, in the surrounding hills. As many living serpents as could be collected are now thrown into the column, which is set on fire at the base by means of torches, armed with which about fifty boys and men dance around with frantic gestures. The serpents, to avoid the flames, wriggle their way to the top, whence they are seen lashing out laterally until finally obliged to drop, their struggles for life giving rise to enthusiastic delight among the surrounding spectators. This is a favourite annual ceremony for the inhabitants of Luchon and its neighbourhood, and local tradition assigns it to a heathen origin."¹ In the midsummer fires formerly kindled on the Place de Grève at Paris it was the custom to burn a basket, barrel, or sack full of live cats, which was hung from a tall mast in the midst of the bonfire; sometimes a fox was burned. The people collected the embers and ashes of the fire and took them home, believing that they brought good luck. The French kings often witnessed these spectacles and even lit the bonfire with their own hands. In 1648 Louis the Fourteenth, crowned with a wreath of roses and carrying a bunch of roses in his hand, kindled the fire, danced at it and partook of the banquet afterwards in the town hall. But this was the last occasion when a monarch presided at the midsummer bonfire in Paris.² At Metz midsummer fires were lighted

¹ *Athenacum*, 24th July 1869, p. 115; *R.K.* p. 515 sq.

² A. Breuil, "Du culte de St.-Jean Baptiste," *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie*, viii. (1845), p. 187 sq.; De Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes*

et Traditions des Provinces de France, p. 355 sq.; J. W. Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 388; Cortet, *Essai sur les fêtes religieuses*, p. 213 sq.; Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du centre de la France*, i. 82; Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 515.

with great pomp on the esplanade, and a dozen cats, enclosed in wicker-cages, were burned alive in them, to the amusement of the people.¹ In Russia a white cock was sometimes burned in the midsummer bonfire;² in Meissen or Thüringen a horse's head used to be thrown into it.³ Sometimes animals are burned in the spring bonfires. In the Vosges cats were burned on Shrove Tuesday; in Elsass they were thrown into the Easter bonfire.⁴ In the department of the Ardennes cats were flung into the bonfires kindled on the first Sunday in Lent; sometimes, by a refinement of cruelty, they were hung over the fire from the end of a pole and roasted alive. As a diabolic animal, the cat could never suffer enough. While the creatures were perishing in the flames, the shepherds gathered their flocks and forced them to leap over the fire, esteeming this an infallible means of preserving them from disease and witchcraft.⁵ We have seen that squirrels were sometimes burned in the Easter fire.

If the men who were burned in wicker frames by the Druids represented the spirit of vegetation, the animals burned along with them may have had the same meaning. Amongst the animals burned by the Druids or in modern bonfires have been, as we saw, cattle, cats, foxes, and cocks; and all of these creatures are variously regarded by European peoples as embodiments of the corn-spirit.⁶ I am not aware of any certain evidence that in Europe serpents have been regarded as representatives of the tree-spirit or corn-spirit;⁷ as victims at the midsummer festival in Luchon they may

¹ Tessier, in *Mémoires et Dissertations publiées par la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, v. (1823), p. 388; *B.K.* p. 515.

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ i. 519; *B.K.* p. 515.

³ *B.K.* lp. 515; Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfesten*, p. 34.

⁴ *B.K.* p. 515.

⁵ A. Meyrac, *Traditions, Légendes, et Contes des Ardennes*, p. 68.

⁶ Above, vol. ii. p. 261 sqq.

⁷ Some of the serpents worshipped by the old Prussians lived in hollow oaks, and as oaks were sacred among the Prussians, the serpents may have

been regarded as genii of the trees. See Simon Grunau, *Preussische Chronik*, ed. Perlbach, i. 89; Hartknoch, *Alt und Neues Preussen*, pp. 143, 163. Serpents, again, played an important part in the worship of Demeter, as we have seen. But that they were regarded as embodiments of her can hardly be assumed. In Siam the spirit of the *takkien* tree is believed to appear, sometimes in the form of a woman, sometimes in the form of a serpent (Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 251). The vipers that haunted the balsam trees in Arabia were regarded by the Arabs as sacred to the trees (Pausanias, ix. 28. 4).

have replaced animals which really had this representative character. When the meaning of the custom was forgotten, self-interest and humanity might unite in suggesting the substitution of noxious reptiles as victims in room of harmless and useful animals.

Thus it appears that the sacrificial rites of the Celts of ancient Gaul can be traced in the popular festivals of modern Europe. Naturally it is in France, or rather in the wider area comprised within the limits of ancient Gaul, that these rites have left the clearest traces in the customs of burning giants of wicker-work and animals enclosed in wicker-work or baskets. These customs, it will have been remarked, are generally observed at or about midsummer. From this we may infer that the original rites of which these are the degenerate successors were solemnised at midsummer. This inference harmonises with the conclusion suggested by a general survey of European folk-custom, that the midsummer festival must on the whole have been the most widely diffused and the most solemn of all the yearly festivals celebrated by the primitive Aryans in Europe. And in its application to the Celts this general conclusion is corroborated by the more or less perfect vestiges of midsummer fire-festivals which we have found lingering in all those westernmost promontories and islands which are the last strongholds of the Celtic race in Europe — Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, the Isle of Man, Scotland, and Ireland. In Scotland, it is true, the chief Celtic fire-festivals certainly appear to have been held at Beltane (the first of May) and Hallowe'en; but this was exceptional.

To sum up: the combined evidence of ancient writers and of modern folk-custom points to the conclusion that amongst the Celts of Gaul an annual festival was celebrated at midsummer, at which living men, representing the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation, were enclosed in wicker-frames and burned. The whole rite was designed as a charm to make the sun to shine and the crops to grow.

But there are some grounds for thinking that another great feature of the Celtic midsummer festival was the gathering of the sacred mistletoe by the Druids. The elaborate ceremonies which were observed by these wizards

when they culled the holy plant have been described by Pliny. After enumerating the different kinds of mistletoe, he proceeds: "In treating of this subject, the admiration in which the mistletoe is held throughout Gaul ought not to pass unnoticed. The Druids, for so they call their wizards, esteem nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree on which it grows, provided only that the tree is an oak. But apart from this they choose oak-woods for their sacred groves and perform no sacred rites without oak-leaves; so that the very name of Druids may be regarded as a Greek appellation derived from their worship of the oak.¹ For they believe that whatever grows on these trees is sent from heaven, and is a sign that the tree has been chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe is very rarely to be met with; but when it is found, they gather it with solemn ceremony. This they do especially on the sixth day of the moon, from which they date the beginning of their months, of their years, and of their thirty years' cycle, because by the sixth day the moon has plenty of vigour and has not run half its course. After due preparations have been made for a sacrifice and a feast under the tree, they hail it as the universal healer and bring to the spot two white bulls, whose horns have never been bound before. A priest clad in a white robe climbs the tree and with a golden sickle cuts the mistletoe, which is caught in a white cloth. Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God may make his own gift to prosper with those upon whom he has bestowed it. They believe that a potion prepared from mistletoe will make barren animals to bring forth, and that the plant is a remedy against all poison."²

¹ Pliny derives the name Druid from the Greek *drūs*, "oak." He did not know that the Celtic word for oak was the same (*daur*), and that therefore Druid, in the sense of priest of the oak, was genuine Celtic, not borrowed from the Greek. See Curtius, *Griech. Etymologie*,⁵ p. 238 sq.; Vaniček, *Griechisch-lateinisches etymolog. Wörterbuch*, p. 368 sqq.; J. Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 221 sqq. In the Highlands of Scotland the word is found in place-names like Bendarroch (the

mountain of the oak), Craigandarroch, etc.

² Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 249 sqq. On the Celtic worship of the oak, see also Maximus Tyrius, *Dissert.* viii. 8: *Κελτοὶ σέβουσι μὲν Διὸς ἀγάλμα δὲ Διὸς Κελτικὸν ὑψηλὴ δρῦν*. With the Druidical mode of gathering the mistletoe compare the following. In Cambodia when a man perceives a certain parasitic plant growing on a tamarind-tree, he dresses in white and taking a new earthen pot climbs the tree at mid-day.

In saying that the Druids cut the mistletoe especially on the sixth day of the moon,¹ Pliny seems to imply that they procured a fresh supply of it every month. But we may surmise that they also gathered the sacred plant with the same solemn ceremony on Midsummer Eve. For in France and England, the countries where the sway of the Druids is known to have been most firmly established, Midsummer Eve is still the time for culling certain magic plants, whose evanescent virtue can be secured at this mystic season alone. Indeed all over Europe antique fancies of the same sort have lingered about Midsummer Eve, imparting to it a fragrance

He puts the plant in the pot and lets the whole fall to the ground. Then in the pot he makes a decoction which renders invulnerable. See Aymonier, "Notes sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," *Cochinchine Française: Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 16, p. 136. Branches of the sacred olive at Olympia, which were to form the victors' crowns, had to be cut with a golden sickle by a boy whose parents were both alive (Schol. on Pindar, *Olymp.* iii. 60). It has been a rule of superstition both in ancient and modern times that certain plants, to which medical or magical virtues were attributed, should not be cut with iron. See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xx. 19, xxiv. 68, 103, 176; Villemarqué, *Barzaz Breiz, Chants Populaires de la Bretagne*,⁸ p. 76; Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du centre de la France*, i. 233; *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), p. 153 sq. In antiquity some thought that the marvellous properties of the mistletoe were heightened if the plant had been gathered from the oak without the use of iron and without being allowed to touch the ground; in that case the plant could cure epilepsy and aid women to conceive (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxiv. 12). Swabian peasants, who ascribe great virtue to mistletoe that grows on an oak, say that it should not be cut in the common way but shot down with an arrow, when the sun is in Sagittarius, on the first, third, or fourth day before the new moon, and

that it should be caught in the left hand as it falls from the tree (E. Meier, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 443 sq.). On the objection to the use of iron in such cases, see Liebrecht, *Gervasius von Tilbury*, p. 103; and above, vol. i. p. 344 sqq.

¹ In the first edition of this book I understood Pliny to say that the ceremony fell in the sixth month—that is, in June, and hence I argued that it probably formed part of the midsummer festival. But in accordance with Latin usage the words of Pliny (*sexta luna*, literally "sixth moon") can only mean "the sixth day of the moon." I have to thank Mr. W. Warde Fowler for courteously pointing out my mistake to me. Compare my note in the *Athenæum*, November 21st, 1891, p. 687. I also misunderstood Pliny's words "*et sæculi post tricesimum annum, quia jam virium abunde habeat nec sit sui dimidia*," applying them to the tree instead of to the moon, to which they really refer. After *sæculi* we must understand *principium* from the preceding *principia*. With the thirty years' cycle of the Druids we may compare the sixty years' cycle of the Boeotian festival of the Great Daedala (vol. i. p. 225 sq.), which like the Druidical rite in question was essentially a worship, or perhaps rather a conjuration, of the sacred oak. Whether any deeper affinity, based on common Aryan descent, may be traced between the Boeotian and the Druidical ceremony, I do not pretend to determine.

of the past, like withered rose leaves that, found by chance in the pages of an old volume, still smell of departed summers. Thus in Saintonge and Aunis, two of the ancient provinces of Western France, we read that "of all the festivals for which the merry bells ring out there is not one which has given rise to a greater number of superstitious practices than the festival of St. John the Baptist. The Eve of St. John was the day of all days for gathering the wonderful herbs by means of which you could combat fever, cure a host of diseases, and guard yourself against sorcerers and their spells. But in order to attain these results two conditions had to be observed; first, you must be fasting when you gathered the herbs, and second, you must cull them before the sun rose. If these conditions were not fulfilled, the plants had no special virtue."¹ In the neighbouring province of Périgord the person who gathered the magic herbs before sunrise at this season had to walk backwards, to mutter some mystic words, and to perform certain ceremonies. The plants thus collected were carefully kept as an infallible cure for fever; placed above beds and the doors of houses and of cattle-sheds they protected man and beast from disease, witchcraft, and accident.² In Normandy a belief in the marvellous properties of herbs and plants, of flowers and seeds and leaves gathered, with certain traditional rites, on the Eve or the Day of St. John has remained part of the peasant's creed to this day. Thus he fancies that seeds of vegetables and plants, which have been collected on St. John's Eve, will keep better than others, and that flowers plucked that day will never fade.³ In the Vosges Mountains they say that wizards have but one day in the year, and but one hour in that day, to find and cull the baleful herbs which they use in their black art. That day is the Eve of St. John, and that hour is the time when the church bells are ringing the noon-day Angelus. Hence in many villages they say that the bells ought not to ring at noon on that day.⁴ In the Tyrol

¹ J. L. M. Nogues, *Les mœurs d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Aunis*, p. 71.

² De Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 150 sq.

³ Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. pp. 8, 224; Bosquet, *La Normandie romanesque et merveilleuse*, p. 294.

⁴ Sauvé, *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 168 sq.

they think that the witching hour is when the Ave Maria bell is ringing on Midsummer Eve, for then the witches go forth to gather the noxious plants whereby they raise thunderstorms. Therefore in many districts the bells ring for a shorter time than usual that evening; ¹ at Folgarcit the sexton used to steal quietly into the church, and when the clock struck three he contented himself with giving a few pulls to the smallest of the bells.² In the Mark of Brandenburg the peasants gather all sorts of simples on Midsummer Day, because they are of opinion that the drugs produce their medicinal effect only if they have been culled at that time. Many of these plants, especially roots, must be dug up at midnight and in silence.³ In Mecklenburg not merely is a special healing virtue ascribed to simples collected on Midsummer Day; the very smoke of such plants, if they are burned in the fire, is believed to protect a house against thunder and lightning, and to still the raging of the storm.⁴ The Wends of the Spreewald twine wreaths of herbs and flowers at midsummer, and hang them up in their rooms; and when any one gets a fright he will lay some of the leaves and blossoms on hot coals and fumigate himself with the smoke.⁵ In Eastern Prussia, some two hundred years ago, it used to be customary on Midsummer Day to make up a bunch of herbs of various sorts and fasten it to a pole, which was then put up over the gate or door through which the corn would be brought in at harvest. Such a pole was called Kaupole, and it remained in its place till the crops had been reaped and garnered. Then the bunch of herbs was taken down; part of it was put with the corn in the barn to keep rats and mice from the grain, and part was kept as a remedy for diseases of all sorts.⁶ A writer of the early part of the seventeenth century informs us that the

¹ Zingerle, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 332 sq.; *id.*, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 158, §§ 1345, 1348.

² Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wälschtirol*, p. 237, § 24.

³ A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 330.

⁴ K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und*

Gebrauche aus Meklenburg, ii. p. 287, § 1436.

⁵ W. von Schulenburg, *Wendische Volkssagen und Gebräuche aus dem Spreewald*, p. 254.

⁶ Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae*, p. 24 sq. Kaupole is probably identical in name with Kupole or Kupalo, as to whom see above, vol. ii. pp. 105, 129 sq.

Livonians, among whom he lived, were impressed with a belief in the great and marvellous properties possessed by simples which had been culled on Midsummer Day. Such simples, they thought, were sure remedies for fever and for sickness and pestilence in man and beast; but if gathered one day too late they lost all their virtue.¹ Among the Letts of the Baltic provinces of Russia girls and women go about on Midsummer Day crowned with wreaths of aromatic plants, which are afterwards hung up for good luck in the houses. The plants are also dried and given to cows to eat, because they are supposed to help the animals to calve.² In Bulgaria St. John's Day is the special season for culling simples. On this day, too, Bulgarian girls gather nosegays of a certain white flower, throw them into a vessel of water, and place the vessel under a rose-tree in bloom. Here it remains all night. Next morning they set it in the courtyard and dance singing round it. An old woman then takes the flowers out of the vessel, and the girls wash themselves with the water, praying that God would grant them health throughout the year. After that the old woman restores her nosegay to each girl and promises her a rich husband.³

Sometimes in order to produce the desired effect it is deemed necessary that seven or nine different sorts of plants should be gathered at this mystic season. Norman peasants, who wish to fortify themselves for the toil of harvest, will sometimes go out at dawn on St. John's Day and pull seven kinds of plants, which they afterwards eat in their soup as a means of imparting strength and suppleness to their limbs in the harvest field.⁴ In Mecklenburg maidens are wont to gather seven sorts of flowers at noon on Midsummer Eve. These they weave into garlands, and sleep with them under their pillows. Then they are sure to dream of the men who will marry them.⁵ But the flowers on which youthful lovers

¹ P. Einhorn, "Wiederlegung der Abgötterey: der ander (sic) Theil," printed at Riga in 1627, and reprinted in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, ii. (Riga and Leipsic, 1848), p. 651 sq.

² J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 26.

³ A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipsic, 1898), pp. 348, 386.

⁴ Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 9.

⁵ Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. 285.

dream at Midsummer Eve are oftener nine in number. Thus in Voigtland nine different kinds of flowers are twined into a garland at the hour of noon, but they may not enter the dwelling by the door in the usual way; they must be passed through the window, or, if they come in at the door, they must be thrown, not carried, into the house. Sleeping on them that night you will dream of your future wife or future husband.¹ The Bohemian maid, who gathers nine kinds of flowers on which to dream of love at Midsummer Eve, takes care to wrap her hand in a white cloth, and afterwards to wash it in dew; and when she brings her garland home she must speak no word to any soul she meets by the way, for then all the magic virtue of the flowers would be gone.² Other Bohemian girls look into the book of fate at this season after a different fashion. They twine their hair with wreaths made of nine sorts of leaves, and go, when the stars of the summer night are twinkling in the sky, to a brook that flows beside a tree. There, gazing on the stream, the girl beholds, beside the broken reflections of the tree and the stars, the watery image of her future lord.³ So in Masuren maidens gather nosegays of wild flowers in silence on Midsummer Eve. At the midnight hour each girl takes the nosegay and a glass of water, and when she has spoken certain words she sees her lover mirrored in the water.⁴ Sometimes Bohemian damsels make a different use of their midsummer garlands twined of nine sorts of flowers. They lie down with the garland laid as a pillow under their right ear, and a hollow voice, swooning from underground, proclaims their destiny.⁵ Yet another mode of consulting the oracle by means of these same garlands is to throw them backwards and in silence upon a tree at the hour of noon, just when the flowers have been gathered. For every time that the wreath is thrown without sticking to the branches of the tree the girl will have a year to wait before she weds. This mode of divination is practised in Voigtland,⁶ and the same thing is done in Masuren, although we are not told that there the wreaths

¹ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., *im Voigtlande*, p. 376.

² Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 312.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *loc. cit.*

⁴ Töppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 72.

⁵ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *loc. cit.*

⁶ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., *im Voigtlande*, p. 376.

must be composed of nine sorts of flowers.¹ However, in Masuren chaplets of nine kinds of herbs are gathered on St. John's Eve and put to a more prosaic use than that of presaging the course of true love. They are carefully preserved, and the people brew a sort of tea from them, which they administer as a remedy for many ailments; or they keep the chaplets under their pillows till they are dry, and thereupon dose their sick cattle with them.² In Esthonia the virtues popularly ascribed to wreaths of this sort are many and various. These wreaths, composed of nine kinds of herbs culled on the Eve or the Day of St. John, are sometimes inserted in the roof or hung up on the walls of the house, and each of them receives the name of one of the inmates. If the plants which have been thus dedicated to a girl happen to take root and grow in the chinks and crannies, she will soon wed; if they have been dedicated to an older person and wither away, that person will die. The people also give them as medicine to cattle at the time when the animals are driven forth to pasture; or they fumigate the beasts with the smoke of the herbs, which are burnt along with shavings from the wooden threshold. Bunches of the plants are also hung about the house to keep off evil spirits, and maidens lay them under their pillows to dream on.³ In Sweden the "Midsummer Brooms," made up of nine sorts of flowers gathered on Midsummer Eve, are put to nearly the same uses. Fathers of families hang up such "brooms" to the rafters, one for each inmate of the house; and he or she whose broom (*quast*) is the first to wither will be the first to die. Girls also dream of their future husbands with these bunches of flowers under their pillows. A decoction made from the flowers is, moreover, a panacea for all disorders, and if a bunch of them be hung up in the cattle shed, the Troll cannot enter to bewitch the beasts.⁴

Of the flowers which it has been customary to gather for purposes of magic or divination at midsummer none perhaps is so widely popular as St. John's wort (*Hypericum per-*

¹ Töppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 72.

² Töppen, *op. cit.* p. 71.

³ A. Wiedemann, *Aus dem inneren*

und äussern Leben der Esten, p. 362 sq.

⁴ I. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 267 sq.

foratum). The reason for associating this particular plant with the great summer festival is perhaps not far to seek, for the flower blooms about Midsummer Day, and with its bright yellow petals and masses of golden stamens it might well pass for a tiny copy on earth of the great sun which reaches its culminating point in heaven at this season. Gathered on Midsummer Eve, or on Midsummer Day before sunrise, the blossoms are hung on doorways and windows to preserve the house against thunder, witches, and evil spirits; and various healing properties are attributed to the different species of the plant. In the Tyrol they say that if you put St. John's wort in your shoe before sunrise on Midsummer Day you may walk as far as you please without growing weary. In Scotland people carried it about their persons as an amulet against witchcraft. On the lower Rhine children twine chaplets of St. John's wort on the morning of Midsummer Day, and throw them on the roofs of the houses. Here, too, the people who danced round the midsummer bonfires used to wear wreaths of these yellow flowers in their hair, and to deck the images of the saints at wayside shrines with the blossoms. Sometimes they flung the flowers into the bonfires. In Sicily they dip St. John's wort in oil, and so apply it as a balm for every wound. During the Middle Ages the power which the plant notoriously possesses of banning devils won for it the name of *fuga daemonum*; and before witches and wizards were stretched on the rack or otherwise tortured, the flower used to be administered to them as a means of wringing the truth from their lips.¹ In Saintonge and Aunis the flowers served to detect the

¹ Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste*, p. 145; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 134; Zingerle, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 329; A. Schlossar, "Volksmeinung und Volksaberglaube aus der deutschen Steiermark," *Germania*, N. R., xxiv. (1891), p. 387; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 428; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 307, 312; Dyer, *Folk-lore of Plants*, pp. 62, 286; Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, pp. 147, 149, 150, 540;

Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi*, p. 161 sq. One authority lays down the rule that you should gather the plant fasting and in silence (Brand, *op. cit.* p. 312). According to Sowerby, the *Hypericum perforatum* flowers in England about July and August (*English Botany*, xi. 295). We should remember, however, that in the old calendar Midsummer Day fell twelve days later than at present. The reform of the calendar probably put many old floral superstitions out of joint.

presence of sorcerers, for if one of these pestilent fellows entered a house, the bunches of St. John's wort, which had been gathered on Midsummer Eve and hung on the walls, immediately dropped their yellow heads as if they had suddenly faded.¹ Further, the edges of the calyx and petals of St. John's wort, as well as their external surface, are marked with dark purple spots and lines, which, if squeezed, yield a red essential oil soluble in spirits.² German peasants believe that this red oil is the blood of St. John,³ and this may be why the plant is supposed to heal all sorts of wounds.⁴ In Mecklenburg they say that if you pull up St. John's wort at noon on Midsummer Day you will find at the root a bead of red juice called St. John's blood; smear this blood on your shirt just over your heart, and no mad dog will bite you.⁵ In the Mark of Brandenburg the same blood, procured in the same manner and rubbed on the barrel of a gun, will make every shot from that gun to hit the mark.⁶ According to others, St. John's blood is found at noon on St. John's Day, and only then, adhering in the form of beads to the root of a weed called knawel, which grows in sandy soil. But some people say that these beads of red juice are not really the blood of the martyred saint, but only insects resembling the cochineal or kermes-berry.⁷

Yet another plant whose root has been thought to yield the blood of St. John is the mouse-ear hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*), which grows very commonly in dry exposed places, such as gravelly banks, sunny lawns, and the tops of park walls. "It blossoms from May to the end of July, presenting its elegant sulphur-coloured flowers to the noontide sun, while the surrounding herbage, and even its own foliage, is withered and burnt up,"⁸ and these round

¹ Nogues, *Les mœurs d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Anais*, p. 71 sq.

² Sowerby, *English Botany*, xi. 295.

³ Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste*, p. 35.

⁴ Dyer, *Folk-lore of Plants*, p. 286; Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. p. 291, § 1450a. The Germans of Bohemia ascribe wonderful virtues to the red juice extracted from the yellow flowers of St. John's wort (W. Müller, *Beiträge zur*

Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren, p. 264).

⁵ Bartsch, *op. cit.* ii. p. 286, § 1433. The blood is also a preservative against many diseases (*op. cit.* ii. p. 290, § 1444).

⁶ Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 387, § 105.

⁷ *Die gestriegelte Rochenphilosophie*, p. 246 sq.; Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste*, p. 147.

⁸ Sowerby, *English Botany*, xii. 1093.

yellow flowers may be likened not inaptly to the disc of the great luminary whose light they love. At Hildesheim, in Germany, people used to dig up hawkweed, especially on the Gallow's Hill, when the clocks were striking noon on Midsummer Day; and the blood of St. John, which they found at the roots, was carefully preserved in quills for good luck. A little of it smeared secretly on the clothes was sure to make the wearer fortunate in the market that day.¹ According to some the plant ought to be dug up with a gold coin.² Near Gablonz, in Bohemia, it used to be customary to make a bed of St. John's flowers, as they were called, on St. John's Eve, and in the night the saint himself came and laid his head on the bed; next morning you could see the print of his head on the flowers, which derived a healing virtue from the blessed touch, and were mixed with the fodder of sick cattle to make them whole.³ But whether these St. John's flowers were the mouse-ear hawkweed or not is doubtful.⁴

More commonly in Germany the name of St. John's flowers (*Johannisblumen*) appears to be given to the mountain arnica. In Voigtland the mountain arnica if plucked on St. John's Day and stuck in the fields, laid under the roof, or hung on the wall, is believed to protect house and fields from lightning and hail.⁵ So in some parts of Bavaria they think that no thunderstorm can harm a house which has a blossom of mountain arnica in the roof, and in the Tyrol the same flower fastened to the door will render the house fire-proof. But it is needless to remark that the flower, which takes its popular name from St. John, will be no protection against either fire or thunder unless it has been culled on the saint's own day.⁶ On the same day South Slavonian peasants gather white "St. John's flowers," and lay them in a sieve, one for each person in the house; he or

¹ K. Seifart, *Sagen, Märchen, Schwänke und Gebräuche aus Stadt und Stift Hildesheim*,² p. 177, § 12.

² Rochholz, *Deutscher Glaube und Brauch*, i. 9.

³ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 98, § 681.

⁴ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 134.

⁵ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch, etc., im Voigtlande*, p. 376.

⁶ *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, iii. 342; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 160, § 1363.

she whose flower droops its head before morning will die within the year.¹

Another plant which possesses wondrous virtues, if only it be gathered on the Eve or the Day of St. John, is mugwort or wormwood (*Artemisia vulgaris*). Hence, in France it goes by the name of the herb of St. John.² Near Péronne, in the French department of Somme, people used to go out fasting before sunrise on St. John's Day to cull the plant; put among the wheat in the barn it protected the corn against mice. In Artois people carried bunches of mugwort, or wore it round their body;³ in Poitou they still wear girdles of mugwort or hemp when they warm their backs at the midsummer fire as a preservative against back-ache at harvest;⁴ and the custom of wearing girdles of mugwort on the Eve or Day of St. John has caused the plant to be popularly known in Germany and Bohemia as St. John's girdle. In Bohemia such girdles are believed to protect the wearer for the whole year against ghosts, magic, misfortune, and sickness. People also weave garlands of the plant and look through them at the midsummer bonfire or put them on their heads; and by doing so they ensure that their heads will not ache nor their eyes smart all that year. Another Bohemian practice is to make a decoction of mugwort which has been gathered on St. John's Day; then, when your cow is bewitched and will yield no milk, you have only to wash the animal thrice with the decoction and the spell will be broken.⁵ In Germany, people used to crown their heads or gird their bodies with mugwort, which they afterwards threw into the midsummer bonfire, pronouncing certain rhymes and believing that they thus rid themselves of all their ill-luck.⁶ Sometimes wreaths or girdles of

¹ F. S. Krauss, *Volks Glaube und religiöser Brauch der Südslaven*, p. 34.

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 1013; Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, i. 189 sq.; Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, p. 751.

³ Breuil, "Du culte de St. Jean-Baptiste," *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie*, viii. (1845), p. 224, note 1, quoting the curé of Manancourt, near Péronne.

⁴ L. Pineau, *Le folk-lore du Poitou* (Paris, 1892), p. 499.

⁵ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 90 sq., §§ 635-637.

⁶ Panzer, *Beitrag zur deutschen Mythologie*, i. p. 249, § 283; Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ ii. 1013; Zingerle, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 331, and *ib.* iv. (1859), p. 42 (quoting a work of

mugwort were kept in houses, cattle-sheds, and sheep-folds throughout the year.¹ In Normandy such wreaths are a protection against thunder and thieves;² and stalks of mugwort hinder witches from laying their spells on the butter.³ In Mecklenburg, they say that if you will dig up a plant of mugwort at noon on Midsummer Day, you will find under the root a burning coal, which vanishes away as soon as the church bells have ceased to ring. If you find the coal and carry it off in silence, it will prove a remedy for all sorts of maladies.⁴ According to another German superstition, such a coal will turn to gold.⁵ English writers record the popular belief that a rare coal is to be found under the root of mugwort at a single hour of a single day in the year, namely, at noon on Midsummer Eve, and that this coal will protect him who carries it on his person from plague, carbuncle, lightning, fever, and ague.⁶ In Eastern Prussia, on St. John's Eve, people can foretell a marriage by means of mugwort; they bend two stalks of the growing plant outward, and then observe whether the stalks, after straightening themselves again, incline towards each other or not.⁷

A similar mode of divination has been practised both in England and in Germany with the orpine (*Sedum telephium*), a plant which grows on a gravelly or chalky soil about hedges, the borders of fields, and on bushy hills. It flowers in August, and the blossoms consist of dense clustered tufts of crimson or purple petals; sometimes, but rarely, the flowers are white.⁸ In England the plant is popularly known as Midsummer Men, because people used to plant slips of them in pairs on Midsummer Eve, one slip standing

the seventeenth century); Vonbun, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, p. 133, note **. See also above, pp. 268, 270, 274.

¹ Gubernatis, *Mythologie der Plantes*, i. 190, quoting Du Cange.

² De Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 262.

³ Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 8.

⁴ Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen, und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. 290, § 1445.

⁵ Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfesten*, p. 141.

⁶ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 334, quoting Lupton and Thomas Hill.

⁷ Lemke, *Volksstümliches in Ostpreussen*, i. 21. As to mugwort (German *Beifuss*, French *armoise*), see further Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, ii. 16 sqq.; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ iii. 356 sq.

⁸ Sowerby, *English Botany*, vii. 1319.

for a young man and the other for a young woman. If the plants, as they grew up, bent towards each other, the couple would marry; if either of them withered, he or she whom it represented would die.¹ In Masuren and the Mark of Brandenburg the method of forecasting the future by means of the orpine is precisely the same.²

Another plant which popular superstition has often associated with the summer solstice is vervain. In some parts of Spain people gather vervain after sunset on Midsummer Eve, and wash their faces next morning in the water in which the plants have been allowed to steep overnight.³ In Normandy, the peasants cull vervain on the Day or the Eve of St. John, believing that, in addition to its medical properties, it possesses at this season the power of protecting the house from thunder and lightning, from sorcerers, demons, and thieves.⁴ Bohemian poachers wash their guns with a decoction of vervain and southernwood, which they have gathered naked before sunrise on Midsummer Day; guns which have been thus treated never miss the mark.⁵ In our own country vervain used to be sought for its magical virtues on Midsummer Eve.⁶ In the Tyrol they think that he who finds a four-leaved clover while the vesper-bell is ringing on Midsummer Eve can work magic

¹ Aubrey, *Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, p. 25 sq.; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 329 sqq.; Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, p. 136. It seems that in England the course of love has sometimes been divined by means of sprigs of real sage placed in a basin of rose-water on Midsummer Eve (Brand, *op. cit.* i. 333).

² Toppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 71 sq.; Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. 176, § 487. In Germany a root of orpine, dug up on St. John's morning and hung between the shoulders, is sometimes thought to be a cure for hemorrhoids (Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste*, p. 145). Perhaps the "oblong, tapering, fleshy, white lumps" of the roots (Sowerby, *English Botany*, vii. 1319) are thought to bear some likeness to the hemorrhoids, and

to heal them on the principle that the remedy should resemble the disease.

³ Dr. Otero Acevado, in *Le Temps*, September 1898. See above, p. 297, note 2.

⁴ De Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 262; Bosquet, *La Normandie romanesque et merveilleuse*, p. 294; Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, i. 287, ii. 8. In Saintonge and Aunis the plant was gathered on Midsummer Eve for the purpose of evoking or exorcising spirits (Nogues, *Les mœurs d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Aunis*, p. 72).

⁵ Grohman, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 207, § 1437.

⁶ Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, ii. 177, citing Chambers, *Edinburgh Journal*, 2nd July 1842.

from that time forth.¹ People in Berry say that the four-leaved clover is endowed with all its marvellous virtues only when it has been plucked by a virgin on the night of Midsummer Eve.² In Saintonge and Aunis the four-leaved clover, if it be found on the Eve of St. John, brings good luck at play.³

At Kirchvers, in Hesse, people run out to the fields at noon on Midsummer Day to gather camomile; for the flowers, plucked at the moment when the sun is at the highest point of his course, are supposed to possess the medicinal qualities of the plant in the highest degree. In heathen times the camomile flower, with its healing qualities, its yellow calix and white stamens, is said to have been sacred to the kindly and shining Balder and to have borne his name, being called *Balders-brâ*.⁴ In Westphalia, also, the belief prevails that camomile is most potent as a drug when it has been gathered on Midsummer Day;⁵ in Masuren the plant must always be one of the nine different kinds of plants that are culled on Midsummer Eve to form wreaths, and tea brewed from the flower is a remedy for many sorts of maladies.⁶ Thuringian peasants hold that if the root of the yellow mullein (*Verbascum*) has been dug up in silence with a ducat at midnight, on Midsummer Eve, and is worn in a piece of linen next to the skin, it will preserve the wearer from epilepsy.⁷ In Prussia girls go out into the fields on Midsummer Day, gather mullein, and hang it up over their beds. The girl whose flower is the first to wither will be the first to die.⁸ Perhaps the bright yellow flowers of mullein, clustering round the stem like lighted candles, may partly account for the association of the plant with the summer solstice. In Germany great mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) is called the King's Candle; in

¹ Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*, p. 107, § 919.

² Laisnel de la Salle, *Croyances et Légendes du Centre de la France*, i. 288.

³ Nogues, *Les mœurs d'autrefois en Saintonge et en Aunis*, p. 71 sq.

⁴ W. Kolbe, *Hessische Volks-Sitten und Gebräuche*, p. 72.

⁵ Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und*

Märchen aus Westfalen, ii. 177, § 488.

⁶ Toppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 71.

⁷ A. Witzschel, *Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Thüringen*, p. 289, § 139.

⁸ Tettâu und Temme, *Volkssagen Ostpreussens, Litthauens und Westpreussens*, p. 283.

England it is popularly known as High Taper. The yellow, hoary mullein (*Verbascum pulverulentum*) "forms a golden pyramid a yard high, of many hundreds of flowers, and is one of the most magnificent of British herbaceous plants."¹ We may trace a relation between mullein and the sun in the Prussian custom of bending the flower, after sunset, towards the point where the sun will rise, and praying at the same time that a sick person or a sick beast may be restored to health.² In Bohemia poachers fancy that they can render themselves invulnerable by swallowing the seed from a fir-cone which they have found growing upwards before sunrise on the morning of St. John's Day.³ Again, wild thyme gathered on Midsummer Day is used in Bohemia to fumigate the trees on Christmas Eve in order that they may grow well;⁴ in Voigtland a tea brewed from wild-thyme which has been pulled at noon on Midsummer Day is given to women in childbed.⁵

More famous, however, than these are the miraculous properties which popular superstition in many parts of Europe has attributed to the fern at this season. At midnight on Midsummer Eve the plant is supposed to bloom and soon afterwards to seed; and whoever catches the bloom or the seed is thereby endowed with supernatural knowledge and miraculous powers; above all, he knows where treasures lie hidden in the ground, and he can render himself invisible at will. But great precautions must be observed in procuring the wondrous bloom or seed, which else quickly vanishes like dew on sand or mist in the air. The seeker must neither touch it with his hand nor let it touch the ground; he spreads a white cloth under the plant, and the blossom or the seed falls into it. Beliefs of this sort concerning fern-seed have prevailed, with trifling variations of detail, in England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, and Russia.⁶ In Bohemia the magic bloom is said to

¹ Sowerby, *English Botany*, iv. 549, 487.

² Tettau und Temme, *loc. cit.*

³ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 205, § 1426.

⁴ Grohmann, *op. cit.* p. 93, § 648.

⁵ J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch, etc., im Voigtlande*, p. 377.

⁶ Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 314 sqq.; Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, p. 342; Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-lore*, p. 242; Leceur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, i. 290;

be golden, and to glow or sparkle like fire.¹ In Russia they say that at dead of night on Midsummer Eve the plant puts forth buds like glowing coals, which on the stroke of twelve burst open with a clap like thunder and light up everything near and far.²

Once more, people have fancied that if they cut a branch of hazel on Midsummer Eve it would serve them as a divining rod to discover treasures and water. This belief has existed in Moravia, Mecklenburg, and apparently in Scotland.³ In the Mark of Brandenburg, they say that if you would procure the mystic wand you must go to the hazel by night on Midsummer Eve, walking backwards, and when you have come to the bush you must silently put your hands between your legs and cut a fork-shaped stick; that stick will be the divining-rod, and, as such, will detect treasures buried in the ground. If you have any doubt as to the quality of the wand, you have only to hold it in water; for in that case your true divining-rod will squeak like a pig, but your spurious one will not.⁴

Many more examples might be cited of the marvellous virtues which certain plants have been supposed to acquire

Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² § 123; Vonbun, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, p. 133 sqq.; Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfesten*, p. 144; Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. 288, § 1437; Töppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 72; A. Schlossar, "Volksmeinung und Volksaberglaube aus der deutschen Steiermark," *Germania*, N. R., xxiv. (1891), p. 387; Vernaleken, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 309; Von Alpenburg, *Mythen und Sagen Tirols*, p. 407 sq.; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*, p. 103, § 882, p. 158, § 1350; Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wülschtirol*, p. 237; Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 97, §§ 673-677; Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 311 sq.; W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 265; Finamore, *Credenze, Usi e Costumi Abruzzesi*, p. 161; Guber-

natis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, ii. 144 sqq. In a South Slavonian story we read how a cowherd understood the language of animals, because fern-seed accidentally fell into his shoe on Midsummer Day (F. S. Krauss, *Sagen und Märchen der Südslaven*, ii. 424 sqq., No. 159). On this subject I may refer to my article, "The Language of Animals," *The Archaeological Review*, i. (1888), p. 164 sqq.

¹ Grohmann, *op. cit.* p. 97, §§ 673, 675.

² *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), p. 152 sq.; Gubernatis, *op. cit.* ii. 146.

³ W. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 265; Bartsch, *op. cit.* ii. 288, § 1439; J. Napier, *Folk-lore, or Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, p. 125.

⁴ Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 330. As to the divining-rod in general, see Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, p. 55 sqq.

at the summer solstice, but the foregoing instances may suffice to prove that the superstition is widely spread, deeply rooted, and therefore probably very ancient in Europe. Hence it seems reasonable to conjecture that like so many other plants the sacred mistletoe may have acquired, in the eyes of the Druids, a double portion of its mystic qualities at the solstice in June, and that accordingly they may have regularly cut it with solemn ceremony on Midsummer Eve. The conjecture is confirmed when we find it to be still a rule of folk-lore that the mistletoe should be cut on this day.¹ Further, the peasants of Piedmont and Lombardy still go out on Midsummer morning to search the oak-leaves for the "oil of St. John," which is supposed to heal all wounds made with cutting instruments.² Originally, perhaps, the "oil of St. John" was simply the mistletoe, or a decoction made from it. For in Holstein the mistletoe, especially oak-mistletoe, is still regarded as a panacea for green wounds;³ and if, as is alleged, "all-healer" is the name of the plant in the modern Celtic speech of Brittany, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland,⁴ this can be nothing but a survival of the name by which, as we have seen, the Druids addressed the oak, or rather, perhaps, the mistletoe. At Lacaune, in France, the old Druidical belief in the mistletoe as an antidote to all poisons still survives among the people; they apply the plant to the stomach of the sufferer or give him a decoction of it to drink.⁵ In the north-east of Scotland people used to cut withes of mistletoe at the full moon in March; these they bent into circles and kept them for a year to cure hectors and other troubles.⁶ In some parts of Germany the mistletoe is

¹ Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ iii. 78, 353, referring to Dybeck.

² Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, ii. 73.

³ Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, p. 378. Hunters believe that the mistletoe heals all wounds and brings luck in hunting (Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,² p. 206).

⁴ Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ ii. 1009. My friend Mr. R. A. Neil of Pembroke College has pointed out to me that in N. M⁴Alpine's *Gaelic Dictionary*

(Seventh Edition, Edinburgh and London, 1877, p. 432) the Gaelic word for mistletoe is given as *an t-uil loc*, which, Mr. Neil tells me, means "all-healer."

⁵ De Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 102 sq.

⁶ Shaw, in Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," printed in Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 136; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 151.

especially esteemed as a remedy for the ailments of children, who sometimes wear it hung round their neck as an amulet.¹

Thus it appears probable that the two main features of the Balder myth—the pulling of the mistletoe and the burning of the god—were reproduced in the great midsummer festival of the Celts. But in Scandinavia itself, the home of Balder, both these features of his myth can still be traced in the popular celebration of midsummer. For in Sweden on Midsummer Eve mistletoe is “diligently sought after, they believing it to be, in a high degree, possessed of mystic qualities; and that if a sprig of it be attached to the ceiling of the dwelling-house, the horse’s stall, or the cow’s crib, the ‘Troll’ will then be powerless to injure either man or beast.”² The oak mistletoe, we are told, is held in the highest repute in Sweden, and is commonly seen in farm-houses hanging from the ceiling to protect the dwelling from all harm, but especially from fire; and persons afflicted with the falling sickness think they can ward off attacks of the malady by carrying about with them a knife which has a handle of oak mistletoe. A Swedish remedy for other complaints is to hang a sprig of mistletoe round the sufferer’s neck, or to make him wear on his finger a ring made from the plant.³ Again, in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark huge bonfires are kindled on hills and eminences on Midsummer Eve.⁴ It does not appear, indeed, that any effigy is burned in these bonfires; but the burning of an effigy is a feature which might easily drop out after its meaning was forgotten. And the name of Balder’s balefires (*Balder’s Bålar*), by which these midsummer fires were formerly known in Sweden,⁵ puts their connection with Balder beyond the reach of doubt, and makes it certain that in former times either a living representative or an effigy of Balder must have been annually burned in them. Midsummer was the season sacred to Balder, and the Swedish poet Tegner, in placing the burning of Balder at mid-

¹ *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie*, i. (1853), p. 444; *id.*, iv. (1859), p. 41 sq.

² L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 269.

³ Kelly, *Curiosities of Indo-European Tradition and Folk-lore*, p. 185 sq.

⁴ Lloyd, *op. cit.* p. 259; Grimm, *D.M.* i. 517 sq.

⁵ Lloyd, *l.c.*

summer,¹ may very well have followed an old tradition that the summer solstice was the time when the good god came to his untimely end.

Thus it has been shown that the leading incidents of the Balder myth have their counterparts in those fire-festivals of our European peasantry which undoubtedly date from a time long prior to the introduction of Christianity. The pretence of throwing the victim chosen by lot into the Beltane fire, and the similar treatment of the man clad all in green at the midsummer bonfire in Normandy, are indubitable traces of an older custom of actually burning human beings on these occasions; and the green dress of the Norman victim, coupled with the leafy envelope of the young fellow who trod out the midsummer fire at Moosheim, seems clearly to indicate that the persons who perished at these festivals did so in the character of tree-spirits or deities of vegetation. From all this we may reasonably infer that in the Balder myth on the one hand, and the fire-festivals and custom of gathering mistletoe on the other hand, we have, as it were, the two broken and dissevered halves of an original whole. In other words, we may assume with a fair degree of probability that the myth of Balder's death was not merely a myth, that is, a description of physical phenomena in imagery borrowed from human life; we may suppose that it was at the same time the explanation given of an annual custom of burning a human representative of the god, and cutting the mistletoe with solemn ceremony. If I am right, the story of Balder's tragic end formed, so to say, the text of the sacred drama which was acted year by year as a magical rite to cause the sun to shine and the trees to grow. The tale belonged, in short, to that class of nature myths which are meant to be supplemented by ritual; here, as so often, myth stood to magic in the relation of theory to practice.

But if the victims—the human Balders—who died by fire, whether in spring or at midsummer, did so as living

¹ Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ iii. 78, who adds, "*Mahnen die Johannisfeuer an Baldrs Leichenbrand?*" This pregnant hint, which contains in germ the solution of

the whole myth, has been quite lost on the mythologists who since Grimm's day have enveloped the subject in a cloud of learned dust.

embodiments of tree-spirits or deities of vegetation, it would seem that Balder himself must have been a tree-spirit or deity of vegetation. It becomes desirable, therefore, to determine, if we can, the particular kind of tree or trees, of which a personal representative was burned at the fire-festivals. For we may be quite sure that it was not as a representative of vegetation in general that the victim suffered death. The idea of vegetation in general is too abstract to be primitive. Most probably the victim at first represented a particular kind of sacred tree. Now of all European trees none has such claims as the oak to be considered as pre-eminently the sacred tree of the Aryans. Its worship is attested for all the great branches of the Aryan stock in Europe. We have seen that it was not only the sacred tree, but the principal object of worship of both Celts and Lithuanians.¹ The roving Celts appear to have carried their worship of the oak with them even to Asia; for in the heart of Asia Minor the Galatian senate met in a place which bore the pure Celtic name of Drynemetum or "temple of the oak."² Among the Slavs the oak seems to have been the sacred tree of the great god Perun.³ According to Grimm, the oak ranked first among the holy trees of the Germans, and was indeed their chief god. It is certainly known to have been adored by them in the age of heathendom, and traces of its worship have survived in various parts of Germany almost to the present day.⁴ Among the ancient Italians the oak was sacred above all other trees.⁵ The image of Jupiter on the Capitol at Rome seems to have been originally nothing but a natural oak-tree.⁶ At Dodona, perhaps the oldest of all Greek sanctuaries, Zeus was worshipped as immanent in the sacred oak, and the rustling of its leaves in the wind was his voice.⁷ If, then, the

¹ Above, p. 327, and vol. i. pp. 168 sq., 186. On the worship of the oak in Europe, see P. Wagler, *Die Eiche in alter und neuer Zeit* (Berlin, 1891).

² Strabo, xii. 5. 1. The name is a compound of *dryu*, "oak," and *nemed*, "temple" (H. F. Tozer, *Selections from Strabo*, p. 284). We know from Jerome (*Commentar. in Epist. ad Galat.* book ii. praeft.) that the Galatians retained their native Celtic speech

as late as the fourth century of our era.

³ See above, vol. i. p. 168.

⁴ Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ i. 55 sq., 58 sq., ii. 542, iii. 187 sq.; Wagler, *op. cit.* p. 40 sqq.

⁵ Preller, *Röm. Mythol.*³ i. 108.

⁶ Livy, i. 10. Cp. C. Bötticher, *Der Baunkultus der Hellenen*, p. 133 sq.

⁷ Bötticher, *op. cit.* p. 111 sqq.; Preller, *Griech. Mythol.*⁴ ed. C. Robert,

great god of both Greeks and Romans was represented in some of his oldest shrines under the form of an oak, and if the oak was the principal object of worship of Celts, Germans, and Lithuanians, we may certainly conclude that this tree was one of the chief, if not the very chief divinity of the Aryans before the dispersion; and that their primitive home must have lain in a land which was clothed with forests of oak.¹

Now, considering the primitive character and remarkable similarity of the fire-festivals observed by all the branches of the Aryan race in Europe, we may infer that these festivals form part of the common stock of religious observances which the various peoples carried with them in their wanderings from their old home. But, if I am right, an essential feature of those primitive fire-festivals was the burning of a man who represented the tree-spirit. In view, then, of the place occupied by the oak in the religion of the Aryans, the presumption is that the tree so represented at the fire-festivals must originally have been the oak. So far as the Celts and Lithuanians are concerned, this conclusion will perhaps hardly be contested. But both for them and for the Germans it is confirmed by a remarkable piece of religious conservatism. The most primitive method known to man of producing fire is by rubbing two pieces of wood against each other till they ignite; and we have seen that this method is still used in Europe for kindling sacred fires such as the need-fire, and

i. 122 sqq; Wagler, *op. cit.* p. 2 sqq. It is noteworthy that at Olympia the only wood that might be used in sacrificing to Zeus was the white poplar (Pausanias, v. 14. 2). But it is probable that herein Zeus, who was an intruder at Olympia, merely accepted an old local custom which, long before his arrival, had been observed in the worship of Pelops (Pausanias, v. 13. 3).

¹ Without hazarding an opinion on the vexed question of the cradle of the Aryans, I may observe that in various parts of Europe the oak seems to have been formerly more common than it is now. In Denmark the present beech woods were preceded by oak woods, and these by the Scotch fir

(Lyell, *Antiquity of Man*, p. 9; J. Geikie, *Prehistoric Europe*, p. 486 sq.). In parts of North Germany it appears from the evidence of archives that the fir has ousted the oak (O. Schrader, *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte*² (Jena, 1890), p. 394). In prehistoric times the oak seems to have been the chief tree in the forests which clothed the valley of the Po; the piles on which the pile villages rested were of oak (W. Helbig, *Die Italiker in der Poebene*, p. 25 sq.). The classical tradition that in the olden time men subsisted largely on acorns is borne out by the evidence of the pile villages in Northern Italy, in which great quantities of acorns have been discovered. See Helbig, *op. cit.* pp. 16 sq., 26, 72 sq.

that most probably it was formerly resorted to at all the fire-festivals under discussion. Now it is sometimes prescribed that the need-fire, or other sacred fire, must be made by the friction of a particular kind of wood; and wherever the kind of wood is prescribed, whether among Celts, Germans, or Slavs, that wood is always the oak. Thus we have seen that amongst the Slavs of Masuren the new fire for the village is made on Midsummer Day by causing a wheel to revolve rapidly round an axle of oak till the axle takes fire.¹ When the perpetual fire which the ancient Slavs used to maintain chanced to go out, it was rekindled by the friction of a piece of oak-wood, which had been previously heated by being struck with a gray (not a red) stone.² In Germany the need-fire was regularly kindled by the friction of oak-wood;³ and in the Highlands of Scotland, both the Beltane and the need-fires were lighted by similar means.⁴ Now, if the sacred fire was regularly kindled by the friction of oak-wood, we may infer that originally the fire was also fed with the same material. In point of fact, the perpetual fire which burned under the sacred oak at the great Lithuanian sanctuary of Romove was fed with oak-wood;⁵ and that oak-wood was formerly the fuel burned in the midsummer fires may perhaps be inferred from the circumstance that in many mountain districts of Germany peasants are still in the habit of making up their cottage fire on Midsummer Day with a heavy block

¹ Above, p. 276.

² Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae*, 19 sq. Mr. Kallston states (on what authority I do not know) that if the fire maintained in honour of the Lithuanian god Perkunas went out, it was rekindled by sparks struck from a stone which the image of the god held in his hand (*Songs of the Russian People*, p. 88).

³ Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ i. 502, 503; Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*,² p. 43; Colshorn, *Märchen und Sagen* (Hanover, 1854), pp. 234-236; Pöhle, *Harzbilder*, p. 75; Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, ii. 150; Rochholz, *Deutscher Glaube und Brauch*, ii. 148. The writer who styles himself Montanus

says (*Die deutschen Volksfeste*, etc., p. 127) that the need-fire was made by the friction of oak and fir. Sometimes it is said that the need-fire should be made with nine different kinds of wood (Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ i. 503, 505; Wolf, *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, ii. 380; Jahn, *Die deutschen Opfergebräuche*, p. 27); but the kinds of wood are not specified. At Delphi the perpetual fire was fed with fir-wood only (Plutarch, *De E apud Delphos*, 2).

⁴ John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 442; Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ i. 506. See above, p. 260.

⁵ Above, vol. i. p. 168 sq.

of oak-wood. The block is so arranged that it smoulders slowly and is not finally reduced to charcoal till the expiry of a year. Then upon next Midsummer Day the charred embers of the old log are removed to make room for the new one, and are mixed with the seed-corn or scattered about the garden. This is believed to promote the growth of the crops and to preserve them from blight and vermin.¹ It may be remembered that at the Boeotian festival of the Daedala, the analogy of which to the spring and midsummer festivals of modern Europe has been already pointed out, the great feature was the felling and burning of an oak.² The general conclusion is, that at those periodic or occasional ceremonies, of which the object was to cause the sun to shine and the fruits of the earth to grow, the ancient Aryans both kindled and fed the fire with the sacred oak-wood.

But if at these solemn rites the fire was regularly made of oak-wood, it follows that the man who was burned in it as a personification of the tree-spirit could have represented no tree but the oak. The sacred oak was thus burned in duplicate; the wood of the tree was consumed in the fire, and along with it was consumed a living man as a personification of the oak-spirit. The conclusion thus drawn for the European Aryans in general is confirmed in its special application to the Scandinavians by the relation in which amongst them the mistletoe appears to have stood to the burning of the victim in the midsummer fire. We have seen that among Scandinavians it has been customary to gather the mistletoe at midsummer. But so far as appears on the face of this custom, there is nothing to connect it with the midsummer fires in which human victims or effigies of them were burned. Even if the fire, as seems probable, was originally always made with oak-wood, why should it have been necessary to pull the mistletoe? The last link between the midsummer customs of gathering the mistletoe and lighting the bonfires is supplied by Balder's myth, which certainly cannot be disjoined from the customs in question. The myth shows that a vital connection must once have been

¹ Montanus, *Die deutschen Volksfeste*, etc., p. 127.

² Above, vol. i. p. 225 *sq.*

believed to subsist between the mistletoe and the human representative of the oak who was burned in the fire. According to the myth, Balder could be killed by nothing in heaven or earth except the mistletoe; and so long as the mistletoe remained on the oak, he was not only immortal but invulnerable. Now, as soon as we see that Balder was the oak, the origin of the myth becomes plain. The mistletoe was viewed as the seat of life of the oak, and so long as it was uninjured nothing could kill or even wound the oak. The conception of the mistletoe as the seat of life of the oak would naturally be suggested to primitive people by the observation that while the oak is deciduous, the mistletoe which grows on it is evergreen. In winter the sight of its fresh foliage among the bare branches must have been hailed by the worshippers of the tree as a sign that the divine life which had ceased to animate the branches yet survived in the mistletoe, as the heart of a sleeper still beats when his body is motionless. Hence when the god had to be killed—when the sacred tree had to be burnt—it was necessary to begin by breaking off the mistletoe. For so long as the mistletoe remained intact, the oak (so people might think) was invulnerable; all the blows of their knives and axes would glance harmless from its surface. But once tear from the oak its sacred heart—the mistletoe—and the tree nodded to its fall. And when in later times the spirit of the oak came to be represented by a living man, it was logically necessary to suppose that, like the tree he personated, he could neither be killed nor wounded so long as the mistletoe remained uninjured. The pulling of the mistletoe was thus at once the signal and the cause of his death.

But since the idea of a being whose life is thus, in a sense, outside itself, must be strange to many readers, and has, indeed, not yet been recognised in its full bearing on primitive superstition, it will be worth while to illustrate it by examples drawn both from story and custom. The result will be to show that, in assuming this idea as the explanation of the relation of Balder to the mistletoe, I assume a principle which is deeply engrained on the mind of primitive man.

§ 3. *The external Soul in Folk-tales*

In a former chapter we saw that, in the opinion of primitive people, the soul may temporarily absent itself from the body without causing death. Such temporary absences of the soul are often believed to involve considerable risk, since the wandering soul is liable to a variety of mishaps at the hands of enemies, and so forth. But there is another aspect to this power of disengaging the soul from the body. If only the safety of the soul can be ensured during its absence, there is no reason why the soul should not continue absent for an indefinite time; indeed a man may, on a pure calculation of personal safety, desire that his soul should never return to his body. Unable to conceive of life abstractly as a "permanent possibility of sensation" or a "continuous adjustment of internal arrangements to external relations," the savage thinks of it as a concrete material thing of a definite bulk, capable of being seen and handled, kept in a box or jar, and liable to be bruised, fractured, or smashed in pieces. It is not needful that the life, so conceived, should be in the man; it may be absent from his body and still continue to animate him, by virtue of a sort of sympathy or "action at a distance." So long as this object which he calls his life or soul remains unharmed, the man is well; if it is injured, he suffers; if it is destroyed, he dies. Or, to put it otherwise, when a man is ill or dies, the fact is explained by saying that the material object called his life or soul, whether it be in his body or out of it, has either sustained injury or been destroyed. But there may be circumstances in which, if the life or soul remains in the man, it stands a greater chance of sustaining injury than if it were stowed away in some safe and secret place. Accordingly, in such circumstances, primitive man takes his soul out of his body and deposits it for security in some snug spot, intending to replace it in his body when the danger is past. Or if he should discover some place of absolute security, he may be content to leave his soul there permanently. The advantage of this is that, so long as the soul remains unharmed in the place where he has deposited

it, the man himself is immortal ; nothing can kill his body, since his life is not in it.

Evidence of this primitive belief is furnished by a class of folk-tales of which the Norse story of "The giant who had no heart in his body" is perhaps the best-known example. Stories of this kind are widely diffused over the world, and from their number and the variety of incident and of details in which the leading idea is embodied, we may infer that the conception of an external soul is one which has had a powerful hold on the minds of men at an early stage of history. For folk-tales are a faithful reflection of the world as it appeared to the primitive mind ; and we may be sure that any idea which commonly occurs in them, however absurd it may seem to us, must once have been an ordinary article of belief. This assurance, so far as it concerns the supposed power of disengaging the soul from the body for a longer or shorter time, is amply corroborated by a comparison of the folk-tales in question with the actual beliefs and practices of savages. To this we shall return after some specimens of the tales have been given. The specimens will be selected with a view of illustrating both the characteristic features and the wide diffusion of this class of tales.¹

In the first place, the story of the external soul is told, in various forms, by all Aryan peoples from Hindoostan to

¹ A number of the following examples were collected by Mr. E. Clodd in his paper, "The Philosophy of Punchkin," *Folk-lore Journal*, ii. (1884), pp. 288-303 ; and again in his *Myths and Dreams* (London, 1885), pp. 188-198. The subject of the external soul, both in folk-tales and in custom, has been well handled by G. A. Wilken in his two papers, "De betrekking tusschen menschen-dieren- en plantenleven naar het volksgeloof," *De Indische Gids*, November 1884, pp. 595-612, and "De Simsonsage," *De Gids*, 1888, No. 5. In "De Simsonsage" Wilken has reproduced, to a great extent in the same words, most of the evidence cited by him in "De betrekking," yet without referring to that paper. When I wrote this book in 1889-1890 I was unacquainted with "De betrekking," but used with advantage "De Simson-

sage," a copy of it having been kindly sent me by the author. I am the more anxious to express my obligations to "De Simsonsage," because I have had little occasion to refer to it, most of the original authorities cited by the author being either in my own library or easily accessible to me in Cambridge. It would be a convenience to anthropologists if Wilken's valuable papers, dispersed as they are in various Dutch periodicals which are seldom to be met with in England, were collected and published together. After the appearance of my first anthropological essay in 1885, Professor Wilken entered into correspondence with me, and thenceforward sent me copies of his papers as they appeared ; but of his papers published before that date I have not a complete set. (Note to the Second Edition.)

the Hebrides. A very common form of it is this: A warlock, giant, or other fairyland being is invulnerable and immortal because he keeps his soul hidden far away in some secret place; but a fair princess, whom he holds enthralled in his enchanted castle, wiles his secret from him and reveals it to the hero, who seeks out the warlock's soul, heart, life, or death (as it is variously called), and, by destroying it, simultaneously kills the warlock. Thus a Hindoo story tells how a magician called Punchkin held a queen captive for twelve years, and would fain marry her, but she would not have him. At last the queen's son came to rescue her, and the two plotted together to kill Punchkin. So the queen spoke the magician fair, and pretended that she had at last made up her mind to marry him. "And do tell me," she said, "are you quite immortal? Can death never touch you? And are you too great an enchanter ever to feel human suffering?" "It is true," he said, "that I am not as others. Far, far away—hundreds of thousands of miles from this—there lies a desolate country covered with thick jungle. In the midst of the jungle grows a circle of palm-trees, and in the centre of the circle stand six chattees full of water, piled one above another; below the sixth chattee is a small cage, which contains a little green parrot—on the life of the parrot depends my life—and if the parrot is killed I must die. It is, however," he added, "impossible that the parrot should sustain any injury, both on account of the inaccessibility of the country, and because, by my appointment, many thousand genii surround the palm-trees, and kill all who approach the place." But the queen's young son overcame all difficulties, and got possession of the parrot. He brought it to the door of the magician's palace, and began playing with it. Punchkin, the magician, saw him, and, coming out, tried to persuade the boy to give him the parrot. "Give me my parrot!" cried Punchkin. Then the boy took hold of the parrot and tore off one of his wings; and as he did so the magician's right arm fell off. Punchkin then stretched out his left arm, crying, "Give me my parrot!" The prince pulled off the parrot's second wing, and the magician's left arm tumbled off. "Give me my parrot!" cried he, and fell

on his knees. The prince pulled off the parrot's right leg, the magician's right leg fell off; the prince pulled off the parrot's left leg, down fell the magician's left. Nothing remained of him except the lifeless body and the head; but still he rolled his eyes, and cried, "Give me my parrot!" "Take your parrot, then," cried the boy; and with that he wrung the bird's neck, and threw it at the magician; and, as he did so, Punchkin's head twisted round, and, with a fearful groan, he died!¹ In another Hindoo tale an ogre is asked by his daughter, "Papa, where do you keep your soul?" "Sixteen miles away from this place," he said, "is a tree. Round the tree are tigers, and bears, and scorpions, and snakes; on the top of the tree is a very great fat snake; on his head is a little cage; in the cage is a bird; and my soul is in that bird." The end of the ogre is like that of the magician in the previous tale. As the bird's wings and legs are torn off, the ogre's arms and legs drop off; and when its neck is wrung he falls down dead.²

In another Hindoo story a princess called Sodewa Bai was born with a golden necklace about her neck, and the astrologer told her parents, "This is no common child; the necklace of gold about her neck contains your daughter's soul; let it, therefore, be guarded with the utmost care; for if it were taken off and worn by another person, she would die." So her mother caused it to be firmly fastened round the child's neck, and, as soon as the child was old enough to understand, she told her its value, and warned her never to let it be taken off. In course of time Sodewa Bai was married to a prince who had another wife living. The first wife, jealous of her young rival, persuaded a negress to steal from Sodewa Bai the golden necklace which contained her soul. The negress did so, and, as soon as she put the necklace round her own neck, Sodewa Bai died. All day long the negress used to wear the necklace; but late at night, on going to bed, she would take it off and put it by till morning; and whenever she took it off, Sodewa Bai's

¹ Mary Frere, *Old Deccan Days*, p. 12 sqq.

² Maive Stokes, *Indian Fairy Tales*, p. 58 sqq. For similar Hindoo stories,

see *id.*, p. 187 sq.; Lal Behari Day, *Folk-tales of Bengal*, p. 121 sq.; F. A. Steel and R. C. Temple, *Wide-awake Stories*, p. 58 sqq.

soul returned to her and she lived. But when morning came, and the negress put on the necklace, Sodewa Bai died again. At last the prince discovered the treachery of his elder wife and restored the golden necklace to Sodewa Bai.¹ In another Hindoo story a holy mendicant tells a queen that she will bear a son, adding, "As enemies will try to take away the life of your son, I may as well tell you that the life of the boy will be bound up in the life of a big *boal*-fish which is in your tank in front of the palace. In the heart of the fish is a small box of wood, in the box is a necklace of gold, that necklace is the life of your son." The boy was born and received the name of Dalim. His mother was the Suo or younger queen. But the Duo or elder queen hated the child, and learning the secret of his life, she caused the *boal*-fish, with which his life was bound up, to be caught. Dalim was playing near the tank at the time, but "the moment the *boal*-fish was caught in the net, that moment Dalim felt unwell; and when the fish was brought up to land, Dalim fell down on the ground, and made as if he was about to breathe his last. He was immediately taken into his mother's room, and the king was astonished on hearing of the sudden illness of his son and heir. The fish was by the order of the physician taken into the room of the Duo queen, and as it lay on the floor striking its fins on the ground, Dalim in his mother's room was given up for lost. When the fish was cut open, a casket was found in it; and in the casket lay a necklace of gold. The moment the necklace was worn by the queen, that very moment Dalim died in his mother's room." The queen used to put off the necklace every night, and whenever she did so, the boy came to life again. But every morning when the queen put on the necklace, he died again.²

In a Cashmeer story a lad visits an old ogress, pretending to be her grandson, the son of her daughter who had married a king. So the old ogress took him into her confidence and showed him seven cocks, a spinning-wheel, a

¹ Mary Frere, *Old Deccan Days*, p. 239 sqq.

² Lal Behari Day, *op. cit.* p. 1 sqq.

For similar stories of necklaces, see *Old Deccan Days*, p. 233 sq.; *Wide-awake Stories*, p. 83 sqq.

pigeon, and a starling. "These seven cocks," said she, "contain the lives of your seven uncles, who are away for a few days. Only as long as the cocks live can your uncles hope to live; no power can hurt them as long as the seven cocks are safe and sound. The spinning-wheel contains my life; if it is broken, I too shall be broken, and must die; but otherwise I shall live on for ever. The pigeon contains your grandfather's life, and the starling your mother's; as long as these live, nothing can harm your grandfather or your mother." So the lad killed the seven cocks and the pigeon and the starling, and smashed the spinning-wheel; and at the moment he did so the ogres and ogresses perished.¹ In another story from Cashmeer an ogre cannot die unless a particular pillar in the verandah of his palace be broken. Learning the secret, a prince struck the pillar again and again till it was broken in pieces. And it was as if each stroke had fallen on the ogre, for he howled lamentably and shook like an aspen every time the prince hit the pillar, until at last, when the pillar fell down, the ogre also fell down and gave up the ghost.² In another Cashmeer tale an ogre is represented as laughing very heartily at the idea that he might possibly die. He said that "he should never die. No power could oppose him; no years could age him; he should remain ever strong and ever young, for the thing wherein his life dwelt was most difficult to obtain." It was in a queen bee, which was in a honeycomb on a tree. But the bees in the honeycomb were many and fierce, and it was only at the greatest risk that any one could catch the queen. However, the hero achieved the enterprise and crushed the queen bee; and immediately the ogre fell stone dead to the ground, so that the whole land trembled with the shock.³ In some Bengalee tales the life of a whole tribe of ogres is described as concentrated in two bees. The secret was thus revealed by an old ogress to a captive princess who pretended to fear lest the ogress should die. "Know, foolish girl," said the ogress, "that we ogres never die. We are not naturally immortal, but our life depends on a secret which no human being can unravel. Let me tell you what it is,

¹ J. H. Knowles, *Folk-tales of Kashmir* (London, 1888), p. 49 sq.

² *Id.*, p. 134.

³ *Id.*, p. 382 sqq.

that you may be comforted. You know yonder tank ; there is in the middle of it a crystal pillar, on the top of which in deep water are two bees. If any human being can dive into the water and bring up the two bees from the pillar in one breath, and destroy them so that not a drop of their blood falls to the ground, then we ogres shall certainly die ; but if a single drop of blood falls to the ground, then from it will start up a thousand ogres. But what human being will find out this secret, or, finding it, will be able to achieve the feat ? You need not, therefore, darling, be sad ; I am practically immortal." As usual, the princess reveals the secret to the hero, who kills the bees, and that same moment all the ogres drop down dead, each on the spot where he happened to be standing.¹ In another Bengalee story it is said that all the ogres dwell in Ceylon, and that all their lives are in a single lemon. A boy cuts the lemon in pieces, and all the ogres die.²

In a Siamese or Cambodian story, probably derived from India, we are told that Thossakan or Ravana, the King of Ceylon, was able by magic art to take his soul out of his body and leave it in a box at home, while he went to the wars. Thus he was invulnerable in battle. When he was about to give battle to Rama, he deposited his soul with a hermit called Fire-eye, who was to keep it safe for him. So in the fight Rama was astounded to see that his arrows struck the king without wounding him. But one of Rama's allies, knowing the secret of the king's invulnerability, transformed himself by magic into the likeness of the king, and going to the hermit asked back his soul. On receiving it he soared up into the air and flew to Rama, brandishing the box and squeezing it so hard that all the breath left the King of Ceylon's body, and he died.³ In a Bengalee story a prince going into a far country planted with his own hands a tree in the courtyard of his father's palace, and said to his parents, " This tree is my life. When you see the tree green and fresh, then know that it is well with me ; when you see

¹ Lal Behari Day, *op. cit.* p. 85 sq., *cp. id.*, p. 253 sqq. ; *Indian Antiquary*, i. (1872), p. 117. For an Indian story in which a giant's life is in five black bees, see Clouston, *Popular Tales*

and Fictions, i. 350.

² *Indian Antiquary*, i. (1872), p. 171.

³ A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iv. 304 sq.

the tree fade in some parts, then know that I am in an ill case; and when you see the whole tree fade, then know that I am dead and gone."¹ In another Indian tale a prince, setting forth on his travels, left behind him a barley plant, with instructions that it should be carefully tended and watched, for if it flourished, he would be alive and well, but if it drooped, then some mischance was about to happen to him. And so it fell out. For the prince was beheaded, and as his head rolled off, the barley plant snapped in two and the ear of barley fell to the ground.² In the legend of the origin of Gilgit there figures a fairy king whose soul is in the snows and who can only perish by fire.³

In Greek tales, ancient and modern, the idea of an external soul is not uncommon. When Meleager was seven days old, the Fates appeared to his mother and told her that Meleager would die when the brand which was blazing on the hearth had burnt down. So his mother snatched the brand from the fire and kept it in a box. But in after-years, being enraged at her son for slaying her brothers, she burnt the brand in the fire and Meleager expired in agonies, as if flames were preying on his vitals.⁴ Again, Nisus King of Megara had a purple or golden hair on the middle of his head, and it was fated that whenever the hair was pulled out the king should die. When Megara was besieged by the Cretans, the king's daughter Scylla fell in love with Minos, their king, and pulled out the fatal hair from her father's head. So he died.⁵ Similarly Poseidon made Pterelaus immortal by giving him a golden hair on his head. But

¹ Lal Behari Day, *op. cit.* p. 189.

² *Wide-awake Stories*, pp. 52, 64.

³ G. W. Leitner, *The Languages and Races of Dardistan*, p. 9.

⁴ Apollodorus, i. 8; Diodorus, iv. 34; Pausanias, x. 31. 4; Aeschylus, *Choeph.* 604 sqq.; Antoninus Liberalis, *Transform.* ii.; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* lxvii. vol. ii. p. 231, ed. Dindorf; Hyginus, *Fab.* 171, 174; Ovid, *Metam.* viii. 445 sqq. In his play on this theme Euripides made the life of Meleager to depend on an olive-leaf which his mother had given birth to along with the babe. See Malalas,

Chronographia, vi. p. 165 sq. ed. L. Dindorf; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 492 sq.; G. Knaack, "Zur Meleager-sage," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xlix. (1894), pp. 310-313.

⁵ Apollodorus, iii. 15. 8; Aeschylus, *Choeph.* 612 sqq.; Pausanias, i. 19. 4; *Ciris*, 116 sqq.; Ovid, *Metam.* viii. 8 sqq. According to Tzetzes (*Schol. on Lycophron*, 650) not the life but the strength of Nisus was in his golden hair; when it was pulled out, he became weak and was slain by Minos. According to Hyginus (*Fab.* 198) Nisus was destined to reign only so long as he kept the purple lock on his head.

when Taphos, the home of Pterelaus, was besieged by Amphitryo, the daughter of Pterelaus fell in love with Amphitryo and killed her father by plucking out the golden hair with which his life was bound up.¹ In a modern Greek folk-tale a man's strength lies in three golden hairs on his head. When his mother pulls them out, he grows weak and timid and is slain by his enemies.² Another Greek story, in which we may perhaps detect a reminiscence of Nisus and Scylla, relates how a certain king, who was the strongest man of his time, had three long hairs on his breast. But when he went to war with another king, and his own treacherous wife had cut off the three hairs, he became the weakest of men.³ In another modern Greek story the life of an enchanter is bound up with three doves which are in the belly of a wild boar. When the first dove is killed, the magician grows sick; when the second is killed, he grows very sick; and when the third is killed, he dies.⁴ In another Greek story of the same sort an ogre's strength is in three singing birds which are in a wild boar. The hero kills two of the birds, and then coming to the ogre's house finds him lying on the ground in great pain. He shows the third bird to the ogre, who begs that the hero will either let it fly away or give it to him to eat. But the hero wrings the bird's neck and the ogre dies on the spot.⁵ In a variant of the latter story the monster's strength is in two doves, and when the hero kills one of them, the monster cries out, "Ah, woe is me! Half my life is gone. Something must have happened to one of the doves." When the second dove is killed, he

¹ Apollodorus, ii. 4. 5 and 7.

² Hahn, *Griechische und albanesische Märchen*, i. 217; a similar story, *ibid.* ii. 282.

³ B. Schmidt, *Griechische Märchen, Sagen und Volkslieder*, p. 91 sq. The same writer found in the island of Zacynthus a belief that the whole strength of the ancient Greeks resided in three hairs on their breasts, and that it vanished whenever these hairs were cut; but if the hairs were allowed to grow again, their strength returned (B. Schmidt, *Das Volksleben der Neu-griechen*, p. 206). The Biblical story of Samson and Delilah (Judges xvi.)

implies a belief of the same sort, as G. A. Wilken abundantly showed in his paper, "De Simsonsage," *De Gids*, 1883, No. 5.

⁴ Hahn, *op. cit.* ii. 215 sq.

⁵ *Ibid.* ii. 275 sq. Similar stories, *ibid.* ii. 204, 294 sq. In an Albanian story a monster's strength is in three pigeons, which are in a hare, which is in the silver tusk of a wild boar. When the boar is killed, the monster feels ill; when the hare is cut open, he can hardly stand on his feet; when the three pigeons are killed, he expires (Dozon, *Contes albanais*, p. 132 sq.).

dies.¹ In another Greek story the incidents of the three golden hairs and three doves are artificially combined. A monster has on his head three golden hairs which open the door of a chamber in which are three doves: when the first dove is killed, the monster grows sick; when the second is killed, he grows worse; and when the third is killed, he dies.² In another Greek tale an old man's strength is in a ten-headed serpent. When the serpent's heads are being cut off, he feels unwell; and when the last head is struck off, he expires.³ In another Greek story a dervish tells a queen that she will have three sons, that at the birth of each she must plant a pumpkin in the garden, and that in the fruit borne by the pumpkins will reside the strength of the children. In due time the infants are born and the pumpkins planted. As the children grow up, the pumpkins grow with them. One morning the eldest son feels sick, and on going into the garden they find that the largest pumpkin is gone. Next night the second son keeps watch in a summer-house in the garden. At midnight a negro appears and cuts the second pumpkin. At once the boy's strength goes out of him, and he is unable to pursue the negro. The youngest son, however, succeeds in slaying the negro and recovering the lost pumpkins.⁴

Ancient Italian legend furnishes a close parallel to the Greek story of Meleager. Silvia, the young wife of Septimius Marcellus, had a child by the god Mars. The god gave her a spear, with which he said that the fate of the child would be bound up. When the boy grew up he quarrelled with his maternal uncles and slew them. So in revenge his mother burned the spear on which his life depended.⁵ In one of the stories of the *Pentamerone* a certain queen has a twin brother, a dragon. The astrologers declared at her birth that she would live just as long as the dragon and no longer, the death of the one involving the death of the other. If the dragon were killed, the only way to

¹ Hahn, *op. cit.* ii. 260 sqq.

² *Ibid.* i. 187.

³ *Ibid.* ii. 23 sq.

⁴ Legrand, *Contes populaires grecs*, p. 191 sqq.

⁵ Plutarch, *Parallela*, 26. In both the Greek and Italian stories the subject of quarrel between nephew and uncles is the skin of a boar, which the nephew presented to his lady-love and which his uncles took from her.

restore the queen to life would be to smear her temples, breast, pulses, and nostrils with the blood of the dragon.¹ In a modern Roman version of "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," the magician tells the princess whom he holds captive in a floating rock in mid-ocean that he will never die. The princess reports this to the prince her husband, who has come to rescue her. The prince replies, "It is impossible but that there should be some one thing or other that is fatal to him; ask him what that one fatal thing is." So the princess asked the magician, and he told her that in the wood was a hydra with seven heads; in the middle head of the hydra was a leveret, in the head of the leveret was a bird, in the bird's head was a precious stone, and if this stone were put under his pillow he would die. The prince procured the stone, and the princess laid it under the magician's pillow. No sooner did the enchanter lay his head on the pillow than he gave three terrible yells, turned himself round and round three times, and died.² Another Italian tale sets forth how a great cloud, which was really a fairy, used to receive a young girl as tribute every year from a certain city; and the inhabitants had to give the girls up, for if they did not, the cloud would throw things at them and kill them all. One year it fell to the lot of the king's daughter to be handed over to the cloud, and they took her in procession, to the roll of muffled drums, and attended by her weeping father and mother, to the top of a mountain, and left her sitting in a chair there all alone. Then the fairy cloud came down on the top of the mountain, set the princess in her lap, and began to suck her blood out of her little finger; for it was on the blood of girls that this wicked fairy lived. When the poor princess was faint with the loss of blood and lay like a log, the cloud carried her away up to her fairy palace in the sky. But a brave youth had seen all that happened from behind a bush, and no sooner did the fairy spirit away the princess to her palace than he turned himself into an eagle and flew after them. He lighted on a tree just outside the palace, and looking in at the window he beheld a room full of young girls all in

¹ Basile, *Pentameron*, ii. 60 sq.
(Liebrecht's German trans.).

² R. H. Busk, *Folk-lore of Rome*, p. 164 sqq.

bed; for these were the victims of former years whom the fairy cloud had half killed by sucking their blood; yet they called her mamma. When the fairy went away and left the girls, the brave young man had food drawn up for them by ropes, and he told them to ask the fairy how she might be killed and what was to become of them when she died. It was a delicate question, but the fairy answered it, saying, "I shall never die." However, when the girls pressed her, she took them out on a terrace and said, "Do you see yonder mountain afar off? On that mountain is a tigress with seven heads. If you wish me to die, a lion must fight that tigress and tear off all her seven heads. In her body is an egg, and if anybody hits me with that egg in the middle of my forehead, I shall die. But if the egg falls into my hands, the tigress will come to life again, resume her seven heads, and I shall live." When the young girls heard this they pretended to be glad and said, "Good! certainly our mamma can never die," but naturally they were discouraged. However, when she went away again, they told it all to the young man, and he bade them have no fear. Away he went to the mountain, turned himself into a lion, and fought the tigress. Meantime the fairy came home, saying, "Alas! I feel ill!" For six days the fight went on, the young man tearing off one of the tigress's heads each day, and each day the strength of the fairy kept ebbing away. Then after allowing himself two days' rest the hero tore off the seventh head and secured the egg, but not till it had rolled into the sea and been brought back to him by a friendly dog-fish. When he returned to the fairy with the egg in his hand, she begged and prayed him to give it her, but he made her first restore the young girls to health and send them away in handsome carriages. When she had done so, he struck her on the forehead with the egg, and she fell down dead.¹ Similarly in a story from the western Riviera a sorcerer called Body-without-Soul can only be killed by means of an egg which is in an eagle, which is in a dog, which is in a

¹ Crane, *Popular Italian Tales*, pp. 31-34. The hero had acquired the power of turning himself into an eagle, a lion, and an ant from three creatures of these sorts whose quarrel about their

shares in a dead ass he had composed. This incident occurs in other tales of the same type. See below, pp. 363, 365, 368 note 3, 369, 370, 374, 375, 381.

lion; and the egg must be broken on the sorcerer's forehead. The hero, who achieves the adventure, has received the power of changing himself into a lion, a dog, an eagle, or an ant from four creatures of these sorts among whom he had fairly divided the carcass of a dead ass.¹

Stories of the same sort are current among Slavonic peoples. Thus in a Russian tale a warlock called Koshchei the Deathless is asked where his death is. "My death," he answered, "is in such and such a place. There stands an oak, and under the oak is a casket, and in the casket is a hare, and in the hare is a duck, and in the duck is an egg, and in the egg is my death." A prince obtained the egg and squeezed it, whereupon Koshchei the Deathless bent double. But when the prince shattered the egg in pieces the warlock died.² "In one of the descriptions of Koshchei's death, he is said to be killed by a blow on the forehead inflicted by the mysterious egg—that last link in the magic chain by which his life is darkly bound. In another version of the same story, but told of a snake, the fatal blow is struck by a small stone found in the yolk of an egg, which is inside a duck, which is inside a hare, which is inside a stone, which is on an island."³ In another variant the prince shifts the fatal egg from one hand to the other, and as he does so Koshchei rushes wildly from side to side of the room. At last the prince smashes the egg, and Koshchei drops dead.⁴ In another Russian story the death of an enchantress is in a blue rose-tree in a blue forest. Prince Ivan uproots the rose-tree, whereupon the enchantress straightway sickens. He brings the rose-tree to her house and finds her at the point of death. Then he throws it into the cellar, crying, "Behold her death!" and at once the whole building shakes, "and becomes an island, on which are people who had been

¹ J. B. Andrews, *Contes Ligures* (Paris, 1892), No. 46, p. 213 sqq. In a parallel Sicilian story the hero Bepino slays a sorcerer in the same manner after he had received from an eagle, a lion, and an ant the same gift of transformation in return for the same service. See G. Pitre, *Fiabe, Novelle e Racconti popolari Siciliani*, ii. 215; and for another Sicilian parallel, Gon-

zenbach, *Sicilianische Märchen*, No. 6, pp. 34-38.

² Ralston, *Russian Folk-tales*, p. 103 sq.; Dietrich, *Russian Popular Tales*, p. 23 sq.; J. Curtin, *Myths and Folk-tales of the Russians, Western Slavs, and Magyars*, p. 119 sqq.

³ Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 109.

⁴ *Ibid.*

sitting in Hell, and who offer up thanks to Prince Ivan."¹ In another Russian story a prince is grievously tormented by a witch who has got hold of his heart, and keeps it seething in a magic cauldron.² In a Bohemian tale a warlock's strength lies in an egg which is in a duck, which is in a stag, which is under a tree. A seer finds the egg and sucks it. Then the warlock grows as weak as a child, "for all his strength had passed into the seer."³ In a Serbian story a fabulous being called True Steel declares, "Far away from this place there is a very high mountain, in the mountain there is a fox, in the fox there is a heart, in the heart there is a bird, and in this bird is my strength." The fox is caught and killed and its heart is taken out. Out of the fox's heart is taken the bird, which is then burnt, and that very moment True Steel falls dead.⁴ In a South Slavonian story a dragon tells an old woman, "My strength is a long way off, and you cannot go thither. Far in another empire under the emperor's city is a lake, in that lake is a dragon, and in the dragon a boar, and in the boar a pigeon, and in that is my strength."⁵

Amongst peoples of the Teutonic stock stories of the external soul are not wanting. In a tale told by the Saxons of Transylvania it is said that a young man shot at a witch again and again. The bullets went clean through her but did her no harm, and she only laughed and mocked at him. "Silly earthworm," she cried, "shoot as much as you like. It does me no harm. For know that my life resides not in me but far, far away. In a mountain is a pond, on the pond swims a duck, in the duck is an egg, in the egg burns a light, that light is my life. If you could put out that light, my life would be at an end. But that can never, never be." However, the young man got hold of the egg, smashed it, and put out the light, and with it the witch's life went out also.⁶ In this last story, as in many other stories of the same

¹ Ralston, *op. cit.* p. 113 sq.

² *Id.*, p. 114.

³ *Id.*, p. 110.

⁴ Mijatovics, *Serbian Folk-lore*, edited by the Rev. W. Denton, p. 172; F. S. Krauss, *Sagen und Märchen der Südslaven*, i. 168 sq. (No. 34).

⁵ A. H. Wratislaw, *Sixty Folk-tales from exclusively Slavonic sources* (London, 1889), p. 225.

⁶ Haltrich, *Deutsche Volksmärchen aus dem Sachsenlande in Siebenbürgen*,¹ No. 34 (No. 33 of the first ed.), p. 149 sq.

type, the hero achieves his adventure by the help of certain grateful animals whom he had met and done a service to on his travels. The same incident occurs in another German tale of this class which runs thus. Once upon a time there was a young fellow called Body-without-Soul, or, for short, Soulless, and he was a cannibal who would eat nothing but young girls. Now it was a custom in that country that the girls drew lots every year, and the one on whom the lot fell was handed over to Soulless. In time it happened that the lot fell on the king's daughter. The king was exceedingly sorry, but what could he do? Law was law, and had to be obeyed. So they took the princess to the castle where Soulless resided; and he shut her up in the larder and fattened her for his dinner. But a brave soldier undertook to rescue her, and off he set for the cannibal's castle. Well, as he trudged along, what should he see but a fly, an eagle, a bear, and a lion sitting in a field by the side of the road, and quarrelling about their shares in a dead horse. So he divided the carcass fairly between them, and as a reward the fly and the eagle bestowed on him the power of changing himself at will into either of their shapes. That evening he made himself into an eagle, and flew up a high tree; there he looked about, but could see nothing but trees. Next morning he flew on till he came to a great castle, and at the gate was a big black board with these words chalked up on it: "Mr. Soulless lives here." When the soldier read that he was glad, and changed himself into a fly, and flew buzzing from window to window, looking in at every one till he came to the one where the fair princess sat a prisoner. He introduced himself at once and said, "I am come to free you, but first you must learn where the soul of Soulless really is." "I don't know," replied the princess, "but I will ask." So after much coaxing and entreaty she learned that the soul of Soulless was in a box, and that the box was on a rock in the middle of the Red Sea. When the soldier heard that, he turned himself into an eagle again, flew to the Red Sea, and came back with the soul of Soulless in the box. Arrived at the castle he knocked and banged at the door as if the house was on fire. Soulless did not know what was the matter, and he came down and

opened the door himself. When he saw the soldier standing at it, I can assure you he was in a towering rage. "What do you mean," he roared, "by knocking at my door like that? I'll gobble you up on the spot, skin and hair and all." But the soldier laughed in his face. "You'd better not do that," said he, "for here I've got your soul in the box." When the cannibal heard that, all his courage went down into the calves of his legs, and he begged and entreated the soldier to give him his soul. But the soldier would not hear of it; he opened the box, took out the soul, and flung it over his head; and that same instant down fell the cannibal, dead as a door-nail.¹

Another German story, which embodies the notion of the external soul in a somewhat different form, tells how once upon a time a certain king had three sons and a daughter, and for each of the king's four children there grew a flower in the king's garden, which was a life-flower; for it bloomed and flourished so long as the child lived, but drooped and withered away when the child died. Now the time came when the king's daughter married a rich man and went to live with him far away. But it was not long before her flower withered in the king's garden. So the eldest brother went forth to visit his brother-in-law and comfort him in his bereavement. But when he came to his brother-in-law's castle he saw the corpse of his murdered sister weltering on the ramparts. And his wicked brother-in-law set before him boiled human hands and feet for his dinner. And when the king's son refused to eat of them, his brother-in-law led him through many chambers to a murder-hole, where were all sorts of implements of murder, but especially a gallows, a wheel, and a pot of blood. Here he said to the prince, "You must die, but you may choose your kind of death." The prince chose to die on the gallows; and die he did even as he had said. So the eldest son's flower withered in the king's garden, and the second son went forth to learn the fate of his brother and sister. But it fared with him no better than with his elder brother, for he too died on the gallows in the murder-

¹ J. W. Wolf, *Deutsche Märchen und Sagen* (Leipsic, 1845), No. 20, pp. 87-93.

hole of his wicked brother-in-law's castle, and his flower also withered away in the king's garden at home. Now when the youngest son was also come to his brother-in-law's castle and saw the corpse of his murdered sister weltering on the ramparts, and the bodies of his two murdered brothers dangling from the gallows in the murder-hole, he said that for his part he had a fancy to die by the wheel, but he was not quite sure how the thing was done, and would his brother-in-law kindly show him? "Oh, it's quite easy," said his brother-in-law, "you just put your head in, so," and with that he popped his head through the middle of the wheel. "Just so," said the king's youngest son, and he gave the wheel a twirl, and as it spun round and round, the wicked brother-in-law died a painful death, which he richly deserved. And when he was quite dead, the murdered brothers and sister came to life again, and their withered flowers bloomed afresh in the king's garden.¹ In another German story an old warlock lives with a damsel all alone in the midst of a vast and gloomy wood. She fears that being old he may die and leave her alone in the forest. But he reassures her. "Dear child," he said, "I cannot die, and I have no heart in my breast." But she importuned him to tell her where his heart was. So he said, "Far, far from here in an unknown and lonesome land stands a great church. The church is well secured with iron doors, and round about it flows a broad deep moat. In the church flies a bird and in the bird is my heart. So long as that bird lives, I live. It cannot die of itself, and no one can catch it; therefore I cannot die, and you need have no anxiety." However the young man, whose bride the damsel was to have been before the warlock spirited her away, contrived to reach the church and catch the bird. He brought it to the damsel, who stowed him and it away under the warlock's bed. Soon the old warlock came home. He was ailing, and said so. The girl wept and said, "Alas, daddy is dying; he has a heart in his breast after all." "Child," replied the warlock, "hold your

¹ Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, ii. 306-308, § 622. In this story the flowers are rather life-tokens than

external souls. The life-token has been carefully studied by Mr. E. S. Hartland in the second volume of his *Legend of Persæus*.

tongue. *I can't die. It will soon pass over.*" At that the young man under the bed gave the bird a gentle squeeze; and as he did so, the old warlock felt very unwell and sat down. Then the young man gripped the bird tighter, and the warlock fell senseless from his chair. "Now squeeze him dead," cried the damsel. Her lover obeyed, and when the bird was dead, the old warlock also lay dead on the floor.¹

In the Norse tale of "the giant who had no heart in his body," the giant tells the captive princess, "Far, far away in a lake lies an island, on that island stands a church, in that church is a well, in that well swims a duck, in that duck there is an egg, and in that egg there lies my heart." The hero of the tale, with the help of some animals to whom he had been kind, obtains the egg and squeezes it, at which the giant screams piteously and begs for his life. But the hero breaks the egg in pieces and the giant at once bursts.² In another Norse story a hill-ogre tells the captive princess that she will never be able to return home unless she finds the grain of sand which lies under the ninth tongue of the ninth head of a certain dragon; but if that grain of sand were to come over the rock in which the ogres live, they would all burst "and the rock itself would become a gilded palace, and the lake green meadows." The hero finds the grain of sand and takes it to the top of the high rock in which the ogres live. So all the ogres burst and the rest falls out as one of the ogres had foretold.³ In a Danish tale a warlock carries off a princess to his wondrous subterranean palace; and when she anxiously inquires how long he is likely to live, he assures her that he will certainly survive her. "No man," he says, "can rob me of my life, for it is in my heart, and my heart is not here; it is in safer keeping." She urges him to tell her where it is, so he says:

¹ K. Müllenhoff, *Sagen, Märchen und Lieder der Herzogthümer Schleswig-Holstein und Lauenburg*, p. 404 sqq.

² Asbjørnsen og Moe, *Norske Folke-Eventyr*, No. 36; Dasent, *Popular Tales from the Norse*, p. 55 sqq.

³ Asbjørnsen og Moe, *Norske Folke-Eventyr*, Ny Samling, No. 70; Dasent, *Tales from the Fjeld*, p. 229 ("Boots

and the Beasts"). As in other tales of this type, it is said that the hero found three animals (a lion, a falcon, and an ant) quarrelling over a dead horse, and received from them the power of transforming himself into animals of these species as a reward for dividing the carcass fairly among them.

"Very far from here, in a land that is called Poland, there is a great lake, and in the lake is a dragon, and in the dragon is a hare, and in the hare is a duck, and in the duck is an egg, and in the egg is my heart. It is in good keeping, you may trust me. Nobody is likely to stumble upon it." However, the hero of the tale, who is also the husband of the kidnapped princess, has fortunately received the power of turning himself at will into a bear, a dog, an ant, or a falcon as a reward for having divided the carcass of a deer impartially between four animals of these species; and availing himself of this useful art he not only makes his way into the warlock's enchanted palace but also secures the egg on which the enchanter's life depends. No sooner has he smashed the egg on the enchanter's ugly face than that miscreant drops down as dead as a herring.¹ In an Icelandic parallel to the story of Meleager, the spæ-wives or sibyls come and foretell the high destiny of the infant Gestr as he lies in his cradle. Two candles were burning beside the child, and the youngest of the spæ-wives, conceiving herself slighted, cried out, "I foretell that the child shall live no longer than this candle burns." Whereupon the chief sibyl put out the candle and gave it to Gestr's mother to keep, charging her not to light it again until her son should wish to die. Gestr lived three hundred years; then he kindled the candle and expired.²

In a Celtic tale a giant says, "There is a great flagstone under the threshold. There is a wether under the flag. There is a duck in the wether's belly, and an egg in the belly of the duck, and it is in the egg that my soul is." The egg is crushed, and the giant falls down dead.³ In another Celtic tale, a sea beast has carried off a king's daughter, and an old smith declares that there is no way of killing the beast but one. "In the island that is in the midst of the loch is Eillid Chaisthion—the white-footed hind, of the slenderest legs, and the swiftest step, and, though she should be caught, there would spring a hoodie out of her, and though the hoodie should be caught, there would

¹ Grundtvig, *Dänische Volksmärchen*, übersetzt von A. Strodtmann, Zweite Sammlung (Leipsic, 1879), p. 194 sqq.

p. 592; Jamieson, *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, s.v. "Yule."

³ J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, i. 10 sq.

² Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen*,

spring a trout out of her, but there is an egg in the mouth of the trout, and the soul of the beast is in the egg, and if the egg breaks, the beast is dead." As usual the egg is broken and the beast dies.¹

In these Celtic tales the helpful animals reappear and assist the hero in achieving the adventure, though for the sake of brevity I have omitted to describe the parts they play in the plot. They figure also in an Argyleshire story, which seems however to be of Irish origin; for the Cruachan of which we hear in it is not the rugged and lofty mountain Ben Cruachan which towers above the beautiful Loch Awe, but Roscommon Cruachan near Belanagare, the ancient palace of the kings of Connaught, long famous in Irish tradition.² The story relates how a big giant, King of Sorcha, stole away the wife and the shaggy dun filly of the herdsman or king of Cruachan. So the herdsman baked a bannock to take with him by the way, and set off in quest of his wife and the filly. He went for a long, long time, till at last his soles were blackened and his cheeks were sunken, the yellow-headed birds were going to rest at the roots of the bushes and the tops of the thickets, and the dark clouds of night were coming and the clouds of day were departing; and he saw a house far from him, but though it was far from him he did not take long to reach it. He went in, and sat in the upper end of the house, but there was no one within; and the fire was newly kindled, the house newly swept, and the bed newly made; and who came in but the hawk of Glencuaich, and she said to him, "Are you here, young son of Cruachan?" "I am," said he. The hawk said to him, "Do you know who was here last night?" "I do not," said he. "There were here," said she, "the big giant, King of Sorcha, your wife, and the shaggy dun filly; and the giant was threatening terribly that if he could get hold of you he would take the head off you." "I well believe it," said he. Then she gave him food and drink, and sent him to bed. She rose in the morning, made breakfast for him, and baked a bannock for him to take with him on his journey. And he went away

¹ J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, i. 80 119.

² See above, vol. i. p. 240, note 2.

and travelled all day, and in the evening he came to another house and went in, and was entertained by the green-headed duck, who told him that the giant had rested there the night before with the wife and shaggy dun filly of the herdsman of Cruachan. And next day the herdsman journeyed again, and at evening he came to another house and went in and was entertained by the fox of the scrubwood, who told him just what the hawk of Glencuaich and the green-headed duck had told him before. Next day the same thing happened, only it was the brown otter of the burn that entertained him at evening in a house where the fire was newly kindled, the floor newly swept, and the bed newly made. And next morning when he wakened, the first thing he saw was the hawk of Glencuaich, the green-headed duck, the fox of the scrubwood, and the brown otter of the burn all dancing together on the floor. They made breakfast for him, and partook of it all together, and said to him, "Should you be at any time in straits, think of us, and we will help you." Well, that very evening he came to the cave where the giant lived, and who was there before him but his own wife? She gave him food and hid him under clothes at the upper end of the cave. And when the giant came home he sniffed about and said, "The smell of a stranger is in the cave." But she said no, it was only a little bird she had roasted. "And I wish you would tell me," said she, "where you keep your life, that I might take good care of it." "It is in a grey stone over there," said he. So next day when he went away, she took the grey stone and dressed it well, and placed it in the upper end of the cave. When the giant came home in the evening he said to her, "What is it that you have dressed there?" "Your own life," said she, "and we must be careful of it." "I perceive that you are very fond of me, but it is not there," said he. "Where is it?" said she. "It is in a grey sheep on yonder hillside," said he. On the morrow, when he went away, she got the grey sheep, dressed it well, and placed it in the upper end of the cave. When he came home in the evening he said, "What is it that you have dressed there?" "Your own life, my love," said she. "It is not there as yet," said he. "Well!" said she, "you are

putting me to great trouble taking care of it, and you have not told me the truth these two times." He then said, "I think that I may tell it to you now. My life is below the feet of the big horse in the stable. There is a place down there in which there is a small lake. Over the lake are seven grey hides, and over the hides are seven sods from the heath, and under all these are seven oak planks. There is a trout in the lake, and a duck in the belly of the trout, an egg in the belly of the duck, and a thorn of blackthorn inside of the egg, and till that thorn is chewed small I cannot be killed. Whenever the seven grey hides, the seven sods from the heath, and the seven oak planks are touched I shall feel it wherever I shall be. I have an axe above the door, and unless all these are cut through with one blow of it the lake will not be reached; and when it will be reached I shall feel it." Next day, when the giant had gone out hunting on the hill, the herdsman of Cruachan contrived, with the help of the friendly animals—the hawk, the duck, the fox, and the otter—to get possession of the fateful thorn and to chew it before the giant could reach him; and no sooner had he done so than the giant dropped stark and stiff, a corpse.¹

Another Highland story sets forth how Hugh, prince of Lochlin, was long held captive by a giant who lived in a cave overlooking the Sound of Mull. At last, after he had spent many years of captivity in that dismal cave, it came to pass that one night the giant and his wife had a great dispute, and Hugh overheard their talk, and learned that the giant's soul was in a precious gem which he always wore on his forehead. So the prince watched his opportunity, seized the gem, and having no means of escape or concealment, hastily swallowed it. Like lightning from the clouds, the giant's sword flashed from its scabbard and flew between Hugh's head and his body to intercept the gem before it could descend into the prince's stomach. But it was too late; and the giant fell down, sword in hand, and expired without a gasp. Hugh had now lost his head, it is true, but having the giant's soul in his body he felt none the worse for the accident. So he buckled the giant's sword at

¹ D. MacInnes, *Folk and Hero Tales* (London, 1890), pp. 103-121.

his side, mounted the grey filly, swifter than the east wind, that never had a bridle, and rode home. But the want of his head made a painful impression on his friends; indeed they maintained that he was a ghost and shut the door in his face, so now he wanders for ever in shades of darkness, riding the grey filly fleetier than the wind. On stormy nights, when the winds howl about the gables and among the trees, you may see him galloping along the shore of the sea "between wave and sand." Many a naughty little boy, who would not go quietly to bed, has been carried off by Headless Hugh on his grey filly and never seen again.¹

In Sutherlandshire at the present day there is a sept of Mackays known as "the descendants of the seal," who claim to be sprung from a mermaid, and the story they tell in explanation of their claim involves the notion of the external soul. They say that the laird of Borgie used to go down to the rocks under his castle to bathe. One day he saw a mermaid close in shore, combing her hair and swimming about, as if she were anxious to land. After watching her for a time, he noticed her cowl on the rocks beside him, and knowing that she could not go to sea without it, he carried the cowl up to the castle in the hope that she would follow him. She did so, but he refused to give up the cowl and detained the sea-maiden herself and made her his wife. To this she consented with great reluctance, and told him her life was bound up with the cowl, and if it rotted or was destroyed she would instantly die. So the cowl was placed for safety in the middle of a great hay-stack, and there it lay for years. One unhappy day, when the laird was from home, the servants were working among the hay and found the cowl. Not knowing what it was, they showed it to the lady of the house. The sight revived memories of her old life in the depths of the sea, so she took the cowl, and leaving her child in its cot, plunged into the sea and never came home to Borgie any more. Only sometimes she would swim close in shore to see her boy, and then she wept because he was not of her own kind that she might

¹ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, his youth a certain old Betty Miles used to terrify him with this tale.
p. 187 sq. The writer tells us that in

take him to sea with her. The boy grew to be a man, and his descendants are famous swimmers. They cannot drown, and to this day they are known in the neighbourhood as *Sliochd an roin*, that is, "the descendants of the seal."¹

In an Irish story we read how a giant kept a beautiful damsel a prisoner in his castle on the top of a hill, which was white with the bones of the champions who had tried in vain to rescue the fair captive. At last the hero, after hewing and slashing at the giant all to no purpose, discovered that the only way to kill him was to rub a mole on the giant's right breast with a certain egg, which was in a duck, which was in a chest, which lay locked and bound at the bottom of the sea. With the help of some obliging salmon, rams, and eagles, the hero as usual makes himself master of the precious egg and slays the giant by merely striking it against the mole on his right breast.² Similarly in a Breton story there figures a giant whom neither fire nor water nor steel can harm. He tells his seventh wife, whom he has just married after murdering all her predecessors, "I am immortal, and no one can hurt me unless he crushes on my breast an egg, which is in a pigeon, which is in the belly of a hare; this hare is in the belly of a wolf, and this wolf is in the belly of my brother, who dwells a thousand leagues from here. So I am quite easy on that score." A soldier, the hero of the tale, had been of service to an ant, a wolf, and a sea-bird, who in return bestowed on him the power of turning himself into an ant, a wolf, or a sea-bird at will. By means of this magical power the soldier contrived to obtain the egg and crush it on the breast of the giant, who immediately expired.³ Another Breton story tells of a giant who was called Body-without-Soul because his life did not reside in his body. He himself dwelt in a beautiful castle which hung between heaven and earth, suspended by four golden chains; but his life was in an egg, and the egg was in a dove, and the dove was in a hare, and the hare was in a wolf, and the wolf was in an iron chest at

¹ J. Macdonald, *op. cit.* p. 191 sq., from information furnished by the Rev. A. Mackay.

² J. Curtin, *Myths and Folk-tales of*

Ireland, p. 71 sqq.

³ Sébillot, *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne* (Paris, 1885), p. 63 sqq.

the bottom of the sea. In his castle in the air he kept prisoner a beauteous princess whom he had swooped down upon and carried off in a magic chariot. But her lover turned himself into an ant and so climbed up one of the golden chains into the enchanted castle, for he had done a kindness to the king and queen of ants, and they rewarded him by transforming him into an ant in his time of need. When he had learned from the captive princess the secret of the giant's life, he procured the chest from the bottom of the sea by the help of the king of fishes, whom he had also obliged; and opening the chest he killed first the wolf, then the hare, and then the dove, and at the death of each animal the giant grew weaker and weaker as if he had lost a limb. In the stomach of the dove the hero found the egg on which the giant's life depended, and when he came with it to the castle he found Body-without-Soul stretched on his bed at the point of death. So he dashed the egg against the giant's forehead, the egg broke, and the giant straightway expired.¹ In another Breton tale the life of a giant resides in an old box-tree which grows in his castle garden; and to kill him it is necessary to sever the tap-root of the tree at a single blow of an axe without injuring any of the lesser roots. This task the hero, as usual, successfully accomplishes, and at the same moment the giant drops dead.²

The notion of an external soul has now been traced in folk-tales told by Aryan peoples from India to Brittany and the Hebrides. We have still to show that the same idea occurs commonly in the popular stories of peoples who do not belong to the Aryan stock. In the first place it appears in the ancient Egyptian story of "The Two Brothers." This story was written down in the reign of Rameses II., about 1300 B.C.

¹ F. M. Luzel, *Contes populaires de Basse-Bretagne* (Paris, 1887), i. 435-449. Compare *id.*, *Veillées Bretonnes* (Morlaix, 1879), p. 133 sq. For two other French stories of the same type, taken down in Lorraine, see Cosquin, *Contes populaires de Lorraine*, Nos. 15 and 50 (vol. i. p. 166 sqq., vol. ii. p. 128 sqq.). In both of them there figures a miraculous beast which can only be slain by breaking a certain egg against

its head; but we are not told that the life of the beast was in the egg. In both of them also the hero receives from three animals, whose dispute about the carcass of a dead beast he has settled, the power of changing himself into animals of the same sort. See the remarks and comparisons of Cosquin, *op. cit.* i. 170 sqq.

² Luzel, *Veillées Bretonnes*, p. 127 sqq.

It is therefore older than our present redaction of Homer, and far older than the Bible. The outline of the story, so far as it concerns us here, is as follows. Once upon a time there were two brethren; the name of the elder was Anpu and the name of the younger was Bata. Now Anpu had a house and a wife, and his younger brother dwelt with him as his servant. It was Anpu who made the garments, and every morning when it grew light he drove the kine afield. As he walked behind them they used to say to him, "The grass is good in such and such a place," and he heard what they said and led them to the good pasture that they desired. So his kine grew very sleek and multiplied greatly. One day when the two brothers were at work in the field the elder brother said to the younger, "Run and fetch seed from the village." So the younger brother ran and said to the wife of his elder brother, "Give me seed that I may run to the field, for my brother sent me saying, Tarry not." She said, "Go to the barn and take as much as thou wouldst." He went and filled a jar full of wheat and barley, and came forth bearing it on his shoulders. When the woman saw him her heart went out to him, and she laid hold of him and said, "Come, let us rest an hour together." But he said, "Thou art to me as a mother, and my brother is to me as a father." So he would not hearken to her, but took the load on his back and went away to the field. In the evening, when the elder brother was returning from the field, his wife feared for what she had said. So she took soot and made herself as one who has been beaten. And when her husband came home, she said, "When thy younger brother came to fetch seed, he said to me, Come, let us rest an hour together. But I would not, and he beat me." Then the elder brother became like a panther of the south; he sharpened his knife and stood behind the door of the cow-house. And when the sun set and the younger brother came laden with all the herbs of the field, as was his wont every day, the cow that walked in front of the herd said to him, "Behold, thine elder brother stands with a knife to kill thee. Flee before him." When he heard what the cow said, he looked under the door of the cow-house and saw the feet of his elder brother standing behind the door, his

knife in his hand. So he fled and his brother pursued him with the knife. But the younger brother cried for help to the Sun, and the Sun heard him and caused a great water to spring up between him and his elder brother, and the water was full of crocodiles. The two brothers stood, the one on the one side of the water and the other on the other, and the younger brother told the elder brother all that had befallen. So the elder brother repented him of what he had done and he lifted up his voice and wept. But he could not come at the farther bank by reason of the crocodiles. His younger brother called to him and said, "Go home and tend the cattle thyself. For I will dwell no more in the place where thou art. I will go to the Valley of the Acacia. But this is what thou shalt do for me. Thou shalt come and care for me, if evil befalls me, for I will enchant my heart and place it on the top of the flower of the Acacia; and if they cut the Acacia and my heart falls to the ground, thou shalt come and seek it, and when thou hast found it thou shalt lay it in a vessel of fresh water. Then I shall come to life again. But this is the sign that evil has befallen me; the pot of beer in thine hand shall bubble." So he went away to the Valley of the Acacia, but his brother returned home with dust on his head and slew his wife and cast her to the dogs.

For many days afterwards the younger brother dwelt alone in the Valley of the Acacia. By day he hunted the beasts of the field, but at evening he came and laid him down under the Acacia, on the top of whose flower was his heart. And many days after that he built himself a house in the Valley of the Acacia. But the gods were grieved for him; and the Sun said to Khnumu, "Make a wife for Bata, that he may not dwell alone." So Khnumu made him a woman to dwell with him, who was perfect in her limbs more than any woman on earth, for all the gods were in her. So she dwelt with him. But one day a lock of her hair fell into the river and floated down to the land of Egypt, to the house of Pharaoh's washerwomen. The fragrance of the lock perfumed Pharaoh's raiment, and the washerwomen were blamed, for it was said, "An odour of perfume in the garments of Pharaoh!" So the heart of

Pharaoh's chief washerman was weary of the complaints that were made every day, and he went to the wharf, and there in the water he spied the lock of hair. He sent one down into the river to fetch it, and, because it smelt sweetly, he took it to Pharaoh. Then Pharaoh's magicians were sent for and they said, "This lock of hair belongs to a daughter of the Sun, who has in her the essence of all the gods. Let messengers go forth to all foreign lands to seek her." So the woman was brought from the Valley of the Acacia with chariots and archers and much people, and all the land of Egypt rejoiced at her coming, and Pharaoh loved her. But when they asked her of her husband, she said to Pharaoh, "Let them cut down the Acacia and let them destroy it." So men were sent with tools to cut down the Acacia. They came to it and cut the flower upon which was the heart of Bata; and he fell down dead in that evil hour. But the next day, when the earth grew light and the elder brother of Bata was entered into his house and had sat down, they brought him a pot of beer and it bubbled, and they gave him a jug of wine and it grew turbid. Then he took his staff and his sandals and hied him to the Valley of the Acacia, and there he found his younger brother lying dead in his house. So he sought for the heart of his brother under the Acacia. For three years he sought in vain, but in the fourth year he found it in the berry of the Acacia. So he threw the heart into a cup of fresh water. And when it was night and the heart had sucked in much water, Bata shook in all his limbs and revived. Then he drank the cup of water in which his heart was, and his heart went into its place, and he lived as before.¹

In the *Arabian Nights* we read how Seyf el-Mulook, after wandering for four months over mountains and hills and deserts, came to a lofty palace in which he found the lovely daughter of the King of India sitting alone on a golden couch in a hall spread with silken carpets. She tells

¹ Maspero, *Contes populaires de l'Égypte ancienne* (Paris, 1882), p. 5 sqq.; Flinders Petrie, *Egyptian Tales*, Second Series (London, 1895), p. 36

sqq. Compare W. Mannhardt, "Das älteste Märchen," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), pp. 232-259.

him that she is held captive by a jinnee, who had swooped down on her and carried her off while she was disporting herself with her female slaves in a tank in the great garden of her father the king. Seyf el-Mulook then offers to smite the jinnee with the sword and slay him. "But," she replied, "thou canst not slay him unless thou kill his soul." "And in what place," said he, "is his soul?" She answered, "I asked him respecting it many times; but he would not confess to me its place. It happened, however, that I urged him, one day, and he was enraged against me, and said to me, 'How often wilt thou ask me respecting my soul? What is the reason of thy question respecting my soul?' So I answered him, 'O Hátim, there remaineth to me no one but thee, excepting God; and I, as long as I live, would not cease to hold thy soul in my embrace; and if I do not take care of thy soul, and put it in the midst of my eye, how can I live after thee? If I know thy soul, I would take care of it as of my right eye.' And thereupon he said to me, 'When I was born, the astrologers declared that the destruction of my soul would be effected by the hand of one of the sons of the human kings. I therefore took my soul, and put it into the crop of a sparrow, and I imprisoned the sparrow in a little box, and put this into another small box, and this I put within seven other small boxes, and I put these within seven chests, and the chests I put into a coffer of marble within the verge of this circumambient ocean; for this part is remote from the countries of mankind, and none of mankind can gain access to it.'" But Seyf el-Mulook got possession of the sparrow and strangled it, and the jinnee fell upon the ground a heap of black ashes.¹ In a modern Arabian tale a king marries an ogress, who puts out the eyes of the king's forty wives. One of the blinded queens gives birth to a son whom she names Mohammed the Prudent. But the ogress queen hated him and compassed his death. So she sent him on an errand to the house of her kinsfolk the ogres. In the house of the ogres he saw some things hanging from the roof, and on asking a female slave what they were, she said, "That is the bottle which contains the life of my lady the queen, and the other bottle beside it

¹ Lane's *Arabian Nights* (London, 1841), iii. 339 sqq.

contains the eyes of the queens whom my mistress blinded." A little afterwards he spied a beetle and rose to kill it. "Don't kill it," cried the slave, "for that is my life." But Mohammed the Prudent watched the beetle till it entered a chink in the wall; and when the female slave had fallen asleep, he killed the beetle in its hole, and so the slave died. Then Mohammed took down the two bottles and carried them home to his father's palace. There he presented himself before the ogress queen and said, "See, I have your life in my hand, but I will not kill you till you have replaced the eyes which you took from the forty queens." The ogress did as she was bid, and then Mohammed the Prudent said, "There, take your life." But the bottle slipped from his hand and fell, the life of the ogress escaped from it, and she died.¹

A Basque story, which closely resembles some of the stories told among Aryan peoples, relates how a monster—a Body-without-Soul—detains a princess in captivity, and is questioned by her as to how he might be slain. With some reluctance he tells her, "You must kill a terrible wolf which is in the forest, and inside him is a fox, in the fox is a

¹ G. Spitta - Bey, *Contes arabes modernes* (Leyden and Paris, 1883), No. 2, p. 12 sqq. The story in its main outlines is identical with the Cashmeer story of "The Ogress Queen" (J. H. Knowles, *Folk-tales of Kashmir*, p. 42 sqq.) and the Bengalee story of "The Boy whom Seven Mothers Suckled" (Lal Behari Day, *Folk-tales of Bengal*, p. 117 sqq.; *Indian Antiquary*, i. 170 sqq.). In another Arabian story the life of a witch is bound up with a phial; when it is broken, she dies (W. A. Clouston, *A Group of Eastern Romances and Stories*, p. 30). A similar incident occurs in a Cashmeer story (Knowles, *op. cit.* p. 73). In the Arabian story mentioned in the text, the hero, by a genuine touch of local colour, is made to drink the milk of an ogress's breasts and hence is regarded by her as her son. The same incident occurs in Kabyl and Berber tales. See J. Rivière, *Contes populaires de la Kabylie du Djurdjura* (Paris, 1882), p. 239; R. Basset,

Nouveaux Contes Berbères (Paris, 1897), p. 128, with the editor's note, p. 339 sqq. In a Mongolian story a king refuses to kill a lad because he has unwittingly partaken of a cake kneaded with the milk of the lad's mother (Jülg, *Mongolische Märchen-Sammlung, die neun Märchen des Siddhi-Kür*, p. 183). Cp. W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, p. 149; and for the same mode of creating kinship among other races, see D'Abbadie, *Douze ans dans la Haute Éthiopie*, p. 272 sq.; Tausch, "Notices of the Circassians," *Journ. Royal Asiatic Soc.* i. (1834), p. 104; Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, pp. 77, 83 (cp. Leitner, *Languages and Races of Dardistan*, p. 34); Denzil Ibbetson, *Settlement Report of the Panipat, Tahsil, and Karnal Parganah of the Karnal District*, p. 101; Moura, *Royaume du Cambodge*, i. 427; F. S. Krauss, *Sitte und Brauch der Süd-slaven*, p. 14.

pigeon ; this pigeon has an egg in his head, and whoever should strike me on the forehead with this egg would kill me." The hero of the story, by name Malbrouk, has learned, in the usual way, the art of turning himself at will into a wolf, an ant, a hawk, or a dog, and on the strength of this accomplishment he kills the animals, one after the other, and extracts the precious egg from the pigeon's head. When the wolf is killed, the monster feels it and says despondently, "I do not know if anything is going to happen to me. I am much afraid of it." When the fox and the pigeon have been killed, he cries that it is all over with him, that they have taken the egg out of the pigeon, and that he knows not what is to become of him. Finally the princess strikes the monster on the forehead with the egg, and he falls a corpse.¹ In a Kabyl story an ogre declares that his fate is far away in an egg, which is in a pigeon, which is in a camel, which is in the sea. The hero procures the egg and crushes it between his hands, and the ogre dies.² In a Magyar folk-tale, an old witch detains a young prince called Ambrose in the bowels of the earth. At last she confided to him that she kept a wild boar in a silken meadow, and if it were killed, they would find a hare inside, and inside the hare a pigeon, and inside the pigeon a small box, and inside the box one black and one shining beetle : the shining beetle held her life, and the black one held her power ; if these two beetles died, then her life would come to an end also. When the old hag went out, Ambrose killed the wild boar, took out the hare, from the hare he took the pigeon, from the pigeon the box, and from the box the two beetles ; he killed the black beetle, but kept the shining one alive. So the witch's power left her immediately, and when she came home, she had to take to her bed. Having learned from her how to escape from his prison to the upper air, Ambrose killed the shining beetle, and the old hag's spirit left her at once.³

¹ W. Webster, *Basque Legends* (London, 1877), p. 80 *sqq.* ; J. Vinson, *Le folk-lore du pays Basque* (Paris, 1883), p. 84 *sqq.* As so often in tales of this type, the hero is said to have received his wonderful powers of metamorphosis from animals whom he found

quarrelling about their shares in a dead beast.

² Rivièrè, *Contes populaires de la Kabylie du Djurdjura*, p. 191.

³ W. H. Jones and L. L. Kropf, *The Folk-tales of the Magyar* (London, 1889), p. 205 *sq.*

In another Hungarian story the safety of the Dwarf-king resides in a golden cockchafer, inside a golden cock, inside a golden sheep, inside a golden stag, in the ninety-ninth island. The hero overcomes all these golden animals and so recovers his bride, whom the Dwarf-king had carried off.¹

A Lapp story tells of a giant who slew a man and took away his wife. When the man's son grew up, he tried to rescue his mother and kill the giant, but fire and sword were powerless to harm the monster; it seemed as if he had no life in his body. "Dear mother," at last inquired the son, "don't you know where the giant has hidden away his life?" The mother did not know, but promised to ask. So one day, when the giant chanced to be in a good humour, she asked him where he kept his life. He said to her, "Out yonder on a burning sea is an island, in the island is a barrel, in the barrel is a sheep, in the sheep is a hen, in the hen is an egg, and in the egg is my life." When the woman's son heard this, he hired a bear, a wolf, a hawk, and a diver-bird and set off in a boat to sail to the island in the burning sea. He sat with the hawk and the diver-bird under an iron tent in the middle of the boat, and he set the bear and the wolf to row. That is why to this day the bear's hair is dark brown and the wolf has dark brown spots; for as they sat at the oars without any screen they were naturally scorched by the tossing tongues of flame on the burning sea. However, they made their way over the fiery billows to the island, and there they found the barrel. In a trice the bear had knocked the bottom out of it with his claws, and forth sprang a sheep. But the wolf soon pulled the sheep down and rent it in pieces. From out the sheep flew a hen, but the hawk stooped on it and tore it with his talons. In the hen was an egg, which dropped into the sea and sank; but the diver-bird dived after it. Twice he dived after it in vain and came up to the surface gasping and spluttering; but the third time he brought up the egg and handed it to the young man. Great was the young man's joy. At once he kindled a great bonfire on the shore, threw the egg into it, and rowed away back across the sea. On landing he went away straight to the giant's abode, and found the monster burning just as he had left the

¹ R. H. Busk, *The Folk-lore of Rome*, p. 168.

egg burning on the island. "Fool that I was," lamented the dying giant, "to betray my life to a wicked old woman," and with that he snatched at an iron tube through which in happier days he had been wont to suck the blood of his human victims. But the woman was too subtle for him, for she had taken the precaution of inserting one end of the tube in the glowing embers of the hearth; and so, when the giant sucked hard at the other end, he imbibed only fire and ashes. Thus he burned inside as well as outside, and when the fire went out the giant's life went out with it.¹

A Samoyed story tells how seven warlocks killed a certain man's mother and carried off his sister, whom they kept to serve them. Every night when they came home the seven warlocks used to take out their hearts and place them in a dish, which the woman hung on the tent-poles. But the wife of the man whom they had wronged stole the hearts of the warlocks while they slept, and took them to her husband. By break of day he went with the hearts to the warlocks, and found them at the point of death. They all begged for their hearts; but he threw six of their hearts to the ground, and six of the warlocks died. The seventh and eldest warlock begged hard for his heart, and the man said, "You killed my mother. Make her alive again, and I will give you back your heart." The warlock said to his wife, "Go to the place where the dead woman lies. You will find a bag there. Bring it to me. The woman's spirit is in the bag." So his wife brought the bag; and the warlock said to the man, "Go to your dead mother, shake the bag and let the spirit breathe over her bones; so she will come to life again." The man did as he was bid, and his mother was restored to life. Then he hurled the seventh heart to the ground, and the seventh warlock died.² In a Kalmuck tale we read how a certain khan challenged a wise man to show his skill by stealing a precious stone on which the khan's life depended. The sage contrived to purloin the talisman while the khan and his guards slept; but not content with

¹ F. Liebrecht, "Lappländische Märchen," *Germania*, N.R., iii. (1870), p. 174 sq.; Poestion, *Lappländische Märchen* (Vienna, 1886), No. 20,

p. 81 sqq.

² Castren, *Ethnologische Vorlesungen über die alttaischen Völker*, p. 173 sqq.

this he gave a further proof of his dexterity by bonneting the slumbering potentate with a bladder. This was too much for the khan. Next morning he informed the sage that he could overlook everything else, but that the indignity of being bonneted with a bladder was more than he could stand; and he ordered his facetious friend to instant execution. Pained at this exhibition of royal ingratitude, the sage dashed to the ground the talisman which he still held in his hand; and at the same instant blood flowed from the nostrils of the khan, and he gave up the ghost.¹

In a Tartar poem two heroes named Ak Molot and Bulat engage in mortal combat. Ak Molot pierces his foe through and through with an arrow, grapples with him, and dashes him to the ground, but all in vain, Bulat could not die. At last when the combat has lasted three years, a friend of Ak Molot sees a golden casket hanging by a white thread from the sky, and bethinks him that perhaps this casket contains Bulat's soul. So he shot through the white thread with an arrow, and down fell the casket. He opened it, and in the casket sat ten white birds, and one of the birds was Bulat's soul. Bulat wept when he saw that his soul was found in the casket. But one after the other the birds were killed, and then Ak Molot easily slew his foe.² In another Tartar poem, two brothers going to fight two other brothers take out their souls and hide them in the form of a white herb with six stalks in a deep pit. But one of their foes sees them doing so and digs up their souls, which he puts into a golden ram's horn, and then sticks the ram's horn in his quiver. The two warriors whose souls have thus been stolen know that they have no chance of victory, and accordingly make peace with their enemies.³ In another Tartar poem a terrible demon sets all the gods and heroes at defiance. At last a valiant youth fights the demon, binds him hand and foot, and slices him with his sword. But still the demon is not slain. So the youth asked him, "Tell me, where is your soul hidden? For if your soul had been 'hidden in your body, you must have been dead long ago." The demon

¹ B. Jül, *Kalmückische Märchen*, No. 12, p. 58 sqq.

² Schiefner, *Heldensagen der Minus-*

sinschen Tataren (St. Petersburg, 1859), pp. 172-176.

³ Schiefner, *op. cit.* pp. 108-112.

replied, "On the saddle of my horse is a bag. In the bag is a serpent with twelve heads. In the serpent is my soul. When you have killed the serpent, you have killed me also." So the youth took the saddle-bag from the horse and killed the twelve-headed serpent, whereupon the demon expired.¹ In another Tartar poem a hero called Kök Chan deposits with a maiden a golden ring, in which is half his strength. Afterwards when Kök Chan is wrestling long with a hero and cannot kill him, a woman drops into his mouth the ring which contains half his strength. Thus inspired with fresh force he slays his enemy.²

In a Mongolian story the hero Joro gets the better of his enemy the lama Tschoridong in the following way. The lama, who is an enchanter, sends out his soul in the form of a wasp to sting Joro's eyes. But Joro catches the wasp in his hand, and by alternately shutting and opening his hand he causes the lama alternately to lose and recover consciousness.³ In a Tartar poem two youths cut open the body of an old witch and tear out her bowels, but all to no purpose, she still lives. On being asked where her soul is, she answers that it is in the middle of her shoe-sole in the form of a seven-headed speckled snake. So one of the youths slices her shoe-sole with his sword, takes out the speckled snake, and cuts off its seven heads. Then the witch dies.⁴ Another Tartar poem describes how the hero Kartaga grappled with the Swan-woman. Long they wrestled. Moons waxed and waned and still they wrestled; years came and went, and still the struggle went on. But the piebald horse and the black horse knew that the Swan-woman's soul was not in her. Under the black earth flow nine seas; where the seas meet and form one, the sea comes to the surface of the earth. At the mouth of the nine seas

¹ Schiefner, *op. cit.* pp. 360-364; Castren, *Vorlesungen über die finnische Mythologie*, p. 186 sq.

² Schiefner, *op. cit.* pp. 189-193. In another Tartar poem (Schiefner, *op. cit.* p. 390 sq.) a boy's soul is shut up by his enemies in a box. While the soul is in the box, the boy is dead; when it is taken out, he is restored to life. In the same poem (p. 384) the soul of a horse is kept shut up in a box,

because it is feared the owner of the horse will become the greatest hero on earth. But these cases are, to some extent, the converse of those in the text.

³ Schott, "Ueber die Sage von Geser Chan," *Abhandlungen d. königl. Akad. d. Wissensch. zu Berlin*, 1851, p. 269.

⁴ W. Radloff, *Proben der Volkslitteratur der türkischen Stämme Süd-Sibiriens*, ii. 237 sq.

rises a rock of copper ; it rises to the surface of the ground, it rises up between heaven and earth, this rock of copper. At the foot of the copper rock is a black chest, in the black chest is a golden casket, and in the golden casket is the soul of the Swan-woman. Seven little birds are the soul of the Swan-woman ; if the birds are killed the Swan-woman will die straightway. So the horses ran to the foot of the copper rock, opened the black chest, and brought back the golden casket. Then the piebald horse turned himself into a bald-headed man, opened the golden casket, and cut off the heads of the seven birds. So the Swan-woman died.¹ In a Tartar story a chief called Tash Kan is asked where his soul is. He answers that there are seven great poplars, and under the poplars a golden well ; seven *Maralen* (?) come to drink the water of the well, and the belly of one of them trails on the ground ; in this *Maral* is the golden box, in the golden box is a silver box, in the silver box are seven quails, the head of one of the quails is golden and its tail silver ; that quail is Tash Kan's soul. The hero of the story gets possession of the seven quails and wrings the necks of six of them. Then Tash Kan comes running and begs the hero to let his soul go free. But the hero wrings the quail's neck, and Tash Kan drops dead.² In another Tartar poem the hero, pursuing his sister who has driven away his cattle, is warned to desist from the pursuit because his sister has carried away his soul in a golden sword and a golden arrow, and if he pursues her she will kill him by throwing the golden sword or shooting the golden arrow at him.³

A Malay poem relates how once upon a time in the city of Indrapoora there was a certain merchant who was rich and prosperous, but he had no children. One day as he walked with his wife by the river they found a baby girl, fair as an angel. So they adopted the child and called her Bidasari. The merchant caused a golden fish to be made, and into this fish he transferred the soul of his adopted daughter. Then he put the golden fish in a golden box full of water, and hid it in a pond in the midst of his garden. In time the girl grew to be a lovely woman. Now the

¹ W. Radloff, *op. cit.* ii. 531 *sqq.*

³ *Id.*, i. 345 *sq.*

² *Id.*, iv. 88 *sq.*

King of Indrapoora had a fair young queen, who lived in fear that the king might take to himself a second wife. So, hearing of the charms of Bidasari, the queen resolved to put her out of the way. She lured the girl to the palace and tortured her cruelly; but Bidasari could not die, because her soul was not in her. At last she could stand the torture no longer and said to the queen, "If you wish me to die, you must bring the box which is in the pond in my father's garden." So the box was brought and opened, and there was the golden fish in the water. The girl said, "My soul is in that fish. In the morning you must take the fish out of the water, and in the evening you must put it back into the water. Do not let the fish lie about, but bind it round your neck. If you do this, I shall soon die." So the queen took the fish out of the box and fastened it round her neck; and no sooner had she done so, than Bidasari fell into a swoon. But in the evening, when the fish was put back into the water, Bidasari came to herself again. Seeing that she thus had the girl in her power, the queen sent her home to her adopted parents. To save her from further persecution her parents resolved to remove their daughter from the city. So in a lonely and desolate spot they built a house and brought Bidasari thither. There she dwelt alone, undergoing vicissitudes that corresponded with the vicissitudes of the golden fish in which was her soul. All day long, while the fish was out of the water, she remained unconscious; but in the evening, when the fish was put into the water, she revived. One day the king was out hunting, and coming to the house where Bidasari lay unconscious, was smitten with her beauty. He tried to waken her, but in vain. Next day, towards evening, he repeated his visit, but still found her unconscious. However, when darkness fell, she came to herself and told the king the secret of her life. So the king returned to the palace, took the fish from the queen, and put it in water. Immediately Bidasari revived, and the king took her to wife.¹

¹ G. A. Wilken, "De betrekking tusschen menschen- dieren- en planten-leven naar het volksgeloof," *De Indische Gids*, November 1884, pp. 600-602; *id.*, "De Simsonsage," *De Gids*, 1888,

No. 5, p. 6 *sqq.* (of the separate reprint). Cp. Backer, *L'Archipel Indien*, pp. 144-149. The Malay text of the long poem was published with a Dutch translation and notes by W. R. var

Another story of an external soul comes from Nias, an island to the west of Sumatra, which we have often visited in the course of this book. Once on a time a chief was captured by his enemies, who tried to put him to death but failed. Water would not drown him nor fire burn him nor steel pierce him. At last his wife revealed the secret. On his head he had a hair as hard as a copper wire; and with this wire his life was bound up. So the hair was plucked out, and with it his spirit fled.¹

Ideas of the same sort meet us in stories told by the North American Indians. Thus in one Indian tale the hero pounds his enemy to pieces, but cannot kill him because his heart is not in his body. At last the champion learns that his foe's heart is in the sky, at the western side of the noon-day sun; so he reaches up, seizes the heart, and crushes it, and straightway his enemy expires. In another Indian myth there figures a personage Winter whose song brings frost and snow, but his heart is hidden away at a distance. However, his foe finds the heart and burns it, and so the Snow-maker perishes.² A Pawnee story relates how a wounded warrior was carried off by bears, who healed him of his hurts. When the Indian was about to return to his village, the old he-bear said to him, "I shall look after you. I shall give to you a part of myself. If I am killed, you shall be killed. If I grow old, you shall be old." And the bear gave him a cap of bearskin, and at parting he put his arms round the Indian and hugged him, and put his mouth against the man's mouth and held the man's hands in his paws. The Indian who told the tale conjectured that when the man died, the old bear died also.³ The Navajoes tell of a certain mythical being called "the Maiden that becomes a Bear," who learned the art of turning herself into a bear from

Hoëvell in *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xix. (Batavia, 1843).

¹ Nieuwenhuisen en Rosenberg, "Verslag omtrent het eiland Nias," *Verhandel. van het Batav. Genootsch. v. Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, xxx, (1863), p. 111; Sundermann, "Die Insel Nias," *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, xi. (1884), p. 453. Compare E.

Modigliani, *Un Viaggio a Nias*, p. 339.

² J. Curtin, *Myths and Folk-tales of the Russians, Western Slavs, and Magyars* (London, 1891), p. 551. The writer does not mention his authorities.

³ G. B. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-tales* (New York, 1889), p. 121 sqq., "The Bear Man."

the prairie wolf. She was a great warrior and quite invulnerable; for when she went to war she took out her vital organs and hid them, so that no one could kill her; and when the battle was over she put the organs back in their places again.¹

§ 4. *The external Soul in Folk-custom*

Thus the idea that the soul may be deposited for a longer or shorter time in some place of security outside the body, or at all events in the hair, is found in the popular tales of many races. It remains to show that the idea is not a mere figment devised to adorn a tale, but is a real article of primitive faith, which has given rise to a corresponding set of customs.

We have seen that in the tales the hero, as a preparation for battle, sometimes removes his soul from his body, in order that his body may be invulnerable and immortal in the combat. With a like intention the savage removes his soul from his body on various occasions of real or imaginary peril. Thus we have seen that among the people of Minahassa in Celebes, when a family moves into a new house, a priest collects the souls of the whole family in a bag, and afterwards restores them to their owners, because the moment of entering a new house is supposed to be fraught with supernatural danger.² In Southern Celebes when a woman is brought to bed the messenger who fetches the doctor or the midwife always carries with him something made of iron, such as a chopping-knife, which he delivers to the doctor. The doctor must keep the thing in his house till the confinement is over, when he gives it back, receiving a fixed sum of money for doing so. The chopping-knife, or whatever it is, represents the woman's soul, which at this critical time is believed to be safer out of her body than in it. Hence the doctor must take great care of the object; for were it lost, the woman's soul would assuredly, they think, be lost with it.³ But in Celebes the convenience of occasionally depositing the soul in some external object is not limited to human

¹ Washington Matthews, "The Mountain Chant: a Navajo ceremony," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1887), p. 407.

² Above, vol. i. p. 273 sq.

³ B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes*, p. 54.

beings. The Alfoors, who inhabit the central district of that island, and among whose industries the working of iron occupies a foremost place, attribute to the metal a soul which would be apt to desert its body under the blows of the hammer, if some means were not found to detain it. Accordingly in every smithy of Poso—for that is the name of the country of these people—you may see hanging up a bundle of wooden instruments, such as chopping-knives, swords, spear-heads, and so forth. This bundle goes by the name of *lamoa*, which is the general word for "gods," and in it the soul of the iron that is being wrought in the smithy is supposed to reside. "If we did not hang the *lamoa* over the anvil," they say, "the iron would flow away and be unworkable," on account of the absence of the soul.¹

Again, we have seen that in folk-tales a man's soul or strength is sometimes represented as bound up with his hair, and that when his hair is cut off he dies or grows weak. So the natives of Amboyna used to think that their strength was in their hair and would desert them if it were shorn. A criminal under torture in a Dutch Court of that island persisted in denying his guilt till his hair was cut off, when he immediately confessed. One man, who was tried for murder, endured without flinching the utmost ingenuity of his torturers till he saw the surgeon standing with a pair of shears. On asking what this was for, and being told that it was to cut his hair, he begged they would not do it, and made a clean breast. In subsequent cases, when torture failed to wring a confession from a prisoner, the Dutch authorities made a practice of cutting off his hair.² In Ceram it is still believed that if young people have their hair cut they will be weakened and enervated thereby.³ Here in Europe it used to be thought that the maleficent powers of witches and wizards resided in their hair, and that nothing could make any impression on these miscreants so long as

¹ A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Nederdeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), p. 23 sq. As to the *lamoa* in general, see A. C. Kruijt, *op. cit.* xl. (1896), p. 10 sq.

² F. Valentyn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, ii. 143 sq.; G. A. Wilken, "De Simsonsage," *De Gids*, 1888, No. 5, p. 15 sq. (of the separate reprint).

³ Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, p. 137.

they kept their hair on. Hence in France it was customary to shave the whole bodies of persons charged with sorcery before handing them over to the torturer. Millaeus witnessed the torture of some persons at Toulouse, from whom no confession could be wrung until they were stripped and completely shaven, when they readily acknowledged the truth of the charge. A woman also, who apparently led a pious life, was put to the torture on suspicion of witchcraft, and bore her agonies with incredible constancy, until complete depilation drove her to admit her guilt. The noted inquisitor Sprenger contented himself with shaving the head of the suspected witch or wizard; but his more thorough-going colleague Cumanus shaved the whole bodies of forty-one women before committing them all to the flames. He had high authority for this rigorous scrutiny, since Satan himself, in a sermon preached from the pulpit of North Berwick church, comforted his many servants by assuring them that no harm could befall them "sa lang as their hair wes on, and sould newir latt ane teir fall fra thair ene."¹

Further it has been shown that in folk-tales the life of a person is sometimes so bound up with the life of a plant that the withering of the plant will immediately follow or be followed by the death of the person.² Similarly among the M'Bengas in Western Africa, about the Gaboon, when two children are born on the same day, the people plant two trees of the same kind and dance round them. The life of each of the children is believed to be bound up with the life of one of the trees; and if the tree dies or is thrown down, they are sure that the child will soon die.³ In Sierra Leone also it is customary at the birth of a child to plant a shoot of a *malep*-tree, and they think that the tree will grow with the child and be its god. If a tree which has been thus planted withers away, the people consult a sorcerer on the subject.⁴ In the Cameroons, also, the life of a person

¹ J. G. Dalyell, *The darker Superstitions of Scotland*, pp. 637-639; C. de Mensignac, *Recherches Ethnographiques sur la Salive et le Crachat* (Bordeaux, 1892), p. 49 note.

² Above, pp. 357 sq., 360, 363, 366 sq., 377 sq.

³ *Revue d'Ethnographie*, ii. 223.

⁴ Fr. Kunstmann, "Valentin Ferdinand's Beschreibung der Serra Leoa," *Abhandlungen der histor. Classe der könig. Bayer. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, ix. (1866), p. 131 sq.

is believed to be sympathetically bound up with that of a tree.¹ The chief of Old Town in Calabar kept his soul in a sacred grove near a spring of water. When some Europeans, in frolic or ignorance, cut down part of the grove, the spirit was most indignant and threatened the perpetrators of the deed, according to the king, with all manner of evil.² Some of the Papuans unite the life of a new-born child sympathetically with that of a tree by driving a pebble into the bark of the tree. This is supposed to give them complete mastery over the child's life; if the tree is cut down, the child will die.³ After a birth the Maoris used to bury the navel-string in a sacred place and plant a young sapling over it. As the tree grew, it was a *tohu orange* or sign of life for the child; if it flourished, the child would prosper; if it withered and died, the parents augured the worst for their child.⁴ In the Chatham Islands, when the child of a leading man received its name, it was customary to plant a tree, "the growth of which was to be as the growth of the child," and during the planting priests chanted a spell.⁵ In Southern Celebes, when a child is born, a cocoa-nut is planted, and is watered with the water in which the after-birth and navel-string have been washed. As it grows up, the tree is called the "contemporary" of the child.⁶ So in Bali a cocoa-palm is planted at the birth of a child. It is believed to grow up equally with the child, and is called its "life-plant."⁷ In the Kei Islands, when a birth has occurred, the placenta are put in a pot with ashes and so deposited among the branches of a tree. According as the child is a boy or a girl, the placenta are regarded as its brother or sister, and the intention of setting them on a tree is to enable them to keep

¹ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, i. 165.

² J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 178.

³ Bastian, *Ein Besuch in San Salvador*, p. 103 sq.; *id.*, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte*, iii. 193.

⁴ R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*,² p. 184; Dumont D'Urville, *Voyage autour*

du monde et à la recherche de La Pérouse sur la corvette Astrolabe, ii. 444.

⁵ W. T. L. Travers, "Notes of the traditions and manners and customs of the Mori-oris," *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, ix. (1876), p. 22.

⁶ Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes*, p. 59.

⁷ Van Eck, "Schetsen van het eiland Bali," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, N.S., ix. (1880), p. 417 sq.

a watchful eye on the fortunes of their comrade.¹ On certain occasions the Dyaks of Borneo plant a palm-tree, which is believed to be a complete index of their fate. If it flourishes, they reckon on good fortune; but if it withers or dies, they expect misfortune.² According to another account, at the naming of children and certain other festivals the Dyaks are wont to set a *sawang*-plant, roots and all, before a priestess; and when the festival is over, the plant is replaced in the ground. Such a plant becomes thenceforth a sort of prophetic index for the person in whose honour the festival was held. If the plant thrives, the man will be fortunate; if it fades or perishes, some evil will befall him.³ It is said that there are still families in Russia, Germany, England, France, and Italy who are accustomed to plant a tree at the birth of a child. The tree, it is hoped, will grow with the child, and it is tended with special care.⁴ The custom is still pretty general in the canton of Aargau in Switzerland; an apple-tree is planted for a boy and a pear-tree for a girl, and the people think that the child will flourish or dwindle with the tree.⁵ In Mecklenburg the after-birth is thrown out at the foot of a young tree, and the child is then believed to grow with the tree.⁶ In Bosnia, when the children of a family have died one after the other, the hair of the next child is cut with some ceremony by a stranger, and the mother carries the shorn tresses into the garden, where she ties them to a fine young tree, in order that her

¹ C. M. Pleyte, "Ethnographische Beschrijving der Kei-Eilanden," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 816 sq. Some of the Galelareese plant the navel-string with a banana-bush or cocoa-nut, but it is not said that any superstition attaches to the observance (M. J. van Baarda, "Fabelen, Verhalen en Overleveringen der Galelareezen," *Rijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, xlv. (1895), p. 461). Among the Wakondyo, at the north-western corner of the Albert Nyanza, it is customary to bury the after-birth at the foot of a young banana-tree; and the fruit of this particular tree may

be eaten by no one but the woman who assisted at the birth (Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 653). Compare vol. i. p. 53 sqq.

² G. A. Wilken, "De Simsonsage," *De Gids*, 1888, No. 5, p. 26 (of the separate reprint).

³ F. Grabowsky, "Die Theogenie der Dajaken auf Borneo," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, v. (1892), p. 133.

⁴ Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, i. p. xxviii. sq.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 50; Ploss, *Das Kind*,² i. 79.

⁶ K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, ii. p. 43, § 63.

child may grow and flourish like the tree.¹ When Lord Byron first visited his ancestral estate of Newstead "he planted, it seems, a young oak in some part of the grounds, and had an idea that as *it* flourished so should *he*."² On a day when the cloud that settled on the later years of Sir Walter Scott lifted a little, and he heard that *Woodstock* had sold for over eight thousand pounds, he wrote in his journal: "I have a curious fancy; I will go set two or three acorns, and judge by their success in growing whether I shall succeed in clearing my way or not."³ Near the Castle of Dalhousie, not far from Edinburgh, there grows an oak-tree, called the Edgewell Tree, which is popularly believed to be linked to the fate of the family by a mysterious tie; for they say that when one of the family dies, or is about to die, a branch falls from the Edgewell Tree. Thus, on seeing a great bough drop from the tree on a quiet, still day in July 1874, an old forester exclaimed, "The laird's deid noo!" and soon after news came that Fox Maule, eleventh Earl of Dalhousie, was dead.⁴

In England children are sometimes passed through a cleft ash-tree as a cure for rupture or rickets, and thenceforward a sympathetic connection is supposed to exist between them and the tree. An ash-tree which had been used for this purpose grew at the edge of Shirley Heath, on the road from Hockly House to Birmingham. "Thomas Chillingworth, son of the owner of an adjoining farm, now about thirty-four, was, when an infant of a year old, passed through a similar tree, now perfectly sound, which he preserves with so much care that he will not suffer a single branch to be touched, for it is believed the life of the patient depends on the life of the tree, and the moment that is cut down, be the patient ever so distant, the rupture returns, and a mortification ensues, and terminates in death, as was the case in a man driving a waggon on the very road in question." "It is not uncommon, however," adds the writer, "for persons to survive for a time the felling of the

¹ F. S. Krauss, "Haarschurgodschaft bei den Südslaven," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vii. (1894), p. 193.

² Moore's *Life of Lord Byron*, i. 101.

³ Lockhart, *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (First Edition), vi. 283.

⁴ Sir Walter Scott's *Journal* (First Edition), ii. 282, with the editor's note.

tree.”¹ The ordinary mode of effecting the cure is to split a young ash-sapling longitudinally for a few feet and pass the child, naked, thrice through the fissure at sunrise. As soon as the ceremony has been performed, the tree is bound tightly up and the fissure plastered over with mud or clay. The belief is that just as the cleft in the tree closes up, so the rupture in the child’s body will be healed; but that if the rift in the tree remains open, the rupture in the child will remain too.² Some thirty years ago the remedy was still in common use at Fittleworth and many other places in Sussex. The account of the Sussex practice and belief is notable because it brings out very clearly the sympathetic relation supposed to exist between the ruptured child and the tree through which it has been passed. We are told that the patient “must be passed nine times every morning on nine successive days at sunrise through a cleft in a sapling ash-tree, which has been so far given up by the owner of it to the parents of the child, as that there is an understanding it shall not be cut down during the life of the infant who is to be passed through it. The sapling must be sound at heart, and the cleft must be made with an axe. The child on being carried to the tree must be attended by nine persons, each of whom must pass it through the cleft from west to east. On the ninth morning the solemn ceremony is concluded by binding the tree lightly with a cord, and it is supposed that as the cleft closes the health of the child will improve. In the neighbourhood of Petworth some cleft ash-trees may be seen, through which children have very recently been passed. I may add, that only a few weeks since, a person who had lately purchased an ash-tree

¹ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1804, p. 909; Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 289.

² Brand, *op. cit.* iii. 287-292; W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 67 sq.; W. Wollaston Groome, “Suffolk Leechcraft,” *Folk-lore*, vi. (1895), p. 123 sq.; E. S. Hartland, in *Folk-lore*, vii. (1896), pp. 303-306; *County Folk-lore, Suffolk*, edited by Lady Gurdon, pp. 26-28. To ensure the success of the cure various additional precautions are

sometimes prescribed, as that the ash should be a maiden, that is a tree that has never been topped or cut; that the split should be made east and west; that the child should be passed into the tree by a maiden and taken out on the other side by a boy; that the child should always be passed through head foremost (but according to others feet foremost), and so forth. In Surrey we hear of a holly-tree being used instead of an ash (*Notes and Queries*, Sixth Series, xi. Jan.-Jun. 1885, p. 46).

standing in this parish, intending to cut it down, was told by the father of a child, who had some time before been passed through it, that the infirmity would be sure to return upon his son if it were felled. Whereupon the good man said, he knew that such would be the case; and therefore he would not fell it for the world."¹

A similar cure for various diseases, but especially for rupture, has been commonly practised in other parts of Europe, for example in Germany, France, Denmark, and Sweden, but in these countries the tree employed for the purpose is generally not an ash but an oak. With this exception, the practice and the belief are nearly the same on the continent as in England, though sometimes German wiscacres recommend that the ceremony should be performed on Christmas Eve, Good Friday, or the Eve of St. John; in this last case it is desirable that two persons of the name of John should hold the split oak-sapling open, while a third John receives the child after it has been passed through the cleft.² In Mecklenburg, as in England, the sympathetic relation thus established between

¹ "Some West Sussex superstitions lingering in 1868, collected by Charlotte Latham, at Fittleworth," *Folk-lore Record*, i. (1878), p. 40 sq.

² For the custom in Germany, see Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ ii. 975 sq.; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 317, § 503; Kuhn und Schwartz, *Nord-deutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 443 sq., § 340; Woeste, *Volksüberlieferungen in der Grafschaft Mark*, p. 54, § 4; E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 390, § 56; *Bavaria, Landes- und Volkskunde des Königreichs Bayern*, ii. 255 (willow-tree); J. A. E. Köhler, *Volksbrauch*, etc., *im Voigtlande*, p. 414 sq.; L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, i. 72 sq., § 88; K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, ii. p. 290 sq., § 1447; J. Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, p. 264. As to France, see Marcellus, *De medicamentis*, xxxiii. 26 (where the tree is a cherry); De

Nore, *Contumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 231; Béranger-Féraud, in *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, Quatrième Série, i. (1890), pp. 895-902; *id.*, *Superstitions et Survivances*, i. 523 sqq. As to Denmark and Sweden, see Grimm, *D.M.*⁴ ii. 976; H. F. Feilberg, "Zwieselbäume nebst verwandten Aberglauben in Skandinavien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 42 sqq. According to some, the tree through which the child is passed should have been split by lightning (Bartsch, *l.c.*). The whole subject of passing sick people through narrow apertures as a mode of cure has been well handled in an elegant little monograph (*Un vieux rite médical*, Paris, 1892) by Mr. H. Gaidoz, with whose general conclusion I agree. Compare also R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche* (Stuttgart, 1878), p. 31 sq.; E. S. Hartland, *Legend of Persens*, ii. 146 sq.; Béranger-Féraud, *Superstitions et Survivances*, i. 523-540.

the tree and the child is so close that if the tree is cut down the child will die.¹ In the island of Rügen people believe that when a person who has been thus cured of rupture dies, his soul passes into the same oak-tree through which his body was passed in his youth.² Thus it seems that with the disease the sufferer is supposed to transfer a certain vital part of himself to the tree so that it is impossible to injure the tree without at the same time injuring the man; and in Rügen this partial union is thought to be completed by the transmigration of the man's soul at death into the tree. Apparently the disease is conceived as something physical, which forms part of the patient and yet can be stripped off him and left behind in the narrow aperture through which he has forced his way. As this view of the matter has been recently disputed,³ it seems desirable to establish it, if possible, by confirmatory evidence. We shall find such evidence in various parts of the world.

In the island of Nias, when a man is in training for the priesthood, he has to be introduced to the various spirits between whom and mankind it will be his office to mediate. A priest takes him to an open window, and while the drums are beating points out to him the great spirit in the sun who calls away men to himself through death; for it is needful that the future priest should know him from whose grasp he will often be expected to wrest the sick and dying. In the evening twilight he is led to the graves and shown the envious spirits of the dead, who also are ever drawing away the living to their own shadowy world. Next day he is conducted to a river and shown the spirit of the waters; and finally they take him up to a mountain and exhibit to him the spirits of the mountains, who have diverse shapes, some appearing like swine, others like buffaloes, others like goats, and others again like men with long hair on their bodies. When he has seen all this, his education is complete, but on his return from the mountain the new priest may not at once enter his own house. For the

¹ Ploss, *Das Kind*,² ii. 221.

thologie und Sittenkunde, ii. (1855), p. 141.

² R. Baier, "Beiträge von der Insel Rügen," *Zeitschrift für deutsche My-*

³ By Mr. E. S. Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. 147.

people think that, were he to do so, the dangerous spirits by whom he is still environed would stay in the house and visit both the family and the pigs with sickness. Accordingly he betakes himself to other villages and passes several nights there, hoping that the spirits will leave him and settle on the friends who receive him into their houses; but naturally he does not reveal the intention of his visit to his hosts. Lastly, before he enters his own dwelling, he looks out for some young tree by the way, splits it down the middle, and then creeps through the fissure, in the belief that any spirit which may still be clinging to him will thus be left sticking to the tree.¹ Again, among the Bilqula or Bella Coola Indians of British Columbia "the bed of a mourner must be protected against the ghost of the deceased. His male relatives stick a thorn-bush into the ground at each corner of their beds. After four days these are thrown into the water. Mourners must rise early and go into the woods, where they stick four thorn-bushes into the ground, at the corners of a square, in which they cleanse themselves by rubbing their bodies with cedar branches. They also swim in ponds. After swimming they cleave four small trees and creep through the clefts, following the course of the sun. This they do on four subsequent mornings, cleaving new trees every day. Mourners cut their hair short. The hair that has been cut off is burnt. If they should not observe these regulations, it is believed that they would dream of the deceased."² To the savage, who fails to distinguish the visions of sleep from the appearances of waking life, the apparition of a dead man in a dream is equivalent to the actual presence of the ghost; and accordingly he seeks to keep off the spiritual intruder, just as he might a creature of flesh and blood, by fencing his bed with thorn-bushes. Similarly the practice of creeping through four cleft trees is clearly an attempt to shake off the clinging ghost and leave it adhering to the trees, just as in Nias the

¹ Fr. Kramer, "Der Götzendienst der Niasser," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxxiii. (1890), pp. 478-480.

² Fr. Boas, in *Seventh Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*,

p. 13 (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1891*). We have seen (vol. i. p. 325) that the Shushwap Indians of the same region also fence their beds against ghosts with a hedge of thorn bushes.

future priest hopes to rid himself in like manner of the dangerous spirits who have dogged his steps from the mountains and the graves.

This interpretation of the custom is strongly confirmed by a funeral ceremony which Dr. C. Hose witnessed in December 1898 at the chief village of the Madangs, a tribe who occupy a hitherto unexplored district in the heart of Borneo. "Just across the river from where we were sitting," says Dr. Hose, "was the graveyard, and there I witnessed a funeral procession as the day was drawing to a close. The coffin, which was a wooden box made from a tree-trunk, was decorated with red and black patterns in circles, with two small wooden figures of men placed at either end; it was lashed with rattans to a long pole, and by this means was lifted to the shoulders of the bearers, who numbered thirteen in all, and who then carried it to the burying-ground. After the mourners had all passed over to the graveyard, a man quickly cut a couple of small sticks, each five feet long and about an inch in diameter. One of these he split almost the whole way down, and forced the unsplit end into the ground, when the upper part opened like a V, leaving sufficient room for each person to pass through. He next split the top of the other stick, and placing another short stick in the cleft, made a cross, which he also forced into the ground. The funeral procession climbed the mound on which the cemetery was situated, passing through the V of the cleft stick in single file. As soon as the coffin had been placed on the stage erected for the purpose, the people commenced their return, following on one another's heels as quickly as possible, each spitting out the words, '*Pit balli krat balli jat tesip bertatip!*' ('Keep back, and close out all things evil, and sickness') as they passed through the V-shaped stick. The whole party having left the graveyard, the gate was closed by the simple process of tying the cleft ends of the stick together, and a few words were then said to the cross-stick, which they call *ngring*, or the wall that separates the living from the dead. All who had taken part in the ceremony then went and bathed before returning to their homes, rubbing their skins with rough pebbles, the old Mosaic idea of the uncleanness of the dead, as mentioned in

Numbers (chap. xix.), evidently finding a place among their religious beliefs. It is apparently a great relief to their minds to think that they can shut out the spirit of the deceased. They believe that the spirit of the dead is not aware that life has left the body until a short time after the coffin has been taken to the graveyard, and then not until the spirit has had leisure to notice the clothes, weapons, and other articles belonging to its earthly estate, which are placed with the coffin. But before this takes place the gate has been closed."¹ Here the words uttered by the mourners in passing through the cloven stick show clearly that they believe the stick to act as a barrier or fence, on the further side of which they leave behind the ghost, whose successful pursuit might entail sickness and death on the survivors. Thus the passage of these Madang mourners through the cleft stick is strictly analogous to the passage of ruptured English children through a cleft ash-tree. Both are simply ways of leaving an evil thing behind. Similarly the subsequent binding up of the cloven stick in Borneo is analogous to the binding up of the cloven ash-tree in England. Both are merely ways of barricading the road against the evil which is dogging your steps: having passed through the doorway you slam the door in the face of your pursuer.

With a like intention, doubtless, some of the savages of Tonquin repair after a burial to the banks of a stream and there creep through a triangle formed by leaning two reeds against each other, while the sorcerer souses them with dirty water. All the relations of the deceased must wash their garments in the stream before they return home, and they may not set foot in the house till they have shorn their hair at the foot of the ladder. Afterwards the sorcerer comes and sprinkles the whole house with water for the purpose of expelling evil spirits.² Here again we cannot doubt that the creeping through the triangle of reeds is intended to rid the mourners of the troublesome ghost. So when the Kamtchatkans had dis-

¹ C. Hose, "In the heart of Borneo," *The Geographical Journal*, xvi. July 1900, p. 45 39.

² Pinabel, "Notes sur quelques

peuplades dépendant du Tong-King," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Septième Série, v. (Paris, 1884), p. 430.

posed of a corpse after their usual fashion by throwing it to the dogs to be devoured, they purified themselves as follows. They went into the forest and cut various roots which they bent into rings, and through these rings they crept twice. Afterwards they carried the rings back to the forest and flung them away westward. The Koraks, a people of the same region, burn their dead and hold a festival in honour of the departed a year after the death. At this festival, which takes place on the spot where the corpse was burned, or, if that is too far off, on a neighbouring height, they sacrifice two young reindeer which have never been in harness, and the sorcerer sticks a great many reindeer horns in the earth, believing that thereby he is dispatching a whole herd of these animals to their deceased friend in the other world. Then they all hasten home, and purify themselves by passing between two poles planted in the ground, while the sorcerer strikes them with a stick and adjures death not to carry them off.¹ In the light of the customs cited above, as well as of a multitude of ceremonies observed for a similar purpose in all parts of the world,² we may safely assume that when people creep through rings after a death or pass between poles after a sacrifice to the dead, their intention simply is to interpose a barrier between themselves and the ghost; they make their way through a narrow pass or aperture through which they hope that the ghost will not be able to follow them. To put it otherwise, they conceive that the spirit of the dead is sticking to them like a burr, and that like a burr it may be rubbed or scraped off and left adhering to the sides of the opening through which they have squeezed themselves.

Similarly, when a pestilence is raging among the Koraks, they kill a dog, wind its guts about two poles, and pass between the poles,³ doubtless for the sake of giving the slip to the demon of the plague in the same way that they give the slip to the ghost. When the Kayans of Borneo have

¹ S. Krascheninnikow, *Beschreibung des Landes Kamtschatka* (Lemgo, 1766), pp. 268, 282.

² For some examples of these I may refer to an article of mine, "On certain burial customs as illustrative of the

primitive theory of the soul," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. (1886), p. 64 sqq.

³ S. Krascheninnikow, *op. cit.* p. 277 sq.

been dogged by an evil spirit on a journey and are nearing their destination, they fashion a small archway of boughs, light a fire under it, and pass in single file under the archway and over the fire, spitting into the fire as they pass. By this ceremony, we are told, "they thoroughly exorcise the evil spirits and emerge on the other side free from all baleful influences."¹ Here, to make assurance doubly sure, a fire as well as an archway is interposed between the travellers and the dreadful beings who are walking unseen behind. In our own country the Highlanders of Strathspey used to force all their sheep and lambs to pass through a hoop of rowan-tree on All Saints' Day and Beltane (the first of November and the first of May),² probably as a means of warding off the witches, who are especially dreaded on the first of May, and against whose malignant arts the rowan-tree affords an efficient protection. In Sweden when a natural ring has been found in a tree, it is carefully removed and treasured in the family; for sick and especially rickety children are cured by merely passing through it.³ To crawl under a bramble which has formed an arch by sending down a second root into the ground, is an English cure for whooping-cough, rheumatism, boils, and other complaints. In Devonshire the patient should creep through the arch thrice with the sun, that is from east to west. When a child is passed through it for whooping-cough, the operators ought to say :

"In bramble, out cough,
Here I leave the whooping-cough."⁴

¹ W. H. Furness, *Folk-lore in Borneo, a Sketch*, p. 28 (Wallingford, Pennsylvania, 1899, privately printed).

² John Ramsay of Ochertyre, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by A. Allardyce, ii. 454. Immediately after mentioning this custom the writer adds: "And in Breadalbane it is the custom for the dairymaid to drive the cattle to the sheals with a wand of that tree [the rowan] cut upon the day of removal, which is laid above the door until the cattle be going back again to the winter-town. This was reckoned a

preservative against witchcraft." As to the witches' sabbath on the first of May, see above, pp. 132, 266, and vol. i. p. 194, note 3. As to the power of the rowan-tree to counteract their spells, see W. Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 188; J. C. Atkinson, *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish* (London, 1891), p. 97 sqq.

³ H. F. Feilberg, "Zwieselbäume nebst verwandten Aberglauben in Skandinavien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 49 sq.

⁴ Dyer, *English Folk-lore*, p. 171 sq.; W. G. Black, *Folk-medicine*, p. 70.

In Périgord and other parts of France the same cure is employed for boils.¹ In Bulgaria, when a person suffers from a congenital malady such as scrofula, a popular cure is to take him to a neighbouring village and there make him creep naked thrice through an arch, which is formed by inserting the lower ends of two vine branches in the ground and joining their upper ends together. When he has done so, he hangs his clothes on a tree, and dons other garments. On his way home the patient must also crawl under a ploughshare, which is held high enough to let him pass.² Further, when whooping-cough is prevalent in a Bulgarian village, an old woman will scrape the earth from under the root of a willow-tree. Then all the children of the village creep through the opening thus made, and a thread from the garment of each of them is hung on the willow. Adults sometimes go through the same ceremony after recovering from a dangerous illness.³ Similarly, when sickness is rife among some of the villages to the east of Lake Nyassa, the inhabitants crawl through an arch formed by bending a wand and inserting the two ends in the ground. By way of further precaution they wash themselves on the spot with medicine and water, and then bury the medicine and the evil influence together in the earth. The same ceremony is resorted to as a means of keeping off evil spirits, wild beasts, and enemies.⁴ In Uganda, when a chief is sick, they sometimes kill a cow near his house and sprinkle the blood on the door-posts. A stout stick, to which some grass has been fastened, is also daubed with the blood and placed across the doorway. Then the sick man, who has been brought out to witness all this, is besprinkled with the blood on his forehead, shoulders, and legs below the knees. After that he must jump over the stick in the doorway, and as he does so he lets his bark-

¹ De Nore, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, p. 152; H. Gaidoz, *Un vieux rite médical*, p. 75.

² A. Strausz, *Die Bulgaren* (Leipsic, 1898), p. 414.

³ A. Strausz, *op. cit.* p. 404.

⁴ *Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa* (London, 1874),

i. 60. Among some tribes of South-Eastern Australia it was customary at the ceremonies of initiation to bend growing saplings into arches and compel the novices to pass under them; sometimes the youths had to crawl on the ground to get through. The intention of the ceremony is not stated. See A. W. Howitt, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiii. (1884), p. 445.

cloth fall off. He may not look behind him, but must go straight on. The priest then takes up the meat and the bark-cloth and goes in the opposite direction, never looking behind him. Afterwards he eats the meat with his friends in the open space before the chief's house. We are told that "the evil is thus atoned for and clings to the bark-cloth." Sometimes the treatment is different. After the door-posts have been bespattered with the blood of the cow, the patient is brought into the garden. Here the priest takes a plantain stem some six feet long, and having made a long cut down it, opens it wide enough for the sick man to pass through. As the patient goes through he leaves his bark-cloth behind, and walks straight on into the house. After that the priest removes the plantain stem and throws it away on the road.¹ Here plainly the patient is supposed to leave the sickness behind him adhering to the bark-cloth at the moment when he jumps over the blood-smeared stick in the doorway or squeezes himself through the cleft in the split plantain.

But if the intention of these ceremonies is merely to rid the performer of some harmful thing, whether a disease or a ghost or a demon, which is supposed to be clinging to him, we should expect to find that any narrow hole or opening would serve the purpose as well as a cleft tree or stick, an arch or ring of boughs, or a couple of posts fixed upright in the ground. And this expectation is not disappointed. On the coast of Morven and Mull thin ledges of rock may be seen pierced with large holes near the sea. Consumptive people used to be brought thither, and after the tops of nine waves had been caught in a dish and thrown on the patient's head, he was made to pass through one of the rifted rocks thrice in the direction of the sun.² In the parish of Madern in Cornwall there is a perforated stone called the Mën an Tol, or "holed stone," through which people formerly crept as a remedy for pains in the back and limbs; and at certain times of the year parents drew their children through the

¹ From notes on the customs and religion of the Waganda sent me by the Rev. John Roscoe, missionary in Uganda.

² John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 451 sq.

hole to cure them of the rickets.¹ Near Everek, on the site of the ancient Caesarea in Asia Minor, there is a rifted rock through which persons pass to rid themselves of a cough.² Sometimes the hole which is to serve as a gateway to health and happiness is made by burrowing in the ground. In the Middle Ages both children and cattle were cured by being forced through a hole dug in the earth.³ Less than twenty years ago a Danish cure for childish ailments was to dig up several sods, arrange them so as to form a hole, and then pass the sick child through it.⁴ Among the Corannas, a people of the Hottentot race on the Orange River, "when a child recovers from a dangerous illness, a trench is dug in the ground, across the middle of which an arch is thrown, and an ox made to stand upon it; the child is then dragged under the arch. After this ceremony the animal is killed, and eaten by married people who have children, none else being permitted to participate of the feast."⁵ Here the attempt to leave the sickness behind in the hole, which is probably the essence of the ceremony, may perhaps be combined with an endeavour to impart to the child the strength and vigour of the animal. Ancient India seems also to have been familiar with the same primitive notion that

¹ W. Borlase, *Antiquities, historical and monumental, of the County of Cornwall* (London, 1779), p. 177 sq.

² Carnoy et Nicolaïdes, *Traditions populaires de l'Asie Mineure*, p. 338.

³ Grimm, *D.M.* ii. 975 sq.; H. Gaidoz, *Un vieux rite medical*, pp. 11, 21.

⁴ H. Feilberg, in *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 45.

⁵ J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey* (London, 1822), ii. 346. Among the same people "when a person is ill, they bring an ox to the place where he is laid. Two cuts are then made in one of its legs, extending down the whole length of it. The skin in the middle of the leg being raised up, the operator thrusts in his hand, to make way for that of the sick person, whose whole body is afterwards rubbed over with the blood of the animal. The ox after

enduring this torment is killed, and those who are married and have children, as in the other case, are the only partakers of the feast" (J. Campbell, *op. cit.* ii. 346 sq.). Here again the intention seems to be not so much to transfer the disease to the ox, as to transfuse the healthy life of the beast into the veins of the sick man. The same is perhaps true of the Welsh and French cure for whooping-cough, which consists in passing the little sufferer several times under an ass. See Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, iii. 288; Béranger-Féraud, in *Bulletins de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, Quatrième Série, i. (1890), p. 897; *id.*, *Superstitions et Survivances*, i. 526. But more probably the intention really is to give the whooping-cough to the animal; for it might reasonably be thought that the feeble whoop of the sick child would neither seriously impair the lungs, nor perceptibly augment the stentorian bray, of the donkey.

sickness could, as it were, be stripped off the person of the sufferer by passing him through a narrow aperture; for in the *Rigveda* it is said that Indra cured Apala of a disease of the skin by drawing her through the yoke of the chariot; "thus the god made her to have a golden skin, purifying her thrice."¹

We may therefore take it as tolerably certain that, in the opinion of the vulgar, the sympathetic relation established between a person and the tree through which he has been passed arises from the transference to the tree of some vital portion of the man, and further that this transference is supposed to take place in the crassest and most palpable fashion, the man leaving a part of himself behind him in the tree, just as he might leave shreds of his skin or clothing behind him in a thorn-hedge through which he had forced his way. That the thing which he thus deposits in the tree is often a disease or malady makes no difference; to the primitive mind a disease may easily present itself as a concrete material thing which forms part of the man and which may, like his skin or his nails, be detached from him by physical abrasion.

But in practice, as in folk-tales, it is not merely with trees and plants that the life of a person is occasionally believed to be united by a bond of physical sympathy. The same bond, it is supposed, may exist between a man and an animal or a thing, so that the death or destruction of the animal or thing is immediately followed by the death of the man. The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus was once informed by an astronomer that the life of Simeon, prince of Bulgaria, was bound up with a certain column in Constantinople, so that if the capital of the column were removed

¹ H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 495. With the preceding examples before us, it seems worth while asking whether the ancient Italian practice of making conquered enemies to pass under a yoke may not in its origin have been a purificatory ceremony, designed to strip the foe of his malignant and hostile powers before dismissing him to his home. For apparently the ceremony was only

observed with prisoners who were about to be released; had it been a mere mark of ignominy, there seems to be no reason why it should not have been inflicted also on men who were doomed to die. See Livy, iii. 28, ix. 6, 15, x. 36. The so-called yoke in this case consisted of two spears set upright in the ground with a third spear laid transversely across them (Livy, iii. 28).

Simeon would immediately die. The Emperor took the hint and removed the capital, and at the same hour, as the emperor learned by inquiry, Simeon died of heart disease in Bulgaria.¹ Amongst the Karens of Burma "the knife with which the navel-string is cut is carefully preserved for the child. The life of the child is supposed to be in some way connected with it, for if lost or destroyed it is said the child will not be long-lived."² When Mr. Macdonald was one day sitting in the house of a Hlubi chief, awaiting the appearance of that great man, who was busy decorating his person, a native pointed to a pair of magnificent ox-horns, and said, "Ntame has his soul in these horns." The horns were those of an animal which had been sacrificed, and they were held sacred. A magician had fastened them to the roof to protect the house and its inmates from the thunder-bolt. "The idea," adds Mr. Macdonald, "is in no way foreign to South African thought. A man's soul there may dwell in the roof of his house, in a tree, by a spring of water, or on some mountain scaur."³ An old Mang'anje woman in the West Shire district of British Central Africa used to wear round her neck an ivory ornament, hollow, and about three inches long, which she called her life or soul (*moyo wanga*). Naturally, she would not part with it; a planter tried to buy it of her, but in vain.⁴ Some twenty years ago, two English missionaries established at San Salvador, the capital of the king of Congo, asked the natives repeatedly whether any of them had seen the strange, big, East African goat which Stanley had given to a chief at Stanley Pool in 1877. But their inquiries were fruitless; no native would admit that he had seen the goat. "Some years afterward, the missionaries discovered that the reason they could obtain no reply to their inquiry was that the people all thought that they, the missionaries, believed the goat contained the spirit of the king of San Salvador, and

¹ Cedrenus, *Compend. Histor.* p. 625 B, vol. ii. p. 308, ed. Bekker.

² F. Mason, "Physical Character of the Karens," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1866, pt. ii. p. 9.

³ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, p. 190.

⁴ Alice Werner, in a letter to the author, dated 25th September 1899. Miss Werner knew the old woman. Compare *Contemporary Review*, lxx. (July-December 1896), p. 389, where Miss Werner describes the ornament as a rounded peg, tapering to a point, with a neck or notch at the top.

therefore they wished to obtain possession of it, and so exercise an evil influence over the king."¹ Among several of the tribes on the banks of the Niger, between Lokoja and the delta, there exists "a belief in the possibility of a man possessing an *alter ego* in the form of some animal, such as a crocodile or hippopotamus. It is believed that such a person's life is bound up with that of the animal to such an extent that whatever affects the one produces a corresponding impression upon the other, and that if one dies the other must speedily do so too. It happened not very long ago that an Englishman shot a hippopotamus close to a native village; the friends of a woman who died the same night in the village demanded and eventually obtained five pounds as compensation for the murder of the woman."² At home in England beliefs of the same sort are not unknown. In Yorkshire witches are thought to stand in such peculiarly close relations to hares, that if a particular hare is killed or wounded, a certain witch will at the same moment be killed or receive a hurt in her body exactly corresponding to the wound in the hare.³ In like manner the Yakuts of Siberia believe that every shaman or wizard keeps his soul, or one of his souls, incarnate in an animal which is carefully concealed from all the world. "Nobody can find my external soul, it lies hidden far away in the stony mountains of Edzhigansk," said one famous wizard. Only once a year, when the last snows melt and the earth turns black; do these incarnate souls of shamans in animal form appear among the dwellings of men. They wander everywhere, but none save shamans can see them. The strong ones sweep roaring and noisily along, the weak steal about quietly and furtively. Often they fight, and then the wizard whose external soul is beaten, falls ill or dies. The weakest and most cowardly wizards are they whose souls are incarnate in the shape of dogs, for the dog gives his human double no peace, but gnaws his heart and tears his body. The most powerful wizards are they whose

¹ Herbert Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals* (London, 1890), p. 53.

² C. H. Robinson, *Hausaland* (London, 1896), p. 36 sq.

³ Th. Parkinson, *Yorkshire Legends and Traditions*, Second Series (London, 1889), p. 160 sq.; J. C. Atkinson, *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish* (London, 1891), p. 82 sqq.

external souls have the shape of stallions, elks, black bears, eagles, or boars. Again, the Samoyeds of the Turukhinsk region hold that every shaman has a familiar spirit in the shape of a boar, which he leads about by a magic belt. On the death of the boar, the shaman himself dies; and stories are told of battles between wizards, who send their spirits to fight before they encounter each other in person.¹ The Malays believe that "the soul of a person may pass into another person or into an animal, or rather that such a mysterious relation can arise between the two that the fate of the one is wholly dependent on that of the other."² In the Banks Islands "some people connect themselves with an object, generally an animal, as a lizard or a snake, or with a stone, which they imagine to have a certain very close natural relation to themselves. This, at Mota, is called *tamaniu*—likeness. This word at Aurora is used for the 'atai' [*i.e.* soul] of Mota. Some fancy dictates the choice of a *tamaniu*; or it may be found by drinking the infusion of certain herbs and heaping together the dregs. Whatever living thing is first seen in or upon the heap is the *tamaniu*. It is watched, but not fed or worshipped. The natives believe that it comes at call. The life of the man is bound up with the life of his *tamaniu*. If it dies, gets broken or lost, the man will die. In sickness they send to see how the *tamaniu* is, and judge the issue accordingly. This is only the fancy of some."³

But what among the Banks Islanders and the Malays is irregular and occasional, among other peoples is systematic and universal. The Zulus believe that every man has his *ihlozi*, a kind of mysterious serpent, "which specially guards and helps him, lives with him, wakes with him, sleeps and travels with him, but always under ground. If it ever makes its appearance, great is the joy, and the man must seek to discover the meaning of its appearance.

¹ Mikhailovskii, "Shamanism in Siberia and European Russia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. (1895), pp. 133, 134.

² Matthes, *Malakassarsch-Hollandsch Woordenboek, s.v. soemāngi*, p. 569; G. A. Wilken, "Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel,"

De Indische Gids, June 1884, p. 933.

³ R. H. Codrington, "Notes on the Customs of Mota, Banks Islands" (communicated by the Rev. Lorimer Fison), *Transactions of the Royal Society of Victoria*, xvi. 136. Compare *id.*, *The Melanesians*, p. 251.

He who has no *ikhlozi* must die. Therefore if any one unintentionally kills an *ikhlozi* serpent, the man whose *ikhlozi* it was dies, but the serpent comes to life again."¹ Every Calabar negro has regularly four souls, one of which always lives outside of his body in the form of a wild beast in the forest. This bush-soul, as Miss Kingsley calls it, may be almost any animal, for example a leopard, a fish, or a tortoise; but it is never a domestic animal and never a plant. Unless he is gifted with second sight, a man cannot see his own bush-soul, but a diviner will often tell him what sort of creature his bush-soul is, and after that the man will be careful not to kill any animal of that species and will strongly object to any one else doing so. A man and his sons have usually the same sort of animals for their bush-souls, and so with a mother and her daughters. But sometimes all the children of a family take after the bush-soul of their father; for example, if his external soul is a leopard, all his sons and daughters will have leopards for their external souls. And on the other hand, sometimes they all take after their mother; for instance, if her external soul is a tortoise, all the external

¹ F. Speckmann, *Die Hermannsburgers Mission in Afrika* (Hermannsburg, 1876), p. 167. However, Miss Alice Werner writes to me (25th September 1899) that she thinks Mr. Speckmann's "account of the *idhlozi* (not *ikhlozi*) among the Zulus is not the correct one—certainly it is not the one usually received. The *amadhlozi* are ancestral spirits, who come back on occasion, in the form of snakes." Certainly, in the other accounts which I have consulted, the *amadhlozi* (plural form of *idhlozi*) are said to be serpents into which people change at death. Serpents which are dead men may easily be distinguished from common snakes, for they frequent huts; they do not eat mice, and they are not afraid of people. If a man in his life had a scar, his serpent after his death will also have a scar; if he had only one eye, his serpent will have only one eye; if he was lame, his serpent will be lame too. That is how you can recognise So-and-so in his serpent-form.

Chiefs do not turn into the same kind of snakes as ordinary people. For common folk become harmless snakes with green and white bellies and very small heads; but kings become boa-constrictors or the large and deadly black Mamba. See J. Shooter, *Kafirs of Natal*, p. 161 sq.; Callaway, *Religious System of the Amazulu*, Part ii. pp. 134 sq., 140, 196-202, 205, 208-211, 231; David Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas* (Edinburgh, 1875), pp. 48, 148, 213. Mr. F. B. Jevons has suggested that the Roman *genius*, the guardian-spirit which accompanied a man from birth to death (Censorinus, *De die natali*, 3), and was commonly represented in the form of a snake, may have been an external soul. See F. B. Jevons, *Plutarch's Romane Questions*, Introd. p. xlvii. sq.; *id.*, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, p. 186 sq.; Preller, *Römische Mythologie*,³ ii. 195 sqq. The suggestion is not improbable, but the evidence seems hardly conclusive.

souls of her sons and daughters will be tortoises too. So intimately bound up is the life of the man with that of the animal which he regards as his external or bush-soul, that the death or injury of the animal necessarily entails the death or injury of the man. And conversely, when the man dies, his bush-soul can no longer find a place of rest, but goes mad and rushes into the fire or charges people and is knocked on the head, and that is the end of it. When a person is sick, the diviner will sometimes tell him that his bush-soul is angry at being neglected; thereupon the patient will make an offering to the offended spirit and deposit it in a tiny hut in the forest at the spot where the animal, which is his external soul, was last seen. If the bush-soul is appeased, the patient recovers; but if it is not, he dies. Yet the foolish bush-soul does not understand that in injuring the man it injures itself, and that it cannot long survive his decease.¹

Amongst the Zapotecs of Central America, when a woman was about to be confined, her relations assembled in the hut, and began to draw on the floor figures of different animals, rubbing each one out as soon as it was completed. This went on till the moment of birth, and the figure that then remained sketched upon the ground was called the child's *tona* or second self. "When the child grew old enough he procured the animal that represented him and took care of it, as it was believed that health and existence were bound up with that of the animal's, in fact that the death of both would occur simultaneously," or rather that when the animal died the man would die.² Among the

¹ Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 460 sq. The lamented authoress was kind enough to give me in conversation (1st June 1897) some details which do not appear in her book; among these are the statements, which I have embodied in the text, that the bush-soul is never a domestic animal, and that when a man knows what kind of animal his bush-soul is, he will not kill an animal of that species and will strongly object to any one else doing so. Miss Kingsley was not able to say whether persons who have the same sort of bush-soul

are allowed or forbidden to marry each other.

² Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific Coast*, i. 661. The words quoted by Bancroft (p. 662, note), "*Consérvese entre ellos la creencia de que su vida está unida a la de un animal, y que es forzoso que mueran ellos cuando éste muere*," are not quite accurately represented by the statement of Bancroft in the text. Elsewhere (vol. ii. p. 277) the same writer calls the "second self" of the Zapotecs a "*nagual*, or tutelary genius," adding that the fate of the child was supposed

Indians of Guatemala and Honduras the *nagual* or *naual* is "that animate or inanimate object, generally an animal, which stands in a parallel relation to a particular man, so that the weal and woe of the man depend on the fate of the *nagual*."¹ According to an old writer, many Indians of Guatemala "are deluded by the devil to believe that their life dependeth upon the life of such and such a beast (which they take unto them as their familiar spirit) and think that when that beast dieth they must die; when he is chased, their hearts pant; when he is faint, they are faint; nay, it happeneth that by the devil's delusion they appear in the shape of that beast (which commonly by their choice is a buck, or doe, a lion, or tigre, or dog, or eagle) and in that shape have been shot at and wounded."² Herrera's account of the way in which the Indians of Honduras acquired their *naguales*, runs thus: "The devil deluded them, appearing in the shape of a lion or a tiger, or a coyote, a beast like a wolf, or in the shape of an alligator, a snake, or a bird, that province abounding in creatures of prey, which they called *naguales*, signifying keepers or guardians, and when the bird died the Indian that was in league with him died also, which often happened and was looked upon as infallible. The manner of contracting this alliance was thus. The Indian repaired to the river, wood, hill, or most obscure place, where he called upon the devils by such names as he thought fit, talked to the rivers, rocks, or woods, said he went to weep that he might have the same his predecessors had, carrying a cock or a dog to sacrifice. In that melancholy fit he fell asleep, and either in a dream or waking saw some one of the aforesaid birds or other creatures, whom he entreated to grant him profit in salt, cacao, or any

to be so intimately bound up with the fortune of the animal that the death of the one involved the death of the other.

¹ Otto Stoll, *Die Ethnologie der Indianerstämme von Guatemala* (Leyden, 1889), p. 57.

² Thomas Gage, *A New Survey of the West Indies*, third edition (London, 1677), p. 334. The same writer relates how a certain Indian named Gonzalez was reported to have the

power of turning himself into a lion or rather a puma. Once when a Spaniard had shot a puma in the nose, Gonzalez was found with a bruised face and accused the Spaniard of having shot him. Another Indian chief named Gomez was said to have transformed himself into a puma, and in that shape to have fought a terrific battle with a rival chief named Lopez, who had changed himself into a jaguar. See Gage, *op. cit.* pp. 383-389.

other commodity, drawing blood from his own tongue, ears, and other parts of his body, making his contract at the same time with the said creature, the which either in a dream or waking told him, 'Such a day you shall go abroad asporting, and I will be the first bird or other animal you shall meet, and will be your *nagual* and companion at all times.' Whereupon such friendship was contracted between them, that when one of them died the other did not survive, and they fancied that he who had no *nagual* could not be rich."¹ The Indians were persuaded that the death of their *nagual* would entail their own. Legend affirms that in the first battles with the Spaniards on the plateau of Quetzaltenango the *naguas* of the Indian chiefs fought in the form of serpents. The *nagual* of the highest chief was especially conspicuous, because it had the form of a great bird, resplendent in green plumage. The Spanish general Pedro de Alvarado killed the bird with his lance, and at the same moment the Indian chief fell dead to the ground.²

In many of the Australian tribes each sex regards a particular species of animals in the same way that a Central American Indian regards his *nagual*, but with this difference, that whereas the Indian apparently knows the individual animal with which his life is bound up, the Australians only know that each of their lives is bound up with some one animal of the species, but they cannot say with which. The result naturally is that every man spares and protects all the animals of the species with which the lives of the men are bound up; and every woman spares and protects all the animals of the species with which the lives of the women are bound up; because no one knows but that the death of any animal of the respective species might entail his or her own;

¹ Herrera, *General History of the Vast Continent and Islands of America*, translated by Capt. John Stevens, iv. 138 sq. The Indians of Santa Catalina Istlavacan still receive at birth the name of some animal, which is commonly regarded as their guardian spirit for the rest of their life. The name is bestowed by the heathen priest, who commonly hears of a birth in the village sooner than his Catholic col-

league. See K. Scherzer, "Die Indianer von Santa Catalina Istlavacana (Frauenfuss), ein Beitrag zur Culturgeschichte der Urbewohner Central-Amerikas," *Sitzungsberichte der philos. histor. Classe der kais. Akademie der Wissen.* (Vienna), xviii. (1856), p. 235.

² Otto Stoll, *Die Ethnologie der Indianerstämme von Guatemala*, p. 57 sq.

just as the killing of the green bird was immediately followed by the death of the Indian chief, and the killing of the parrot by the death of Punchkin in the fairy tale. Thus, for example, the Wotjobaluk tribe of South-Eastern Australia "held that 'the life of Ngününgünüt (the Bat) is the life of a man, and the life of Yáratgürk (the Nightjar) is the life of a woman,' and that when either of these creatures is killed the life of some man or of some woman is shortened. In such a case every man or every woman in the camp feared that he or she might be the victim, and from this cause great fights arose in this tribe. I learn that in these fights, men on one side and women on the other, it was not at all certain which would be victorious, for at times the women gave the men a severe drubbing with their yamsticks while often women were injured or killed by spears."¹ The particular species of animals with which the lives of the sexes were believed to be respectively bound up varied somewhat from tribe to tribe. Thus whereas among the Wotjobaluk the bat was the animal of the men, at Gunbower Creek on the Lower Murray the bat seems to have been the animal of the women, for the natives would not kill it for the reason that "if it was killed, one of their lubras [women] would be sure to die in consequence."² But the belief itself and the fights to which it gave rise are

¹ A. W. Howitt, "Further Notes on the Australian Class Systems," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xviii. (1889), p. 58. It is very remarkable that among the Kurnai these fights had a special connection with marriage. When young men were backward of taking wives, the women used to go out into the forest and kill an emu-wren, which was the men's "brother"; then returning to the camp they showed the dead bird to the men. The result was a fight between the young men and the young women, in which, however, lads who were not yet marriageable might not take part. Next day the marriageable young men went out and killed a superb warbler, which was the women's "sister," and this led to a worse fight than before. Some days afterwards, when the wounds and bruises were

healed, one of the marriageable young men met one of the marriageable young women, and said, "Superb warbler!" She answered, "Emu-wren! What does the emu-wren eat?" To which the young man answered, "He eats so-and-so," naming kangaroo, opossum, emu, or some other game. Then they laughed, and she ran off with him without telling any one. See Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 201 sq. Perhaps this killing of the sex-totem before marriage may be related to the pretence of killing young men and bringing them to life again at puberty. See below, p. 422 sqq.

² Gerard Krefft, "Manners and Customs of the Aborigines of the Lower Murray and Darling," *Transact. Philos. Soc. New South Wales*, 1862-65, p. 359 sq.

known to have extended over a large part of South-Eastern Australia, and probably they extended much farther.¹ The belief is a very serious one, and so consequently are the fights which spring from it. Thus where the bat is the men's animal they "protect it against injury, even to the half-killing of their wives for its sake"; and where the fern-owl or large goatsucker (a night-bird) is the women's animal, "it is jealously protected by them. If a man kills one, they are as much enraged as if it was one of their children, and will strike him with their long poles."²

The jealous protection thus afforded by Australian men and women to bats and owls respectively (for bats and owls seem to be the creatures usually allotted to the two sexes)³ is not based upon purely selfish considerations. For each man believes that not only his own life but the lives of his father, brothers, sons, and so on are bound up with the lives of particular bats, and that therefore in protecting the bat species he is protecting the lives of all his male relations as well as his own. Similarly, each woman believes that the lives of her mother, sisters, daughters, and so forth, equally with her own, are bound up with the lives of particular owls, and that in guarding the owl species she is guarding the lives of all her female relations besides her own. Now, when men's lives are thus supposed to be contained in certain animals, it is obvious that the animals can hardly be distinguished from the men, or the men from the animals. If my brother John's life is in a bat, then, on the one hand, the bat is my brother as well as John; and, on the other hand, John is in a sense a bat, since his life is in a bat. Similarly, if my sister Mary's life is in an owl, then the owl is my sister and Mary is an owl. This is a natural enough conclusion, and the Australians have not failed to draw it. When the bat is the man's animal, it is called his brother; and when the owl is the woman's animal, it is called her

¹ A. W. Howitt, *l.c.*

² Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 52.

³ It is at least remarkable that both the creatures thus assigned to the two sexes should be nocturnal in their habits. Perhaps the choice of such

creatures is connected with the belief that the soul is absent from the body in slumber. On this hypothesis bats and owls would be regarded by these savages as the wandering souls of sleepers. Such a belief would fully account for the reluctance of the natives to kill them.

sister. And conversely a man addresses a woman as an owl, and she addresses him as a bat.¹ So with the other animals allotted to the sexes respectively in other tribes. For example, among the Kurnai all Emu-Wrens were "brothers" of the men, and all the men were Emu-Wrens; all Superb Warblers were "sisters" of the women, and all the women were Superb Warblers.²

But when a savage names himself after an animal, calls it his brother, and refuses to kill it, the animal is said to be his totem. Accordingly the bat and the owl, the Emu-Wren and the Superb Warbler, may properly be described as totems of the sexes. But the assignation of a totem to a sex is comparatively rare, and has hitherto been discovered nowhere but in Australia. Far more commonly the totem is appropriated not to a sex, but to a tribe or clan, and is hereditary either in the male or female line. The relation of an individual to the tribal totem does not differ in kind from his relation to the sex-totem; he will not kill it, he speaks of it as his brother, and he calls himself by its name.³ Now if the

¹ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiv. 350, xv. 416, xviii. 57 (the "nightjar" is apparently an owl).

² Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, pp. 194, 201 sq., 215; *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xv. 416, xviii. 56 sq.

³ For a collection of facts on totemism I may refer to my little volume *Totemism* (Edinburgh, 1887). Since that work was published a good deal of fresh evidence has come to light, which I hope at some future time to embody in a new edition of my book. The very important evidence collected by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen among the tribes of Central Australia, since the first edition of *The Golden Bough* was written (*The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, London, 1899), appears to show that the theory of totemism propounded in the text is at most only a partial solution of the problem, and that the totemic system has, at least among these tribes, a much wider scope, its aim being to provide the community with a supply of food and all other necessities by means of certain magical ceremonies, the performance of which is distributed among

the various totem groups. See Spencer and Gillen, "Some remarks on totemism as applied to Australian tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxviii. (1899), pp. 275-280; and my remarks *ibid.* pp. 281-286, and in the *Fortnightly Review*, N.S., lxx. (Jan.-June 1899), pp. 647-665, 835-852. But I have allowed the theory in the text to stand, partly because it is not as yet clear how far the particular theory of totemism suggested by the Central Australian evidence is of general application, and partly because, in the uncertainty which still hangs over the origin and meaning of totemism, it seems scarcely worth while to patch up an old theory which the next new facts may perhaps entirely demolish. Here I will only call attention to the Arunta legend that the ancestors of the tribe kept their spirits in certain sacred sticks and stones (*churinga*), which bear a close resemblance to the well-known bull-roarers, and that when they went out hunting they hung these sticks or stones on certain sacred poles (*nurtunjas*) which represented their totems. See Spencer and Gillen,

relations are similar, the explanation which holds good of the one ought equally to hold good of the other. Therefore the reason why a tribe revere a particular species of animals or plants (for the tribal totem may be a plant) and call themselves after it, would seem to be a belief that the life of each individual of the tribe is bound up with some one animal or plant of the species, and that his or her death would be the consequence of killing that particular animal, or destroying that particular plant. This explanation of totemism squares very well with Sir George Grey's definition of a totem or *kobong* in Western Australia. He says: "A certain mysterious connection exists between a family and its *kobong*, so that a member of the family will never kill an animal of the species to which his *kobong* belongs, should he find it asleep; indeed he always kills it reluctantly, and never without affording it a chance to escape. This arises from the family belief that some one individual of the species is their nearest friend, to kill whom would be a great crime, and to be carefully avoided. Similarly, a native who has a vegetable for his *kobong* may not gather it under certain circumstances, and at a particular period of the year."¹ Here it will be observed that though each man spares all the animals or plants of the species, they are not all equally precious to him; far from it, out of the whole species there is only one which is specially dear to him; but as he does not know which the dear one is, he is obliged to spare them all from fear of injuring the one. Again, this explanation of the tribal totem harmonises with the supposed effect of killing one of the totem species. "One day one of the blacks killed a crow. Three or four days afterwards a Boortwa (crow) [*i.e.* a man of the Crow clan or tribe] named Larry died. He had been ailing for some days, but the killing of his wingong [totem] hastened his death."² Here the killing of the crow caused

Native Tribes of Central Australia, pp. 137 sq., 629. This tradition appears to point to a custom of transferring a man's soul or spirit to his totem. (Note to Second Edition.)

¹ (Sir) George Grey, *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia*, ii. 228 sq.

² Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and*

Kurnai, p. 169. According to Mr. Howitt, it is a serious offence to kill the totem of another person "with intent to injure him" (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xviii. (1889), p. 53). Such an intention seems to imply a belief in a sympathetic connection between the man and the animal.

the death of a man of the Crow clan, exactly as, in the case of the sex-totems, the killing of a bat causes the death of a Bat-man or the killing of an owl causes the death of an Owl-woman. Similarly, the killing of his *nagual* causes the death of a Central American Indian, the killing of his bush-soul causes the death of a Calabar negro, the killing of his *ihlosi* causes the death of a Zulu, the killing of his *tamanu* causes the death of a Banks Islander, and the killing of the animal in which his life is stowed away causes the death of the giant or warlock in the fairy tale.

Thus it appears that the story of "The giant who had no heart in his body" furnishes the key to the religious aspect of totemism, that is, to the relation which is supposed to subsist between a man and his totem. The totem, if I am right, is simply the receptacle in which a man keeps his life, as Punchkin kept his life in a parrot, and Bidasari kept her soul in a golden fish. It is no valid objection to this view that when a savage has both a sex-totem and a tribal totem his life must be bound up with two different animals, the death of either of which would entail his own. If a man has more vital places than one in his body, why, the savage may think, should he not have more vital places than one outside it? Why, since he can put his life outside himself, should he not transfer one portion of it to one animal and another to another? The divisibility of life, or, to put it otherwise, the plurality of souls, is an idea suggested by many familiar facts, and has commended itself to philosophers like Plato,¹ as well as to savages. It is only when the notion of a soul, from being a quasi-scientific hypothesis, becomes a theological dogma that its unity and indivisibility are insisted upon as essential. The savage, unshackled by dogma, is free to explain the facts of life by the assumption of as many souls as he thinks necessary. Hence, for example, the Caribs supposed that there was one soul in the head, another in the heart, and other souls at all the places where an artery is felt pulsating.² Some of the Hidatsa Indians explain the

¹ According to Plato, the different parts of the soul were lodged in different parts of the body (*Timaeus*, pp. 69C-72D), and as only one part, on his theory, was immortal, Lucian seems

not unnaturally to have interpreted the Platonic doctrine to mean that every man had more than one soul (*Demomax*, 33).

² De la Borde, "Relation de

phenomena of gradual death, when the extremities appear dead first, by supposing that man has four souls, and that they quit the body, not simultaneously, but one after the other, dissolution being only complete when all four have departed.¹ Some of the Dyaks of Borneo and the Malays of the Peninsula believe that every man has seven souls.² The Alfoors of Poso in Celebes are of opinion that he has three.³ The Laos suppose that the body is the seat of thirty spirits, which reside in the hands, the feet, the mouth, the eyes, and so on.⁴ Hence, from the primitive point of view, it is perfectly possible that a savage should have one soul in his sex-totem, and another in his tribal totem. However, as I have observed, sex-totems have been found nowhere but in Australia; so that as a rule the savage who practises totemism need not have more than one soul out of his body at a time.⁵

l'Origine, etc., des Caraïbes," p. 15, in *Recueil de divers Voyages faits en Afrique et en l'Amérique* (Paris, 1684).

¹ Washington Matthews, *The Hidatsa Indians* (Washington, 1877), p. 50.

² H. Ling Roth, "Low's Natives of Borneo," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxi. (1892), p. 117; W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 50.

³ A. C. Kruijt, "Een en ander aangaande het geestelijk en maatschappelijk leven van den Poso-Alfoer," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), p. 3 sq.

⁴ Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, iii. 248.

⁵ In some tribes, chiefly of North American Indians, every man has an individual or personal totem in addition to the totem of his clan. This personal totem is usually the animal of which he dreamed during a long and solitary fast at puberty (*Totemism*, p. 53 sq.). Among the Shushwap of British Columbia, when a young man has thus obtained his personal totem or guardian spirit, he is supposed to become proof against bullets and arrows (Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 93, separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*). Is this because, like the giant of the fairy

tale who cannot be wounded, he has deposited his life or soul in the animal of which he dreamed? If so, it would seem that the personal totem is essentially the receptacle in which the individual deposits his soul, or one of his souls, for safety. It is quite possible that, as some good authorities incline to believe, the clan totem has been developed out of the personal totem by inheritance. See Miss Alice C. Fletcher, *The import of the totem*, p. 3 sq. (paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, August 1887, separate reprint); Fr. Boas, "The Social Organisation and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895*, pp. 323 sq., 336-338, 393. In the bush-souls of the Calabar negroes (see above, p. 410 sq.) we seem to have something like the personal totem on its way to become hereditary and so to grow into the totem of a clan. This origin of the clan totem would not be inconsistent with the theory of totemism suggested by the Central Australian facts (see above, p. 416, note 3); for the intimate relation established between an animal or other natural object and the man who dreamed of it might well be thought to confer, first on the man himself and afterwards on his descendants, a special power over the

If this explanation of the totem as a receptacle in which a man keeps his soul or one of his souls is correct, we should expect to find some totem tribes of whom it is expressly stated that every man amongst them is believed to keep at least one soul permanently out of his body, and that the destruction of this external soul is supposed to entail the death of its owner. Such a tribe are the Battas of Sumatra. The Battas are divided into exogamous clans (*margas*) with descent in the male line; and each clan is forbidden to eat the flesh of a particular animal. One clan may not eat the tiger, another the ape, another the crocodile, another the dog, another the cat, another the dove, another the white buffalo, and another the locust. The reason given by members of a clan for abstaining from the flesh of the particular animal is either that they are descended from animals of that species, and that their souls after death may transmigrate into the animals, or that they or their forefathers have been under certain obligations to the animals. Sometimes, but not always, the clan bears the name of the animal.¹ Thus the Battas have totemism in full. But, further, each Batta believes that he has seven or, on a more moderate computation, three souls. One of these souls is always outside the body, but nevertheless whenever it dies, however far away it may be at the time, that same moment the man dies also.² The writer who mentions this belief says nothing

object, in virtue of which he and they might be entitled and even required to perform magical ceremonies for the multiplication of the animal or the control and direction of the object, whatever it chanced to be. But the discussion of these questions must be reserved for another place.

¹ J. B. Neumann, "Het Pane- en Bila-stroomgebied op het eiland Sumatra," *Tijdschrift van het Nederlandsch Aardrijks. Genootsch.* Tweede Serie, dl. iii. Afdeeling, meer uitgebreide artikelen, No. 2, p. 311 sq.; *id.*, dl. iv. No. 1, p. 8 sq.; Van Hoëvell, "Iets over 't oorlogvoeren der Batta's," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, N.S., vii. (1878), p. 434; G. A. Wilken, *Over de verwantschap en het huwelijks- en erfrecht bij de*

volken van het maleische ras, pp. 20 sq., 36 (reprint from *De Indische Gids*, May 1883); *id.*, *Iets over de Papoevas van de Geelvinksbai*, p. 27 sq. (reprint from *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Ned.-Indië*, 5e Volgreeks ii.); *Journal Anthropol. Inst.* ix. (1880), p. 295; Backer, *L'Archipel Indien*, p. 470; Von Brenner, *Besuch bei den Kannibalen Sumatras* (Würzburg, 1894), p. 197 sqq.

² B. Hagen, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Battareligion," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xxviii. 514. J. B. Neumann (*op. cit.* dl. iii. No. 2, p. 299) is the authority for the seven souls. According to another writer, six out of the seven souls reside outside of the body; one of them dwells in heaven, the remaining

about the Batta totems ; but on the analogy of the Australian, Central American, and African evidence we can scarcely avoid concluding that the external soul, whose death entails the death of the man, must be housed in the totem animal or plant.

Against this view it can hardly be thought to militate that the Batta does not in set terms affirm his external soul to be in his totem, but alleges other, though hardly contradictory, grounds for respecting the sacred animal or plant of his clan. For if a savage seriously believes that his life is bound up with an external object, it is in the last degree unlikely that he will let any stranger into the secret. In all that touches his inmost life and beliefs the savage is exceedingly suspicious and reserved ; Europeans have resided among savages for years without discovering some of their capital articles of faith, and in the end the discovery has often been the result of accident. Above all, the savage lives in an intense and perpetual dread of assassination by sorcery ; the most trifling relics of his person—the clippings of his hair and nails, his spittle, the remnants of his food, his very name¹—all these may, he fancies, be turned by the sorcerer to his destruction, and he is therefore anxiously careful to conceal or destroy them. But if in matters such as these, which are but the outposts and outworks of his life, he is so shy and secretive, how close must be the concealment, how impenetrable the reserve in which he enshrouds

five have no definite place of abode, but are so closely related to the man that were they to abandon him his health would suffer. See Von Brenner, *Besuch bei den Kannibalen Sumatras*, p. 239 sq. A different account of Batta psychology is given by Mr. Westenberg. According to him, each Batta has only one *tendi* (not three or seven of them) ; and the *tendi* is something between a soul and a guardian spirit. It always resides outside of the body, and on its position near, before, behind, above, or below, the welfare of its owner is supposed in great measure to depend. But in addition each man has two invisible guardian spirits (his *kaka* and *agi*) whose help he invokes in great danger ; one is the seed by which he was begotten, the other is the after-birth,

and these he calls respectively his elder and his younger brother. Mr. Westenberg's account refers specially to the Karo-Battas. See C. J. Westenberg, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de godsdienstige Begrippen der Karo-Bataks," *Hijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xli. (1892), p. 228 sq.

¹ It is not merely the personal name which is often shrouded in mystery (see above, vol. i. p. 403 sqq.) ; the names of the clans and their subdivisions are objects of mysterious reverence among many, if not all, of the Siouan tribes, and are never used in ordinary conversation. See J. Owen Dorsey, "Osage Traditions," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1888), p. 396.

the inner keep and citadel of his being ! When the princess in the fairy tale asks the giant where he keeps his soul, he generally gives false or evasive answers, and it is only after much coaxing and wheedling that the secret is at last wrung from him. In his jealous reticence the giant resembles the timid and furtive savage ; but whereas the exigencies of the story demand that the giant should at last reveal his secret, no such obligation is laid on the savage ; and no inducement that can be offered is likely to tempt him to imperil his soul by revealing its hiding-place to a stranger. It is therefore no matter for surprise that the central mystery of the savage's life should so long have remained a secret, and that we should be left to piece it together from scattered hints and fragments and from the recollections of it which linger in fairy tales.

X This view of totemism throws light on a class of religious rites of which no adequate explanation, so far as I am aware, has yet been offered. Amongst many savage tribes, especially such as are known to practise totemism, it is customary for lads at puberty to undergo certain initiatory rites, of which one of the commonest is a pretence of killing the lad and bringing him to life again. Such rites become intelligible if we suppose that their substance consists in extracting the youth's soul in order to transfer it to his totem. For the extraction of his soul would naturally be supposed to kill the youth or at least to throw him into a death-like trance, which the savage hardly distinguishes from death. His recovery would then be attributed either to the gradual recovery of his system from the violent shock which it had received, or, more probably, to the infusion into him of fresh life drawn from the totem. Thus the essence of these initiatory rites, so far as they consist in a simulation of death and resurrection, would be an exchange of life or souls between the man and his totem. The primitive belief in the possibility of such an exchange of souls comes clearly out in the story of the Basque hunter who affirmed that he had been killed by a bear, but that the bear had, after killing him, breathed its own soul into him, so that the bear's body was now dead, but he himself was a bear, being animated by the bear's soul.¹ This revival of the dead hunter as a bear is exactly

¹ Th. Benfey, *Pantschatantra*, i. 128 sq. Similarly a man of the Kulin

analogous to what, if I am right, is supposed to take place in the ceremony of killing a lad at puberty and bringing him to life again. The lad dies as a man and comes to life again as an animal; the animal's soul is now in him, and his human soul is in the animal. With good right, therefore, does he call himself a Bear or a Wolf, etc., according to his totem; and with good right does he treat the bears or the wolves, etc., as his brethren, since in these animals are lodged the souls of himself and his kindred.

Examples of this supposed death and resurrection at initiation are the following. Among some of the Australian tribes of New South Wales, when lads are initiated, it is thought that a being called Thuremlin takes each lad to a distance, kills him, and sometimes cuts him up, after which he restores him to life and knocks out a tooth. In point of fact, a tooth is knocked out of the mouth of every youth on this occasion, and while this is being done a loud humming noise is made by swinging a bull-roarer, that is, a flat piece of wood with serrated edges fastened to a string.¹ In one part of Queensland the humming sound of the bull-roarer, which is swung at the initiatory rites, is said to be the noise made by the wizards in swallowing the boys and bringing them up again as young men. The Ualaroi of the Upper Darling River said that the boy met a ghost which killed him and brought him to life again as a man.² So among the tribes of Central Australia the bull-roarers are swung while a boy is being circumcised, and the women and

tribe in Victoria was called Kurburu, that is, "native bear," because the spirit of a native bear was supposed to have entered into him when he killed the animal, and to have endowed him with its wonderful cleverness. This I learn from Miss E. B. Howitt's *Folklore and Legends of some Victorian Tribes* (chapter vi.), which I have been privileged to see in manuscript. Among the Chiquites Indians of Paraguay sickness was sometimes accounted for by supposing that the soul of a deer or a turtle had entered into the patient (*Letters édifiantes et curieuses*, viii. 339). We have seen (p. 412 sq.) that the Indians of Honduras made an alliance with the animal that was to be their

nagual by offering some of their own blood to it. Conversely the North American Indian kills the animal which is to be his personal totem, and thenceforth wears some part of the creature as an amulet (*Totemism*, p. 54). These facts seem to point to the establishment of a blood covenant, involving an interchange of life between a man and his personal totem or *nagual*.

¹ A. L. P. Cameron, "Notes on some Tribes of New South Wales," *Journ. Anthropol. Instit.* xiv. (1885), p. 358.

² A. W. Howitt, "On Australian Medicine Men," *Journ. Anthropol. Instit.* xvi. (1887), p. 47 sq.

children believe that the roaring noise is the voice of the great spirit Twanyirika, who has come to take the boy away. Twanyirika enters the body of the boy and carries him off into the bush until his wound is healed, when the spirit goes away and the boy returns an initiated man.¹ The resurrection to a new life appears to be represented at the initiatory rites of some tribes of South-Eastern Australia by the following ceremony. An old man, disguised with stringy bark fibre, lies down in a grave, and is lightly

¹ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 246. On the bull-roarer, see A. Lang, *Custom and Myth*, pp. 29-44 (first edition); J. D. E. Schmelz, *Das Schwirrholtz* (Hamburg, 1896); A. C. Haddon, *The Study of Man*, pp. 277-327. I offered some remarks on this subject in a paper contributed to the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science, January 1900. The religious or magical use of the bull-roarer is best known in Australia (see for example Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, pp. 267-269; A. W. Howitt, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiv. (1885), pp. 312 sq., 315, xx. (1891), p. 83; R. H. Mathews, *ibid.* xxvii. (1898), pp. 52-60); but in the essay just referred to Mr. Andrew Lang showed that the instrument has been similarly employed not only by savages in various parts of the world, but also by the ancient Greeks in their religious mysteries. As a sacred or magical instrument it occurs in Southern and Western Africa (Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, p. 222 sq.; R. F. Burton, *Abeokuta and the Cameroons Mountains*, i. 197 sq.; Bouche, *La Côte des Esclaves*, p. 124; A. B. Ellis, *Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, p. 110; Mrs. Batty and Governor Moloney, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), pp. 162-164); among the Tusayan, Apache, and Navajo Indians of the United States (J. G. Bourke, in *Ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, Washington, 1892, pp. 476-478); among the Koskimo of British Columbia (Fr. Boas, "Social organisation, etc., of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 610); among the Bororo of

Central Brazil (K. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasi-liens*, p. 497 sqq., cp. p. 327 sq.); in various parts of New Guinea (J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 85; *id.*, "Toaripi," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xxvii. (1898), p. 329; O. Schellong, "Das Barlum-fest der Gegend Finsch-hafens," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ii. (1889), pp. 150 sq., 154 sq.; F. Grabowsky, "Der Bezirk von Hatzfeldhafen und seine Bewohner," *Petermanns Mittheilungen*, xli. (1895), p. 189); in some of the islands of Torres Straits (A. C. Haddon, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xix. (1890), pp. 406, 432, and in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vi. (1893), pp. 150 sq., 153); in the Melanesian island of Florida (R. C. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, pp. 98 sq., 342, cp. p. 267); in the North-Western Solomon Islands (R. Parkinson, *Zur Ethnographie der nordwestlichen Salomo Inseln*, Berlin, 1899, p. 11); and among the Minangkabauers of Sumatra (J. L. van der Toorn, "Het animisme bij den Minangkabauer der Padangsche Bovenlanden," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, xxxix. (1890), p. 55 sq.). In the present connection it is worthy of note that among the Minangkabauers the bull-roarer is used to induce the demons to carry off the soul of a woman and so drive her mad. It is made of the frontal bone of a brave or skilful man, and some of the intended victim's hair is attached to it. Among the Koskimo (see above) the noise of the bull-roarer is supposed to be the voice of the spirit who has come to carry away a novice.

covered up with sticks and earth, and as far as possible the natural appearance of the ground is restored, the excavated earth being carried away. The buried man holds a small bush in his hand; it appears to be growing in the soil, and other bushes are stuck in the ground to heighten the effect. The novices are then brought to the edge of the grave, and a song is sung, in which the only words used are the "class-name" of the buried man and the word for stringy bark fibre. Gradually, as the song continues, the bush held by the buried man begins to quiver and then to move more and more, and finally the man himself starts up from the grave.¹ Similarly, Fijian lads at initiation were shown a row of apparently dead men, covered with blood, their bodies seemingly cut open, and their entrails protruding. But at a yell from the priest the pretended dead men sprang to their feet and ran to the river to cleanse themselves from the blood and entrails of pigs with which they had been besmeared.²

In the valley of the Congo initiatory rites of this sort are common. In some places they are called Ndembo. "In the practice of Ndembo the initiating doctors get some one to fall down in a pretended fit, and in that state he is carried away to an enclosed place outside the town. This is called 'dying Ndembo.' Others follow suit, generally boys and girls, but often young men and women. . . . They are supposed to have died. But the parents and friends supply food, and after a period varying, according to custom, from three months to three years, it is arranged that the

¹ A. W. Howitt, "On some Australian ceremonies of initiation," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiii. (1884), p. 453 sq. The "class-name" is the name of the totemic division to which the man belongs. In the Arunta tribe of Central Australia a man who is preparing to be a wizard repairs to a cave which is haunted by the ancestral spirits. One of these spirits is supposed to kill him with a lance, take out all his internal organs, and provide him with a new set, after which he comes to life again, but in a state of insanity. When he has partially recovered, he is led home by the spirit, who remains in-

visible to all but a few gifted wizards and to the dogs. For several days afterwards, the new wizard continues more or less strange in his appearance and behaviour. See Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 523 sq.; F. J. Gillen, in *Report of the Horn Scientific Expedition*, Part iv. p. 180 sq.

² L. Fison, "The Nanga, or sacred stone enclosure of Wainimala, Fiji," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiv. (1885), p. 22; A. B. Joske, "The Nanga of Vitilevu," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, ii. (1889), p. 264 sq.

doctor shall bring them to life again. . . . When the doctor's fee has been paid, and money (goods) saved for a feast, the *Ndembo* people are brought to life. At first they pretend to know no one and nothing; they do not even know how to masticate food, and friends have to perform that office for them. They want everything nice that any one uninitiated may have, and beat them if it is not granted, or even strangle and kill people. They do not get into trouble for this, because it is thought that they do not know better. Sometimes¹ they carry on the pretence of talking gibberish, and behaving as if they had returned from the spirit-world. After this they are known by another name, peculiar to those who have 'died *Ndembo*.' . . . We hear of the custom far along on the upper river, as well as in the cataract region."¹ Mr. Herbert Ward informs us that the course of initiation among the natives of this region lasts from six months to two years, according to the tribal custom. During all this time the novices are not allowed to wash themselves; they smother their bodies with chinks of various colours and wear a costume made of grass. All lads of ten or twelve years of age may go through the course, and most of them do so. At the ceremony of induction the candidate is required to drink a certain potion which renders him insensible. He is then declared to be dead and is carried away into the forest, and there circumcised. After a while he is restored to consciousness, and the simple villagers believe that he has been raised from the dead. Next he receives a new name and professes not to be able to remember his former tribe or even his parents. The initiated form a privileged order called *N'Kimba*.² From another account given by the same writer it would seem that in some places rites of this sort are only resorted to when the elders of a village consider that the women are not bearing enough children. Upon this an

¹ W. H. Bentley, *Life on the Congo* (London, 1887), p. 78 sq. Compare *id.*, *Pioneering on the Congo* (London, 1900), ii. 282-287. During their seclusion in the stockade outside the town the bodies of the novices are supposed to decompose and decay till only one bone of each of them is left in charge of the wizard. An attempt

is made to teach them a secret language, but the vocabulary is said to be small and to show little ingenuity. Both sexes live together in the stockade and the grossest immorality prevails.

² Herbert Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals* (London, 1890), p. 54 sq.

N'Kimba is proclaimed, and the sorcerers and other celebrants of the rite betake themselves to a lonely wood. Here they are soon joined by voluntary candidates for initiation. Boys and men of any age are eligible, also girls and women who have not borne a child. Full sexual license is permitted. At initiation the body of the candidate is painted with white chalk; he is supposed to die, to be raised from the dead, and then to enter upon a new life. The initiated speak a complicated language. At the conclusion of these rites, which usually last five or six years, the members of the craft take new names and pretend to have forgotten their former life; they even feign not to recognise their parents and friends.¹ The following account of the rites, as practised in this part of Africa, was given to Adolf Bastian by an interpreter. "In the land of Ambamba every one must die once, and when the fetish priest shakes his calabash against a village, all the men and lads whose hour is come fall into a state of lifeless torpidity, from which they generally awake after three days. But if the fetish loves a man he carries him away into the bush and buries him in the fetish house, often for many years. When he comes to life again, he begins to eat and drink as before, but his understanding is gone and the fetish man must teach him and direct him in every motion, like the smallest child. At first this can only be done with a stick, but gradually his senses return, so that it is possible to talk with him, and when his education is complete, the priest brings him back to his parents. They would seldom recognise their son but for the express assurances of the fetish priest, who moreover recalls previous events to their memory. He who has not gone through the ceremony of the new birth in Ambamba is universally looked down upon and is not admitted to the dances." During the period of initiation the novice is sympathetically united to the fetish by which his life is thenceforward determined.² The novice, plunged in the magic sleep or death-like trance within the sacred hut, "beholds a bird or other object with which his existence is henceforth sympathetically bound

¹ Herbert Ward, "Ethnographical Notes relating to the Congo Tribes," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*,

xxiv. (1895), p. 288 sq.

² A. Bastian, *Ein Besuch in San Salvador*, pp. 82 sq., 86.

up, just as the life of the young Indian is bound up with the animal which he sees in his dreams at puberty."¹

Rites of this sort were formerly observed in Quoja, on the west coast of Africa, to the north of the Congo. They are thus described by an old writer:—"They have another ceremony which they call Belli-Paaro, but it is not for everybody. For it is an incorporation in the assembly of the spirits, and confers the right of entering their groves, that is to say, of going and eating the offerings which the simple folk bring thither. The initiation or admission to the Belli-Paaro is celebrated every twenty or twenty-five years. The initiated recount marvels of the ceremony, saying that they are roasted, that they entirely change their habits and life, and that they receive a spirit quite different from that of other people and quite new lights. The badge of membership consists in some lines traced on the neck between the shoulders; the lines seem to be pricked with a needle. Those who have this mark pass for persons of spirit, and when they have attained a certain age they are allowed a voice in all public assemblies; whereas the uninitiated are regarded as profane, impure, and ignorant persons, who dare not express an opinion on any subject of importance. When the time for the ceremony has come, it is celebrated as follows. By order of the king a place is appointed in the forest, whither they bring the youths who have not been marked, not without much crying and weeping; for it is impressed upon the youths that in order to undergo this change it is necessary to suffer death. So they dispose of their property, as if it were all over with them. There are always some of the initiated beside the novices to instruct them. They teach them to dance a certain dance called *killing*, and to sing verses in praise of Belli. Above all, they are very careful not to let them die of hunger, because if they did so, it is much to be feared that the spiritual resurrection would profit them nothing. This manner of life lasts five or six years, and is comfortable

¹ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, ii. 183; cp. *id.*, pp. 15-18, 30 sq. On these initiatory rites in the Congo region see also (Sir) H. Johnston in *Proceedings of*

the Royal Geographical Society, N.S., v. (1883), p. 572 sq., and in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xiii. (1884), p. 472; E. Delmar Morgan, in *Proceed. Royal Geogr. Soc.* N.S., vi. 193.

enough, for there is a village in the forest, and they amuse themselves with hunting and fishing. Other lads are brought thither from time to time, so that the last comers have not long to stay. No woman or uninitiated person is suffered to pass within four or five leagues of the sacred wood. When their instruction is completed, they are taken from the wood and shut up in small huts made for the purpose. Here they begin once more to hold communion with mankind and to talk with the women who bring them their food. It is amusing to see their affected simplicity. They pretend to know no one, and to be ignorant of all the customs of the country, such as the customs of washing themselves, rubbing themselves with oil, and so forth. When they enter these huts, their bodies are all covered with the feathers of birds, and they wear caps of bark which hang down before their faces. But after a time they are dressed in clothes and taken to a great open place, where all the people of the neighbourhood are assembled. Here the novices give the first proof of their capacity by dancing a dance which is called the dance of Belli. After the dance is over, the novices are taken to the houses of their parents by their instructors."¹ Miss Kingsley informs us that "the great point of agreement between all these West African secret societies lies in the methods of initiation. The boy, if he belongs to a tribe that goes in for tattooing, is tattooed, and is handed over to instructors in the societies' secrets and formulae. He lives, with the other boys of his tribe undergoing initiation, usually under the rule of several instructors, and for the space of one year. He lives always in the forest, and is naked and smeared with clay. The boys are exercised so as to become inured to hardship; in some districts they make raids so as to perfect themselves in this useful accomplishment. They always take a new name, and are supposed by the initiation process to become new beings in the magic wood, and on their return to their village

¹ Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 268 sq. Dapper's account has been abridged in the text. Among the Bondeis, a tribe on the coast of East Africa, opposite to the island of Pemba, one of the rites of initiation into manhood consists in a pretence of slaying one of the lads with a sword; the

entrails of a fowl are placed on the boy's stomach to make the mock killing seem more real. See G. Dale, "Customs and habits of the natives inhabiting the Bondei country," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxv. (1896), p. 189.

at the end of their course, they pretend to have entirely forgotten their life before they entered the wood ; but this pretence is not kept up beyond the period of festivities given to welcome them home. They all learn, to a certain extent, a new language, a secret language only understood by the initiated. The same removal from home and instruction from initiated members is observed also with the girls. However, in their case, it is not always a forest-grove they are secluded in ; sometimes it is done in huts. Among the Grain Coast tribes, however, the girls go into a magic wood until they are married. Should they have to leave the wood for any temporary reason, they must smear themselves with white clay. A similar custom holds good in Okyön, Calabar district, where, should a girl have to leave the fattening-house, she must be covered with white clay."¹

Among the Indians of Virginia, an initiatory ceremony, called *Huskanaw*, took place every sixteen or twenty years, or oftener, as the young men happened to grow up. The youths were kept in solitary confinement in the woods for several months, receiving no food but an infusion of some intoxicating roots, so that they went raving mad, and continued in this state eighteen or twenty days. "Upon this occasion it is pretended that these poor creatures drink so much of the water of Lethe that they perfectly lose the remembrance of all former things, even of their parents, their treasure, and their language. When the doctors find that they have drunk sufficiently of the Wysocan (so they call this mad potion), they gradually restore them to their senses again by lessening the intoxication of their diet ; but before they are perfectly well they bring them back into their towns, while they are still wild and crazy through the violence of the medicine. After this they are very fearful of discovering anything of their former remembrance ; for if such a thing should happen to any of them, they must immediately be *Huskanaw'd* again ; and the second time the usage is so severe that seldom any one escapes with life. Thus they

¹ Miss Mary H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 531. Perhaps the smearing with clay may be intended to indicate that the novices have undergone the new birth ; for the negro

child, though born reddish-brown, soon turns slaty-grey (E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology*, p. 67), which would answer well enough to the hue of the clay-bedaubed novices.

must pretend to have forgot the very use of their tongues, so as not to be able to speak, nor understand anything that is spoken, till they learn it again. Now, whether this be real or counterfeit, I don't know ; but certain it is that they will not for some time take notice of anybody nor anything with which they were before acquainted, being still under the guard of their keepers, who constantly wait upon them everywhere till they have learnt all things perfectly over again. Thus they unlive their former lives, and commence men by forgetting that they ever have been boys."¹

Among some of the Indian tribes of North America there exist certain religious associations which are only open to candidates who have gone through a pretence of being killed and brought to life again. In 1766 or 1767 Captain Carver witnessed the admission of a candidate to an association called "the friendly society of the Spirit" among the Naudowessies. The candidate knelt before the chief, who told him that "he himself was now agitated by the same spirit which he should in a few moments communicate to him ; that it would strike him dead, but that he would instantly be restored again to life ; to this he added, that the communication, however terrifying, was a necessary introduction to the advantages enjoyed by the community into which he was on the point of being admitted. As he spoke this, he appeared to be greatly agitated, till at last his emotions became so violent that his countenance was distorted and his whole frame convulsed. At this juncture he threw something that appeared both in shape and colour like a small bean at the young man, which seemed to enter his mouth, and he instantly fell as motionless as if he had been shot." For a time the man lay like dead, but under a shower of blows he showed signs of consciousness, and finally, discharging from his mouth the bean, or whatever it was the chief had thrown at him, he came to life.² In other tribes, for example, the

¹ (Beverley's) *History of Virginia* (London, 1722), p. 177 sq. Compare J. Bricknell, *The Natural History of North Carolina* (Dublin, 1737), p. 405 sq.

² J. Carver, *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America* (Lon-

don, 1781), pp. 271-275. The thing thrown at the man and afterwards vomited by him was probably not a bean but a small white sea-shell (*Cypraea moneta*). See Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, iii. 287 ; J. G. Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, i. 71 ; *Seventh Annual Report*

Ojebways, Winnebagoes, and Dacotas or Sioux, the instrument by which the candidate is apparently slain is the medicine-bag. The bag is made of the skin of an animal (such as the otter, wild cat, serpent, bear, raccoon, wolf, owl, weasel), of which it roughly preserves the shape. Each member of the society has one of these bags, in which he keeps the odds and ends that make up his "medicine" or charms. "They believe that from the miscellaneous contents in the belly of the skin bag or animal there issues a spirit or breath, which has the power, not only to knock down and kill a man, but also to set him up and restore him to life." The mode of killing a man with one of these medicine-bags is to thrust it at him; he falls like dead, but a second thrust of the bag restores him to life.¹ Among the Dacotas the institution of the medicine-bag or mystery-sack was attributed to Onktehi, the great spirit of the waters, who ordained that the bag should consist of the skin of the otter, raccoon, weasel, squirrel, or loon, or a species of fish and of serpents. Further, he decreed that the bag should contain four sorts of medicines of magical qualities, which should represent fowls, quadrupeds, herbs, and trees. Accordingly, swan's down, buffalo hair, grass roots, and bark from the roots of trees are kept by the Dacotas in their medicine-bags. From this combination there proceeds a magical influence (*tonwan*) so powerful that no human being can of his own strength withstand it. When the god of the waters had prepared the first medicine-bag, he tested its powers on four candidates for initiation, who all perished under the shock. So he consulted with his wife, the goddess of the earth, and by holding up his left hand and pattering on the back of it

of the Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, 1891), pp. 191, 215; *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1896), p. 101.

¹ Carver, *op. cit.* p. 277 sq.; Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, iii. 287 (as to the Winnebagoes), v. 430 sqq. (as to the Chippeways and Sioux); Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, i. 64-70 (as to the Ojebways). For a very detailed account of the Ojebway ceremonies, see W. J. Hoffman, "The Midewiwin or Grand Medicine Society of the

Ojibwa," *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1891), especially pp. 215 sq., 234 sq., 248, 265. For similar ceremonies among the Menomini, see *id.*, "The Menomini Indians," *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1896), pp. 99-102; and among the Omahas, see J. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), pp. 342-346.

with the right, he produced myriads of little shells, whose virtue is to restore life to those who have been slain by the medicine-bag. Having taken this precaution, the god chose four other candidates and repeated the experiment of initiation with success, for after killing them with the bag he immediately resuscitated them by throwing one of the shells into their vital parts, while he chanted certain words assuring them that it was only sport and bidding them rise to their feet. That is why to this day every initiated Dakota has one of these shells in his body. Such was the divine origin of the medicine-dance of the Dakotas. The initiation takes place in a special tent. The candidate, after being steamed in the vapour-bath for four successive days, plants himself on a pile of blankets, and behind him stands an aged member of the order. "Now the master of the ceremonies, with the joints of his knees and hips considerably bent, advances with an unsteady, uncouth hitching, sack in hand, wearing an aspect of desperate energy, and uttering his 'Heen, heen, heen' with frightful emphasis, while all around are enthusiastic demonstrations of all kinds of wild passions. At this point the sack is raised near a painted spot on the breast of the candidate, at which the *tonwan* is discharged. At the instant the brother from behind gives him a push and he falls dead, and is covered with blankets. Now the frenzied dancers gather around, and in the midst of bewildering and indescribable noises, chant the words uttered by the god at the institution of the ceremony, as already recorded. Then the master throws off the covering, and chewing a piece of the bone of the Onktehi, spirts it over him, and he begins to show signs of returning life. Then as the master pats energetically upon the breast of the initiated person, he, convulsed, strangling, struggling, and agonizing, heaves up the shell which falls from his mouth on a sack placed in readiness to receive it. Life is restored and entrance effected into the awful mysteries. He belongs henceforth to the medicine-dance, and has a right to enjoy the medicine-feast."¹

¹ G. H. Pond, "Dakota superstitions," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society for the year 1867*

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(Saint Paul, 1867), pp. 35, 37-40. A similar but abridged account of the Dakota tradition and usage is given by

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A ceremony witnessed by Jewitt during his captivity among the Indians of Nootka Sound doubtless belongs to this class of customs. The Indian king or chief "discharged a pistol close to his son's ear, who immediately fell down as if killed, upon which all the women of the house set up a most lamentable cry, tearing handfuls of hair from their heads, and exclaiming that the prince was dead; at the same time a great number of the inhabitants rushed into the house armed with their daggers, muskets, etc., inquiring the cause of their outcry. These were immediately followed by two others dressed in wolf-skins, with masks over their faces representing the head of that animal. The latter came in on their hands and feet in the manner of a beast, and taking up the prince, carried him off upon their backs, retiring in the same manner as they entered."¹ In another place Jewitt mentions that the young prince—a lad of about eleven years of age—wore a mask in imitation of a wolf's head.² Now, as the Indians of this part of America are divided into totem clans, of which the Wolf clan is one of the principal, and as the members of each clan are in the habit of wearing some portion of the totem animal about their person,³ it is probable that the prince belonged to the Wolf clan, and that the ceremony described by Jewitt represented the killing of the lad in order that he might be born anew as a wolf, much in the same way that the Basque hunter supposed himself to have been killed and to have come to life again as a bear.

This conjectural explanation of the ceremony has, since it was first put forward, been confirmed by the researches of Dr. Fr. Boas among these Indians; though it would seem that the community to which the chief's son thus obtained admission was not so much a totem clan as a secret society called Tlokoala, whose members imitated wolves. The

S. R. Riggs in his *Dakota Grammar, Texts, and Ethnography* (Washington, 1893), pp. 227-229 (*Contributions to North American Ethnology*, vol. ix.).

¹ *Narrative of the Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt* (Middle-town, 1820), p. 119.

² *Id.*, p. 44. For the age of the prince, see *id.*, p. 35.

³ Holmberg, "Ueber die Völker des russischen Amerika," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae*, iv. (Helsingfors, 1856), pp. 292 sqq., 328; Petroff, *Report on the Population, etc., of Alaska*, p. 165 sq.; A. Krause, *Die Tlinkit-Indianer*, p. 112; R. C. Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island*, pp. 257 sq., 268.

name Tlokoala is a foreign word among the Nootka Indians, having been borrowed by them from the Kwakiutl Indians, in whose language the word means the finding of a *manitoo* or personal totem. The Nootka tradition runs that this secret society was instituted by wolves who took away a chief's son and tried to kill him, but, failing to do so, became his friends, taught him the rites of the society, and ordered him to teach them to his friends on his return home. Then they carried the young man back to his village. They also begged that whenever he moved from one place to another he would kindly leave behind him some red cedar-bark to be used by them in their own ceremonies; and to this custom the Nootka tribes still adhere. Every new member of the society must be initiated by the wolves. At night a pack of wolves, personated by Indians dressed in wolf-skins and wearing wolf-masks, make their appearance, seize the novice, and carry him into the woods. When the wolves are heard outside the village, coming to fetch away the novice, all the members of the society blacken their faces and sing, "Among all the tribes is great excitement, because I am Tlokoala." Next day the wolves bring back the novice dead, and the members of the society have to revive him. The wolves are supposed to have put a magic stone into his body, which must be removed before he can come to life. Till this is done the pretended corpse is left lying outside the house. Two wizards go and remove the stone, which appears to be quartz, and then the novice is resuscitated.¹ Among the Niska Indians of British Columbia, who are divided into four principal clans with the raven, the wolf, the eagle, and the bear for their respective totems, the novice at initiation is always brought back by an artificial totem animal. Thus when a man was about to be initiated into a secret society called Olala, his friends drew their knives and pretended to kill him. In reality they let him slip away, while they cut off the head

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 47 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1890*); *id.*, "The social organisation and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 632 sq.

But while the initiation described in the text was into a wolf society, not into a wolf clan, it is to be observed that the wolf is one of the regular totems of the Nootka Indians. See F. Boas, in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, p. 32.

of a dummy which had been adroitly substituted for him. Then they laid the decapitated dummy down and covered it over, and the women began to mourn and wail. His relations gave a funeral banquet and solemnly burnt the effigy. In short, they held a regular funeral. For a whole year the novice remained absent and was seen by none but members of the secret society. But at the end of that time he came back alive, carried by an artificial animal which represented his totem.¹ In these ceremonies the essence of the rite appears to be the killing of the novice in his character of a man and his restoration to life in the form of the animal which is thenceforward to be, if not his guardian spirit, at least linked to him in a peculiarly intimate relation. It is to be remembered that the Indians of Guatemala, whose life was bound up with an animal, were supposed to have the power of appearing in the shape of the particular creature with which they were thus sympathetically united.² Hence it seems not unreasonable to conjecture that in like manner the Indians of British Columbia may imagine that their life depends on the life of some one of that species of creature to which they assimilate themselves by their costume. At least if that is not an article of belief with the Columbian Indians of the present day, it may very well have been so with their ancestors in the past, and thus may have helped to mould the rites and ceremonies both of the totem clans and of the secret societies. For though these two sorts of communities differ in respect of the mode in which membership of them is obtained—a man being born into his totem clan but admitted into a secret society later in life—we can hardly

¹ Fr. Boas, in *Tenth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, pp. 49 sq., 58 sq. (separate reprint from the *Report of the British Association for 1895*). It is remarkable, however, that in this tribe persons who are being initiated into the secret societies, of which there are six, are not always or even generally brought back by an artificial animal which represents their own totem. Thus while men of the eagle totem are brought back by an eagle which rises from underground, men of the bear clan return on the back of an artificial killer-whale which

is towed across the river by ropes. Again, members of the wolf clan are brought back by an artificial bear, and members of the raven clan by a frog. In former times the appearance of the artificial totem animal, or of the guardian spirit, was considered a matter of great importance, and any failure which disclosed the deception to the uninitiated was deemed a grave misfortune which could only be atoned for by the death of the persons concerned in the disclosure.

² See above, p. 412.

doubt that they are near akin and have their root in the same mode of thought.¹ That thought, if I am right, is the possibility of establishing a sympathetic relation with an animal, a spirit, or other mighty being, with whom a man deposits for safe-keeping his soul or some part of it, and from whom he receives in return a gift of magical powers.

The Carrier Indians, who dwell further inland than the tribes we have just been considering, are divided into four clans with the grouse, the beaver, the toad, and the grizzly bear for their totems. But in addition to these clan totems the tribe recognised a considerable number of what Father Morice calls honorific totems, which could be acquired, through the performance of certain rites, by any person who wished to improve his social position. Each totem clan had a certain number of honorific totems or crests, and these might be assumed by any member of the clan who fulfilled the required conditions; but they could not be acquired by members of another clan. Thus the Grouse clan had for its honorific totems or crests the owl, the moose, the weasel, the crane, the wolf, the full moon, the wind, and so on; the Toad clan had the sturgeon, the porcupine, the wolverine, the red-headed woodpecker, the "darding knife," and so forth; the Beaver clan had the mountain-goat for one of its honorific totems; and the goose was a honorific totem of the Grizzly Bear clan. But the common bear, as a honorific totem or crest, might be assumed by anybody, whatever his clan. The common possession of a honorific totem appears to have constituted the same sort of bond among the Carrier Indians as the membership of a secret society does among

¹ This is the opinion of Dr. F. Boas, who writes: "The close similarity between the clan legends and those of the acquisition of spirits presiding over secret societies, as well as the intimate relation between these and the social organizations of the tribes, allow us to apply the same argument to the consideration of the growth of the secret societies, and lead us to the conclusion that the same psychical factor that molded the clans into their present shape molded the secret societies" ("The social organization and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl In-

dians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 662). Compare my *Totemism*, p. 49 sqq. Dr. Boas would see in the acquisition of a *manitoo* or personal totem the origin both of the secret societies and of the totem clan; for according to him the totem of the clan is merely the *manitoo* or personal totem of the ancestor transmitted by inheritance to his descendants. As I have already indicated (p. 419, note 5), I see nothing in this view which is inconsistent with the theory of totemism here advocated.

the coast tribes of British Columbia ; certainly the rites of initiation were similar. This will be clear from Father Morice's account of the performances, which I will subjoin in his own words. "The connection of the individual with his crest appeared more especially during ceremonial dances, when the former, attired, if possible, with the spoils of the latter, was wont to personate it in the gaze of an admiring assemblage. On all such occasions, man and totem were also called by the same name. The adoption of any such 'rite' or crest was usually accompanied by initiatory ceremonies or observances corresponding to the nature of the crest, followed in all cases by a distribution of clothes to all present. Thus whenever anybody resolved upon getting received as *Lulem* or Bear, he would, regardless of the season, divest himself of all his wearing apparel and don a bear skin, whereupon he would dash into the woods there to remain for the space of three or four days and nights in deference to the wons of his intended totem animal. Every night a party of his fellow-villagers would sally out in search of the missing 'bear.' To their loud calls: *Yi! Ketulem* (Come on, Bear!) he would answer by angry growls in imitation of the bear. The searching party making for the spot where he had been heard, would find by a second call followed by a similar answer that he had dexterously shifted to some opposite quarter in the forest. As a rule, he could not be found, but had to come back of himself, when he was speedily apprehended and conducted to the ceremonial lodge, where he would commence his first bear-dance in conjunction with all the other totem people, each of whom would personate his own particular totem. Finally would take place the *pot-lach* [distribution of property] of the newly initiated 'bear,' who would not forget to present his captor with at least a whole dressed skin. The initiation of the 'Darding Knife' was quite a theatrical performance. A lance was prepared which had a very sharp point so arranged that the slightest pressure on its tip would cause the steel to gradually sink into the shaft. In the sight of the multitude crowding the lodge, this lance was pressed on the bare chest of the candidate and apparently sunk in his body to the shaft, when he would tumble down simulating death. At the same time a

quantity of blood—previously kept in the mouth—would issue from the would-be corpse, making it quite clear to the uninitiated gazers-on that the terrible knife had had its effect, when lo! upon one of the actors striking up one of the chants specially made for the circumstance and richly paid for, the candidate would gradually rise up a new man, the particular *protégé* of the 'Darding Knife.'"¹ In the former of these initiatory rites the prominent feature is the transformation of the man into his totem animal; in the latter it is his death and resurrection. But in substance, probably, both are identical. In both the novice dies as a man and revives as his totem, whether that be a bear, a "darding" knife, or what not; in other words, he has deposited his life or some portion of it in his totem, with which accordingly for the future he is more or less completely identified. Hard as it may be for us to conceive why a man should choose to identify himself with a knife, whether "darding" or otherwise, we have to remember that in Celebes it is to a chopping-knife or other iron tool that the soul of a woman in labour is transferred for safety;² and the difference between a chopping-knife and a "darding" knife, considered as a receptacle for a human soul, is perhaps not very material. Among the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia warriors who had a knife, an arrow, or any other weapon for their personal totem or guardian spirit, enjoyed this signal advantage over their fellows that they were for all practical purposes invulnerable. If an arrow did hit them, which seldom happened, they vomited the blood up, and the hurt soon healed. Hence these bomb-proof warriors rarely wore armour, which would indeed have been superfluous, and they generally took the most dangerous posts in battle. So convinced were the Thompson River Indians of the power of their personal totem or guardian spirit to bring them back to life, that some of them killed themselves in the sure hope that the spirit would immediately

¹ A. G. Morice, "Notes, archaeological, industrial, and sociological, on the Western Dénés," *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, iv. (1892-93), pp. 203-206. The honorific totems of the Carrier Indians may perhaps correspond in some measure to the

sub-totems or multiplex totems of the Australians. As to these latter see my *Totemism*, pp. 85-87, and "The origin of Totemism," *Fortnightly Review*, N.S., lxx. (1899), pp. 848-850.

² See above, p. 389.

raise them up from the dead. Others, more prudently, experimented on their friends, shooting them dead and then awaiting more or less cheerfully their joyful resurrection. We are not told that success crowned these experimental demonstrations of the immortality of the soul.¹

The Toukaway Indians of Texas, one of whose totems is the wolf, have a ceremony in which men, dressed in wolf-skins, run about on all fours, howling and mimicking wolves. At last they scratch up a living tribesman, who has been buried on purpose, and putting a bow and arrows in his hands, bid him do as the wolves do—rob, kill, and murder.² The ceremony probably forms part of an initiatory rite like the resurrection from the grave of the old man in the Australian rites.

The people of Rook, an island to the east of New Guinea, hold festivals at which one or two disguised men, their heads covered with wooden masks, go dancing through the village, followed by all the other men. They demand that the circumcised boys who have not yet been swallowed by Marsaba (the devil) shall be given up to them. The boys, trembling and shrieking, are delivered to them, and must creep between the legs of the disguised men. Then the procession moves through the village again, and announces that Marsaba has eaten up the boys, and will not disgorge them till he receives a present of pigs, taro, and so forth. So all the villagers, according to their means, contribute provisions, which are then consumed in the name of Marsaba.³ In New Britain all males are members of an association called the Duk-duk. The boys are admitted to it very young, but are not fully initiated till their fourteenth year, when they receive from the Tubuvan a terrible blow with a cane, which is supposed to kill them. The Tubuvan and the Duk-duk are two disguised

¹ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. ii. part iv. p. 357.

² Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, v. 683. In a letter dated 16th Dec. 1887, Mr. A. S. Gatschet, of the Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, writes to me: "Among the Toukawe whom in 1884 I found at Fort Griffin [?], Texas, I

noticed that they never kill the big or grey wolf, *hatchukunän*, which has a mythological signification, 'holding the earth' (*hatch*). He forms one of their totem clans, and they have had a dance in his honor, danced by the males only, who carried sticks."

³ Reina, "Ueber die Bewohner der Insel Rook," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, N.F., iv. (1858), p. 356 sq.

men who represent cassowaries. They dance with a short hopping step in imitation of the cassowary. Each of them wears a huge hat like an extinguisher, woven of grass or palm-fibres; it is six feet high, and descends to the wearer's shoulders, completely concealing his head and face. From the neck to the knees the man's body is hidden by a crinoline made of the leaves of a certain tree fastened on hoops, one above the other. The Tubuvan is regarded as a female, the Duk-duk as a male. According to one account, women and children may not look upon one of these disguised men or they would die. So strong is this superstition among them that they will run away and hide as soon as they hear him coming, for they are aware of his approach through a peculiar shrieking noise he utters as he goes along. In the district of Berara, where red is the Duk-duk colour, the mere sight of a red cloth is enough to make the women take to their heels. The common herd are not allowed to know who the masker is. If he stumbles and his hat falls to the ground, disclosing his face, or his crinoline is torn to tatters by the bushes, his attendants immediately surround him to hide his person from the vulgar eye. According to one writer, indeed, the performer who drops his mask, or lets it fall so that the sharp point at the top sticks in the ground, is put to death. The institution of the Duk-duk is common to the neighbouring islands of New Ireland and the Duke of York.¹

Among the Galelareese and Tobelorese of Halmahera, an island to the west of New Guinea, boys go through a form of initiation, part of which seems to consist in a pretence of begetting them anew. When a number of boys have reached

¹ R. Parkinson, *In the Bismarck Archipel*, pp. 129-134; Rev. G. Brown, "Notes on the Duke of York Group, New Britain, and New Ireland," *Journ. Royal Geogr. Soc.* xlvii. (1878), p. 148 sq.; H. H. Romilly, "The Islands of the New Britain Group," *Proceed. Royal Geogr. Soc. N.S.*, ix. (1887), p. 11 sq.; Rev. G. Brown, *ibid.* p. 17; W. Powell, *Wanderings in a Wild Country*, pp. 60-66; C. Hager, *Kaiser Wilhelm's Land und der Bismarck Archipel*, pp. 115-128; Hubner, quoted by W. H. Dall, "On

masks, labrets, and certain aboriginal customs," *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 100. The inhabitants of these islands are divided into two exogamous classes, which in the Duke of York Island have two insects for their totems. One of the insects is the *mantis religiosa*; the other is an insect that mimics the leaf of the horse-chestnut tree very closely (Rev. B. Danks, "Marriage customs of the New Britain Group," *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xviii. (1889), p. 281 sq.).

the proper age, their parents agree to celebrate the ceremony at their common expense, and they invite others to be present at it. A shed is erected, and two long tables are placed in it, with benches to match, one for the men and one for the women. When all the preparations have been made for a feast, a great many skins of the rayfish, and some pieces of a wood which imparts a red colour to water, are taken to the shed. A priest or elder causes a vessel to be placed in the sight of all the people, and then begins, with significant gestures, to rub a piece of the wood with the ray-skin. The powder so produced is put in the vessel, and at the same time the name of one of the boys is called out. The same proceeding is repeated for each boy. Then the vessels are filled with water, after which the feast begins. At the third cock-crow the priest smears the faces and bodies of the boys with the red water, which represents the blood shed at the perforation of the *hymen*. Towards daybreak the boys are taken to the wood, and must hide behind the largest trees. The men, armed with sword and shield, accompany them, dancing and singing. The priest knocks thrice on each of the trees behind which a boy is hiding. All day the boys stay in the wood, exposing themselves to the heat of the sun as much as possible. In the evening they bathe and return to the shed, where the women supply them with food.¹

In the west of Ceram boys at puberty are admitted to the Kakian association.² Modern writers have commonly

¹ J. G. F. Riedel, "Galela und Tobeloresen," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xvii. (1885), p. 81 sq.

² The Kakian association and its initiatory ceremonies have often been described. See Valentyn, *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indiën*, iii. 3 sq.; Von Schmid, "Het Kakihsch Verbond op het eiland Ceram," *Tijdschrift v. Nederlands Indië*, 1843, dl. ii. pp. 25-38; Van Ekris, "Het Ceramsche Kakian-verbond," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederland. Zendinggenootschap*, ix. (1865), pp. 205-226 (repeated with slight changes in *Tijdschrift v. Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde*, xvi. (1866), pp. 290-315); F. Fournier, "De Zuidkust van Ceram," *Tijdschrift*

v. Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde, xvi. 154 sq.; Van Rees, *Die Pioniers der Beschaving in Nederlands Indië*, pp. 92-106; Van Hoëvell, *Ambon en meer bepaaldelijk de Oeliasers*, p. 153 sq.; Schulze, "Ueber Ceram und seine Bewohner," *Verhandl. d. Berliner Gesell. f. Anthropologie*, etc. (1877), p. 117; W. Joest, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Eingebornen der Insel Formosa und Ceram," *ibid.* (1882), p. 64; Rosenberg, *Der Malayische Archipel*, p. 318; Bastian, *Indonesien*, i. 145-148; Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua*, pp. 107-111. The best accounts are those of Valentyn, Von Schmid, Van Ekris, Van Rees, and Riedel, which are accordingly followed in the text.

regarded this association as primarily a political league instituted to resist foreign domination. In reality its objects are purely religious and social, though it is possible that the priests may have occasionally used their powerful influence for political ends. The society is in fact merely one of those widely-diffused primitive institutions, of which a chief object is the initiation of young men. In recent years the true nature of the association has been duly recognised by the distinguished Dutch ethnologist, J. G. F. Riedel. The Kakian house is an oblong wooden shed, situated under the darkest trees in the depth of the forest, and is built to admit so little light that it is impossible to see what goes on in it. Every village has such a house. Thither the boys who are to be initiated are conducted blindfolded, followed by their parents and relations. Each boy is led by the hand by two men, who act as his sponsors or guardians, looking after him during the period of initiation. When all are assembled before the shed, the high priest calls aloud upon the devils. Immediately a hideous uproar is heard to proceed from the shed. It is made by men with bamboo trumpets, who have been secretly introduced into the building by a back door, but the women and children think it is made by the devils, and are much terrified. Then the priests enter the shed, followed by the boys, one at a time. As soon as each boy has disappeared within the precincts, a dull chopping sound is heard, a fearful cry rings out, and a sword or spear, dripping with blood, is thrust through the roof of the shed. This is a token that the boy's head has been cut off, and that the devil has carried him away to the other world, there to regenerate and transform him. So at sight of the bloody sword the mothers weep and wail, crying that the devil has murdered their children. In some places, it would seem, the boys are pushed through an opening made in the shape of a crocodile's jaws or a cassowary's beak, and it is then said that the devil has swallowed them. The boys remain in the shed for five or nine days. Sitting in the dark, they hear the blast of the bamboo trumpets, and from time to time the sound of musket shots and the clash of swords. Every day they bathe, and their faces and bodies are smeared with a yellow dye, to give them the appearance of having been swallowed by the devil.

During his stay in the Kakian house each boy has one or two crosses tattooed with thorns on his breast or arm. When they are not sleeping, the lads must sit in a crouching posture without moving a muscle. As they sit in a row cross-legged, with their hands stretched out, the chief takes his trumpet, and placing the mouth of it on the hands of each lad, speaks through it in strange tones, imitating the voice of the spirits. He warns the lads, under pain of death, to observe the rules of the Kakian society, and never to reveal what has passed in the Kakian house. The novices are also told by the priests to behave well to their blood relations, and are taught the traditions and secrets of the tribe.

Meantime the mothers and sisters of the lads have gone home to weep and mourn. But in a day or two the men who acted as guardians or sponsors to the novices return to the village with the glad tidings that the devil, at the intercession of the priests, has restored the lads to life. The men who bring this news come in a fainting state and daubed with mud, like messengers freshly arrived from the nether world. Before leaving the Kakian house, each lad receives from the priest a stick adorned at both ends with cock's or cassowary's feathers. The sticks are supposed to have been given to the lads by the devil at the time when he restored them to life, and they serve as a token that the youths have been in the spirit-land. When they return to their homes they totter in their walk, and enter the house backward, as if they had forgotten how to walk properly ; or they enter the house by the back door. If a plate of food is given to them, they hold it upside down. They remain dumb, indicating their wants by signs only. All this is to show that they are still under the influence of the devil or the spirits. Their sponsors have to teach them all the common acts of life, as if they were new-born children. Further, upon leaving the Kakian house the boys are strictly forbidden to eat of certain fruits until the next celebration of the rites has taken place. And for twenty or thirty days their hair may not be combed by their mothers or sisters. At the end of that time the high priest takes them to a lonely place in the forest, and cuts off a lock of hair from the

crown of each of their heads. After these initiatory rites the lads are deemed men, and may marry; it would be a scandal if they married before.

The simulation of death and resurrection or of a new birth at initiation appears to have lingered on, or at least to have left traces of itself, among peoples who have advanced far beyond the stage of savagery. Thus, after his investiture with the sacred thread—the symbol of his order—a Brahman is called “twice born.” Manu says, “According to the injunction of the revealed texts the first birth of an Aryan is from his natural mother, the second happens on the tying of the girdle of *Muṅga* grass, and the third on the initiation to the performance of a *Srauta* sacrifice.”¹ A pretence of killing the candidate perhaps formed part of the initiation to the Mithraic mysteries.²

Thus, if I am right, wherever totemism is found, and wherever a pretence is made of killing and bringing to life again at initiation, there must exist or have existed not only a belief in the possibility of permanently depositing the soul in some external object—animal, plant, or what not—but an actual intention of so doing. If the question is put, why do men desire to deposit their life outside their bodies? the answer can only be that, like the giant in the fairy tale, they think it safer to do so than to carry it about with them, just as people deposit their money with a banker rather than carry it on their persons. We have seen that at critical periods the life or soul is sometimes temporarily deposited in a safe place till the danger is past. But institutions like totemism are not resorted to merely on special occasions of danger; they are systems into which every one, or at least every male, is obliged to be initiated at a certain period of life. Now the period of life at which initiation takes place is regularly puberty; and this fact suggests that the special danger which totemism and systems like it are

¹ *Laws of Manu*, ii. 169, trans. by Bühler; Dubois, *Mœurs, Institutions et Cérémonies des Peuples de l'Inde*, i. 125; Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, pp. 360 sq., 366 sq.; H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 466 sqq.

² Lampridius, *Commodus*, 9; C. W. King, *The Gnostics and their Remains*,² pp. 127, 129. Compare Fr. Cumont, *Textes et Monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra*, i. (Brussels, 1899), pp. 69 sq., 321 sq.

intended to obviate is supposed not to arise till sexual maturity has been attained, in fact, that the danger apprehended is believed to attend the relation of the sexes to each other. It would be easy to prove by a long array of facts that the sexual relation is associated in the primitive mind with many serious perils; but the exact nature of the danger apprehended is still obscure. We may hope that a more exact acquaintance with savage modes of thought will in time disclose this central mystery of primitive society, and will thereby furnish the clue, not only to totemism, but to the origin of the marriage system.

§ 5. Conclusion

Thus the view that Balder's life was in the mistletoe is entirely in harmony with primitive modes of thought. It may indeed sound like a contradiction that, if his life was in the mistletoe, he should nevertheless have been killed by a blow from it. But when a person's life is conceived as embodied in a particular object, with the existence of which his own existence is inseparably bound up, and the destruction of which involves his own, the object in question may be regarded and spoken of indifferently as the person's life or as his death, as happens in the fairy tales. Hence if a man's death is in an object, it is perfectly natural that he should be killed by a blow from it. In the fairy tales Koshchei the Deathless is killed by a blow from the egg or the stone in which his life or death is;¹ the ogres burst when a certain grain of sand—doubtless containing their life or death—is carried over their heads;² the magician dies when the stone in which his life or death is contained is put under his pillow;³ and the Tartar hero is warned that he may be killed by the golden arrow or golden sword in which his soul has been stowed away.⁴

¹ Above, p. 363; compare pp. 362, 369, 374, 375.

² Above, p. 368. ³ Above, p. 361.

⁴ Above, p. 386. In the myth the throwing of the weapons and of the mistletoe at Balder and the blindness of Hödur who slew him remind us of the custom of the Irish reapers who kill the corn-spirit in the last sheaf by throwing

their sickles blindfold at it. See above, vol. ii. p. 179. In Mecklenburg a cock is sometimes buried in the ground and a man who is blindfolded strikes at it with a flail. If he misses it, another tries, and so on till the cock is killed (Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, ii. 280). In England on Shrove Tuesday a hen

The idea that the life of the oak was in the mistletoe was probably suggested, as I have said, by the observation that in winter the mistletoe growing on the oak remains green while the oak itself is leafless. But the position of the plant—growing not from the ground but from the trunk or branches of the tree—might confirm this idea. Primitive man might think that, like himself, the oak-spirit had sought to deposit his life in some safe place, and for this purpose had pitched on the mistletoe, which, being in a sense neither on earth nor in heaven, was as secure a place as could be found. At the beginning of this chapter we saw that primitive man seeks to preserve the life of his human divinities by keeping them in a sort of intermediate position between earth and heaven, as the place where they are least likely to be assailed by the dangers that encompass the life of man on earth. We can therefore understand why it has been a rule both of ancient and of modern folk-medicine that the mistletoe should not be allowed to touch the ground; were it to touch the ground, its healing virtue would be gone.¹ This may be a survival of the old superstition that the plant in which the life of the sacred tree was concentrated should not be exposed to the risk incurred by contact with the earth. In an Indian legend, which offers a parallel to the Balder myth, Indra promised the demon Namuci not to kill him by day or by night, nor with what was wet or what was dry. But he killed him in the morning twilight by sprinkling over him the foam of the sea.² The foam of the sea is just such an object as a savage might choose to put his life in, because it occupies that sort of intermediate or nondescript

used to be tied upon a man's back, and other men blindfolded struck at it with branches till they killed it (Dyer, *British Popular Customs*, p. 68). Mannhardt (*Die Korndämonen*, p. 16 sq.) has made it probable that such sports are directly derived from the custom of killing a cock upon the harvest-field as a representative of the corn-spirit (see above, vol. ii. p. 268 sq.). These customs, therefore, combined with the blindness of Hödur in the myth, suggest that the man who killed the human representative of the oak-spirit

was blindfolded, and threw his weapon or the mistletoe from a little distance. After the Lapps had killed a bear—which was the occasion of many superstitious ceremonies—the bear's skin was hung on a post, and the women, blindfolded, shot arrows at it (Scheffer, *Lapponia*, p. 240).

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxiv. 12; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 1010. Compare below, p. 467.

² Denham Rouse, in *Folk-lore Journal*, vii. (1889), p. 61, quoting *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, I. vii. 1.

position between earth and sky or sea and sky in which primitive man sees safety. It is therefore not surprising that the foam of the river should be the totem of a clan in India.¹ Again, the view that the mistletoe owes its mystic character partly to its not growing on the ground is confirmed by a parallel superstition about the mountain-ash or rowan-tree. In Jutland a rowan that is found growing out of the top of another tree is esteemed "exceedingly effective against witchcraft: since it does not grow on the ground witches have no power over it; if it is to have its full effect it must be cut on Ascension Day."² Hence it is placed over doors to prevent the ingress of witches.³ Similarly the mistletoe in Germany is still universally considered a protection against witchcraft, and in Sweden, as we saw, the mistletoe which is gathered on Midsummer Eve is attached to the ceiling of the house, the horse stall, or the cow's crib, in the belief that this renders the Troll powerless to injure man or beast.⁴

The view that the mistletoe was not merely the instrument of Balder's death, but that it contained his life, is countenanced by the analogy of a Scottish superstition. Tradition ran that the fate of the family of Hay was bound up with the mistletoe of a certain oak.

"While the mistletoe bats on Errol's oak,
And that oak stands fast,
The Hays shall flourish, and their good gray hawk
Shall not flinch before the blast.

But when the root of the oak decays,
And the mistletoe dwines on its withered breast,
The grass shall grow on the Earl's hearthstone,
And the corbies crawl in the falcon's nest."

¹ Col. E. T. Dalton, "The Kols of Chota-Nagpore," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society*, N.S., vi. (1868), p. 36.

² Jens Kamp, *Danske Folkeminder* (Odense, 1877), pp. 172, 65 sq., referred to in Feilberg's *Bidrag til en Ordbrug over Jyske Almuesmål*, Fjerde hefte (Copenhagen, 1888), p. 320. For a sight of Feilberg's work I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Walter

Gregor, M.A., Pitsligo, who pointed out the passage to me.

³ E. T. Kristensen, *Jyske Folkeminder*, vi. 380²⁶³, referred to by Feilberg, *l.c.* According to Marcellus (*De Medicamentis*, xxvi. 115), ivy which springs from an oak is a remedy for stone, provided it be cut with a copper instrument.

⁴ Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 97, § 128; L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 269.

"A large oak with the mistletoe growing on it was long pointed out as the tree referred to. A piece of the mistletoe cut by a Hay was believed to have magical virtues. 'The oak is gone and the estate is lost to the family,' as a local historian says."¹ The idea that the fate of a family, as distinct from the lives of its members, is bound up with a particular plant or tree, is no doubt comparatively modern. The older view probably was that the lives of all the Hays were in this particular mistletoe, just as in the Indian story the lives of all the ogres are in a lemon; to break a twig of the mistletoe would then have been to kill one of the Hays. Similarly in the island of Rum, whose bold mountains the voyager from Oban to Skye observes to seaward, it was thought that if one of the family of Lachlin shot a deer on the mountain of Finchra, he would die suddenly or contract a distemper which would soon prove fatal.² Probably the life of the Lachlins was bound up with the deer on Finchra, as the life of the Hays was bound up with the mistletoe on Errol's oak, and the life of the Dalhousie family with the Edgewell Tree.

It is not a new opinion that the Golden Bough was the mistletoe.³ True, Virgil does not identify but only compares it with mistletoe. But this may be only a poetical device to cast a mystic glamour over the humble plant. Or, more probably, his description was based on a popular superstition that at certain times the mistletoe blazed out into a supernatural golden glory. The poet tells how two doves, guiding Aeneas to the gloomy vale in whose depth grew the Golden Bough, alighted upon a tree, "whence shone a flickering gleam of gold. As in the woods in winter cold the mistletoe—a plant not native to its tree—is green with fresh leaves and twines its yellow berries about the boles; such seemed upon the shady oak the leafy gold, so rustled in the gentle breeze the golden leaf."⁴ Here Virgil

¹ Extract from a newspaper, copied and sent to me by the Rev. Walter Gregor, M.A., Pittligo. Mr. Gregor does not mention the name of the newspaper.

² Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in

Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels*, iii. 661.

³ Rochholz, *Deutscher Glaube und Brauch*, i. 9.

⁴ Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 203 sqq., cp. 136 sqq. On the mistletoe (*viscum*) see Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xvi. 245 sqq.

definitely describes the Golden Bough as growing on an oak, and compares it with the mistletoe. The inference is almost inevitable that the Golden Bough was nothing but the mistletoe seen through the haze of poetry or of popular superstition.

Now grounds have been shown for believing that the priest of the Arician grove—the King of the Wood—personified the tree on which grew the Golden Bough.¹ Hence if that tree was the oak, the King of the Wood must have been a personification of the oak-spirit. It is, therefore, easy to understand why, before he could be slain, it was necessary to break the Golden Bough. As an oak-spirit, his life or death was in the mistletoe on the oak, and so long as the mistletoe remained intact, he, like Balder, could not die. To slay him, therefore, it was necessary to break the mistletoe, and probably, as in the case of Balder, to throw it at him. And to complete the parallel, it is only necessary to suppose that the King of the Wood was formerly burned, dead or alive, at the midsummer fire festival which, as we have seen, was annually celebrated in the Arician grove.² The perpetual fire which burned in the grove, like the perpetual fire under the oak at Romove, was probably fed with the sacred oak-wood; and thus it would be in a great fire of oak that the King of the Wood formerly met his end. At a later time, as I have suggested, his annual tenure of office was lengthened or shortened, as the case might be, by the rule which allowed him to live so long as he could prove his divine right by the strong hand. But he only escaped the fire to fall by the sword.

Thus it seems that at a remote age in the heart of Italy, beside the sweet Lake of Nemi, the same fiery tragedy was annually enacted which Italian merchants and soldiers were afterwards to witness among their rude kindred, the Celts of Gaul, and which, if the Roman eagles had ever swooped on Norway, might have been found repeated with little difference among the barbarous Aryans of the North. The rite

¹ Virgil (*Aen.* vi. 201 *sqq.*) places the Golden Bough in the neighbourhood of Lake Avernus. But this was probably a poetical liberty, adopted for the convenience of Aeneas's descent

to the infernal world. Italian tradition, as we learn from Servius, placed the Golden Bough in the grove at Nemi.

² See above, vol. i. p. 5.

was probably an essential feature in the ancient Aryan worship of the oak.¹

It only remains to ask, Why was the mistletoe called the Golden Bough? The name was not simply a poet's fancy, nor even peculiarly Italian; for in Welsh also the mistletoe is known as "the tree of pure gold."² The whitish-yellow of the mistletoe berries is hardly enough to account for the name. For Virgil says that the Bough was altogether golden, stem as well as leaves,³ and the same is implied in the Welsh name, "the tree of pure gold." A clue to the real meaning of the name is furnished by the mythical fern-seed or fern-bloom.

We saw that fern-seed is popularly supposed to bloom like gold or fire on Midsummer Eve. Thus in Bohemia it is said that "on St. John's Day fern-seed blooms with golden blossoms that gleam like fire."⁴ Now it is a property of this mythical fern-seed that whoever has it, or will ascend a mountain holding it in his hand on Midsummer Eve, will discover a vein of gold or will see the treasures of the earth shining with a bluish flame.⁵ In Russia they say that if you succeed in catching the wondrous bloom of the fern at midnight on Midsummer Eve, you have only to throw it up into the air, and it will fall like a star on the very spot where a treasure lies hidden.⁶ In Brittany treasure-seekers gather fern-seed at midnight on Midsummer Eve, and keep it till Palm Sunday of the following year; then they strew the seed on

¹ A custom of annually burning a human representative of the corn-spirit has been noted among the Egyptians, Pawnees, and Khonds. See above, vol. ii. pp. 238 sq., 244, 254 sq. We have seen (above, p. 167 sqq.) that in Western Asia there are strong traces of a practice of annually burning a human god. The Druids appear to have eaten portions of the human victim (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 13). Perhaps portions of the flesh of the King of the Wood were eaten by his worshippers as a sacrament. We have found traces of the use of sacramental bread at Nemi. See above, vol. ii. p. 343 sq.

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 1009, *pren puraur*.

³ Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 137 sq.

⁴ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 97, § 673.

⁵ Grohmann, *op. cit.* p. 97, § 676; Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*,² p. 94, § 123; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 158, § 1350.

⁶ C. Russwurm, "Aberglaube in Russland," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), p. 152 sq.; Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, ii. 146.

ground where they think a treasure is concealed.¹ Tyrolese peasants imagine that hidden treasures can be seen glowing like flame on Midsummer Eve, and that fern-seed, gathered at this mystic season, with the usual precautions, will help to bring the buried gold to the surface.² In the Swiss canton of Freiburg people used to watch beside a fern on St. John's night in the hope of winning a treasure, which the devil himself sometimes brought to them.³ In Bohemia they say that he who procures the golden bloom of the fern at this season has thereby the key to all hidden treasures; and that if maidens will spread a cloth under the fast-fading bloom, red gold will drop into it.⁴ And in the Tyrol and Bohemia if you place fern-seed among money, the money will never decrease, however much of it you spend.⁵ Sometimes the fern-seed is supposed to bloom on Christmas night, and whoever catches it will become very rich.⁶ In Swabia you can, by taking the proper precautions, compel the devil himself to bring you a packet of fern-seed on Christmas night. But for four weeks previously, and during the whole of the Advent season, you must be very careful never to pray, never to go to church, and never to use holy water; you must busy yourself all day long with devilish

¹ P. Sébillot, *Traditions et Superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, ii. 336; *id.*, *Coutumes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, p. 217.

² J. E. Waldfreund, "Volksgebräuche und Aberglauben in Tirol und dem Salzburger Gebirg," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. (1855), p. 339.

³ H. Runge, "Volks Glaube in der Schweiz," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), p. 175.

⁴ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalendar aus Böhmen*, p. 311 sq. Compare Vernalen, *Mythen und Bräuche des Volkes in Oesterreich*, p. 309 sq.; Töppen, *Aberglauben aus Masuren*,² p. 72 sq. Even without the use of fern-seed treasures are sometimes said to bloom or burn in the earth on Midsummer Eve; in Transylvania only children born on a Sunday can see them and fetch them up. See Halt-

rich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, p. 287; Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 159, §§ 1351, 1352; K. Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg*, ii. 285, § 1431; E. Monseur, *Folklore Wallon*, p. 6, § 1789.

⁵ Zingerle, *op. cit.* p. 103, § 882; *id.*, in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, i. (1853), p. 330; W. Müller, *Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Deutschen in Mähren*, p. 265. At Pergine, in the Tyrol, it was thought that fern-seed gathered with the dew on St. John's night had the power of transforming metals (into gold?). See Ch. Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wälschtirol*, p. 237, § 23.

⁶ Zingerle, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des Tiroler Volkes*,² p. 190 sq., § 1573.

thoughts, and cherish an ardent wish that the devil would help you to get money. Thus prepared you take your stand, between eleven and twelve on Christmas night, at the meeting of two roads, over both of which corpses have been carried to the churchyard. Here many people meet you, some of them dead and buried long ago, it may be your parents or grandparents, or old friends and acquaintances, and they stop and greet you, and ask, "What are you doing here?" And tiny little goblins hop and dance about and try to make you laugh. But if you smile or utter a single word, the devil will tear you to shreds and tatters on the spot. If, however, you stand glum and silent and solemn, there will come, after all the ghostly train has passed by, a man dressed as a hunter, and that is the devil. He will hand you a paper cornet full of fern-seed, which you must keep and carry about with you as long as you live. It will give you the power of doing as much work at your trade in a day as twenty or thirty ordinary men could do in the same time. So you will grow very rich. But few people have the courage to go through with the ordeal.¹ In Styria they say that by gathering fern-seed on Christmas night you can force the devil to bring you a bag of money.²

Thus, on the principle of like by like, fern-seed is supposed to discover gold because it is itself golden; and for a similar reason it enriches its possessor with an un-failing supply of gold. But while the fern-seed is described as golden, it is equally described as glowing and fiery.³ Hence, when we consider that two great days for gathering the fabulous seed are Midsummer Eve and Christmas—that is, the two solstices (for Christmas is nothing but an old heathen celebration of the winter solstice)—we are led to regard the fiery aspect of the fern-seed as primary, and its golden aspect as secondary and derivative. Fern-seed, in

¹ E. Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben*, p. 242 sq., § 267.

² A. Schlossar, "Volksmeinung und Volksaberglaube aus der deutschen Steiermark," *Germania*, N.R., xxiv. (1891), p. 387.

³ Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, p. 97, § 675; Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 98; C. Russwurm, "Aberglaube in Russland," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iv. (1859), p. 152.

fact, would seem to be an emanation of the sun's fire at the two turning-points of its course, the summer and winter solstices. This view is confirmed by a German story in which a hunter is said to have procured fern-seed by shooting at the sun on Midsummer Day at noon; three drops of blood fell down, which he caught in a white cloth, and these blood-drops were the fern-seed.¹ Here the blood is clearly the blood of the sun, from which the fern-seed is thus directly derived. Thus it may be taken as certain that fern-seed is golden, because it is believed to be an emanation of the sun's golden fire.

Now, like fern-seed, the mistletoe is gathered either at Midsummer or Christmas²—that is, at the summer and winter solstices—and, like fern-seed, it is supposed to possess the power of revealing treasures in the earth. On Midsummer Eve people in Sweden make divining-rods of mistletoe, or of four different kinds of wood one of which must be mistletoe. The treasure-seeker places the rod on the ground after sun-down, and when it rests directly over treasure, the rod begins to move as if it were alive.³ Now, if the mistletoe discovers gold, it must be in its character of the Golden Bough; and if it is gathered at the solstices, must not the Golden Bough, like the golden fern-seed, be an emanation of the sun's fire? The question cannot be answered with a simple affirmative. We have seen that the old Aryans probably kindled the midsummer bonfires as sun-charms, that is, with the intention of supplying the

¹ L. Bechstein, *Deutsches Sagenbuch* (Leipzig, 1853), p. 430, No. 500; *id.*, *Thüringer Sagenbuch* (Leipzig, 1885), ii. p. 17 sq., No. 161.

² For gathering it at midsummer, see above, pp. 343, 344. The custom of gathering it at Christmas still survives among ourselves. At York "on the eve of Christmas Day they carry mistletoe to the high altar of the cathedral, and proclaim a public and universal liberty, pardon, and freedom to all sorts of inferior and even wicked people at the gates of the city, towards the four quarters of heaven" (Stukeley, *Medallie History of Carausius*, quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, i. 525). This last custom, which is now doubt-

less obsolete, may have been a relic of an annual period of license like the Saturnalia. The traditional privilege associated with the mistletoe is probably another relic of the same sort.

³ Afzelius, *Volkssagen und Volkslieder aus Schwedens älterer und neuerer Zeit*, i. 41 sq.; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ iii. 289; L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 266 sq. In the Tyrol they say that if mistletoe grows on a hazel-tree, there must be a treasure under the tree (Von Alpenburg, *Mythen und Sagen Tirols*, p. 398). We have seen that the divining-rod which reveals treasures is commonly cut from a hazel (above, p. 342).

sun with fresh fire. But as this fire was always elicited by the friction of oak-wood,¹ it must have appeared to the ancient Aryan that the sun was periodically recruited from the fire which resided in the sacred oak. In other words, the oak must have seemed to him the original storehouse or reservoir of the fire which was from time to time drawn out to feed the sun. But the life of the oak was conceived to be in the mistletoe; therefore the mistletoe must have contained the seed or germ of the fire which was elicited by friction from the wood of the oak. Thus, instead of saying that the mistletoe was an emanation of the sun's fire, it would be more correct to say that the sun's fire was regarded as an emanation of the mistletoe. No wonder, then, that the mistletoe shone with a golden splendour, and was called the Golden Bough. Probably, however, like fern-seed, it was thought to assume its golden aspect only at those stated times, especially midsummer, when fire was drawn from the oak to light up the sun.² At Pulverbatch, in Shropshire, it was believed within living memory that the oak-tree blooms on Midsummer Eve and the blossom withers before daylight.³ This fleeting bloom of the oak, if I am right, could originally have been nothing but the mistletoe in its character of the Golden Bough. As Shropshire borders on Wales, the superstition may be Welsh in its immediate origin, though probably the belief is a fragment of the primitive Aryan creed. In some parts of Italy, as we saw,⁴ peasants still go out on Midsummer morning to search the oak-trees for the "oil of St. John," which, like the mistletoe, heals all wounds, and is, perhaps, the mistletoe itself in its glorified aspect. Thus it is easy to understand how a title like the Golden Bough or the "tree of pure gold," so little descriptive of the real appearance of the plant, should have held its ground as a name for the mistletoe in Italy and Wales, and probably in other parts of the Aryan world.⁵

¹ Above, p. 348.

² Fern-seed is supposed to bloom at Easter as well as at midsummer and Christmas (Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 98 *sq.*); and Easter, as we have seen, is one of the times when sun-fires are kindled.

³ Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-lore*, p. 242.

⁴ P. 343.

⁵ The reason why Virgil represents Aeneas as taking the mistletoe with him to Hades is perhaps that the mistletoe was supposed to repel evil spirits

Now, too, we can fully understand why Virbius came to be confounded with the sun. If Virbius was, as I have tried to show, a tree-spirit, he must have been the spirit of the oak on which grew the Golden Bough; for tradition represented him as the first of the Kings of the Wood. As an oak-spirit he must have been supposed periodically to rekindle the sun's fire, and might therefore easily be confounded with the sun itself. Similarly we can explain why Balder, an oak-spirit, was described as "so fair of face and so shining that a light went forth from him,"¹ and why he should have been so often taken to be the sun. And in general we may say that in primitive society, when the only known way of making fire is by the friction of wood, the savage must necessarily conceive fire as a property stored away, like sap or juice, in trees, from which he has laboriously to extract it. The Senel Indians of California "profess to believe that the whole world was once a globe of fire, whence that element passed up into the trees, and now comes out whenever two pieces of wood are rubbed together."² In the Vedic hymns the fire-god Agni "is spoken of as born in wood, as the embryo of plants, or as distributed in plants. He is also said to have entered into all plants or to strive after them. When he is called the embryo of trees, or of trees as well as plants, there may be a side-glance at the fire produced in forests by the friction of the boughs of trees."³ In some Australian languages the words for wood and fire are the same.⁴ Thus all trees, or at least the particular sorts of trees whose wood he employs in fire-making, must be regarded by the savage as reservoirs of hidden fire, and it is natural that he should describe them by epithets like golden, shining, or bright. May not this have been the

(see above, pp. 344, 448). Hence when Charon is disposed to bluster at Aeneas, the sight of the Golden Bough quiets him (*Aen.* vi. 406 sq.). Perhaps also the power ascribed to the mistletoe of laying bare the secrets of the earth may have suggested its use as a kind of "open Sesame" to the lower world. Compare *Aen.* vi. 140 sq.—

"Sed non ante datur telluris aperta
subire,

*Auricomos quam qui decerpserit arbore
fetus."*

¹ *Die Edda*, übersetzt von K. Simrock,⁸ p. 264.

² S. Powers, *Tribes of California*, p. 171.

³ A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 91 sq.; cp. H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 120.

⁴ E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 9, 18.

origin of the name, "the Bright or Shining One" (Zeus, Jove), by which the ancient Greeks and Italians designated their supreme god?¹ It is at least highly significant that, amongst both Greeks and Italians, the oak should have been the tree of the supreme god, that at his most ancient shrines, both in Greece and Italy, this supreme god should have been actually represented by an oak, and that so soon as the barbarous Aryans of Northern Europe appear in the light of history, they should be found, amid all diversities of language, of character, and of country, nevertheless at one in worshipping the oak and extracting their sacred fire from its wood. If we are to judge of the primitive religion of the European Aryans by comparing the religions of the different branches of the stock, the highest place in their pantheon must certainly be assigned to the oak. The result, then, of our inquiry is to make it probable that, down to the time of the Roman Empire and the beginning of our era, the primitive worship of the Aryans was maintained nearly in its original form in the sacred grove at Nemi, as in the oak woods of Gaul, of Prussia, and of Scandinavia; and that the King of the Wood lived and died as an incarnation of the supreme Aryan god, whose life was in the mistletoe or Golden Bough.

¹ On the derivation of the names Zeus and Jove from a root meaning "shining," "bright," see G. Curtius, *Griech. Etymologie*,⁶ p. 236; Vaniček, *Griech.-Latein. Etymolog. Wörterbuch*, p. 353 *sqq.* On the relation of Jove to the oak, compare Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xii. 3: "*arborum genera numinibus*

suis dicata perpetuo servantur, ut Jovi aesculus"; Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 332: "*omnis quercus Jovi est consecrata*." Zeus and Jupiter have commonly been regarded as sky gods, because their names are etymologically connected with the Sanscrit word for sky. The reason seems insufficient.

We are at the end of our inquiry, but as often happens in the search after truth, if we have answered one question, we have raised many more ; if we have followed one track home, we have had to pass by others that opened off it and led, or seemed to lead, to far other goals than the sacred grove at Nemi. Some of these paths we have followed a little way ; others, if fortune should be kind, the writer and the reader may one day pursue together. For the present we have journeyed far enough together, and it is time to part. Yet before we do so, we may well ask ourselves whether there is not some more general conclusion, some lesson, if possible, of hope and encouragement, to be drawn from the melancholy record of human error and folly which has engaged our attention in these volumes.

If then we consider, on the one hand, the essential similarity of man's chief wants everywhere and at all times, and on the other hand, the wide difference between the means he has adopted to satisfy them in different ages, we shall perhaps be disposed to conclude that the movement of the higher thought, so far as we can trace it, has on the whole been from magic through religion to science. In magic man depends on his own strength to meet the difficulties and dangers that beset him on every side. He believes in a certain established order of nature on which he can surely count, and which he can manipulate for his own ends. When he discovers his mistake ; when he recognises sadly that both the order of nature which he had assumed and the control which he had believed himself to exercise over it were purely imaginary, he ceases to rely on his own intelligence and his own unaided efforts, and throws himself humbly on the mercy of certain great invisible beings behind the veil of nature, to whom he now ascribes all those far-reaching powers which he once arrogated to himself. Thus in the acuter minds magic is gradually superseded by religion, which explains the succession of natural phenomena as regulated by the will, the passion, or the caprice of spiritual beings like man in kind, though vastly superior to him in power.

But as time goes on this explanation in its turn

proves to be unsatisfactory. For it assumes that the succession of natural events is not determined by immutable laws, but is to some extent variable and irregular, and this assumption is not borne out by closer observation. On the contrary, the more we scrutinise that succession the more we are struck by the rigid uniformity, the punctual precision with which, wherever we can follow them, the operations of nature are carried on. Every great advance in knowledge has extended the sphere of order and correspondingly restricted the sphere of apparent disorder in the world, till now we are ready to anticipate that even in regions where chance and confusion appear still to reign, a fuller knowledge would everywhere reduce the seeming chaos to cosmos. Thus the keener minds, still pressing forward to a deeper solution of the mysteries of the universe, come to reject the religious theory of nature as inadequate, and to revert in a measure to the older standpoint of magic by postulating explicitly, what in magic had only been implicitly assumed, to wit, an inflexible regularity in the order of natural events, which, if carefully observed, enables us to foresee their course with certainty and to act accordingly. In short, religion, regarded as an explanation of nature, is displaced by science.

But while science has this much in common with magic that both rest on a faith in order as the underlying principle of all things, readers of this work will hardly need to be reminded that the order presupposed by magic differs widely from that which forms the basis of science. The difference flows naturally from the different modes in which the two orders have been reached. For whereas the order on which magic reckons is merely an extension, by false analogy, of the order in which ideas present themselves to our minds, the order laid down by science is derived from patient and exact observation of the phenomena themselves. The abundance, the solidity, and the splendour of the results already achieved by science are well fitted to inspire us with a cheerful confidence in the soundness of its method. Here at last, after groping about in the dark for countless ages, man has hit upon a clue to the labyrinth, a golden key that opens many locks in the

treasury of nature. It is probably not too much to say that the hope of progress—moral and intellectual as well as material—in the future is bound up with the fortunes of science, and that every obstacle placed in the way of scientific discovery is a wrong to humanity.

Yet the history of thought should warn us against concluding that because the scientific theory of the world is the best that has yet been formulated, it is necessarily complete and final. We must remember that at bottom the generalisations of science or, in common parlance, the laws of nature are merely hypotheses devised to explain that ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought which we dignify with the high-sounding names of the world and the universe. In the last analysis magic, religion, and science are nothing but theories of thought; and as science has supplanted its predecessors, so it may hereafter be itself superseded by some more perfect hypothesis, perhaps by some totally different way of looking at the phenomena—of registering the shadows on the screen—of which we in this generation can form no idea. The advance of knowledge is an infinite progression towards a goal that for ever recedes. We need not murmur at the endless pursuit:—

*"Fatti non foste a viver come bruti
Ma per seguir virtute e conoscenza."*

Great things will come of that pursuit, though we may not enjoy them. Brighter stars will rise on some voyager of the future—some great Ulysses of the realms of thought—than shine on us. The dreams of magic may one day be the waking realities of science. But a dark shadow lies athwart the far end of this fair prospect. For however vast the increase of knowledge and of power which the future may have in store for man, he can scarcely hope to stay the sweep of those great forces which seem to be making silently but relentlessly for the destruction of all this starry universe in which our earth swims as a speck or mote. In the ages to come man may be able to predict, perhaps even to control, the wayward courses of the winds and clouds, but hardly will his puny hands have strength to speed

afresh our slackening planet in its orbit or rekindle the dying fire of the sun. Yet the philosopher who trembles at the idea of such distant catastrophes may console himself by reflecting that these gloomy apprehensions, like the earth and the sun themselves, are only parts of that unsubstantial world which thought has conjured up out of the void, and that the phantoms which the subtle enchantress has evoked to-day she may ban to-morrow. They too, like so much that to common eyes seems solid, may melt into air, into thin air.

Without dipping so far into the future, we may illustrate the course which thought has hitherto run by likening it to a web woven of three different threads—the black thread of magic, the red thread of religion, and the white thread of science, if under science we may include those simple truths, drawn from observation of nature, of which men in all ages have possessed a store. Could we then survey the web of thought from the beginning, we should probably perceive it to be at first a chequer of black and white, a patchwork of true and false notions, hardly tinged as yet by the red thread of religion. But carry your eye further along the fabric and you will remark that, while the black and white chequer still runs through it, there rests on the middle portion of the web, where religion has entered most deeply into its texture, a dark crimson stain, which shades off insensibly into a lighter tint as the white thread of science is woven more and more into the tissue. To a web thus chequered and stained, thus shot with threads of diverse hues, but gradually changing colour the farther it is unrolled, the state of modern thought, with all its divergent aims and conflicting tendencies, may be compared. Will the great movement which for centuries has been slowly altering the complexion of thought be continued in the near future? or will a reaction set in which may arrest progress and even undo much that has been done? To keep up our parable, what will be the colour of the web which the Fates are now weaving on the humming loom of time? will it be white or red? We cannot tell. A faint glimmering light illumines the backward portion of the web. Clouds and thick darkness hide the other end.

If turning from the unrest of the present and the uncertainties of the future we revisit once more in imagination the scene from which we set out on our long pilgrimage, we shall find the Lake of Nemi but little changed from what it was in the days when Diana saw her fair face reflected in its still waters. The temple of the sylvan goddess indeed has disappeared, and the King of the Wood no longer stands sentinel over the Golden Bough. But Nemi's woods are still green, and at evening, while the sunset fades in the glowing west, you may hear the church-bells of Albano, and perhaps, if the air be still, of Rome itself, ringing the Angelus. Sweet and solemn they chimè out from the distant city and die lingeringly away across the wide Campagnan marshes. *Le roi est mort, vive le roi !*

NOTE A

SECLUSION FROM SUN AND EARTH

IN the text I have shown that sacred kings and girls at puberty have sometimes been forbidden to see the sun and to set foot on the ground, and I have attempted to explain these prohibitions by the supposed need of isolating such persons from society and from the world, to which the powerful and dangerous influences with which they are charged might do a serious if not irreparable mischief. These rules, however, do not hold exclusively of the persons mentioned in the text, but are applicable in certain circumstances to other sacred or tabooed persons and things. Whatever, in fact, is permeated by the mysterious virtue of taboo may need to be isolated from earth and heaven. For example, women after childbirth and their offspring are more or less tabooed all the world over; hence in Corea the rays of the sun are rigidly excluded from both mother and child for a period of twenty-one or a hundred days, according to their rank, after the birth has taken place.¹ Among some of the tribes on the north-west coast of New Guinea a woman may not leave the house for months after childbirth. When she does go out, she must cover her head with a hood or mat; for if the sun were to shine upon her, it is thought that one of her male relations would die.² Again, mourners are everywhere taboo; accordingly in mourning the Ainos wear peculiar caps in order that the sun may not shine upon their heads.³ During a solemn fast of three days the Indians of Costa Rica eat no salt, speak as little as possible, light no fires, and stay strictly indoors, or if they go out during the day they carefully cover themselves from the light of the sun, believing that exposure

¹ Mrs. Bishop, *Korea and her Neighbours* (London, 1898), ii. 248.

² J. L. van Hasselt, "Eenige Aanteekeningen aangaande de bewoners der N. Westkust van Nieuw Guinea,"

Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde, xxxi. (1886), p. 587.

³ A. Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asien*, v. 366.

to the sun's rays would turn them black.¹ On Yule Night it has been customary in parts of Sweden from time immemorial to go on pilgrimage, whereby people learn many secret things and know what is to happen in the coming year. As a preparation for this pilgrimage, "some secrete themselves for three days previously in a dark cellar, so as to be shut out altogether from the light of heaven. Others retire at an early hour of the preceding morning to some out-of-the-way place, such as a hay-loft, where they bury themselves in the hay, that they may neither see nor hear any living creature; and here they remain, in silence and fasting, until after sundown; whilst there are those who think it sufficient if they rigidly abstain from food on the day before commencing their wanderings. During this period of probation a man ought not to see fire, but should this have happened, he must strike a light with flint and steel, whereby the evil that would otherwise have ensued will be obviated."² During the sixteen days that a Pima Indian is undergoing purification for killing an Apache he may not see a blazing fire.³

Again, newly born infants are strongly taboo; accordingly in Loango they are not allowed to touch the earth.⁴ Warriors, also, on the war-path are strictly taboo; hence some Indians may not sit on the bare ground the whole time they are out on a warlike expedition.⁵ In Laos the hunting of elephants gives rise to many taboos; one of them is that the chief hunter may not touch the earth with his foot. Accordingly, when he alights from his elephant, the others spread a carpet of leaves for him to step upon.⁶ German superstition recommended that when witches were led to the block or to the fire, they should not be allowed to touch the bare earth, and a reason suggested for the rule was that if they touched the earth they might make themselves invisible and escape. The sagacious author of "The striped-petticoat Philosophy" ridicules this idea as silly talk; not a single instance, he assures us, can be produced of a witch who escaped in this fashion. "I have myself," says he, "in my youth seen divers witches burned, some at Arnstadt, some at Ilmenau, some at Schwenda, a noble village between Arnstadt and Ilmenau, and some of them were pardoned and beheaded before being burned. They were laid on the earth in the place of execution and

¹ W. M. Gabb, *Indian Tribes and Languages of Costa Rica* (read before the American Philosophical Society, 20th August 1875), p. 510.

² L. Lloyd, *Peasant Life in Sweden*, p. 194.

³ Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, i. 553. See above, vol. i. p. 337.

⁴ Pechuel-Loesche, "Indiscretions aus Loango," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, x. (1878), p. 29 sq.

⁵ J. Adair, *History of the American Indians*, p. 382; *Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, p. 123.

⁶ E. Aymonier, *Notes sur le Laos*, p. 26.

beheaded like any other poor sinner; whereas if they could have escaped by touching the earth, not one of them would have failed to do so."¹ The most sacred object of the Arunta tribe in Central Australia is a pole about twenty feet high, which is completely smeared with human blood and set up on the ground where the final initiatory ceremonies are performed. A young gum-tree is chosen to form the pole, and it must be cut down and transported in such a way that it does not touch the earth till it is erected in its place on the holy ground.² The holy ark of some North American Indians was deemed "so sacred and dangerous to be touched," that no one, except the war chief and his attendant, would touch it, "under the penalty of incurring great evil. Nor would the most inveterate enemy touch it in the woods for the very same reason." In carrying it against the enemy they never placed it on the ground, but rested it on stones or logs.³ At Sipi, near Simla, in Northern India, an annual fair is held, at which the people dance round a sacred object consisting of a square box with a domed top, which exhibits on three sides the head and shoulders of a female figure, while to the fourth side a black yak's tail is fastened. This sacred object is brought to Sipi from a place sixty miles off; it may not be set down on the ground during the journey, but is carried by relays of men without stopping anywhere on the way.⁴ The sacred clam-shell of the Elk clan is kept in a holy bag, which is never allowed to touch the earth.⁵ In Scotland, when water was carried from sacred wells to sick people, the water-vessel might not touch the ground.⁶ In some parts of Aberdeenshire, the last bit of standing corn (which, as we have seen, is very sacred) is not suffered to touch the ground; but as it is cut, it is placed on the lap of the "guedman."⁷ Sacred food may not, in certain circumstances, be brought into contact with the earth. We have seen that among some Victorian tribes this rule held with regard to the fat of the emu.⁸ The Roumanians of Transylvania believe that "every fresh-baked loaf of wheaten bread is sacred, and should a piece inadvertently fall to the ground, it is hastily picked up, carefully wiped and kissed, and if soiled, thrown into the fire—partly as an offering to the dead, and partly because it were a heavy sin to throw away or tread upon any

¹ *Die gestriegelte Rockenphilosophie* (Chemnitz, 1759), p. 586 sqq.

² Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 364, 629.

³ J. Adair, *History of the American Indians*, p. 162 sq.

⁴ H. Babington Smith, in *Folk-lore*, v. (1894), p. 340.

⁵ E. James, *Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, ii. 47.

J. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *Third Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, 1884), p. 226.

⁶ C. F. Gordon Cumming, *In the Hebrides* (London, 1883), p. 211.

⁷ W. Gregor, "Quelques coutumes du Nord-est du Comté d'Aberdeen," *Revue des Traditions populaires*, iii. (1888), p. 485 v.

⁸ Above, p. 203.

particle of it."¹ At certain festivals in South-Eastern Borneo the food which is consumed in the common house may not touch the ground; hence, a little before the festivals take place, foot-bridges made of thin poles are constructed from the private dwellings to the common house.² When Hall was living with the Esquimaux and grew tired of eating walrus, one of the women brought the head and neck of a reindeer for him to eat. This venison had to be completely wrapt up before it was brought into the house, and once in the house it could only be placed on the platform which served as a bed. "To have placed it on the floor or on the platform behind the fire-lamp, among the walrus, musk-ox, and polar-bear meat which occupy a goodly portion of both of these places, would have horrified the whole town, as, according to the actual belief of the Innuits, not another walrus could be secured this year, and there would ever be trouble in capturing any more."³ But in this last case the real scruple appears to have been felt not so much at placing the venison on the ground as at bringing it into contact with walrus-meat.⁴

Sometimes magical implements and remedies are supposed to lose their virtue by contact with the ground. Thus in the Boulia district of Queensland the magical bone, which the sorcerer points at his victim as a means of killing him, is never by any chance allowed to touch the earth.⁵ Some people in antiquity believed that a woman in hard labour would be delivered if a spear, which had been wrenched from a man's body without touching the ground, were thrown over the roof of the house where the expectant mother lay. According to certain ancient writers, arrows which had been extracted from bodies without coming into contact with the earth and laid under a sleeper's body, acted as a love-charm.⁶ Pliny mentions several medicinal plants which, if they were to retain their healing virtue, ought not to be allowed to touch the earth.⁷ The curious medical treatise of Marcellus abounds with prescriptions of this sort. Thus he tells us that the white stones found in the stomachs of young swallows assuage the most persistent headache, if they be held in the hand or tied to the head, always provided that their virtue be not impaired by contact with the ground.⁸ Another of his remedies for the same malady is a wreath of fleabane placed on the head, but it must not

¹ E. Gerard, *The Land beyond the Forest*, ii. 7.

² F. Grabowsky, "Der Distrikt Dussou Timor in Südost-Borneo und seine Bewohner," *Das Ausland*, 1884, No. 24, p. 470.

³ *Narrative of the Second Arctic Expedition made by Charles F. Hall*, edited by Prof. J. E. Nourse (Washington,

1879), p. 110 sq.

⁴ See above, vol. ii. p. 336.

⁵ W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines*, p. 156, § 265.

⁶ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 33 sq.

⁷ *Nat. Hist.* xxiv. 12 and 68, xxv. 171.

⁸ Marcellus, *De medicamentis*, i. 68.

touch the earth.¹ On the same condition a decoction of the root of elecampane in wine kills worms; a fern, found growing on a tree, relieves the stomach-ache; and the pastern-bone of a hare is an infallible remedy for colic, provided, first, that it be found in the dung of a wolf, second, that it does not touch the ground, and third, that it is not touched by a woman.² Another cure for colic is effected by certain hocus-pocus with a scrap of wool from the forehead of a first-born lamb, if only the lamb, instead of being allowed to fall to the ground, has been caught by hand as it dropped from its dam.³ In the olden time, before a Lithuanian or Prussian farmer went forth to plough for the first time in spring, he called in a wizard to perform a certain ceremony for the good of the crops. The sage seized a mug of beer with his teeth, quaffed the liquor, and then tossed the mug over his head. This signified that the corn that year should grow taller than a man. But the mug might not fall to the ground; it had to be caught by somebody stationed at the wizard's back, for if it fell to the ground the consequence naturally would be that the corn also would be laid low on the earth.⁴

¹ Marcellus, *De medicamentis*, i. 76.

² *Ibid.* xxviii. 28 and 71, xxix. 35.

³ *Ibid.* xxix. 51.

⁴ Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicae* (Berlin, 1871), p. 54.

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