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THE GOLDEN BOUGH



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THE
GOLDEN BOUGH

A STUDY
IN MAGIC AND RELIGION

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SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

IN THREE VOLUMES
VOL. II

50423
5/7/01

London
MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1900

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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 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* (Hanover, 1806-1807), i. 48.

² R. I. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, p. 112.

³ F. Blumentritt, “Der Ahnencultus und die religiösen Anschauungen der Malaien 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 im Südlichen Africa*, i. 349 sq.; W. H. I. Bleek, *Reynard the Fox in South Africa*, p. 75 sq.; Theophilus Hahn, *Tsunii-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.*, *Philopatris*, 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; Thisis boasted of the mummy of Anhouris; 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 Mंगाians 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 Ba-ronga* (Neuchatel, 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. Graecor.* 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 Graeci*, ed. Westermann, p. 175); Stobaeus, *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, *Saharâ und Sûdân* (Leipzig, 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) IVme 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 Fison, 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, *bale muri*, "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 (*Kirvaido*). 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 sq., 156 sq.

² Simon Grunau, *Preussische Chronik*, herausgegeben von Dr. M. Perlbach (Leipsic, 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*, *vazirs*, 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, Shotter-

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 Olympian 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 E. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1853-58), iv. 246 sq.

² Plutarch, *Agis*, ii.

³ *Die Dorer*,² 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 τῆσι δ' ἐνὶ Κνωσῶς, μεγάλη πόλις,
ἔνθα τε Μίνως
ἐννέωρος βασιλεὺς Διὸς μεγάλου
ἄριστός.

Homer, *Odyssey*, xix. 178 sq. There is some difference of opinion as to the exact meaning to be given to ἐννέωρος

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 Veda*, p. 267.

⁵ D. Collins, *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* (London, 1804), p. 383.

⁶ Holzmayer, "Osiliana," *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 Dènè-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. Jelínek, "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 Tchéráz, "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 Ehsten 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, *Coutumes, Mythes et Traditions des Provinces de France*, pp. 101, 160, 223, 267, 284; B. Souché, *Croyances, présages 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, *Folklore du Poitou* (Paris, 1892), p. 525 sq.

² L. F. Sauvé, *Le Folklore 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 Chrysostom, *Orat.* iv. p. 69 sq. (vol. i. p. 76, ed. Dindorf). Dio Chrysostom 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 ζωγάτης was put to death is further shown by Macrobius, *Sat.* iii. 7. 6, "*Animas vero sacratorum hominum quos + zanas Graeci vocant, dis debitas aestimabant,*" where for *zanas* we should probably read ζωγάτας with Liebrecht, in *Philologus*, xxii. 710, and Bachofen, *Die Sage von Tanagwil*, 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 ἐκρέμασαν 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 Folk-lore 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 Muung Thai or Siam," *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, i. (Singa-

pore, 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 Fellaḥ 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 *khír* (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 *Panjab Notes and Queries*, i. p. 86, § 674.

² Aeneas Sylvius, *Opera* (Bâle, 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 *Respublica sive Status Regni Poloniae, Lituaniae, 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 Jambi) 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, *Saturn.* 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 Cytisorus. 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 Pherocydes, 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, *l.c.* 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 trumpery 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 Minyer*,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. "Εμβάρος). At Salamis in Cyprus a man was annually sacrificed to Aphrodite and afterwards to Diomedea, 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, *Praepar. 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 built 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 Hebraeorum*, 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 prae-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 firstborn 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 firstborn. 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 Heidenthums 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 travail 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 significatione*, 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 *Dun-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*² (New York, 1876), p. 270 sq.

⁵ Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 685; Cicero, *In Terr.* 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 Tellez (London, 1710), p. 198.

² Ph. Paulitschke, *Ethnographie Nordost-Afrikas, die geistige Cultur der Danakil, Galla und Somäl* (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.; Mone, *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 zeege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, 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, *Mœurs, 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 Rudhirádháyā, 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 (*Nannu*) 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, Legendes 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*⁵ (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, *Coutumes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, p. 227 sq.

² A. de Nore, *Coutumes, 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 Ehsten*, p. 353.

³ H. Pröhle, *Harzbilder* (Leipsic, 1855), p. 54.

² 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.

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii. 642.

³ Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, *Fest-Kalender aus Böhmen*, p. 90 sq.

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, *Völksthümliches 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. Pitri, *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*,³ ii. *Rheinisches Museum*, N. F. xxx. (1875), 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 Wislocki, *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 Abruzzesi*, 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, *Baumkultus*, 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 stript 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 Todeustragen und der Auorlef, 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*,⁴ ii. 640 sq.

⁴ See above, p. 86.

⁵ K. Schwenk, *Die Mythologie der Slawen*, 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.

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).

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 Ehsten*, p. 353; Holzmayer, "Osiliana," in *Verhand-*

lungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat, vii. Heft 2, p. 10 sq.; W. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, 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, p. 357 sq.

² Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*,⁴ ii.

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 Lechraim*, 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 melâ*, or fair of Rali, the *Rali* being a small painted earthen image of Siva or Pârvatî. 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 Sankrânt of Baisâkh (April). On a morning in March all the young girls of the village take small baskets of *dîb* 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 seashore 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 Adonidis planctu et gaudio prosequens."

⁴ Theocritus, xv.

⁵ W. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* p. 277.

⁶ Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 6. The words *ἐς τὸν ἦρα πέμπουσι* 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ th March $\frac{1}{6}$ th. 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, "Ctesias 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 Phœnician (Liddell and Scott, *Greek*

Lexicon, s.v. *σμύρνα*). 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, ἤγουν ὁ σῖτος ὁ σπειρόμενος, ἐξ μῆρας ἐν τῇ γῇ ποιεῖ ἀπὸ τῆς σπορᾶς καὶ ἐξ μῆρας ἔχει αὐτὸν ἡ Ἀφροδίτη, τουτέστιν ἡ εὐκρασία τοῦ ἀέρος. καὶ ἐκτότε λαμβάνουσιν αὐτὸν οἱ ἄνθρωποι. Jerome on Ezech. c. viii. 14: "Eadem gentilitas hujuscemodi 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 sollennibus Adonidis sacris, quod simulacrum aliquod esse frugum adularum religiones mysticae docent." *Id.*, xxii. 9. 15: "amato Veneris,

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 ὠραίους καρπούς. Etymolog. Magn. s.v. Ἄδωνις κύριον· δύναται καὶ ὁ καρπὸς εἶναι ἄδωνις· οἷον ἄδωνειος καρπός, ἀρέσκων. Eusebius, *Praepar. Evang.* iii. 11. 9: Ἄδωνις τῆς τῶν τελείων καρπῶν ἐκτομῆς σύμβολον.

² D. Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, 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 *φντεύοντες ἢ φντεύουσαι*. 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 μεσοῦντος ἡδῆ*.

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 Eubœa, 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; Wlislöcki, *Sitten und Brauch der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Hamburg, 1888), p. 32.

² G. Drosinis, *Land und Leute in Nord-Eubœa* (Leipsic, 1884), p. 53.

³ Matthæus Praetorius, *Deliciae Prussicæ*, 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* (Leipsic, 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-

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'uzu or Tammuz that "there can

be no doubt that he is originally the spring vegetation, which dies in his month Tammuz or Du'uzu" (*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. 105.

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 Pârvatî 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. Pitrè, *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 ὠσίον ἐπιταφίους Ἀδώνιδι, 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. omn. 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.² 370 *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.*, *Baumkultus*, 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, *Apologet.* 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 fetibus 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 paenitenti solacium quaerent, quem paulo ante sepelierant revixisse jactarunt. . . . Mortem ipsius [i.e. of Attis] dicunt, quod semina collecta conduntur, vitam rursus quod jacta semina annuis vicibus † reconduuntur" [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 ἰλαρίων καλουμένην ἑορτήν ὑπερ ἑδήλου τὴν ἐξ ἕδου γεγουῖαν ἡμῶν σωτηρίαν. This last passage, compared with the formula in Firmicus Maternus, *op. cit.* 22.*

θαρρεῖτε μύσται τοῦ θεοῦ σεσωμένου· ἔσται γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐκ πόνων 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. 17 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*,⁵ i. 456, note 4; Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon d. griech. u. röm. Mythologie*, i. col. 724. Cp. Polybius, xxii. 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 *Encyclopaedia 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 humble 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 *Paufl'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.* Ἑκατομβέβης; Athenaeus, iv. p. 139, D-F; Ovid,

Metam. x. 161-219; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxi. 66; Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*,³ 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 aegyptisches 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 them 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 Aegypter*, p. 617 sq.; Erman, *Aegypten und aegyptisches 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: ὁμολογεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ τιτανικά καὶ νῦν τελεία τοῖς λεγομένοις Ὀσίριδος διασπασμοῖς καὶ ταῖς ἀναβιώσεσι καὶ παλιγγενεσίαις, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ περὶ τὸς 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, Tyfonem calorem: et quia maturatae fruges calore ad vitam hominum colliguntur*

et divisa a terrae consortio separantur et rursus adpropinquante hieme seminantur, hanc volunt esse mortem Osiridis, cum fruges recondunt, inventionem vero, cum fruges genitali terrae fomento conceptae annua rursus coeperint procreatione generari.” Eusebius, *Praepar. Evang.* iii. 11, 31: ὁ δὲ “Ὀσίρις παρ’ Αἰγυπτίους τῆν κάρπιμον παρίσθησι δύναμιν, ἣν θρήνοι ἀπομειλίσσονται εἰς γῆν ἀφανίζομένην ἐν τῷ σπόρῳ, καὶ ὑφ’ ἡμῶν καταναλισκομένην εἰς τὰς τροφάς. Athenagoras, *Supplicatio pro Christianis*, 22, pp. 112, 114, ed. Otto: τὰ δὲ στοιχεῖα καὶ τὰ μύρια αὐτῶν θεοποιούσιν, ἄλλοτε ἄλλα ὀνόματα αὐτοῖς τιθέμενοι, τὴν μὲν τοῦ σίτου σποράν “Ὀσίριν (ὅθεν φασὶν μυστικῶς ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνευρέσει τῶν μελῶν ἢ τῶν καρπῶν ἐπιλεχθῆναι τῇ Ἰσιδι: Εὐρήκαμεν, συγχαίρομεν!).

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, αινῶ δὲ τομὴν ξύλου καὶ σχίσιν λίνον καὶ χοῦς χρομένης, διὰ τὸ πολλὰ τῶν μυστικῶν ἀναμείχθαι τοῦτοις. Again, *ibid.* 42, τὸ δὲ ξύλον ἐν ταῖς λεγομέναις Ὀσίριδος ταφαῖς τέμνοντες κατασκευάζουσι λάρνακα μνηοειδῆ.

² See above, p. 140 *sq.*

³ Lefebure, *Le mythe Osirien*, pp.

194, 198, referring to Mariette, *Denderah*, iv. 66 and 72.

⁴ Lefebure, *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 Aegypter*, p. 621; Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 20. In this passage of Plutarch it has been proposed by Parthey to read *μυρκης* for *μηθιδης*, 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 Aegypter*, 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 *Sochit* 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. Evang.* 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 πλατύτερον μὲν ὁ Μανέθως, ἐπετεσημημένως 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 Aegyptier, 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*¹ (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, *Praepar. Evang.* iii. 11. 31; Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* xi. 287; *id.*, on *Georg.* i. 166; Hippolytus, *Refut. omn. haeres.* v. 9, p. 168; Socrates, *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 23, p. 204; Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophron*, 212; Διηγήμενα, 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 Aegypter*, 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 quae caeduntur, carpuntur, tondentur innocentius decrescente luna quam crescente fiunt." *Geoponica*, i. 6. 8: τινές δοκιμάζουσι μηδὲν φθινοῦσης τῆς σελήνης ἀλλὰ αὐξανομένης φτερεύειν.

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 Uryuell*, 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 tondens calvos fiam*," and refer *istac* 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. Schandein, 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, *ll. cc.* 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*,² § 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, *Quaest. 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. 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, *Satur.* vii. 16. See further, W. H. Roscher, *Über Selene und Verwandtes* (Leipsic, 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 Sauv , *Folk-lore des Hautes-Vosges*, p. 5.

² Martin, "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in Pinkerton's *Voyages 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*,²i. 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 Ahls 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 (Sprout, *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 sq.; Fr. Lenormant, article "Bacchus" in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines*, i. 591 sq.; Voigt and Thraemer's article "Dionysus" in Roscher's *Ausführliches Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie*, i. col. 1029 sq.

⁴ Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* v. 3: Διονύσω δὲ δένδρῳ πᾶντες, ὡς ἔπος εἰπείν, Ἕλληνας θύουσιν.

⁵ Hesychius, *s.v.* Ἐνδένδρος.

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, *Dissertat.* viii. 1.

⁵ Athenaeus, iii. pp. 78 C, 82 D.

⁶ Himerius, *Orat.* i. 10, Διόνυσος γεωργεῖ.

⁷ *Orphica*, Hymn l. 4, liii. 8.

⁸ Aelian, *Var. Hist.* iii. 41; Hesychius, s.v. Φλέω[s]. 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. p. 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*, *τριετηρικὸς*, 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 E Delphico*, 9; *id.*, *De esu carniū*, 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 *Εἰσαφώτης* 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 αἰγί, ὁ ἐν τῷ ἔαρι φαινόμενος, ἤγονν ὁ πρῶϊμος; Stephanus Byzant. *s.v.* Ἀκρῶρεια.

⁹ Pausanias, ii. 35. 1; Schol. on Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 146; *Etymolog. Magn.* *s.v.* Ἀπατούρια, p. 118. 54 *sqq.*; Suidas, *s.vv.* Ἀπατούρια and μελαναίγυδα Διόνυσον; Nonnus, *Dionys.* xxvii. 302. Compare Conon, *Narrat.* 39, where for Μελανθίδῃ we should perhaps read Μελαναίγυδι.

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.* αἰγίξιν. As fawns

appear to have been also torn in pieces at the rites of Dionysus (Photius, *Lexicon*, *s.v.* νεβρίξιν; Harpocration, *s.v.* νεβρίξιν), 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 Bacchanals wore goat-skins (Hesychius, *s.v.* τραγηφόροι).

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.*: ἀγρεῶν 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 B); Zeus αἰγοφάγος, *Etymolog. Magnum*, *s.v.* αἰγοφάγος,

p. 27. 52 (cp. Schol. on Oppianus, *Halieut.* iii. 10; L. Stephani, in *Compte - Rendu de la Commission Impériale Archéologique pour l'année 1869* (St. Petersburg, 1870), pp. 16-18); Apollo ὄψοφάγος at Elis, Athenaeus, viii. p. 346 B; Artemis καπροφάγος in Samos, Hesychius, *s.v.* καπροφάγος; cp. *idem*, *s.v.* κρισφάγος. Divine titles derived from killing animals are probably to be similarly explained, as Dionysus αἰγόβολος (Pausanias, ix. 8. 2); Rhea or Hecate κνωσφαγής (Tzetzes, *Schol. on Lycophrou*, 77); Apollo λυκοκτόνος (Sophocles, *Electra*, 6); Apollo σαυροκτόνος (Pliny, *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 abstin.* 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. deor.* 28; Varro in Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, vii. 20; Hesychius, s.v. Φερσεφόβεια; 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 *d̄zai*, 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. Compare 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, *II. 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. §§ 12, 17; Hesychius, *s.v.* κορυαίειν; S. Reinach, *Traité d'Épigraphie Grecque* (Paris, 1885), p. 141 sqq.; W. Immerwahr, *Die Kulte und Mythen Arkadiens* (Leipsic, 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 Hausthiere in ihrem Uebergang aus Asien*,⁴ p. 65. $\Delta\eta\alpha\iota$ is doubtless equivalent etymologically to $\xi\epsilon\iota\alpha\iota$, 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 Hærvest-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-Bretagne*, 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. Prahm, "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

"Boren y codais I,
Hwyr y delynaïs 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 *Ibid.* p. 151 sq.

³ J. Macdonald, *Religion and Myth*, 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 scycle 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.

Bohn's ed.

² Hutchinson, *History of Northumberland*, ii. *ad finem*, 17, quoted by Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ii. 20,

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 *Bavaria, 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 Balquhiddy, 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 Balquhiddy 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 Argyleshire the last handful of corn cut is called the Maiden (*Maighdean-Bhuana*). Near Ardri-shaig, in Argyleshire, 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 Balquhiddel, 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 Alpbach, 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 Korndämonen*, 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 demaund 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.

¹ 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 Balquhiddy, 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 Punjaub, 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 *Bhogaldai*, that is "mother-cotton," from *bhogla*, a name sometimes given to a large cotton-pod, and *dai* (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 horse-back, 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 Batangnata 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 Batangnata," *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 *kepek* (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), Afdeling, meer

uitgebreide artikelen, p. 397.

² Maimonides, translated by Chwolson, *Die Sabier und der Sabismus*, 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-dèrès," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendinggenootschap*, 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 vorgelijkende 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, *Anatomie 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;

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 Zendelingenootschap*, xxxix. (1895), p. 138, *ibid.* xl. (1896), p. 16 sq.

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 *helaga*. 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 accused 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 Smectymnuus*).

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 δὴ τῇ θυσίᾳ τοῦ Γορπιαίου μηνὸς Ἰσταμενοῦ δευτέρᾳ κατακλινομένον τινα τῶν νεανίσκων φθέγγεσθαι καὶ ποιεῖν ἄπερ ὠδινοῦσαι 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 Newuid 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.*⁴ 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. *Lityerses*

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 *mââ-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 *mââ-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, ἔτι γὰρ καὶ νῦν κατὰ τὸν θερισμὸν τοῦς πρώτους ἀμηθέντας στάχυς θέντας τοῦς ἀνθρώπους κόπτεσθαι πλησίον τοῦ δράγματος καὶ τὴν Ἴσιν ἀνακαλεῖσθαι κ. τ. λ. For *θέντας* we should perhaps read *σύνθεντας*, which is supported by the following *δράγματος*.

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, *svv.* Βῶρμος and Μαριανδυνός θρήνος.

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 Balquhiddy 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. 19 *sq.* *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 soused 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 *Basenwurst*, 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. 335.

² *Ibid.* p. 335.

³ Above, pp. 173, 181, 193.

⁴ W. Mannhardt, *Korndämonen*, p. 26.

⁵ Above, p. 182.

⁶ W. Mannhardt, *M.F.* p. 50.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 50 sq.

⁸ See above, pp. 121 *sqq.*, 171, 174, 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 *sqq.* Compare *Revue des Traditions populaires*, iii. (1888), p. 598.

² W. Mannhardt, *Mythol. Forsch.* p. 35 *sq.*

³ *Ibid.* p. 36.

⁴ O. Hartung, "Zur Volkskunde aus Anhalt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, vii. (1897), p. 153.

⁵ J. Lecœur, *Esquisses du Bocage Normand*, ii. 240 *sq.* (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.

² *Ibid.* p. 40. For the speeches made by the woman who binds the stranger

or the master, see *ibid.* p. 41; Lemke, *Volksthümliches in Ostpreussen*, i. 23 sq.

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 corns he walked. To detect him, seven bundles of brushwood 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 *Biberschneider* (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 unreaped 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 unreaped 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 newcomer 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*,² § 400; Töppen, *Aberglaube aus Masurien*,² p. 57.

² The explanation of the custom is Mannhardt's. *M.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-Esperance*, 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 Mittheilungen*, 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.

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, *Körndämonen*, p. 5.

³ Pfannenschmid, *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 Phoenician 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.* Βῶρμος.

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 sqq.; 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 Chwolson, *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, *Sylloge 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 man-servant 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 *Wôld!* 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 and 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 Épinal 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 Sauv , *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 Eisler 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 Korndämonen*, 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, *Volksth mlisches in Ostpreussen*, i. 24.

⁵ G. A. Heinrich, *Agrarische 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 Lamé 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 Tettngang, in Württemberg, 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. *Gebäude 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.

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. Pineau, *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 Klepzig, 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, *Volksthümliches 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 Neuzatz, 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; Ralston, *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, *Volkssagen 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 Ehsten, pp. 344, 485.

³ 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.

² 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 Romanae*, 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.Ä.*, 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.* βούφονια; Suidas, *s.v.* Θαύλων; Bekker's *Anecdota Graeca*, p. 238, *s.v.* Διυπόλια. 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 *Etyrn. 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. praef. § 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.K.* 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 Heccquard, *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;

² *China Review*, i. 62, 154, 162,

Gray, *China*, ii. 115 sq.

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 κώδιον*) 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 κώδιον; 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 *Frogs*, 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. *σθήνια*, 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. *στρήνα*.

² E. Rohde, "Unedirte Lucianscholien, die attischen Thesmophorien und Haloen betreffend," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F., xxv. (1870), p. 548. Two passages of classical writers (Clemens 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 sqq.).

³ The scholiast speaks of them as *megara* and *adyta*. *Megara* (from a Phoenician word meaning "cavern," "subterranean chasm," Movers, *Die*

Phoenizier, 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 Δωδώνη* Lobeck (*Aglaophamus*, p. 829 sq.) proposed to read *ἀναδύνα* or *ἀναδοθήαι*. 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 *μεγαρίζοντες χοίρους ἐκβάλλουσι* Lobeck (*Aglaophamus*, p. 831) would read *μεγάρους ζῶντας χοίρους 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 importunity, 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 *hṓys*, "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.³ 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-Nedim, in Chwolsohn'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 *capiaï* (an animal like a pig) it would give them leprosy;⁴ perhaps the *capiaï* 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 sluijk- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes 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'Amérique 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 abstin.* 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 Osirion*, 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*,⁵ 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 Aegypter*, 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.* Βραυρωνίως; 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, *Quaest. 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. l. 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-supper 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, *Baumkultus*, p. 205. It is not said that the dough-man is made of the new corn; but probably 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 Bezenberger, *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 Mongondon," *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-Klêk-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.

² Gover, "The Pongol Festival in

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 *Uzwati* 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 Hermannsbürger 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 Amazulu, 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, *Nouveaux 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* (Leipzig, 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 Vitzilipuztli 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 Vitzilipuztli, 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 Vitziliputzli. 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 worshipt, 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 Vitziliputzli 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 unclthe 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 Basseur 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 *laras*.

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 Jesuites*, 1636, p. 11, ed. 1858.) Poor people who could not afford to sacrifice real animals offered dough images of them (Suidas, *s. v.* βοῦς ἑβδομος; cp. Hesychius, *s. vv.* βοῦς, ἑβδομος 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 Prosepine, 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, "Ju-ju 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 Wester-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 Selebes 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 an*

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, *Tsuni-||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 System of the Amazulu*, 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 Abstinencia*, ii. 48 : οἱ γοῦν ζῶων μαντικῶν ψυχὰς δεξασθαι βουλόμενοι εἰς ἑαυτοῦς, τὰ κυριώτατα μέρη καταπίνοντες, οἷον καρδίας κοράκων ἢ ἀσπαλάκων ἢ ἱεράκων, ἔχουσι παριούσαν τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ χρηματίζουσιν ὡς θεὸν 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 sluik- en kroesharige rassen tusschen Selebes 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 Italones 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 Coro-graphica natural y evangelica dela Nueva Andaluçia* (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 Danâkil, Galla und Somâl* (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 Amazulu*, 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 Arrousset 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 aufgeessene 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 Prussicis, p. 163; *Alt-preussen*, p. 161) the image of the old Prussian god Curcho was annually renewed. But see Mannhardt, *Die Kordämonen*, 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. l.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. l.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 Ainu 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 Ainu 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 bear'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 gereizt 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), Afdeling, 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.

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 Mabuag 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*

Néerland's 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 Katoc-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. Raffeneil, *Voyage dans l'Afrique occidentale* (Paris, 1846), p. 84 sq.

⁴ Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, p. 292.

speak 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*, xlv. (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 matar 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 bear 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 Lappland. 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, *Lapponia* (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 Assiniboins 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 Ojebways 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 aan de Zuidkust 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.

² Fr. Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika*, p. 87.

³ J. Becker, *La Vie en Afrique* (Paris

and Brussels, 1887), ii. 298 sq., 305.

⁴ Bastian, *Die deutsche Expedition an der Loango-Küste*, ii. 243.

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 Coro-graphica natural y evangelica dela Nueva Andalucia*, 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 Tzentalés 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 pais 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).

² Schleiden, *Das Salz*, p. 47. For

this reference I am indebted to my friend W. Robertson Smith.

³ Hugh Miller, *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*, ch. xvii. p. 256 sq. (Edinburgh, 1889).

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 *Metlahkattlah*, 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 re clothed 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, *Lapponia*, 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 Finnorum 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; Vambéry, *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 Mongalorum* (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 war feast 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 Inuit (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*,² 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; Whympier, 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," *Archaeological 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 Dénés Nord-ouest* (Paris, 1886), p. 132 *sqq.*, *Dindjie* (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 Danâkil, Galla und Somâl*, 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 Conzenbach'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 (Leipsic, 1878), übersetzt von Leo, p. 289; Leskien und Brugmann, *Litauische Volkslieder und Märchen*, pp. 405 sq., 409 sq.; Schott, *Walachische Maerchen*, No. 10, p. 142; Schneller, *Märchen und Sagen aus Wälschtiro*, 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 Danâkil Galla und Somâl*, 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, justitiæ.*" Then write the same words on pieces of paper, fold them up, and place one

¹ L. Declé, *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, *Contumes, 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*, xlv. (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, *Reliquiæ juris ecclesiastici antiquissimæ*, 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 Baronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), p. 419 sq. As to the rain-making ceremony among the Baronga, 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 worships 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 Ecclésiastique des Francs*, viii. 33, Guizot's translation. For more stories of the same sort, see Thiers, *Traité des Superstitious* (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 μέσον τῆς χώρας αὐτῆς ἀνεφύησαν 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. i. 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. i. 64; Pausanias, i. 24. 8.

⁷ Strabo, xiii. i. 64; Eustathius, on Homer, *Iliad*, i. 39, p. 34.

⁸ Strabo and Eustathius, *ll. cc.*

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. i, 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 *Λόκειος* or *Λόκιος*, 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 Letticæ 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 Chiriguanos 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'Isle 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 Tanoë, 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

Malaien 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 Pelauer," 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 Westen Noordkust van Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea," *Tijdschrift van het Kon. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Tweede Serie, x. (1893), p. 635.

⁴ Mr. Sleigh 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 Geelvinksbaai," 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 reser-vatum*; 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 Abghazses (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 *tûde* 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 sq., 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*,² 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 Punjaub. 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

βασιλικος, *regulus, rex avium* (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 90, x. 203), *re di siepe, r. yezuelo, roitelet, 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.

Romanesque et Merveilleuse, p. 221; Rolland, *op. cit.* ii. 294 sq.; Sébillot,

² A. Bosquet, *La Normandie*

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 seashore 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. Ridgeway 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 Athenæus, 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 (ἐξ δεκάδας λυκάβας κεκορώνικα). See *Compte Rendu* of the Imperial Archæological 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 *beannachadhthurlair*, 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 Thiers, *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 tender-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 Dènd-Dindjè* (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 Puja*, 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,⁵ 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*,⁵ 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.

² J. G. Kohl, *Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen*, ii. 268 sqq.

³ S. W. Tromp, "Uit de Salasila van Koetei," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-*

Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië, xxxvii. (1888), pp. 87-89.

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. Bunte; *id.*, *Fabulae*, 130; Servius and Probus on Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 389; Festus, *s.v.* "Oscillantes," p.

194, ed. Müller; Athenaeus, xiv. p. 618 EF; Pollux, iv. 55; Hesychius, *s. v.* Ἀλήτης and Αἰώρα; *Etymologicum Magnum*, *s.v.* Αἰώρα, 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 justa 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 Icarus,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 gestriegelte 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-FRUITS

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 *sqq.*

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. Decle, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, p. 157 sq.

³ L. Decle, *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.* xxviii. 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. Anthrop. 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*,² p. 165 sq.; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journ. Anthrop. 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 sluik- 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 impiously 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 Wainimala, 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 Melan- among the Head-hunters, being an Account of Three Visits to the Solomon*

² C. M. Woodford, *A Naturalist 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 *Nófo óoa tegger gnaóbe, óoa gnaóbe*, 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 *malái*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 *malái* 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 *mataboole* 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 Tootonga now addressed the gods generally, and afterwards particularly, mentioning the late Tootonga, 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 *mahii*, 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 Tootonga. 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 Tootonga. 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 historicæ de variis rebus Prussicis*, p. 163 (appended to his edition of Dusburg's *Chronicon Prussiae*). Cp. W. Mann-

hardt, *Die Korndämonen*, p. 27.

⁵ Hyginus, *Fabulæ*, 130.

⁶ Festus, *s.v.* "Sacrima," 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).

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